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Foreword

Welcome to the last quarterly issue of 2006. The Asian EFL Journal now receives so many submissions from all over the globe that some of these articles were first submitted in 2005. We thank the authors for their patience and our volunteer team of editors for their commitment to the academic process. Nine countries are represented in this issue. The eleven papers often deal with issues of local concern, but all of the themes raised transcend national boundaries.

The first paper is by one of our own associate editors, Professor Reima Al-Jarf of Saudi Arabia, who deals with a very practical issue that concerns so many countries around the world in “Large Student Enrollments in EFL Programs: Challenges and Consequences”. How can we make sure that it is administration that supports academic concerns and not the reverse? We are strongly committed to publishing articles like this one by prominent academics who address practical issues because they can be cited by others as evidence that large class sizes do have a negative impact and this can lead to better administrative decision making in all of our contexts. Without supportive decision making at an administrative level all academic and pedagogical efforts can be in vain: “Since large freshman class sizes at COLT were found to have a negative effect on student achievement (grammar taken as an example), on student and instructor attitudes, on classroom instruction, and result in staffing problems and insufficient resources and classrooms, efforts to reduce class size should be taken seriously.”

Another study from the Gulf States by Dr. Suleiman Al-Husseini of Oman, “The Visible and Invisible Role of English Foundation Programmes: A Search for Communication Opportunities within EFL Contexts” looks at a very common part of the university curriculum in this part of Asia, the ‘foundation programme’. His research finds that, in addition to teaching English, English Foundation Programmes are an excellent means of providing a holistic inductive process to university study, ensuring a successful transition from the previous learning experience and integration into the new context.

Al-Husseini also indicates that foundation courses “could provide a golden opportunity for using English communicatively.”

The gap between English learnt in schools and the English needed for university study is a common theme of several papers in this issue. The first part of Taguchi and Naganuma’s title - “Transition from Learning English to Learning in English: Students’ Perceived Adjustment Difficulties in an English-Medium University in Japan” - sums up the problem. Of course, not all universities are English medium universities but far more of them are now promoting courses taught in English, although even English classes at secondary schools do not always take place primarily in English. Their study reveals the students’ adjustment difficulties and explores the extent to which the difficulties stem from their previous experience in secondary school English classes. As one who spent almost fourteen years in secondary schools in five countries, as a teacher (and later as a researcher), before moving to university teaching, I feel it might be relevant to ask how far we can expect schools to take on any more responsibility and how far universities themselves will need to develop better programmes and strategies to bridge the gap through the kind of foundation programmes discussed in this issue.

In Dr. Lixin Xiao’s contribution from China, again the issue is needs of university English students (English majors in this case), if from a very different angle. In “What can we learn from a Learning Needs Analysis of Chinese English Majors in a University Context?” one “encouraging” finding is that the students have favorable attitudes towards communicative classroom activities. In Xiao’s view, this is “very encouraging for teachers who are engaged in innovations in teaching methods.” Xiao also emphasizes the importance of listening to students: “Students also show strong interest in learning target cultures and call for innovation in combining English teaching and culture teaching. On the other hand, the students are not inclined to see all activities emphasizing formal linguistic competence as less effective than those emphasizing the communicative functions of language.”

Perhaps the message of this issue is that all transitions require careful preparation and students in transition need sensitive handling. In “Prospective Teachers and L2 Writing Anxiety”, Atay and Kurt from Turkey provide us with an interesting study in anxiety for prospective English teachers. Their results indicate that more than half of the participants

suffer from high levels of writing anxiety. Symptoms include “difficulties in organizing their thoughts and producing ideas while writing in L2”. Importantly the students blame university instructors as one major factor affecting their attitude towards L2 writing.

In the first of three papers from Iran, Ghonsooly and Eghtesadee investigate the “Role of Cognitive Style of Field-dependence/independence in Using Metacognitive and Cognitive Reading Strategies by a Group of Skilled and Novice Iranian Students of English Literature”. Their results indicate that “level of proficiency and cognitive style of field-dependence/independence are both important factors in using meta-cognitive and cognitive reading strategies.” They also outline interesting findings about the differences between the meta-cognitive and cognitive reading strategies used by novice field-independent and skilled field-independent readers. These findings underline the importance of strategy teaching for novice students.

At a time when definitions of “Global English” are coming under the microscope, notably at our own global congress and EIL conference in May, 2007, M. Samaie, R. Sahragard, and R. Parhizkar, in their article “A Critical Analysis of Learning and Teaching Goals in Gardner's Theory of Attitudes and Motivation”, present us with an interesting critical discourse analysis, raising the issue of ‘xenocentrism’ in some western theories of motivation. ‘Xenocentrism’ is a particular form of ‘ethnocentrism’ which can be used to label assumptions built into the discourse that “typically involve the superiority of the second language community and the things associated with it but the inferiority of the first language community and the things associated with it.” The assumption that integrative motivation is central to EFL is clearly problematic in our world of EIL.

Mansour Koosha and Ali Akbar Jafarpour, in “Data-driven Learning and Teaching Collocation of Prepositions: The Case of Iranian EFL Adult Learners”, provide us with an interesting study, investigating whether “concordancing materials presented through data-driven learning (DDL) have any effect in the teaching/learning of the collocation of prepositions”, one conclusion being that that their DDL approach was highly effective in the teaching and learning of the collocation of prepositions.

From Taiwan, Yuh-Mei Chen’s “Using Children’s Literature for Reading and Writing Stories” explains why children’s literature is suitable for older EFL learners, illustrating her view with a description of a project which used children’s literature to engage EFL

university students in reading and writing stories. Often a practical paper of this kind would be redirected to our teaching article issues. However, this paper is included in this issue as it provides an interesting contribution to the discussion on using literature in EFL classrooms that we are encouraging in our quarterly issues, and supports the final opinion piece of this issue by Sivasubramaniam (see below).

To conclude this last issue of 2006, which has been a very dynamic growth year for AEJ, we are pleased to present two opinion pieces included for their powers of argumentation. We hope that they stimulate lively discussion in 2007 and would welcome detailed responses over the next months. Authors who are responding in detail to recent AEJ articles can sometimes be published a little more quickly than full research submissions. Shaun O'Dwyer, argues that "In ELT, it's Time for Constructivists to get Real". He takes issue with the philosophy and psychology of constructivism in English language teaching, citing books such Williams' and Burden's *Psychology for Language Teachers* (1997). He argues that "so far there has not been much critical examination of constructivism in ELT." He goes on to propose "a more philosophically robust and consistent understanding of those realities to serve as a background for reflective teaching practice."

Is it time to bring literature back? Did it ever actually go away? We invite our readers to join the debate stimulated by our final contributor, Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam, in "Promoting the Prevalence of Literature in the Practice of Foreign and Second Language Education: Issues and Insights". Sivasubramaniam skillfully argues for a more humanistic approach to language teaching suggesting that "the course-book culture rampant in current foreign and second language settings appears to promote a reductionist view of language learning" which is merely aimed at meeting exam requirements. He suggests that using literature in the ELT classroom can "lay the groundwork for personal and social construction of meanings by the students". Sivasubramaniam practices what he preaches in this paper.

Dr. Roger Nunn
Senior Associate Editor
Asian EFL Journal



Large Student Enrollments in EFL Programs: Challenges and Consequences

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Bio Data:

Reima Al-Jarf is a professor at King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where she has taught courses in EFL, ESP, linguistics, and translation to graduate and undergraduate students. She has four books and 66 articles published in refereed international and national journals. She has given 100 presentations and attended about 150 conferences in 25 countries (USA, UK, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Greece, Iran, Ukraine, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Cyprus, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia). She is a member of 22 professional organizations and serves on international and national committees.

Abstract

Year after year, EFL and translation programs at King Saud University are experiencing significant increases in female freshman student enrollments. This study aims to investigate the effect of female freshman student enrollment figures in EFL programs on student achievement and attitudes, program staffing, classroom instruction, management, assessment, resources and facilities utilization on the basis of female faculty demographic, female faculty teaching load, number of courses and total number of credit hours offered by the department, freshman students' enrollment statistics and grammar test scores. Female students, instructors, department head and program coordinators' perceptions of the causes and outcomes of large female freshman student enrollments will be reported.

1. Introduction

In the past five decades, college and school classrooms in many parts of the world have become progressively larger. Large enrollments, as Lewis (1997) found, result in problems such as: finding qualified teachers on a short notice, finding enough portable classrooms, exhausted teacher pool of qualified candidates, lack of space in schools, the extra burden on administrators who have to evaluate and lead more personnel, confusion over program assessment, such as the lack of initial baseline data that would allow

districts to demonstrate the effectiveness of Class Size Reduction (CSR), and the extra work required of teachers.

Like many parts of the world, English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) and translation programs at Saudi state universities are experiencing dramatic increases in freshman student enrollments. For example, twenty years ago, the pre-medical division for women at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University, had 400 female students and twenty four instructors most of whom were native speakers of English. In Fall 2003, it had 850 students and only seven instructors. Fifteen years ago, the author used to teach one section of a course with 20-25 students. In Fall 2004, she was teaching five sections of freshman grammar, with a total of 350 students with an average of 70 students per section. In Spring 2005, the number of enrollees in the same course went up to 400 with 65-74 students per section. Unfortunately, the current staffing status, especially at women's departments, resources and facilities do not accommodate the enrollment demands. EFL and translation programs are having difficulties in retaining experienced native-speaking instructors and in hiring qualified substitutes.

The aim of the present study is to describe female freshman student enrollment status at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Since enrollment figures should not be dealt with in isolation from other variables, this study will examine the effects of large female freshman student enrollments at COLT upon the staffing status, student achievement, students and instructors' attitudes, classroom instruction, management and assessment, and utilization of resources and facilitates. This study will also shed some light on the causes of larger freshman enrollments in the past few years.

The impact of large freshman enrollments on student achievement and attitudes, EFL program staffing, classroom instruction and assessment revealed by the present study will help policy-makers at the department, college, university, Ministry of Higher Education and parents understand the relationship between existing conditions and their outcomes. This study is intended to help policymakers understand the benefits of class-size reduction (CSR) and how it enhances student achievement. Some of the costs associated with large classes is a reduction in teacher quality and a shortage of personnel and

facilities. The study stresses the importance of ensuring that enough well-trained teachers should be available to meet the increasing need.

2. Study Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions: (i) What is the female freshman student enrollment status at COLT and what is the student attrition rate? (ii) What is the effect of the annual increase in female freshman student enrollment at COLT on students' academic achievement level? (iii) What are female freshman students and instructors' attitudes towards learning in and teaching large classes? (iv) What is the effect of the annual increase in freshman students' enrollment at COLT on program staffing and faculty teaching load? (v) What is the effect of the annual increase in freshman students' enrollment at COLT on classroom instruction, management and assessment as perceived by the students and their instructors? (vi) What is the effect of annual increase in freshman students' enrollment at COLT on resources and facilities utilization (college infrastructure)? (vii) What are the causes of the dramatic annual increase in female freshman student enrollments at COLT?

3. Literature Review

Class size at elementary, secondary and college levels has been the focus of educational research for five decades. Prior studies have investigated several aspects of class size such as the effect of class size on instruction, its effect on achievement and attitudes, the optimal class size, and class size reduction funds. Studies focusing on each of these aspects are reported below.

3.1 Effect on Instruction and Class Management

According to Krieger (2003), teachers in small-size classes use more facial expressions, more eye contact, more positive remarks, spend more time on direct instruction than on classroom management and work more often in small groups than they do in the regular-size classes. In addition, small classes in grades K-3, as Achilles, Krieger, Finn and Sharp (2003) concluded, boost students' academic performance in all subjects and in prosocial behavior. Two other studies provided evidence that teachers spend more time on task and with individual students because of

less time spent on dealing with disciplinary problems and interactions not related to learning objectives, compared with teachers in larger classes. Halbach, Ehrle, Zahorik and Molnar (2001) also found that smaller classes in grades 1-3 (15 students per teacher) had fewer discipline problems, more time for instruction and individualization, varied instructional strategies, and more content and in-depth coverage. In a five-year class-size-reduction program implemented in 80 Wisconsin schools called SAGE, Zahorik (1999) conducted an evaluative study in 30 SAGE schools. He found that small classes have three effects leading to increased individualization: fewer discipline problems, greater knowledge of students, and more teacher enthusiasm. In a similar CSR program in the Detroit Public Schools, Thomas (2001) reported that over half of teachers and administrators agreed that student achievement and teacher morale improved as a result of the CSR. Program teachers, administrators, and parents appreciated that CSR resulted in individualized instruction, decreased discipline problems, and better monitoring of student progress. Finn (1997) found that the advantage of small classes is greater for minority students and students in inner-city schools than for white students, probably because students are more actively engaged in learning compared to their peers in larger classes. Data from a literature review and interviews with second language teachers from schools and community-based organizations indicated that small classes are beneficial in teaching and learning second languages for communication purposes (Diamantidis, 1998).

3.2 Effect on Academic Achievement

Reduced class size proved to have a positive effect on student achievement at the elementary, secondary and college levels. Results of studies by Oberg (1993), Haenn (2002), Mazzola (1989), Robinson and Wittebols (1986) suggest that smaller class sizes produce the largest and most consistent test gains among disadvantaged elementary school children.

In a literature review on the effect of secondary-school size upon student outcomes, Fowler (1992) concluded that large secondary schools with a graduating class above 750 appeared to have deleterious effects on student attitudes, achievement, and voluntary

participation. Monk and Haller found that curricular adequacy was reached at a small high school level (that is, a graduating class of 100).

At the college level, Dillon, Kokkelenberg and Christy (2002) found that class size negatively affects grades. Undergraduate students' average grade point average declines as class size increases, precipitously up to class sizes of ten, and more gradually but monotonically through class sizes of 400 plus. The probability of getting a B plus or better declines from 0.9 for class sizes of 20 to about 0.5 for class sizes of 120, and almost 0.4 for class sizes of 400. Becker and Powers (2001) studied the effects of class size and other class-specific variables on learning of college economics. They found that beginning class size was significant and negatively correlated to learning economics - partly since students in larger classes were significantly more likely to withdraw before taking the posttest.

3.3 Effect on Attitude

Research findings have indicated that class size affects students and teachers' attitudes. Smith and Glass (1980) reviewed 59 studies and found a substantial relationship between class size and teacher and student attitudes, as well as instruction. Study findings by Glass and Down (1979) also indicated that lowered class size increases student achievement and improves school attitudes. Counter argument indicates there is little educational payoff and great monetary expense in small reductions in class size. Smith and Glass (1979) examined the relationship between class size and measures of outcomes such as student attitudes and behavior, classroom processes and learning environment, and teacher satisfaction. Small class size was associated with higher quality classroom environments, better student attitudes, and greater teacher satisfaction. Findings also indicated that class size effects were related to pupil age, with effects most noticeable for children 12 years and under and least apparent for pupils 18 or over. In 1984, the North Gibson School Corporation (Princeton, Indiana) began a reduced class size program as part of the PRIME TIME project investigating the effects of smaller classes on pupils' academic achievement, self-concepts, and attitudes toward school (Swan et al, 1987). Swan et al found significant gains in achievement, self-concept and attitude towards school for both first- and second-graders.

At the college level, Edgell (1981) studied the comparative effects of large and traditional-sized remedial mathematics classes on college students' aptitude and attitude. Two large pre-algebra classes of 129 and 121 students and traditional-sized classes ranging in size from 30 to 40 students were assessed by informal observations, a placement tool and an attitude measure. For the students in the large classes, there was a significant negative change in attitude. Although some negative change in attitude occurred for students in the traditional-sized classes, there was a significant difference in negativity between the two study groups. Gunter and Gunter (1994) also found a statistically significant difference between class size and college students' attitudes on the computer usefulness subscale. Students in smaller classes perceived computers to be more useful after completion of a computer literacy course than students in larger classes. In Japan, Locastro (1989) investigated teacher and students' attitudes towards second language instruction in large classes at the university and secondary levels. She found that the "average large class size" experienced by most teachers was 45 and most students experienced classes of 40-59 students, some much larger. She also found that teachers of large classes faced pedagogical, managerial and affective problems. Problems were seen to arise with classes over the size of 39 students and begin to occur under the size of 51 students.

3.4 The Optimal Class Size

Since small-size classes have a positive effect on achievement and attitudes, this would pose a question about the optimal class size. Goettler-Sopko (1990) indicated that class size is a complex problem that depends on many factors. The central theme that runs through the research literature is that academic achievement does not necessarily improve with the reduction of student/teacher ratio unless appropriate learning styles and effective teaching styles are utilized. It is also evident that no single class size is best for all grade levels and all subject areas. However, based on recent research studies, there is considerable agreement that smaller class sizes seem to result in higher achievement among students who are economically disadvantaged; students with lower academic ability seem to do better in smaller classes; class size may affect student attitudes more significantly than it affects achievement; a direct effect of large class size is to lower the

morale and increase the stress of teachers; and there is typically little to be gained from reductions in class size that do not bring class size below 30 (Goettler-Sopko, 1990).

At the elementary school level, Wright et al (1977) investigated the differences between different sized classes in grades four and five of Toronto schools. Teachers and students from 11 schools were assigned to 34 classes of either 16, 23, 30, or 37 students. Questionnaires and attitude scales were used to measure teachers' expectations and attitudes, students' opinions and attitudes toward their classes, and parents' opinions. In addition, student achievement in reading comprehension, vocabulary, mathematics problem-solving, mathematics concepts, art, and composition was measured, and students' academic self-concepts were assessed. Results showed that varying class size produced few changes in classroom functioning, and most differences between class sizes were relatively small. Students were addressed as individuals significantly more frequently as class size was reduced below 30. Other differences included increased mathematics concepts scores in classes of 16, increased verbal participation in classes of 16 or 23, more noise in classes of 30 or 37, increased scores on "indicators of quality" in classes of 16 or 23, more frequent reading instruction in classes of 16, and increased complaints about lack of art instruction in classes of 37.

In foreign language classrooms, Horne (1970) indicated that the optimal class size for foreign language instruction is between 5 and 9 students. The policy statement of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) concerning the English teacher's workload stated that the teacher of English should have direct instructional responsibility for no more than 100 students (The Ad Hoc Committee on English Teacher Workload in Secondary Schools, 1973). Locastro (1989) reported that Japanese college students preferred classes of 11-20. Johnson (2001) recommended classes with not more than 20 students. In a study that focused on three "Lab" schools which were established in 1994-1995 in Durham, North Carolina, Haenn (2002) indicated that State standards call for class sizes of 23 students for grades K-2, and 26 for grades 3-5. The average class size for the Lab schools ranged from 14 to 21 for grades K-2 and from 11 to 22.5 for grades 3-5. The average class size for the comparison schools ranged from 13.9 to 20.3 for grades K-2, and from 14.3 to 20.3 for grades 3-5. When asked what class size was "just right," responses from school staff ranged from 16-21 students; by contrast parent

responses ranged from 10-19. Data collected from 47 school districts of the Metropolitan School Study Council showed a progressively larger difference as class size decreases. He found that in the elementary grades a significant break occurs between the 11-15 and 16-20, and the 21-25 and 26-30 class size intervals. In the secondary grades, the only significant break occurs between the 11-15 and 16-20 class size intervals (Vincent, 1968).

3.5 Class Size Reduction Funds

In some countries, class size reduction funds were established to help recruit more teachers and provide professional development for new and veteran teachers. For example, in the USA, Naik, Casserly and Uro (2000) surveyed members of the Council of the Great City Schools to determine how they were using federal class size reduction funds in the 2000-2001 school year. Results indicated that the federal class size reduction program improved student achievement and received strong teacher support. These funds enabled the responding school systems to hire approximately 4,303 teachers, and, in fact, all 36 major cities used their federal class size reduction funds to hire new teachers. Thirty-one cities used some of their federal class size reduction monies to provide professional development for new and veteran teachers. Urban schools spent their federal class size reduction funds in 2000-2001 in approximately the same ways as they did in 1999-2000, with the exception of a somewhat increased emphasis on recruiting efforts. The class size reduction program is becoming an essential ingredient of urban school reform efforts.

To conclude, many prior studies used questionnaire-surveys and interviews to assess the effect of large class size on elementary, secondary, and college student achievement and attitudes in different subject fields. Several variables were the focus of those studies such as achievement, attitudes, class discipline, teachers-student interaction, classroom management and instruction. However, studies that assess the effect of large college student enrollments in EFL environments are lacking. This study will examine the impact of large enrollments on several variables as perceived by college students and instructors at COLT.

4. Subjects

A random sample of 100 female students majoring in translation at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), at King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia participated in the study. The subjects were enrolled in the freshman class of Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005. Freshman students at the COLT take 19 hours of English language courses as follows: listening (3 hours), speaking (3 hours), reading (4 hours), writing (4 hours), vocabulary building (3 hours) and grammar (2 hours).

In addition, a sample of 20 instructors who are currently teaching English language courses to freshman students (Level One students) or have taught Level One students at COLT in Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 were selected. 15% of the instructor sample hold a Ph.D. degree, 15% have an M.A. degree and 70% have a B.A. degree.

Finally, the department head and two program coordinators at the Department of European Languages and Translation at COLT (English program only) were also interviewed.

5. Data Collection

Student Data: Female freshman student enrollment statistics at COLT were collected for six semesters: Fall 2000, Spring 2001, Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005. The number of sections, section enrollment, number of withdrawn students and number of repeating students were obtained for those semesters. To show the effect of increasing student enrollment on achievement in EFL, only female freshman students' grammar final exam scores for six semesters were obtained: Fall 2000, Spring 2001, Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005. All of the students in those groups were taught by the author. They studied the same grammatical structures, used the same grammar textbook and took the same pretest and final exam. Other courses could not be compared as they were taught by different instructors, using different teaching and assessment techniques.

Instructor Data: Demographic data about the female faculty at COLT such as nationality, degree, teaching load, and courses they teach were collected for Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005.

Course Data: The number of sections and total number of credit hours offered at each of the ten college levels were also obtained for Fall 2000, Spring 2001, Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004 and Spring 2005.

Questionnaires and Interviews: The questionnaire was e-mailed to 125 students and 80% were returned. In addition, all of the instructors, department head and program coordinators were interviewed by the author. The student questionnaire, and instructor and administrator questionnaire-surveys consisted of open-ended question (See Appendices 1, 2, and 3).

6. Data Analysis

To describe the annual increase in female freshman student enrollment at COLT, the percentage of withdrawn students and the percentage of repeating students, the median and range of section enrollment were computed for the six semesters.

To find out the effect of annual increase in freshman students' enrollment on their academic achievement, the % of passing students in the grammar course was calculated for each semester (as an example). To find out whether there is a significant difference in freshman students' means scores in grammar over the six semesters, analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was calculated using the final exam scores as the response variable and the pretest scores as the covariate to correct for chance differences that existed when the subjects were assigned to treatment groups. This correction will result in the adjustment of group means for pre-existing differences caused by the sampling error and reduction of the size of the error variance of the analysis.

To find out the effect of large freshman enrollments on program staffing and on faculty teaching load, the total number of hours offered to all the sections of the ten college levels and the teaching load for all the female faculty was calculated in hours.

To find out the effect of large freshman student enrollment on attitudes, on classroom instruction, class management, assessment practices and resources and facilities utilization, students and instructors' responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaires and interviews were sorted out and analyzed.

To find out the causes of annual increase in female freshman students' enrollment, department head and program coordinators' responses to the open-ended questions of the interview were sorted out and analyzed.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Female Freshman Enrollment Status

Results presented in Table (1) show that the total number of female freshman students increased from 84 students in Fall 2000 to 393 students in Spring 2005. In 4 years, female freshman students' enrollment figures quadrupled. Since Fall 2003, each semester has been witnessing an increase of at least 50 students over the previous semester.

Table (1)
Student Enrollment in Grammar 1

<i>Semester</i>	<i># sections</i>	<i>Students per section</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>Withdrawn Students</i>	<i>Took Final Exam</i>	<i>Passing Students</i>
Fall 2000 (Semester 1)	2	40-42	82	28%	59	66%
Spring 2001 (Semester 2)	2	37-40	77	11.7%	68	84%
Fall 2003 (Semester 3)	5	47-48-51-51-54	251	20%	200	42.5%
Spring 2004 (Semester 4)	5	57-65-66-67-70	325	30%	237	56%
Fall 2004 (Semester 5)	5	72-72-74-74-76	368	25%	275	29.8%
Spring 2005 (Semester 6)	6	39-65-68-73-74-74	393	27%	287	35.8%

The attrition rate was 20% (51 students) in Fall 2003, it went up to 30% (98 students) in Spring 2004, and was 25% (93 students) in Fall 2004, and 27% (106 students) in Spring 2005. Few students drop each week. Many re-register in the grammar 1 course the following semester adding up to the total number of enrollees (See Table 1).

In the academic year 2000/2001, there were 2 level-one sections, with a median number of 40 students per section. Since Fall 2003 (3 years later), there have been 5 level-one sections, with an increasing number of section enrollment from one semester to

the next. In Fall 2003, the median section enrollment was 51; in Spring 2004 it went up to 66, and in Fall 2004 it increased to 74 (See Table 1).

The percentage of students who took the grammar course over, either because they failed the grammar course, or because they dropped it and re-registered it in the following semester was 28% in Fall 2003, and went up to 45% in Fall 2004 (See Table 2).

Table (2)
% of Students Who Took the Grammar Course Over (Repeaters)

Semester	# of sections	Grand Total	Course Repeaters	% of repeaters
Fall 2003	5	251	70	28%
Fall 2004	5	368	165	45%

7.2 Effect of Enrollment Increase on Academic Achievement

Table (1) shows the total number of students who took the grammar final exam and the % of students who passed the grammar course. It can be seen that 66% (total = 59) of the students passed the grammar course in Fall 2000, 87% (total = 68) passed in Spring 2001, 42.5% (total = 200) passed in Fall 2003, 56% (total = 237) passed in Spring 2004, and 29.8% (total = 275) passed in Fall 2005, and 35% (total = 287) passed in Spring 2005. It can be noted that as the class size increases, the percentage of passing students decreases.

ANCOVA results show significant difference among freshman students' grammar final exam scores, i.e., posttest scores ($F = 53.84$, $P = < 0.0001$, $df = 1124$). The mean scores for female freshman students enrolled in Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 (semesters with low enrollment) were significantly higher than that for those enrolled in Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004, and Spring 2005 in which the enrollment was 200 or higher. The effect size was .56. This again shows that the group mean score declines as the class size increases (See Table 3). The above findings show that large student enrollments have had a negative effect on freshman students' academic achievement in grammar. As the number of enrollees increases, students' achievement level declines. This finding is consistent with findings of prior studies in the literature. Dillon, Kokkelenberg and Christy (2002) found that class size negatively affects grades. Average grade point average declines as the class size increases. The probability of getting a B plus or better declines from 0.9 for class sizes to 20 to about 0.5 for class sizes of 120, and almost 0.4 for class sizes of 400. Rieck, Clark and Lopez (1995). found that students enrolled in

Math 107 had a lower attrition rate and a higher rate of satisfactory course completion. Becker and Powers (2001) found that beginning class size was significant and negatively correlated with learning economics-partly, because students in larger classes were significantly more likely to withdraw before taking the posttest.

Table (3)
The Means, Medians, Ranges, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors of the Grammar Pre and Posttest Scores for the Six Semesters

	Fall 2000		Spring 2001		Fall 2003	
	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>
N	59	59	68	68	200	200
Mdn	60.0	64.0	55.0	68.0	50.0	52.00
Mean	62.8	64.0	52.4	67.2	46.6	53.28
SD	15.2	16.8	15	13.4	19.92	17.22
SE	1.98	2.2	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.22
Range	4-90	4-94	10-80	22-90	5-90	16-92

* Total final exam (posttest) mark = 100

Table (3) Cont'd

Spring 2004		Fall 2004		Spring 2005	
<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>	<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Posttest (Final)</i>
237	237	275	275	287	287
46.0	56.00	48.00	52.00	56	52
47.6	57.52	48.48	52.46	54.06	50.56
15.2	16.48	13.80	14.46	15.52	15.00
0.98	1.08	0.84	0.88	1.12	0.88
6-94	4-100	18-86	12-86	12-70	8-88

7.3 Effects on Attitudes

Both students and instructors in the present study had negative attitudes towards learning in and teaching large classes. Students reported that they feel lost, do not have a sense of belonging, cannot concentrate, hesitate to participate and feel left out in a large class. By contrast, when they are in a small class, they reported that they feel that they receive more attention, have a chance to communicate, share in the discussion and classroom activities, receive individualized feedback and are motivated to learn. Instructors in the present study feel that large classes require more energy, are exhausting and difficult to manage.

They cannot create rapport with students and cannot pay attention to each and every individual in a large class.

Students' surveys and instructor interviews revealed negative effects among students and instructors towards large classes, and towards the teaching and learning process in EFL. This finding is also supported by prior research. Cheatham and Jordan (1976) found that small class-individual instructor technique, used in a speech communication course, prompted more favorable student attitudes than did the 40- or 80-student lecture treatments. Likewise, Rieck, Clark and Lopez (1995) found that college students enrolled in Math 107 (i.e. small classes) showed greater gains in positive attitudes towards mathematics.

7.4 Effects on Program Staffing:

Table (4) shows that the total number of teaching hours that needed to be filled in Level One were between 372 in Fall 2003 and 455 in Spring 2005, with about 50% of the total number of teaching hours offered to Levels One and Two sections i.e. half of the female faculty.

The department head and program coordinators reported that the EFL program at COLT is severely under-staffed. Shortage is always solved by merging classes, by raising the teaching load of instructors, and by hiring local recruits who have a B.A. degree, and who are sometimes inadequately qualified.

The department head, program coordinators, and instructors at COLT believe that the optimal class size should be 25-30 students. If freshman section enrollment is reduced to 30, the total number of Level One sections will be twice as many (between 10-13 sections for Fall 2004 and Spring 2005). This means that an additional 5-6 language instructors with an M.A. degree (teaching load =18 hrs per week) need be hired to cover the teaching hours for the extra 5-6 Level One sections only (See Tables 4 & 5 & 6).

Tables (7 & 8) show that most of the instructors in the EFL program are teaching full load which depends on the degree and academic status. The teaching load is reduced for the department head, coordinators, T.A.'s who are pursuing their graduate studies, and those who are sick. When the department had 29 instructors in Fall 2003, the teaching load for some professors went up to 23 hours per week (with an overload of 9 hours per

week). Since Fall 2003, the percentage of instructors with a B.A. degree has ranged between 25%-30% of the total EFL female faculty at COLT, most of whom are local recruits (Saudi non-native speakers). Moreover, the department has only one native-English speaking instructor, one non-Arab, and the rest are either Saudi or from other Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq and the Sudan.

At the beginning of each semester, the department head is overwhelmed by the large enrollments in the freshman class. She has to search for and recruit more faculty on short notice. In such a case, foreign recruits are impossible to contact and recruit, and local recruits with a B.A. degree are the only option available.

Table (4)
Total Number of Teaching Hours Required for All the Sections at All the Levels

Levels	Fall 2003		Spring 2004		Fall 2004		Spring 2005	
	<i>Sections</i>	<i>Hrs</i>	<i>Sections</i>	<i>hrs</i>	<i>Sections</i>	<i>Hrs</i>	<i>Sections</i>	<i>hrs</i>
One	5	100 (26.8%)	5	100 (27.7%)	5	100 (23%)	6	120 (26%)
Two	4	80 (21.5%)	4	80 (22%)	5	100 (23%)	5	100 (22%)
Three	3	42	3	42	4	56	4	56
Four	3	36	2	24	3	36	4	48
Five	2	34	2	34	3	51	3	51
Six	2	36	2	36	2	36	2	36
Seven	1	10	1	10	2	20	1	10
Eight	1	12	1	12	1	12	1	12
Nine	1	12	1	12	1	12	1	12
Ten	1	10	1	10	1	10	1	10
Total	23	372	22	360	27	433	28	455

Table (5)
Total Enrollment and Actual and Optimal Number of Sections Per Level

	Fall 2004			Spring 2005		
	<i>Total # Students Per Level</i>	<i>Actual # of Sections</i>	<i>Optimal # of sections</i>	<i>Total # Students Per Level</i>	<i>Actual # Sections</i>	<i>Optimal # of sections</i>
Level 1	293	5	10	393	6	13
Level 2	147	5	5	220	5	7
Level 3	128	4	4	155	4	5
Level 4	139	3	5	120	4	4
Level 5	89	3	3	122	3	4
Level 6	62	2	2	65	2	2
Level 7	63	2	2	50	1	2
Level 8	41	1	2	50-55	1	2

Level 9	35	1	1	45	1	1
Level 10	36	1	1	45	1	1
	1033	27	35	1265	28	41

Table (6)
Distribution of Female COLT Faculty According to Degree

	Fall 2003		Spring 2004		Fall 2004		Spring 2005	
	<i>Native</i>	<i>Non-native</i>	<i>Native</i>	<i>Non-native</i>	<i>Native</i>	<i>Non-native</i>	<i>Native</i>	<i>Non-native</i>
Ph.D	1	9	1	8	-	9	1	9
M.A.	-	10	-	11	-	13	-	17
B.A.	-	9	-	7	-	10	-	10
Total faculty	29		27		32		37	

Table (7)
Grand Total of Teaching Load Per Degree

	Fall 2003		Spring 2004		Fall 2004		Spring 2005	
	# Faculty	Total work Load	# Faculty	Total work Load	# Faculty	Total Work Load	# Faculty	Total Work Load
Ph.D	10	142	9	110	9	134	10	121
M.A.	10	171	11	170	13	224	17	252
B.A.	9	109	7	96	10	118	10	120
Grand Total	29	422	27	376	32	476	37	493

Table (8)
Instructors' Teaching Load in Hours Per Week

	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005
Ph.D	4-4-10-10-12-14-21-22-22-23	6-8-10-10-12-14-14-18-18	8-10-10-14-14-17-18-18-25	5-8-10-10-12-13-14-14-17-18
M.A.	4-8-16-16-19-20-21-22-22-23	4-8-16-16-18-18-18-18-18-18	8-8-12-16-17-18-18-18-18-18-18-19-10	4-8-9-11-14-14-15-16-17-18-18-18-18-18-18-18-18
B.A.	4-6-8-15-15-15-15-16	4-12-15-15-15-15-15	4-10-12-14-15-15-16-16-16	4-6-6-12-14-15-15-16-16-16
Total faculty	29	27	32	37

The above findings show that increasing freshman student enrollment results in severe female faculty shortage at COLT. This result is also consistent with findings of a study by Sabandar (1989) in Indonesia. Sabandar indicated that the situation at Universitas '45 is

characterized by increasingly large student numbers and a severe instructor shortage. Instructors have complained of large classes, and found it impossible to reconcile the attainment of the university goals with the actual classroom situation. This has led to declining achievement and is threatening the institution's popularity. In Japan, Locastro (1989) found that teachers of large classes faced pedagogical, managerial and affective problems.

7.5 Effects on Classroom Instruction

Student questionnaires and instructor interviews revealed that both freshman students and instructors believe that large class sizes inhibit small group activities and individualized instruction, because of the noise level and lack of space in the classroom. The instructor does not have sufficient time to check each student's work. Instructors indicated that they do not have enough time to pay attention to each and give every student a chance to speak or participate. As a result, individual students do not receive sufficient attention from the instructor.

When classes are large, the instructors pointed out that they cannot accommodate the wide individual differences (ability-levels) available in class. Poor students do not get enough attention. They cannot have a one-on-one contact and do not have adequate time to follow their students' progress. Students feel that the instructor calls and focuses on those who sit in the front row. They do not have a chance to answer or practice.

Large class enrollments also result in discipline problems even at the college level. Some students talk in class and make it difficult for the majority to hear the instructor and concentrate due to increasing the noise level. Many students might mishear an answer or a point. They pay less attention and are distracted by those who talk in class. They are psychologically inhibited from participation. Instructors spend a lot of time taking attendance. They cannot remember names and faces and cannot call on all the students.

Moreover, over-crowded classes have a negative effect on assessment. Extra work is required of instructors when classes are large. All of the instructors reported that grading 200-300 essays (per in-term test) is exhausting, tedious, and time consuming. Writing instructors reported that grading students' essays is very time-consuming. Testing students

individually and orally in the speaking course is also very time-consuming, no matter how short the questions are.

When the author was teaching 59 and 70 students in Fall 2000 and Spring 2001, she used to give 7 quizzes over the whole semester (a quiz every other week). When the number of students went up to 200, she gave 4 in-terms tests, when it went beyond 250 students, she could only give 2 in-term tests. Other instructors can only give 2 in-term test per course per semester. Instead of preparing one version on the test per course, she has to prepare three test versions for each in-term, each with two forms to accommodate for the 5 grammar sections she teaches. As the class size increases, the test length decreases. In Spring 2004, the author had to grade 900 pages, in Fall 2004, she had to grade 1100 pages for the Grammar I final exam within a few days. She graded 15 hours a day to meet the deadline set by the Registration Department for submitting the grade sheets.

Finally, the negative effects of large student enrollment on classroom instruction in EFL are also consistent with findings of Coleman and Lewis' studies. Coleman (1989) surveyed 33 teachers providing remedial ESL instruction to large classes with over 100 students in Nigerian universities. Results showed that the most common difficulties were in the areas of relationships with individual students, classroom control, and grading of written work. Lewis (1997) found that large enrollments result in problems such as: Finding qualified teachers on short notice, finding enough portable classrooms, exhausted teacher pool of qualified candidates; lack of space in schools; the extra burden on administrators who have to evaluate and lead more personnel; confusion over program assessment, such as the lack of initial baseline data that would allow districts to demonstrate the effectiveness of Class Size Reduction (CSR); and the extra work required of teachers in higher grades.

7.6 Effects on Resources and Facilities Utilization

Many classrooms at COLT are small and cannot seat more than 50 students (the average classroom space is less than one meter per student). As a result, students are squeezed in and some cannot find a chair to sit and cannot squeeze in extra seats. Students are crowded by the door. Those who sit in the back, find it difficult to see what is written on the white board. During in-terms, classrooms are not spacious enough as more space

between the seats is needed. Rows are too close that the instructor cannot walk in between the seats to check the students' work. Seats cannot be rearranged in a U-shape or a semi-circle for small group activities. Many instructors seek help with test invigilation. During tests, some students can easily cheat as seats are too close to each other. The four language labs available at COLT, which are used for teaching listening and interpreting courses, do not seat more than 40 students. Each of the two computer labs has only 20 PC's. The labs are always fully booked and most listening hours cannot be conducted in the lab, in which case, a cassette players needs to be used in the classroom. Additional numbers of cassette players are needed for classroom use. When played in the classroom, the students cannot hear nor comprehend as classrooms are not sound-proof and no amplification systems are available. Classrooms cannot be dimmed for overhead or LCD projector's use, and no portable screens are available. Only one LCD projector is available at the department. Finally, no microphones and loud speakers are available.

7.7 Causes of large freshman enrollments

Large freshman enrollments are attributed to several factors such as the increasing numbers of high school graduates and hence increasing numbers of students interested in majoring in translation.

In the past few years, Saudi universities have applied an open admission policy, where students can be admitted to any college of their choice, as soon as they submit their credentials to the Office of Admission. Everybody is admitted to COLT without screening. Passing the admission test is no longer a requirement for joining COLT (the English admission test has been canceled). Only students who transfer from other colleges to COLT are required to take the English admission test. The Office of Admission does not abide by COLT's enrollment quota. The high attrition rate and high percentage of failing students who re-register the following semester add to the problem. It is difficult for those who fail and would like to transfer to another college to do so due to strict rules and regulations.

In addition, each semester thousands of male and female students take the General English course (English 101) that students in the Colleges of Arts, Education and Administrative Sciences are required to take and the ESP course the completion of which

is a prerequisite to admission to the college of Medicine, Pharmacy, Engineering, Science, Applied Medical Sciences, and Computer Science (about 4500 female students per semester). A large number of instructors is needed to cover the General English and ESP courses.

Every year, COLT loses female faculty, however the turnover is low. It is difficult to find external recruits especially after September 11 and because of the unstable situation in the Middle East and the Blasts in Riyadh and other cities. Some foreign faculty are interviewed and given the job, but they do not show up. Foreign faculty prefer to work in other Gulf countries or at private institutes where the pay, benefits and job conditions are better. It is also difficult to find internal recruits with a Ph.D. or an M.A. degree. COLT loses Saudi faculty as well. Some move, retire, quit, or go back to graduate school. Some work for few weeks, then quit. COLT has no long-term plan for preparing Saudi EFL instructors. Saudi male college graduates go for an M.A. & Ph.D. degree but many females are not interested in studying abroad. COLT does not have sufficient funds for recruitment and resources. As a state university, King Saud University depends on a budget from government. They are not allowed to charge tuition and contributions and endowments go to the university general account not to individual colleges or departments. Procedures to withdraw money from the university general account are complicated. Job vacancies are not advertised on the university intranet or on Internet websites such as Dave's ESL café. Information about vacancies is not available online. E-mail is rarely used in correspondence between job applicants and recruiters and online interviews (teleconferencing) are not used in recruiting. In short, the current staffing practices at COLT do not meet the increases in female freshman enrollments.

8. Recommendations and Conclusions

Since large freshman class sizes at COLT were found to have a negative effect on student achievement (grammar taken as an example), on student and instructor attitudes, on classroom instruction, and result in staffing problems and insufficient resources and classrooms, efforts to reduce class size should be taken seriously. A class size reduction fund should be established. Such a fund will help recruit more instructors, provide professional development for new and veteran teachers, and purchase educational

resources. Class-size reduction funds will help create more manageable classrooms so that teachers could focus on teaching and spend less time on discipline, taking attendance and paperwork. Since the cost of class size reduction is enormous, public support for the level of funding needed to substantially reduce class size through expansion of college facilities and staff is called for.

Second, to accommodate the larger number of freshman students, innovative methods of instruction can be introduced. Weber and Hunt (1977) recommended use of technology in the teaching of EFL courses to supplement classroom instruction. Gillette (1996) asserted that electronic media provide new opportunities for engaging college students in and out of the classroom. Electronic mail, teleconferencing, and Internet resources can increase instructor availability and extend class discussion.

Each semester, COLT should conduct prediction studies based on enrollment, statistics, attrition rate, percentage of passing, failing, and returning students in previous semesters, and total number of retiring and resigning faculty. COLT should have a long-term staffing plan for preparing Saudi faculty through graduate studies. Technology can be used in the recruiting process such as having an online job center, allowing candidates to submit their CV's online, using e-mail in correspondence, posting information about job vacancies online and using videoconferencing in job interviews. It is advisable that when foreign faculty submit their resignation letters, vacancies are advertised and recruiting is started months in advance. All parties involved in recruiting and student admission should be made aware of the large enrollments and staffing problems. The college may seek new financial resources, contributions and endowments. Recruiting efforts should be intensified.

To reduce the number of freshman enrollment at COLT, an admission test should be given prior to admission. Those who fail a course should be encouraged to transfer. Transferring criteria should be made flexible. Rules and regulations for transferring to other colleges should be made more lenient. Every effort must be made to inform the university administration, Ministry of Higher Education and the public of the outcomes of large enrollment through conferences, newspapers, satellite T.V. and the Internet.

Classroom assignment should be based on section size not tradition or coordinator convenience. Large classrooms should be assigned to large section even if sections of the

same level are scattered all over the COLT buildings. Teaching hours can be extended until 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. instead of 1:00 p.m. so that more sections can use the language and computer labs. Large classrooms in other departments and divisions may be utilized as well. No classroom should remain free at any time.

Each semester, statistics about course enrollment by course, by section and by level should be kept for several years. High attrition rates among freshman students at COLT should receive special attention. Factors that affect freshman students' attrition and withdrawal from the courses are still open for further investigation.

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Appendix (1)
Student Questionnaire

(i) *What are the advantages and disadvantages of learning English (listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary) in a large class with more than 50 students?*

(ii) *What are the positive and negative effects of studying in a large class on the following:*

- *seating capacity and arrangement*
- *attendance*
- *classroom atmosphere*
- *your achievement*
- *attitude & enthusiasm*
- *classroom interaction and participation in activities*
- *language practice*
- *class work & assignments*
- *receiving feedback from the teacher*
- *using the language and computer labs*
- *teacher-student relationship*
- *student-student relationship*

(iii) *What things do you not like about studying in a large class?*

(iv) *What is the optimal class size for you?*

Appendix (2)
Instructor Questionnaire-Survey

(1) *What are the advantages and disadvantages of teaching listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary building courses to freshman students in large classes (above 50 students)?*

(2) *What are the positive and negative effects of teaching large classes on the following:*

- *attendance*
- *attitude, enthusiasm & morale*
- *classroom atmosphere*

- teaching techniques used
- language activities & practice
- classroom interaction and participation in activities
- class work & assignments
- frequency of evaluation
- grading of assignments and exams
- giving feedback
- seating arrangement
- students' achievement
- student-student relationship
- teacher-student relationship
- classroom management
- using the language and computer labs
- availability and use of college equipment (e.g.: cassette players, LCD projector, OHP ...etc.)

(3) *What things can you not do with large classes?*

(4) *How do you feel about teaching large classes?*

(5) *What is the optimal class size for you?*

Appendix (3)

Administrator Questionnaire-Survey

(a) *What are the disadvantages of offering English language courses to large classes (above 50 students)*

(b) *What problems are caused by large freshman classes in relation to the following:*

- *facilities management (classrooms and labs)*
- *resources and facilities availability and utilization*
- *program staffing*
- *scheduling*
- *student grouping and seating arrangements in classrooms and labs*
- *invigilation*
- *keeping and following students' records*
- *academic advising*

(c) *What are the causes of large freshman student enrollments at COLT?*

(d) *How do you solve the understaffing problems?*

(d) *What is the optimal class size for you?*



The Visible and Invisible Role of English Foundation Programmes: A Search for Communication Opportunities within EFL Contexts

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Abstract

This paper argues that in addition to teaching English, English Foundation Programmes should also help new students become involved in the new teaching environment by ensuring a transition from the previous learning experience and integration into the new context. The study also argues that the process of transition and integration contributes to creating an environment in which English can be used communicatively outside the language classroom, in institutions which teach English as a foreign language (EFL). The study follows the college impact approach to understand the influence of students' previous education and their understanding of the new learning environment on their college studies. An open question questionnaire was used to collect data from 199 students studying in three higher education establishments in the Sultanate of Oman. The data was analysed qualitatively, using a coding system. The study finds that the participants were influenced by their previous learning experience and suffered unfamiliarity with, as well as misconceptions of, the new learning situation, which indicates that the purpose of the FP should be, in addition to teaching English, helping students overcome these problems. The process of students' transition and integration could provide a golden opportunity for using English communicatively.

Keywords: Foundation Programmes, new students, involvement, transition, integration, communicative use.

Introduction

Foundation programmes (FPs) are very common in countries where English as a foreign language is the medium of instruction in higher education establishments. In Oman,

English is seen as a resource for national development because of its role in the global economy, science and technology. The Government supports, politically, economically, and legislatively, English Language teaching in general and tertiary education. In general education, pupils aged between 7-16 are taught English not as a medium of instruction but as a compulsory foreign language. For various reasons such as the limited and rare exposure to English as well as the quality of instruction they receive at this stage (Al-Issa, 2005), students' competency in English is far below the level that is needed in tertiary education in which English is the medium of instruction for science majors in such fields as medicine, business or engineering (Al-Issa, 2005; and Flowerdew, 1993). Arts specialisations such as history, Arabic and geography are taught in Arabic.

In order to enhance these students' language proficiency, the establishments which provide tertiary education, such as; universities; colleges of technology; colleges of administration and business studies; and institutions of health studies all have a special English language teaching programme named the Foundation Year Programme (FYP or FP). The overall aim of the FP is to provide learners with the level and type of English e.g. listening/speaking, reading/ writing; EGP, EAP or ESP (Flowerdew, 1993; Kormos *et al*, 2002 and Al-Husseini, 2004) that they need to pursue academic specialisations in which subjects are taught in English. FP "is designed for access by students whose English Language ability is very basic" (Kobeil, 2005). It "aims to improve the students' linguistic competence" (Al-Jamoussi and Al-Bedwawi, 2005) in order "to meet their immediate academic needs and prospective labor market requirements" (Al-Hinai, 2005). "The FP is a bridging year between the secondary school and the new specialisations in which English is the medium of instruction" (Al-Jamoussi and Al-Bedwawi, 2005). Although FPs are structured mainly around language needs, they also typically include subjects such as mathematics, computer skills, learning skills, and thinking skills (Ryan, 2005) to facilitate the students' adaptation and integration into the academic institution.

Fulfilling students' language needs as explained above is a visible role of the FPs that is addressed and expressed obviously in the programmes' documentations. In addition to the language needs, as this study argues, FP students have transitional and integration needs which are not mentioned in the programme policies. In my view, fulfilling such needs represents the invisible role of FP. General education graduates who join

institutions of higher education face learning environments different from the ones that they are used to in terms of, for example; deep-learning as opposed to surface-learning at school (Eizenberg, 1988 and Ramsden, 1988); methodology, autonomy of learners; teacher-student relationships, and student-student relationships. Students often fail to understand why they need to change to the new learning approach (Bradbeer, 1999).

In addition, creating an environment in which students can use communicatively the language they learn in the classroom is a challenging issue for the FP. Al-Husseini (2004, p.175) finds that “students need more opportunities to practice English and use it communicatively inside and outside the language classroom”. Al-Issa (2005, p. 8) asserts that the students “might have learned a great deal about the rules and the system of English. However, the scarce application of these rules in genuine interactive situations results in failure to use the language communicatively”.

This paper argues that the students’ transitional needs and adaptation needs contribute to creating an environment that provides students with opportunities to use communicatively the language they learn in the classroom. EFL teachers now, although using a communicative approach in ELT, need a solution to increase EFL learners’ exposure to, and use of the target knowledge, both inside and outside the classroom (Chen, 2005). If conducted properly, assisting students to adapt to the new learning context should help them apply their English competence in real-life (Swan, 1985) communicative situations.

This paper has a two-fold task. First, it tries to find out the students’ transition and integration needs. Then it tries to discover the features these needs may contain for developing a communicative environment. Therefore, the study tries to find answers to these three main questions;

- 1) What are the transition needs and integration needs of students learning in FP?
- 2) How does the language learned in the FP influence future study?
- 3) What are the communicative opportunities, provided by students’ transition and integration needs that students studying in the FP can use?

The answers to these questions, although addressing the Omani context, should be applicable to similar EFL contexts where learners have similar transitional and integration problems.

Literature Review

College has a significant impact on students (Donaldson and Graham, 1999). There are four main areas where the study of college impacts, namely: 1) students' background/pre-enrolment characteristics; 2) the structural/organisational characteristics of the institution; 3) interaction with faculty and peers, and 4) interaction with the institution's academic systems (Pascarella, 1985, p. 640).

The learners' understanding of the current learning context is influenced by their previous learning (Yang and Lucus, 2003; Kasworm, 2003 and Breen and Littlejohn, 2000). They see the current learning context through "*the window screen of their past learning experiences*" (Belzer, 2004 p 55). This relationship between present and past learning experience determines the students' attitude towards the new learning context. This may range from comfort, to hesitation, to confrontation (Belzer, 2004).

Studying learners' past learning experiences in order to make them explicit to teachers, educators and specialists is important. "*Instead of looking through the window screens, learners need encouragement to look with a conscious and critical eye at the screens themselves*" (Belzer 2004 p 56). This can be achieved by explicit classroom practice where teachers explain to the learners the relationship between understanding their prior educational experience and the purpose of the new learning experience which aims at developing them academically by improving their language skills and abilities (Belzer, 2004). Learners should be provided with opportunities to express and assess their prior conceptions, goals and plans, as a point of departure for new learning (Breen and Littlejohn, 2000).

The institution's organizational features have significant effects on students' academic integration and the level of interaction between the learner and the teachers' and other personnel (Pascarella, 1985; Donaldson and Graham, 1999 and Schultz, 1998). More than 70% of what students learn in college comes from extra-curricular activities. Research finds that 40% of students believe that the activities they do out of class provided the

most significant learning experiences (Moffatt, 1989), and 90% of students think that extracurricular experience contributed to their maturation in college (Kuh, 1989). Some experiences include; excursions, meeting people in the local community, interaction with organisations, being involved in societies, volunteering, talking with teachers and students outside the classroom, involvement in research, and living on or off campus (McCormick *et al*, 2005 and Kuh, 1993). Active involvement in out-of-classroom activities also helps teachers to acquaint themselves with students, become more able to understand students' problems and help them to solve them (Zepeda and Ponticell, 1997).

There are some gaps between teachers and learners' beliefs and conceptions (Yang and Lucus, 2003, and Kasworm, 2003). Students, like teachers, have their own understanding of the school cultural values (Keefe and Howard, 1997), aims and objectives of major learning tasks (Stefani *et al*, 1997 and Eisenberg, 1988), teachers' teaching abilities, importance of language, teaching material, teachers' preparation and the ethnic background of the teachers (Yang and Lucus, 2003). Students' perceptions which are sometimes more influential than the reality (Keefe and Howard, 1997), affect their learning goals (Eisenberg, 1988) and motivation, the teachers' assessment practice (Stefani *et al*, 1997) and cooperation between the students and teachers (Brown *et al*, 2000). Students' opinions are not always built on true understanding. Brown *et al* (2000) find that students' belief of the teacher's credibility is influenced by their perception of the teacher's race and gender.

Being new, a student may or may not be able to practice autonomy in terms of thinking and operating, according to his/her principles, rather than imitating or following others (Breen and Littlejohn, 2000). In addition, students have little idea of the requirements of the new learning environment, such as: efficient time-management skills; assignment quality expectations, etc. nor do they know the level of support they can get from faculty or their peers (Trueman and Hartely, 1996; Stefani *et al*, 1997).

Success in this new culture requires understanding the value of the new learning environment and obtaining an in-class comforting relationship with the teachers, which should take place at the early stages of joining the college (Kasworm, 2003). Success could be increased through an organized and ongoing advising process which aims at helping students achieve the educational, personal and job-related goals, by using all

faculty resources (Schultz, 1998). When given the correct information, students become able to make the appropriate decisions about their academic lives (Schultz, 1998).

Methodology

This study follows the college impact approach, which emphasizes the role of the learning environment, in terms of the interaction between the learner and the institution, in accounting for the learning and personal development of the learner (Kuh, 1993). Studies applying such an approach include Kuh (1993), Pascarella (1985), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) and Baxter Magolda (1992).

Learners' involvement in understanding and improving teaching and learning has been emphasised in educational research, as in: Fullan (1991); McCallum *et al* (2000); Breen and Littlejohn (2000); Kormos *et al* (2002), and Al-Husseini (2004). Learners are seen "as participators in social and educational processes rather than as passive recipients or outcomes of such process" (McCallum *et al*, 2000 p. 276). Their views are valuable in higher education improvement, and complement other participants' views, e.g. teachers, principals and planners (Hill, 1995).

This research involves 199 students at Nizwa University, Ibra College of Technology and Sur College of Applied Sciences, Sultanate of Oman. The three institutions have FPs in which new students are enrolled in order to achieve the level of English that is required in the academic specialisations. The institutions are located in three different cities. Nizwa University is a private establishment, while the others are all funded and managed by the government.

The participants were selected randomly to represent students who were still in the FPs as well as those who had finished and started their specialisation studies. The participants were both male and female. This variation in learning experience, I assume, provides cross-sectional opinions which should enrich the data.

An open-question questionnaire was used for data collection. An open-question questionnaire minimizes participants' irrational fear of criticism (Stefani *et al*, 1997). It gives the participants freedom to say what they want and however they want to say it. This, consequently, provides the researcher with more useful information compared to closed-questions, although the latter are easier to collate and analyse. Responses to

open-questions are most likely to reflect accurately what the respondent wants to say (Nunan, 1992). A questionnaire was preferred to interviews in order to involve a large number of students which would have been practically impossible to interview (Kormos *et al*, 2002). The questionnaire also gives privacy to participants, especially when identity is not required and the researcher's direct interaction is minimized, thereby encouraging participants to express themselves freely (Robson, 1993).

The data were analysed qualitatively, using the coding system (Robson, 1993). The issues; e.g. teachers, other students, classroom activities, social activities, etc. that the students were asked to write about in the questionnaire, were used as codes for identifying particular responses. The information the respondents provided was combined into categories. This facilitated a simple description of data (Robson, 1993). All the responses of one category were copied onto a master paper. This minimized possible information loss (Robson, 1993) and ensured that all students' views provided in the questionnaires were accounted for.

Analysis

This is an analysis of the participants' answers to the questionnaire. The data were used to answer the following questions:

- 1) To what extent does learning in college/university differ from the participants' previous learning experience, as they perceived it?
- 2) To what extent does specialisation learning differ from or seem similar to FP learning, as perceived by the participants?
- 3) How does the language learned in the FP influence future study?
(The answers to these questions will help to construct an idea about students' transition and integration needs which will be used to find out an answer to the fourth question):
- 4) What opportunities do students' transition and integration needs have for using English language communicatively on the college/university campus?

Any statement in this section put between quotation marks is quoted from the students' responses.

The participants described the learning in the colleges and the university as a new experience that differs from their previous learning experience at school: *"I find the university completely different from the high school in terms of the teachers, students, activities etc."* The differences between learning at university and high school, as students perceived it, include: physical structure of the learning environment; the regulations and academic life; the teachers; other students; the teaching content and methodology; the medium of instruction; teacher-students and student-student relationships and approach to communication, assessment, and extra curricular activities.

Students' past learning experience enhances their misunderstanding of the new academic context (Yang and Lucus, 2003; Kasworm, 2003 and Belzer, 2004). The time issue for example, is one of factors that plays an important role. This is why one of the students wrote that out-of-class activities, *"add more load on students"* and another suggested that *"students should not be given homework but left to study on their own pace"*. Students' perception of teachers at institutions of higher education is another area that is influenced by their past learning experience; *"teachers at school deal with us as students and human beings. There is a language of communication. At college, teachers look at us as students only, therefore they teach us and that's it"*. Some students thought that *"the college has very good teachers but some of them need too much time to understand the students"*.

In addition, the students know part of the reality of the new educational context. They, for different reasons, have either a damaged picture of another part of the reality or it is completely absent from their knowledge. This is noticeable in students' understanding of the study in the FP and the specialisations. There is some discrepancy in their understanding of the differences and similarities between the study in FP and in the specialisations. FP graduates all agreed that *"learning in FP is different from learning in the academic specialisation"*. On the other hand, some students who were still in the FP thought that *"there is a difference"*, others thought *"studying in the specialisation... is not going to be different from studying in the foundation in terms of teachers, students, or exams"*.

This misunderstanding of the learning situation can be contributed to two reasons. First, the required information is not provided by the institution. For example, the

foundation student who said, "*we know nothing about the kinds of specialisations available, and the study in the specialisations*" has not been provided with information about these issues. This is why they asserted that they "*need a precise induction into the specialisations*". Lacking such important information is not helpful for the students. A student explained that "*because I was placed in a specialisation that I do not like (selected engineering but placed in IT) I am going to quit and look for a job*". Educators' role is to help learners participate meaningfully in the practices of the learning context they selected themselves (Fenwick, 2000).

Second, students misinterpreted the reality. The student who said, "*the schools have regulations which are applied strictly, while the college which focuses on self-management does not have regulations which leads to students each behaving as he/she likes without any responsibility*" did not realize that the college, which teaches self-management and autonomy, has concurrent regulations and rules.

Misleading sources of information (e.g. peers, society) also play an important role in hiding the true reality from students. Some new students can not practice autonomy in thinking according to their own needs, rather than copying others (Breen and Littlejohn, 2000). A student of this kind wrote, "*I want to change this college because some students told me that it is not a good college*". A student explained, "*I am happy with being a student in the college but when it comes to the society's view of the college, I am not proud of the college*". Therefore, students' motivation and self-esteem can be influenced by the misleading information coming from peer or society.

Students also have their own understanding of the context (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Woods, 1996; Keefe and Howard, 1997; Stefani *et al*, 1997 and Eisenberg, 1988) which they did not base on any facts. Some students think that "*the teachers in the specialisations are more qualified than FP teachers*". The reality could be different e.g. teachers in both areas are equally qualified.

Students need a high level of English in order to be successful in the specialisations; "*to be successful in learning in the specialisation, the student needs to know English very well*". "*The language level must be high because all the studies are in English*". Students in the specialisation classroom use English therefore in the FP they need more activities which help them develop the required skills; "*in terms of the classroom activities, they*

are fewer in the FP than the specialization where we do more presentations and research and have more discussions". "In college students send homework to teachers by email". Students also need to use English communicatively in the three institutions involved in this study; "there is a need for a good level of English to communicate with teachers, students and to find information in books". Lower command of English leads to difficulties in student-teacher communication, especially with non-Arabic speaking teachers; "teachers in college, although, they have higher qualifications than school teachers, are not able to transfer knowledge to students. We have a problem of understanding. This is because the language of teaching is English which we are not familiar with, but this will be solved by time when we become competent in English".

Discussion

The study finds that the participants have transition and integration needs which should contribute to creating an educational environment in which students can use English communicatively. In non-English speaking countries, using English outside the language classroom has to be a created activity because it does not exist out there the way it does in native countries. EFL learners use their mother tongue in the real world (Chen, 2005) unless special factors, for example, in this study transition and integration, encourage them to communicate in English.

To help new students with little or no experience of higher education confront the various difficulties they face in the new educational context (Hilton and Pollard, 2005; Willmot and Lloyd, 2002) the FP should, in addition to teaching students the language they need in the specialisation, create the environment which embeds learners in the new culture (Wilson, 1992) by ensuring transition (Hill, 1995) and affording integration (Pascarella, 1985). First, learners should be helped to transit from being school learners to college learners. They should be helped to understand the difference between their previous learning at school and the requirements and demands of the new context (Belzer, 2004; Fenwick, 2000). Second, students should be helped to value the new learning situation (Kasworm, 2003). New recruits usually have little information about the requirements of the new learning and are unable to predict their academic behaviour (Trueman and Hartely, 1996; Stefani *et al*, 1997). They should be helped to understand

the requirements of learning in the FP, and while in the FP should be helped to develop a clear picture about academic studies: the available specialisations, the requirement for joining these specialisations, class and out-of-class activities. This can be achieved through induction and socialisation activities.

The induction should be a multi-functional, long-term process (Willmot and Lloyd, 2002) that helps students' perceptions change throughout their studies (Hill, 1995) and helps students achieve their personal goals and the institution objectives by using all the available facilities and means including in-class and out-of-class activities (Schultz, 1998; Hilton and Pollard, 2005). Socialisation is important because the impact of college is more significant for students who actively participate in the college environment (Donaldson and Graham, 1999). Out-of-class activities that contribute to students' involvement and the development of a communicative use of English within the institution or in the wider social environment include excursions, meeting people in the local community; interacting with organisations; participating in societies; volunteering; talking with teachers and students outside the classroom; doing research, and living on or off campus (McCormick *et al*, 2005; Kuh, 1993).

Induction and social programmes in which English is the medium of communication will surely help students exchange ideas and information communicatively outside the language classroom. Students noticed the need for English in everyday communication in higher education as a student explained; "*at university we need both Arabic and English to communicate with others*".

Students need written and spoken information which introduces them at enrolment to the learning environment and the language programme, and then introduces them to the specialisations. For example, the students expressed the need to know; "*the different specialisations [available]*"; "*the different sub-divisions in the specialisation*"; "*the number of years of study*"; "*How to learn*" and "*how the specialisation is going to affect a student's career*". Discussing and finding answers to these questions, which are relevant and interesting to students, help them apply the linguistic competence, that they learned inside the classroom, for "genuine communication" (Nunan, 1987, p.137) and exchange of information in real-life (Swan, 1985) for a purpose that is driven by a kind of desire (Harmer, 1982).

A student asking a faculty member about the types of specialisations available in a certain department or college, a teacher talking to new students about the assessment system; or a student delivering a speech in front of other students, explaining the aims of a students' organisation or activity group, is purposeful and initiated by the desire to transmit a certain type of information to the interlocutor or audience. There is also the existence of an information-gap (Harmer, 1982; Swan, 1985) between the speaker/writer and listener/speaker. The transmission of information takes place in the form of initiation or elicitation. That means that communication happens either because someone tells others some information that they need, or someone asks another person to tell him/her a piece of information that he/she needs. For example, in a campus tour at the beginning of the year the guide who tells (in English) the new students the location of the various facilities on campus transmits to the new students information that they need in order to familiarize themselves with the physical structure of the college/university. The tour may involve a type of discussion in which students raise questions, for example about how to borrow a book from the library, or whether the material in the self-access centre can be borrowed. This tour may be "characterized by the uneven distribution of information, the negotiation of meaning, topic nomination and negotiation by more than one speaker and the right of interlocutors to decide whether to contribute to an interaction or not" (Nunan, 1987, p.137) all of which feature communicative interchange. In addition, using English for such purposes and in such situations is for the content rather than the form (Harmer, 1982). It is also without language teachers' intervention which sometimes characterized classroom language use, where teachers intervene to correct students' mistakes or to tell them they made pronunciation errors (Harmer, 1982).

What should be clarified is that having transition and integration needs does not imply automatic English communication, unless English, rather than native language is used. Social activities in which Arabic is used do not help students apply their English communicatively. A student described these activities as "*useless because they are in Arabic and we learn in English, so they do not help us with our learning objective*".

Conclusion

In addition to teaching students the required English, FP should also enhance new students' involvement in the new learning environment (Wilson, 1992) by ensuring transition (Hill, 1995) and affording integration (Pascarella, 1985). Students should be helped to remove the obstacles that they bring to the college through previous experience, and that hinder them from achieving their academic goals. Integration is important because; "individuals learn as they participate, by interacting with the community (with its history, assumptions and cultural values, rules and patterns of relationship), the tools at hand (including objectives, technology, languages and images), and the moment's activity (its purposes, norms, and practical challenges)" (Fenwick, 2000 p. 253). To achieve this target, new students should be familiarized with the requirements of learning in the FP. While still in the FP, students should be introduced to the specialisations by a systematic and on-going induction process. The induction and socialisation programmes which help students achieve transition and integration contribute in creating an educational environment in which students can use English for genuine communication (Nunan, 1987). Students can practice the linguistic knowledge (Canale and Swain, 1980) they have learned in the language classroom in a social context (Ellis, 1996) where the focus shifts from form to content without teacher's intervention (Harmer, 1982).

The findings of this study, I think, are applicable to comparable EFL contexts. In Asia, for example China, Japan, Korea and Bangladesh, learners now have a great need to listen, speak, read and write for practical purpose (Shih, 1999). The search for communicative opportunities outside the language classroom has been emphasised in a number of studies for example, Jones (1995), Shih (1999), Chen (2005) and Rahman (2005). Hopefully, this study helps specialists in such contexts look at their students' transition and integration needs for possible factors which will enhance the communicative use of English outside the language classroom.

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Transition from Learning English to Learning in English: Students' Perceived Adjustment Difficulties in an English-Medium University in Japan

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Abstract

In 2003, the Japanese Ministry of Education officially announced an action plan that aims to produce Japanese citizens who can function effectively in English in international settings. The 2003 Action Plan also corresponds with the on-going reform of higher-education system in Japan. In 2004, all national universities became private entities and gained flexibility in promoting unique education. One notable trend born out of this reform is the establishment of an English-medium university – a university where content courses are taught in English to develop students' functional ability in English. This case study, conducted in one English-medium university in a prefecture in Japan, examined how Japanese students who graduated from regular Japanese high schools in the prefecture have adapted to a new English-only university environment. The study revealed the students' adjustment difficulties and explored the extent to which the difficulties stem from their previous experience in high school English classes.

Key Words: Learning in English, English-medium instruction

Introduction

In 2003, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) announced an action plan that aims to produce Japanese citizens who can function effectively in English in international settings (Ministry, 2003a). The 2003 Action Plan presented a set of strategic guidelines to be carried out by the nation as a whole to improve the quality of English education. Improvement of English education is not a new agenda. In 1989, the Japanese Ministry of Education announced a new high school curriculum that emphasized communication skills as a distinct subject area. The 1989 national curriculum, updated in 1999, was an early attempt to develop students' functional abilities in English in public school settings. The 2003 Action Plan is considered as another symbolic event that represents the nation-wide educational policy that aims to promote functional English ability among Japanese citizens.

The 2003 Action Plan also corresponds with the on-going reform of higher-education system in Japan. In 2004, all public universities became independent administrative corporations and gained flexibility in promoting unique education. One notable incident born out of this reform is the establishment of an English-medium university – a university in which all courses, from language to advanced courses, are taught in English in order to develop students' functional ability in English. Currently, there are two English-medium colleges and universities in Japan.

This case study, conducted in one English-medium university in a northern prefecture in Japan, examined how Japanese students who graduated from public high schools in the prefecture have adapted to a new English-only university environment. The purpose of the study was to reveal the students' adjustment difficulties and explore the extent to which the difficulties stem from their previous experience in their high school English classes.

Background

English being a required foreign language subject, students in Japan typically receive six years of compulsory English education in junior and senior high schools. Methods and content of English education are shaped by the central government through official

curriculum guidelines called the *Course of Study*, which presents general course objectives, a list of content to be taught, and guidelines for selecting materials.

The late 20th century has witnessed the widespread adoption of communicative language teaching in many English-as-a-foreign language (EFL) countries, and English education in Japan is no exception. Recent English curriculums in the *Course of Study* (Ministry, 1989) showed a departure from past practices that emphasized grammatical mastery, to a functional, communication-oriented teaching approach and emphasized the development of students' listening and speaking skills in classrooms. As such, the 1989 *Course of Study* was a landmark decision in the history of English education because, for the first time, the government officially introduced three Oral Communication courses into high school curriculum. The 1989 curriculum was revised in 1999 in order to promote a more integrated approach to the development of functional English abilities in spoken skills.

Although the goals of the 1989 and 1999 *Course of Study* were well-disseminated by the central government, questions remain as to whether this curricular reform has produced intended outcome, in terms of improvement of students' actual communication ability. Abundant research has documented that the university entrance exams and other factors (e.g., limited target language input, large class size, limited communication abilities of teachers) cause difficulty for teachers in implementing the communication-oriented teaching (Brown & Wada, 1998; Gorsuch, 2000, 2001; Koike & Tanaka, 1995; LoCastro, 1996; McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005; Oka & Yoshida, 1997; Patek, 1996; Sato, 2002; Taguchi, 2002, 2005; Wada, 2002).

Taguchi (2005) combined survey and class observation methods and documented the characteristics of Oral Communication classes in one prefecture. Survey responses from 92 high school English teachers revealed that listening exercises and dialogue practices were most typical classroom activities. Activities for creative expressions and negotiation of meaning, such as speech and role play, received weak responses. Grammar and vocabulary instruction was reported as the third most common activity. These activities were conducted largely in Japanese because 93% of the teachers reported using Japanese as an instructional medium.

Observations of four Oral Communication classes in Taguchi's study revealed the teacher-centered characteristic in class. The teacher provided most input (48-74% of the class time) and guided activities 100%. Students used speaking skills less than 15% of class time, which was mostly choral repeating of the dialogues. Filling in the missing words in dialogues was the typical listening exercise observed. The time for reading and writing was limited to grammar quizzes. There was also strong instructional emphasis on language structures; between 50% and 90% of the class time was allocated to language form, including reference to grammar and phrasal expressions. Understanding the meaning of isolated phrases seemed to have received emphasis, and little attention was paid to comprehending or producing connected discourse or using English to achieve functions. A translation method was also predominant; teachers often used Japanese to help students to understand vocabulary meaning.

It seems that these teaching practices are influenced by Japanese educational systems such as entrance exams and large class size. Gorsuch's (2000, 2001) survey study examined how national, school, and classroom variables are related to teachers' approval of communicative activities. The results documented the centrality of college entrance exams; grammar-oriented exams present a well-defined instructional focus and shape teachers' classroom practices in Japan. Sato's (2002) class observation research also reported that teachers seem to follow hidden instructional goals toward exam-oriented English. Due to institutional and social tradition, teachers' grammar-based and translation-based instruction method was found hard to change even after they had training programs on communicative methods, as documented in Pacek's (1996) interview study.

Another educational component, English textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education, was also found to provide only partial support for development of communicative abilities in Japanese English education. McGroarty and Taguchi (2005) found that most exercises which appeared in a selection of five Oral Communication textbooks were mechanical and structured, including simple comprehension and production of information, and did not provide cognitively complex language activities such as negotiation of meaning or imaginative projection.

As shown above, despite the strong encouragement from the government, previous findings generally confirmed that the communicative approach is difficult for teachers to implement due to various institutional and social reasons, as well as specific beliefs about language teaching that are deeply rooted in local tradition in Japan. The difficulty seems to be a common phenomenon in many EFL countries, such as Korea or China, because of the different underlying educational philosophies between EFL and ESL contexts as well as the deep-rooted grammar-based syllabus used in EFL countries (Burnaby and Sun, 1989; Li, 1998). Li's (1998) case study of 18 Korean teachers of English revealed similar reluctance of the teachers toward implementing communicative teaching methods and introducing changes in the way they teach English, although they showed interest in the communicative approach. As Savignon (2002) observed, implementation of a new pedagogical idea is sensitive to its socio-political contexts, noting that communicative language teaching is an approach that can be used to develop materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning. Hence, continuous evaluation of the implementation process in local context is necessary in order to identify specific areas of implementation difficulty with the communicative approach, and consequently propose some important implications for the improvement of the current practice.

Although the previous research provided relatively well-formed descriptions about the implementation difficulty of this curricular innovation from teacher perspectives, little research has sought information from students' perspectives. Previous findings about teachers' practice imply that, due to the difficulty of implementing the communicative curriculum, communicative competence of Japanese students is underdeveloped, compared with other skill areas (e.g., reading, grammar). However, these claims are only suggestive and not addressed empirically. Very few studies to date have documented students' perceptions about their transition process from grammar-based mechanical exercises to communicative language activities. As a result, the functional level of students' ability has rarely been examined. Thus, investigation into students' actual communication ability, including their potential adaptation difficulties in functional use of English, will help establish a relationship between the national curriculum, actual classroom practice, and outcomes of the practice.

This case study, conducted in one prefecture in Japan, is an attempt to seek such a relationship. The study inquired into the institutional experiences of a group of Japanese students enrolled in an English-medium university located in a local prefecture. It examined how the students who received English education under the Ministry curriculum have adapted to a new university environment in which general and specialized subject areas are taught only in English. Through interviews with individual students, this study aimed to reveal their adjustment difficulties in using English for communicative purposes. It also explored the extent to which the difficulties stem from their previous experience in high school English classes.

The Present Study

This case study was conducted in one English-medium university that opened in April of 2004 in a prefecture located in northern Japan. The section below explains the nature of English-medium universities in general in relation to the recent higher-education reforms, as well as the descriptions of the English-medium university chosen as the research site in this study.

English-Medium Universities and Higher-Education Reforms

The 21st century has brought the swift advance of globalization in countless areas, including technology, economics, and business. Responding to this societal change, the Japanese government has promoted the national agenda of developing human resources that can become competitive in the global society (Ministry, 2003b). In 2002, Atsuko Toyama (the Minister of MEXT) announced the “Human Resource Strategy” in which she emphasized that human resources development should be implemented strategically from compulsory education to higher education and lifelong learning (Ministry, 2002).

One objective in the Human Resource Strategy was the higher-education reform that promotes universities that have unique, marketable characteristics in a society. The higher-education reform has become a pressing business in Japan as observed in the recent privatization of public universities. In 2004, all national universities became independent administrative corporations and gained flexibility in promoting unique education. In an age of declining birthrates and university enrollments in Japan, “survival

of public universities depends on how much they can emulate methods of private universities honed through relentless competition,” and offer unique learning environments that attract students (Asahi Newspaper, 2004).

Another objective in the Human Resource Strategy relates to the reform of English education. For children living in the 21st century, it is imperative to acquire communication abilities in English as a common international language. This idea was also incorporated into the 2003 Action Plan as a set of concrete strategies to improve quality of English education (Ministry, 2003a). The Action Plan, announced by the central government in 2004, proposed the teaching of English as a means of practical communication tools (Tanabe, 2004). The budget of 11 hundred million yen (approximately \$10 million) approved under the plan was designated to attain those objectives in five years by the means of intensive teacher training, effective assessment methods, and hiring of native speaker instructors.

An English-medium university is one obvious place in which the two human resource goals, higher-education reform and English education reform, are intertwined. It is also a place where three key elements in a global society (foreign language ability, general knowledge, and specialized knowledge) are clearly intertwined. The English-medium university, by definition, is a university in which all college-level courses in basic and advanced education areas, as well as language courses, are taught in English in order to improve academic proficiency in English (The Daily Yomiuri, 2004). English is used for textbooks, course materials, and lectures. The goal of this type of university is to broaden students' general and specialized knowledge and build professional expertise in English so that they can take leadership in the international arena. In such a university, English is viewed as a tool, not as an end. English is a means for reading, writing, and talking about current issues in content courses. Thus, attained English skills are a by-product of the process of gaining content-area knowledge. In an English-medium university, English is used for truly functional and communicative purposes.

English-medium education is not a Japanese-specific phenomenon. In South Korea, for example, the Ministry of Education recently introduced a curriculum that intends to implement English-only instruction in secondary schools, and the actual implementation methods and outcomes have been of much concern (Dash, 2002). Therefore, the theme of

English-medium instruction has wider relevant applications that extend to other Asian classrooms.

The English-medium University in This Study

The university in which this study was conducted was established in order to produce well-educated human resources who are fully competent in English with rich knowledge of the world and global visions. To achieve such goals, the institution offers all the courses in English (except for Japanese and Chinese courses). More than half of the faculty members are non-Japanese from other countries. For the academic year of 2004, about 150 students from 38 different prefectures were admitted in the academic year of 2004.

All new students are required to spend at least one semester in the program of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) that has three levels (i.e., EAP 1, 2, and 3). According to the university brochure, EAP 1 carries students with less than 460 on TOEFL-ITP (Institutional-TOEFL), EAP 2 with between 460 and 480, and EAP with more than 500. A typical EAP class has about 15 students and meets from 18 to 20 hours per week for 7.5 weeks. Since students' success depends on their ability to function in English in academic settings, the EAP program provides content-based, integrated-skills courses on a variety of subjects such as world history, psychology, and sociology, as well as skill-based courses, such as writing, listening, and computer courses. These classes intend to prepare students for more advanced courses where they are required to listen to lectures, participate in discussions, read extensively, and write academic papers.

Research questions

The purpose of this case study, conducted in one prefecture in Japan, was to examine students' transitional processes in English education from the context of high school English classes to the context of an English-medium university. This is a follow-up study of Taguchi (2005) that documented characteristics of high school English classes in the same prefecture in 2002 (see literature review). The present study, conducted in 2004, examined how a group of students who graduated from high schools in the target prefecture have adapted to the English-only university context. Although both high school

and university contexts offer an environment for learning English, they differ in the way English is taught, used, and viewed. This study aimed to document those differences and reveal students' perceptions and coping difficulties that may stem from the differences. The research questions below guided this investigation:

1. What are students' perceived adjustment difficulties to the English-medium university?
2. In what ways does previous high school experience affect learning experience in the English-medium university?

Methods of the Study

In order to address the research questions, this case study compiled information from interviews with individual students. The interview participants were 13 students who graduated from high schools in the target prefecture and entered the English-medium university in April, 2004 when the university opened. At the time of data collection, there were 30 local students in the university, 7 males and 23 females. Because female students were the majority of the group, in order to control potential response variability coming from gender difference, only the female students were recruited. The students who studied abroad were excluded from the participant pool, which left 20 female students to recruit from. The authors contacted the 20 students and solicited their participation. Out of the 20 students, 13 students came forward to participate voluntarily. They were all first year female students who graduated from local public high schools in the previous year and received English education under the uniformed Ministry curriculum. Their mean age was 18.9, ranging from 18 to 19. When they entered the university, eight of them were placed into EAP 1, four into EAP 2, and one into EAP 3, meaning that 12 out of 13 students had less than 480 TOEFL score at the time of entry to the university. Their TOEFL scores are considered relatively typical for pre-college level students in Japan, because they are equivalent to the pre-second to second grades in the English STEP test (an authorized English certificate exam in Japan), which are also considered pre-college level (Ogawa, 2006).

Interview data was collected after the students had spent two semesters in the university. After the informed consent process, interviews were conducted individually by

the authors who were EAP instructors at the university. Each interview session lasted from 30 to 50 minutes in Japanese. The interview questions addressed mainly these two areas:

- 1) descriptions of previous formal English study, particularly the types of English classes they had in high schools and typical class activities and instructional methods
- 2) descriptions of their experiences in the new university environment, focusing on:
 - a) what expectations they had about classes before coming to the university
 - b) whether the expectations matched the reality, particularly whether any aspects of classes were surprising to them

These questions were expected to address the overarching goal of this study, that is, to document the ways in which previous experience shaped the students' learning practice and how they influenced their transition process to the new university environment (see Appendix A for the guiding interview questions).

All interview sessions were tape-recorded and analyzed using the strategy of analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Chi, 1997), based on the data transcribed by the second author. The authors examined the interview data for impressions and trends by noting salient, recurring comments and grouping the comments for similarity. The themes and coding categories emerged from an examination of the data rather than being determined beforehand and imposed on the data.

Results

The sections below provide descriptions of reported influence of high school English classes and resulting adjustment difficulties in two skill areas: spoken skills (i.e., listening and speaking) and written skills (i.e., reading and writing). These descriptions highlight different instructional approaches between high schools and the English-medium university, and how the students have adapted to the new approach.

Perceived Effects of High School Classes on Speaking and Listening Skills

All 13 students reported that listening was the primary source of adjustment difficulty in the English-medium context. They commented that, because the opportunity to listen to

authentic English was limited in high schools, understanding teachers' directions in a university class was the major challenge. Some students reported that the gap between the English they were spoken to in high schools and authentic, naturally spoken English in the university affected their listening comprehension:

1. "English-only classes were hard. When I entered this university I couldn't comprehend a word in class. Because my high school didn't provide an English-speaking environment, I still hesitate speaking with teachers in English. I feel nervous." (K.T., February 9, 2005).⁶
2. "Like most of typical Japanese high school students, I was not used to listening to natural English. So I could not understand anything in the first class... One of the reasons was that I was able to catch individual words only and had no idea what they meant, but moreover, I was lost when I heard native speakers pronouncing the word I knew because the pronunciation of the word was totally different from what learned before." (Y.T., February 18, 2005).

Six out of 13 students mentioned that listening opportunity in English was limited in high schools because classes were taught in Japanese.

3. "We didn't practice any listening in high school. Here (English-medium university) we are learning English in a way that we have never experienced before. In high school, teachers taught English using Japanese, but in this university we are learning English in English." (M.Y., February 1, 2005).

These students' comments illustrate that, due to the limited exposure to English in high schools, the students were not prepared in aural skills when they came to the university; they did not have adequate listening ability to follow class instructions in English. Although in the survey responses listening exercises were reported as typical classroom activities by the majority of local teachers, it seems that the aural input that the students received was not in sufficient amount nor authentic.

Similar to the listening skill, the students reported that the lack of speaking practice in high schools affected their adjustment to the English-medium university environment. Eight out of 13 students commented that communicating only in English was one of the difficulties they had to overcome because they had almost no experience in speaking in English in high schools:

4. "I don't recall we had any conversation in English... We did not do any speaking. We only used English to play games with the ALT (i.e., native-speaker assistant language teachers). We had classes with the ALT only in the first grade. We spoke some words in

English with ALTs, but we didn't have a conversation in English at all. (A.K., February 24, 2005).

Some students reported that, in their high school English classes, they mainly read aloud written conversations in pairs or repeating dialogues after a teacher. Very little time was spent on using English in a creative manner to express their own opinions or thoughts:

5. "In class, we sometimes practiced oral paraphrasing, but basically we only practiced reading aloud written texts...I wish I had more time to practice daily expressions." (K.T., February 9, 2005).
6. "In the OC class, we repeated after the teacher sentence by sentence. Sometimes, we practiced reading sentences orally in pairs...So it was not enjoyable at all...I had no chance to give my own opinions or ideas in English." (Y.S., February 24, 2005).

Perceived Effects of High School Classes on Reading and Writing Skills

Twelve out of 13 students reported difficulties in adjusting to the amount of reading assignments in the English-medium university. They unanimously reported that they were initially shocked with the massive amount of reading assignments that they had to complete on a daily basis. Reading was typically assigned from content-based, pre-college level textbooks used by native speakers in U.S. high schools over a variety of academic subjects. For instance, the world history textbook that some of the interview participants used (Glencoe World History, Spielvogel, 2002) was a 981-page textbook including 32 chapters. Although only about 20% of the textbook was covered in a 15-week semester, students usually received 20-30 pages of reading assignment per week. The students reported that most days they spent hours in the library looking up unfamiliar vocabulary and responding to the comprehension questions assigned for each reading.

7. "Completing homework every day took a lot of time at the beginning because the quantity of reading was large...When I was in high school, I was able to read perfectly because each text was short. I was reading for sentences and didn't think about which part of the text was important. Now I try to get the gist of the text and summarize content next to the sentences or on separate notes." (M.Y., February 1, 2005).

In response to the question, what took them so long to complete the reading assignment, eight students pointed out their word-for-word translation habit that they acquired in high school English classes. Typical class activities in high schools involved checking the

meaning of English words in Japanese and translating each sentence according to their teachers' grammar explanations. This translation practice discouraged the students from processing texts directly in English, consequently affecting the timely completion of reading assignments. Some students reported:

8. "When I was in high school, emphasis was placed on accurate and precise translation of each sentence, rather than comprehension of the gist of the text." (A.Y., February 3, 2005).
9. "Understanding the content of texts was hard, because the texts were not written for Japanese learners. There were many unfamiliar expressions, most of which were not listed in the dictionary...it took me some time to acquire a strategy - a strategy of comprehending meaning using contextual cues." (M.S., January 25, 2005).
10. "What was not so useful in high school classes was the method of reading. After I came here (the English-medium university), I realized that it's not efficient to read sentence-by-sentence. Reading texts took a lot of time initially because I was reading them by breaking a sentence into individual structural units in order to understand meaning accurately...Different from high school classes, teachers here encourage students to skip unknown words and get overall outline of a text." (T.N., February 18, 2005).

These interview responses revealed a difference in reading instruction between high school and university English classes. In high schools, the students were trained to understand every single word in a sentence, as well as grammatical structures within a sentence. Speed of reading was de-emphasized in classroom instruction. Instead, accurate, precise translation of structural units in sentences received much emphasis. Due to this bottom-up reading habit, the students faced a new challenge in the university, as they had to read a large amount of text quickly and efficiently. While coping with everyday homework assignments, the students gradually acquired a set of new reading strategies – skipping unknown vocabulary, reading for the main idea, and making inferences using contextual information. These top-down reading strategies helped students to develop reading speed. The students seemed to have learned that reading is a process of understanding overall meaning of connected discourse, not isolated phrases or sentences.

Treating text as a discourse rather than a set of isolated sentences also revealed itself as an adjustment problem in the area of writing. Ten out of 13 students reported that they had difficulty in producing a paragraph-level discourse because of their previous

experiences in translating sentence-by-sentence from Japanese to English when writing.

11. "I didn't do writing in high school. The only writing we did was to fill in missing information in sentences. We did nothing other than that." (Y.S., February 24, 2005).
12. "We did a limited range of writing in high school. For example, after studying how to make a tag question, we practiced writing sentences with a tag question only. I wrote only one sentence based on a Japanese sentence, and each of the sentences was not connected at all, so it was not so useful." (A.M., January 19, 2005).

These translation practices received much emphasis in high schools due to the necessity to prepare for grammar-based college entrance exams. Seven students reported that in high schools the focus was placed on preparing for the exams. They said that, although the exam preparation provided them with a strong grammatical and vocabulary background, translation training did not help them to prepare for the kind of writing required in the English-medium university:

13. "When I was in the third year of high school, I studied only for the entrance examinations. There seemed to be only one answer for a question. Studying for entrance examinations was painful. I did not like being forced to have only one answer for each question when we translated from English to Japanese or from Japanese to English." (H.T., February 21, 2005).

In the English-medium university, the students were introduced to the academic writing course in the second level of the EAP program. In the writing course they were taught how to write an essay, how to formulate a thesis statement, how to develop support for the thesis, and how to organize paragraphs according to their argument. The students typically produced a two- to three-page essay in the writing course (personal communication with course instructors, 2004). The essay tasks were also cognitively demanding (e.g., reading a text and writing a response essay). These experiences were new to many of the students interviewed:

14. "Writing homework was tough because I had never produced long sentences. I didn't know how to write...I didn't know how to organize...When I was in high school I translated short Japanese sentences into English. The content of writing didn't matter. So when I entered this university, I tried to translate Japanese concepts into English sentences, but I couldn't express my ideas well. Whenever I tried to translate, I felt something was not right, that's not what I wanted to say. After about six months, when I entered EAP level 3, I started writing directly in English, because I became able to think in English, without using Japanese, after being in class for a while." (M.S.,

January 25, 2005).

15. "I was keeping a journal when I was in EAP level 1. Writing even one page took a long time. I used a dictionary a lot. But now I can write fluently without dictionaries. My writing speed became faster. Before I was translating from Japanese to English, but now I try to think in English. If I think in Japanese first and change it to English, ideas sound awkward, and expressions become confusing. Simple sentences are easier to comprehend for readers, compared with complex ones." (K.T., February 9, 2005).

As demonstrated in the comments above, the students initially used Japanese as a medium of writing in English; they generated ideas in Japanese and tried to convert them into English. However, they soon realized that translated expressions did not sound natural or did not adequately represent what they wanted to say. It seems that this internal awareness partially originated in the transition process from writing for translation to writing for expression of one's own thoughts and ideas. When students were translating sentences in high school, they translated someone else's ideas and thoughts that pre-existed in the text. Therefore, their job was merely to replace Japanese words with their English equivalents by using a Japanese-English dictionary. However, in the English-medium university, because they have to translate their thoughts and ideas into English, they have a great personal involvement with the choice of words and phrases. They search for the precise expressions that could represent their ideas, and critically evaluate whether the expressions are appropriate in conveying the meaning that they have created. This self-reflection process seems to extend from the word and phrase level to the sentence and paragraph level:

16. "After I entered EAP level 2, I learned how to order things in writing, like placing the thesis statement at the beginning. I also learned that readers get confused if I elaborate too much...So I tried to identify the redundant parts and simplify sentences...By doing this I became able to judge which sentences are good, and which ones are unnecessary and should be eliminated." (Y.S., February 24, 2005).

Through these processes, the students seemed to have realized that writing is a meaning-producing process, not a process of practicing grammatical structures learned from textbooks:

17. "When I was in high school, there was impression that we had to translate exactly in accordance to grammar, but here in this university, the important thing is to convey

what we think. It's okay if we can get our meaning across, even if our grammar is a little bit wrong." (M.Y., February 1, 2005).

18. "It was hard for me to write an essay because I didn't have any experience. In Mr. B's class, I was surprised to learn that we had to write based on what we think, not based on what the textbook says. I wasn't used to it. But once I got used to it, writing became fun." (H.T., February 21, 2005).

Summary and Discussion

This case study conducted in one prefecture in Japan investigated students' perceived adjustment difficulties in the learning environment where content courses are taught only in English. The study explored the extent to which the difficulties stemmed from their previous experience in high school English classes. Although interpretations of the results require caution due to the small amount of data, the results revealed that high school English classes had some impact in shaping students' learning practice. Taguchi's (2005) study conducted in the same prefecture revealed a profound use of mechanical activities in grammar and vocabulary instruction in high schools. Activities that could promote creative expression were not reported as typical activities, and spoken skills were not assessed regularly in class. Teachers also reported using Japanese in the majority of class time. Class observations revealed that teachers took full control of instruction and emphasized an exact understanding of every word and phrase and focused on discrete grammar structures rather than connected discourse in their instruction.

These high school practices seemed to have affected the students' adjustment to the new learning context where English is used as a tool to produce discourse and communicate meaning. Although the students provided positive comments on high school instruction (i.e., providing strong grammatical and vocabulary knowledge), they also felt that the translation habit discouraged them from processing texts directly in English, consequently affecting the timely completion of reading assignments. In addition, because of the translation habit, the students struggled with expressing ideas in English spontaneously. When writing, they experienced a difficulty in thinking in English and locating the right expressions to symbolize their thoughts. Furthermore, due to little exposure to authentic English in high schools, instructors' directions were too difficult to follow. As a result, the students found themselves at a loss in an English-only classroom.

These findings suggest a need to further explore the types of high school English instruction needed to prepare students for the education offered by an English-medium university. In an English-medium university, English is used as a tool to understand, discuss, and reflect on various issues in general and specialized subject areas. English is viewed as a means to achieve functions, providing students with ability to acquire knowledge, exchange ideas with peers to deepen the knowledge, and internalize the knowledge through critical reflection and application. English skills required to perform these functions are inevitably complex and demanding. They require students to become able to read extended text for the gist, develop logical, coherent, and precise argument in writing, comprehend a stream of English input in real time, and respond to the input in a spontaneous manner during discussion. These views sharply contrast with how English is studied in high schools. Because English is viewed as an academic subject that consists of a set of discrete structures to memorize, not as a set of skills, the high schools examined in this study did not seem to prepare students adequately for the types of skills they would need in the English-medium university environment.

The recent nation-wide reforms promoted by the central government aim at producing a next generation of Japanese citizens who can function effectively in English in international settings. To achieve this goal, various educational policies put forth by the government, including the Human Resources Strategies, the 2003 Action Plans, and national curriculum guidelines, all intend to improve functional communicative English abilities among Japanese students. Findings gleaned from this study did not provide full support for the effectiveness of the educational policies, as exemplified in the students' adjustment difficulties in using English for functional purposes. Because it is possible that English-medium universities indeed offer an optimal environment to enhance students' functional abilities, methods and content of high school English education could be modified in a way that will prepare students for such an environment where English is used for truly communicative purposes. A smooth transition from a high school to a university context could serve as an indication of successful implementation of the educational reforms. Students' adjustment difficulties and strategies they developed to overcome those difficulties gleaned from this study provide important insights as to what aspects of high school education need improvement and how they should be improved.

While the findings in this study suggest that the current high school settings may not provide an optimal language learning environment, several attempts have been made in the target prefecture to assist students' adjustment to the English-medium university. One such attempt is the intensive teacher training program provided by the EAP faculty members. Following the MEXT guidelines, the university is committed to provide pedagogy workshops to all public school English teachers within a five-year period. Since the workshops are conducted 100% in English, the local teachers can understand what types of English skills are needed to survive in an English-only environment. The teacher education program could facilitate communication between university faculty and local English teachers so that they can collaboratively explore the ways to develop students' functional English abilities at college and pre-college levels.

In addition to the teacher education, orientation programs for incoming students could also assist students' adjustment process. The English-medium university studied here regularly provides a series of orientation sessions to newly admitted students before academic semesters begin. The three- to four-day orientation program introduces students to the EAP program and prepares students for a variety of study skills and learning strategies which are necessary to function in academic classes. Informal post-program survey results have indicated students' appreciation of the orientation program and potential effectiveness of the program to assist their adjustment.

Conclusion and Implications for Future Research

This study documented student difficulties in adjusting to a new English-only environment and focused on the skill areas and classroom activities or tasks that they felt were difficult to cope with. The interview data reported here provided a starting point for describing the communicative difficulties that the students experience in the university context. However, due to the small amount of data collected from self-report interviews, this study is exploratory, and thus there is a need for a larger longitudinal study. In addition, the data reported in this study are not sufficient to establish a causal relationship between high school English experience and students' adjustment difficulties. Although the study revealed some potential influence, more data needs to be collected systematically in order to explore the causal relationship.

In addition, the present findings are limited to the students' reported adjustment problems and concerns. By design, this study did not reveal the process of their adjustment, that is, the process of their academic socialization. Transition from one learning context to another requires students to make tremendous adaptation, because it is a process of undoing old habits and acquiring new habits. Old behaviors and beliefs need to be modified over time for a successful transition to occur. Thus, a longitudinal in-depth analysis of the students' adaptation process, compiled with actual observations of their behaviors, is necessary in order to reveal how they negotiated their identities, participation, and membership in their new learning community. Such analysis will tell us in more depth about the actual strategies that the students used when shifting from the context of learning English to the context of learning-in-English.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions (Translated into English)

1. Name
2. Age
3. The name of the high school you graduated from
4. Describe previous experiences of studying English (e.g., cram school, study abroad, etc.) in addition to junior and senior high school English classes, if any.
5. Reason(s) why you wanted to attend the English-medium university
6. Future goal(s)
7. Describe experiences and/or incidents that you were surprised at related to your study at the university
8. Were you interested in “studying English” in high school? Why? Why not?
9. What kinds of English classes did you have in high school?
10. Describe the English classes you had in high school.
11.
 - (1) Do you think your English skills have improved since you came to the university?
 - (2) If so, what kinds of skills do you think you have improved?
 - (3) Why do you think you have improved such skills?
 - (4) How can you tell that you have improved such skills?



What can we Learn from a Learning Needs Analysis of Chinese English Majors in a University Context?

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Abstract

This study investigates Chinese English major students' learning needs including their attitudes towards student-centred and traditional teaching approaches, culture learning in EFL program, attitudes towards authority in class, the main problems encountered in the course of their learning English, and their practice of language learning strategies. The findings of this research will provide Chinese EFL teachers with insightful information on learners' learning needs as an input to syllabus and materials planning, to lesson planning and classroom instruction practice. The study demonstrates the importance of a good understanding of learner variables in TEFL programs at university level in China.

Key Words: Learning needs, learning strategies, learner variables

Introduction

The diversity of needs of English language learners has long been acknowledged (cf. Tarone & Yule, 1989). Researchers also propose that teachers should outline correct learner expectations and attitudes about how languages are learned and also explain the reasoning behind classroom methods, in order to reduce any gap between learner and teacher beliefs (e.g. Horwitz, 1985; Wenden, 1986; McCargar, 1993; Kern, 1995; Peacock, 1999). In China the revised national English language teaching curriculum for English majors at tertiary level calls for innovation in teaching methodology, i.e., a learner-centred or communicative approach (CA) should be employed in English classrooms (English Division, 2000). However, research suggests that, despite the

widespread adoption of CA by textbooks and curricula around the world, CA principles in classroom are rare, with most teachers professing commitment to the communicative approach but following more structural approaches in their classrooms (Karavas, 1996, p.187). A learning-centred approach to lessons, materials and syllabus design advocates the involvement of learners in contributing to this design. Learners should be invited to express their views on their needs for learning the language, their preferred learning styles (Willing, 1988), their beliefs about language learning or their preferred activity types (Barkhuisen, 1998). These views then can inform the classroom instruction and design process (cf. Spratt, 1999). In keeping with a learner-centred or communicative approach, its goals are focused on students and their success. When designing courses for English major students, it is necessary that the English teachers have reliable information on their learner variables so that what is taught, how it is taught and what is tested matches learners' needs as closely as possible. Berwick (1989) claims that a need is expressed 'as a gap or measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state' (p.52). Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that 'needs analysis, or needs assessment, involves the systematic gathering of specific information about the language needs of learners and the analysis of this information for purposes of language syllabus design' (p.102). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish between two types of needs: target needs and learning needs. *Target needs* comprise necessities (what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation), lacks (the gap between target and existing proficiency of the learner), and wants (the learners' view on their needs). *Learning needs*, on the other hand, is a cover term for all the factors connected to the process of learning like attitude, motivation, awareness, personality, learning styles and strategies, social background etc.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the best methodology for studying the needs of any particular group of students is to use such methods as questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and collection of authentic texts. The main concern of this investigation will be an analysis of the learning needs of Chinese EFL learners at university level. The learning needs are further broken down into attitude, motivation, learning styles, perceived difficulties, and strategies. For more clarification of these elements, an attempt will be made here to examine the learners' classroom activity

preferences, their attitudes towards student-centred and teacher-centred approaches, towards authority in class, culture learning in EFL program, their motivation, and the main problems encountered in the course of their learning English and their practice of language learning strategies. The aim of this study is to gain insightful information on learners' needs and preferences as an input to syllabus and materials planning, and to lesson planning and classroom instructional practice. Another aim of this study is to see whether there is a need to modify our objectives or to update our programs in light of the findings of this investigation. Although the actual needs of English majors might vary across the country, the applied process of questionnaire design, validation and data analysis can serve as a model or example for other institutions in China or in other parts of the world.

2. The study: Details of subjects

This is part of a larger investigation on Chinese EFL learners' needs and preferences carried out over the past three years, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In this empirical study, the subjects consisted of 210 English-major students from a multi-faculty university in North China. The questionnaire data were gathered in the last 20 minutes of the students' class time, via prior agreement with the teachers. The selection of student informants was completely random with a view to accessing a large number of students from different levels.

3. The questionnaires

Questionnaires were used as the initial survey instrument for students and the questionnaire consisted of 58 items including a section of main problems which students have encountered so far in their English learning process, and another section of 3 open-ended questions. The questionnaires were written in Chinese and five-point *Likert* scale was used. For example, (1), strongly disagree, (2), disagree, (3), neutral, (4), Agree, (5), Strongly agree (See appendix).

4. Methodology

The student data were grouped into 5 different subgroups based on their university year at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The purpose of doing this was to identify similarities and differences between the sub-groups and subsequently the causes of the variation can be explored. In analysing the 5 subgroups, a statistical technique - one-way ANOVA Test - was used to identify whether the mean scores on a variable differed significantly from one group to another by taking into account variation within groups as well as between groups. The data collected from questionnaire were categorized into 12 inter-related themes (See Section 5 below). This way of categorization corresponds with Quinn's (1984) characteristics of communicative and traditional approaches ^[1] (cited in Nunan, 1988), and the definition of 'weak version of communicative teaching' (Howatt, 1984: 279).

5. Data analysis and discussion

Students' attitudes towards group work in class (*Items 1, 2, 3, 4*)

The findings show that the students approach group-work positively. The results indicate that students like small discussion groups and working in pairs in English class. Taking this categorization as a whole, the ANOVA Test finds that *Item 1* to be statistically significant ($P < 0.013$). The difference mainly exists between 2nd-year MA graduates and 4th-year undergraduates. The former is much more interested in group-work than the latter. These differences might be explained by the fact that MA students have a smaller class with teacher directed or initiated discussions. Given their advanced English proficiency and their specialized area of their study, there is more group work in which students and teachers, and students among themselves interact. This positive experience reinforces, in turn, their own positive attitudes towards working in a small group in class.

For 4th-year undergraduates, both the larger class size and the nature of courses taught resulted in a less positive attitude towards group work. Job placement was their major concern and many of them were busy preparing for graduate-study entrance exams or TOEFL, IELTS, or GRE. Some were hoping English would be a springboard to further study in other departments, e.g. Finance, International Trade and Economics, Journalism.

Small group discussion was not of great interest to them. This result supported the investigation of the North Project Group (1998) which reported that English language teaching in the final year of undergraduate programmes was found to have its own particular problems in China.

Students' attitudes towards speaking out in class (*Items 5, 6, 7, 9, 57*)

The students' responses to *Item 5* showed that students would like to be active in speaking English while engaged in group activities, and the results of *Item 5* were statistically significant. MA students showed more favourable attitudes than undergraduates ($P < 0.026$) because of the similar reasons as mentioned above. However, on *Item 57* students as a whole showed a negative attitude towards asking or answering questions in class. This phenomenon may derive from the assumption that students considered a small group to be a more protective environment in which they would feel freer to communicate in English than a situation in which they were forced to speak in front of the whole class. The results indicate the following:

1. Their attitudes reflect their own perceptions of student role in class, that is, learning from the teacher and not challenging what teachers said. Asking questions for clarification in class would indicate that the student has not grasped a good understanding of what the teacher said. In this case, asking questions would expose one's ignorance, thus a loss of face.
2. The way the questions raised by the teacher might be the cause of their reticence. Perhaps these questions did not stimulate a response, adequately arouse their interest or seemingly did not challenge the students enough.
3. Their responses to open-ended questions supported the second assumption as the following comment given by students shows: 'some teachers just asked questions whose answers were quite obvious or questions that focused on grammar and vocabulary'.

A preliminary analysis of *Item 57* indicates that this result, to certain degree, seems to support the claims reported in earlier studies that Chinese students were reticent in class and did not answer questions unless asked to (Burnaby & Sun, 1989), or 'Chinese students are expected to show total obedience or submission to their teachers' (Song, 1995, p.35).

However, what the open-ended section and follow-up interview (in a separate study) data reveals is that the reasons for their apparent reticence in the English language class was more closely related with teaching performance than cultural or psychological traits. In other words, what really matters in class is multi-faceted and includes many factors: teaching methodology, the ways the questions were asked and whether answers were specifically elicited, the topics chosen for group discussion, and the students' own perceptions of being active in class.

When asked if they would like to outperform their peers or maintain harmony in class or in group work, students' responses to *Item 7* revealed their mixed feelings about this: about 32% of the students were concerned about group harmony in class and tended to avoid 'showing off' whereas 35% of them showed their intent to be very active in group-work. Another 32% of the students remained neutral. The findings indicated that more students seemed to feel comfortable speaking English in a small group and they tended to view a small group (2-4 students) as a more protective environment than speaking in front of the whole class. Linking *Item 7* to *Item 6*, we can find that the majority of students were concerned with maintaining group harmony, and some of them were willing to be more active than others in group activities. This finding supports some other studies of Chinese students' behaviours, which reveal collective-oriented national cultural traits in the classroom (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Littlewood, 2001). Students' responses to *Item 9* revealed that students often thought carefully before speaking English in class. The findings indicated that about 60% of students surveyed tended to focus more on accuracy than on fluency as this would help them avoid making mistakes or experiencing loss of 'face' (Bond, 1991; Mao, 1994).

The implication of this finding is that teachers should give students enough time to think before they speak while also encouraging quick and impromptu replies from the students. In Chinese culture, being active in class does not necessarily mean getting physically involved in the classroom activities. Being mentally active also means being co-operative with the teacher and actively listening to the teacher (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Students are often concerned about their own linguistic accuracy or fearful of losing 'face', and therefore actually speak very little in English class. This goes against

communicative English language teaching principles, which emphasizes fluency over accuracy and focuses on students' involvement in classroom activities.

On *Item 8*, the ANOVA Test shows that significant difference exists between the 2nd-year MA students and 2nd-year undergraduate ($P < 0.002$). The findings remind teachers that language learning strategies (LLS) need to be taught explicitly rather than leave it to learners themselves to cope unconsciously in their EFL learning process. The gap between 2nd-year undergraduates and 2-year MA students might derive from the different language skills acquired by the two groups. This also indicates that the improvement of language skills, in the case of 2nd-year MA students boosted their confidence with the result that their anxiety is lower than 2nd-year undergraduates. This assumption is supported by earlier studies. For instance, insecurity and anxiety tend to diminish if learners gain more linguistic proficiency and more positive experience (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989).

The implication of this finding for teachers is that they should be aware of the fact that student anxiety created by, among other things, a tense classroom environment might be one of the most potent factors undermining students' classroom behaviour. On the other hand, explicit explanation of language learning strategies and frequent engagement of students in interactive classroom activities are very important and necessary in class. In short, teachers need to 'create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom' (Garret & Shortall, 2002, p. 30) and provide more opportunities for learners to practise in interactive group activities in order to reinforce the positive experience. Less practice will lead to less confidence and therefore less actual ability to use the target language, especially orally.

Nature and strength of motivation among students

(Item 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)

The results showed students liked learning English and were interested in learning about major English-speaking countries. Their interest focused on the culture, science and technology of English-speaking countries. The findings also indicated that students had an instrumental motivation in learning English which encompassed their desire to work very hard towards a goal which would benefit their families as well as themselves. This

finding supports similar assumptions made by some earlier studies (Littlewood, 2001; Bond, 1991). Littlewood described Chinese college students in Hong Kong as having a typical social achievement motivation, characterized in a collectivist-oriented culture, that is, they are motivated to succeed because success would bring prestige and other benefits to their families. In China, it is a virtue to involve the value and interest of family with what one is pursuing (Littlewood, 2001; Bond, 1991). However, the findings of *Item 47* revealed that sustaining strong motivation exclusively through a long-term goal is, to certain extent, problematic. This situation possibly derives from the fact that most students were not clear what they would do after graduation. Neither were they content with EFL teaching in the university since teaching and learning have reciprocal effects. This assumption is confirmed by the qualitative data findings in the follow-up interviews in a separate study.

Students' attitudes towards TCA in class (*Item 18*)

The results showed that the student group as a whole held a mildly negative attitude towards teacher-centred approach (TCA). The Frequency Table showed that 19% (40) and 8.1% (17) of students chose '4' (agree) and '5' (strongly agree) respectively whereas 25.7% (54) and 14.8% (31) selected '2' (disagree) and '1' (strongly disagree). There are 32.4% (68) respondents remaining neutral. This indicates that students found TCA to be effective on some occasions but ineffective on others. The perceived effectiveness seemed to depend on different variables, such as the teacher's competence, the textbook, and the nature of the course taught. The results of the ANOVA test shows that the difference between 2nd-year MA graduates and 4th-year undergraduates is statistically significant ($P < 0.008$). This result reveals that different classroom activities carried out between the two groups could reinforce their disposition to their different favoured activities in class. As mentioned earlier, a smaller class size and more teacher-initiated or directed discussion in class led MA students towards rating TCA less effectively than did the 4th-year students.

Students' attitudes towards SCA in class (*Item 19*)

Contrast to *Item 18*, the findings of *Item 19* showed that the students surveyed liked a student-centred approach. 17.1% (36) of the students selected '5' (strongly agree) and 35.7% (75) chose '4' (agree), 2.9% (6) students chose '1' (strongly disagree), and 8.6% (18) select '2' (disagree). Moreover, 75 (35.7%) students acknowledged that they had mixed feelings about SCA, i.e. they considered student-centred methods to be efficient in some ways but unhelpful in others. Of the students surveyed as a whole, it seems that the pendulum of their favoured teaching methods swings from TCA to SCA although they consider both approaches to be useful in their own way.

The findings are supported by the results of open-ended questions, which revealed that only 31% of students surveyed were in favour of TCA in contrast to 70% in support of SCA. This reveals that a 'pure' student- or teacher-centred approach falls wide of the mark regarding English classes; both need to be used in combination to suit the Chinese EFL context. A Chinese saying sums up the need for synthesis thus, 'extracting the essence while discarding the dross' (qu chu qu jing) and 'making foreign things serve China' by late Chairman Mao (yang wei zhong yong), indicating that the strengths inherent in both approaches need to be maintained and synthesised to make EFL teaching effective. Pica (2000) argues that all methods have their own conceptually distinctive characteristics. No single method could possibly meet all of a learner's needs' (Pica, 2000). As Kumaravadivelu (1994) has pointed out, teachers must seek not alternative methods, but an alternative to methods. Such an alternative would be based on their professional experience and awareness of learner needs, and the adjustments they make to cope with the realities and dynamics of the classroom.

Students' attitudes to communicative activities in class (*Items 21, 22, 25*)

The findings showed that students liked class discussions and enjoyed seeing English films or watching video shows. If students found that they had something to talk about after seeing a film or a video show, they would like to participate in a group discussion with the teacher's guidance and facilitation which would help them increase their understanding of the films/video shows. They also expressed their strong desire that in English class they would expect teachers to stimulate their interest and analytical thinking

ability through thought-provoking questions. Such findings are not surprising. As the follow-up classroom observations revealed, the ways teachers elicited answers or responses were found to be quite ill-thought out. The teachers concerned very often asked only 'display question' (questions that had obvious right answers) (Long & Sato, 1983 cited in Walsh, 2002, p.6). As Walsh argues display questions are possibly appropriate to geography or maths classes, but in L2 or EFL classes they seem to deny language learners access to critical thinking and real language use (Walsh, 2002). The implications of these findings are clear. Teachers need to initiate questions at a discourse level which allow the students' judgement, reasoning and critical thinking to be brought into play.

Students' attitudes towards non-communicative activities in class

(Item 20, 24, 42)

The findings of *Item 20* showed that students expressed mixed attitudes towards the traditional Intensive Reading method – a kind of teaching method in which the English text materials are dealt with in over-meticulous detail and a sentence-by-sentence way. The findings showed that 36.2% (76) of the students favoured this teaching method whereas 34.2% (72) did not favour it and 30% (62) remained neutral. The results indicate that many students still think the Intensive Reading (now renamed comprehensive reading) method is a very important way of teaching and learning English in class, and that grammatical structures need to be emphasised. It was clear that teacher-centeredness was commonly found to be a dominant teaching method in the classroom. The ANOVA test showed that the results of *Item 20* were significantly different between the 2nd-year undergraduates and the MA students ($P < 0.008$). As described above, given the MA students' advanced English proficiency and their positive experience in small group activities in class, they responded to this meticulous teaching method negatively whereas the 2nd-year undergraduates seemed to feel comfortable with this traditional teaching method to which they had been exposed since their pre-college schooling.

The results of *Item 24* revealed that the students as a whole responded negatively to simulation test exercises in which teachers merely explained the answers to students in class. The ANOVA test showed that a significant difference existed between the 2nd-year undergraduates and the other groups, except the 4th-year undergraduates ($P < 0.003$). The

findings indicated that the 2nd-year students seemed to be exam-oriented and were under pressure to pass English tests, especially the EMT-4. This was confirmed by their responses to *Item 53*: the EMT-4 test was found to exert heavy pressure on them. Although the 4th-year students had to take EMT-8 test, they seemed to be less pressurised than the 2nd-year students because the passing of MET-8, unlike EMT-4, has not been linked to the awarding of a BA degree in the EFL programme.

On *Item 42*, 47% (99) of the students surveyed did not consider that the main task of students in class was to receive knowledge from the teacher whereas 25% (52) students thought that the students' role in class was to listen to the teacher. 28% (59) students were neutral, believing in the mixed roles for students to play in class. The findings of this item support the results of *Item 18*: students showed a mildly negative attitude to teacher-centred approach (TCA) in class. The ANOVA test showed that a significant difference existed between the 4th year undergraduates and the 2nd-year MA students regarding *Item 42* ($P < 0.012$). The difference may be explained by the fact that the 4th-year students were busy looking for jobs and were less committed to their English learning. Therefore they regarded teacher-centred methods as 'secure and relaxing' whereas the 2nd year MA students were susceptible to participating in small group activities in which students were expected to take more initiatives in class.

The findings of *Item 42* reveal that, about half of the students in this survey hold positive attitudes towards learning whereas the other half of students surveyed still stick to the traditional roles of students in class or have unclear perceptions of different roles which students are expected to play in class. The findings also demonstrate the necessity of making explicit what roles both students and teachers are supposed to play in the classroom-based setting. However, it would be inaccurate to deduce that 'Chinese students are mere passive learners' as reported in some earlier studies (Oxford & Anderson, 1995; Stefani, 1997). We need to know the real cause of their apparent passivity.

Culture learning in EFL (*Items 11, 36, 37, 23*)

Students' responses to *Items 11 and 37* indicated that in English class they liked to learn about target cultures, including the western people's way of life, social customs and so on.

They expressed a strong desire for a synthesised pedagogy that could properly combine learning English and learning target cultures in EFL programmes. At the same time, students indicated that although they had learned a little about target cultures in English class, they would like to learn more. This finding indicates the need to develop a pedagogy which can integrate culture into EFL education in order to enhance students' sociocultural competence as required by the revised national curriculum for English majors.

Students' attitudes towards compensation strategies (*Item 29, 31, 32*)

On *Item 29*, the results of the ANOVA Test showed a significant difference between the 2nd-year undergraduates and other groups ($P < 0.000$). The 2nd-year undergraduates tended to refer to L1 when they found it hard to express themselves orally in English whereas the other groups responded negatively. The results reveal that their dependence on L1 is closely related to their target language skills and awareness of use of language learning strategies (LLS). The dependence on L1 tends to drop with improvement in target language skills and awareness of LLS use in the EFL learning process. The results of *Item 31* showed that students did not often use gestures to enhance their communication, indicating the need to learn and use LLS on their part. The findings of *Item 32* showed that students preferred to use paraphrases to 'get meanings across' when they could not think of a word during a conversation in English. By linking *Item 32* to *Item 29*, we find that even if most students tended to use 'paraphrases' in English conversations, about 30% of the students were not content with their own ability to 'get meanings across'. This could be due to their inadequate target language proficiency and lack of conscious use of LLS. The findings alerted teachers to the importance of the explicit teaching of communication and language learning strategies in English class. It is misplaced to assume that students can automatically make use of the skills of their native language when communicating in the target language. These communicative skills are not transferred automatically without explicit teaching or learning. Teachers need to raise students' consciousness and provide them with more opportunities to use these strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford 1990). This reflects the necessity of integrating

communicative components of CLT into current traditional teaching methods in order to develop learners' communicative competence.

Students' attitudes towards social strategies (*Item 33, 34, 35*)

The findings of *Item 33* clearly revealed that most students did not have a peer with whom they often practised oral English on a regular basis. The results of the ANOVA Test showed a significant difference between 2nd-year and 4th-year undergraduates ($P < 0.032$). This finding reveals that the 4th-year students who are taken up with job seeking spend even less time than 2nd-year students practising their oral English with peers outside class. The 2nd-year undergraduates need to take EMT-4 oral test along with its written test, and therefore they have to pay more attention to oral practice. Once the EMT-4 test is behind them, it seems that practising English outside class recedes and students do not seek opportunities to speak English with peers.

Items 34 and *35* also revealed that students surveyed are not interested in taking part in after-class activities in which English was practised, for example, in an English corner drama group or newspaper group. Their reasons for not being interested in this might be that they thought such activities did not provide them with authentic English input and that they could not learn idiomatic or 'real' English by practising spoken English with their peers. The findings indicate that it is vital to create a teacher-initiated environment in which students feel relaxed and confident to practise their spoken English in the Chinese EFL context.

Students' attitudes towards authority in class (*Items 43, 44, 45, 46*)

The findings of *Item 44* indicated that students did not rate teacher authority very highly. This finding is supported by the results of *Items 43* and *45* which reveal that most students want to be active rather than passive learners in the process of acquiring knowledge. The findings of these items are incongruent with the reports in earlier studies which claim that teachers are perceived as a 'fount of knowledge' from whom the knowledge is transmitted to students (Maley 1984; Liu, 1998; Song, 1995) and Asian students including Chinese are expected to show 'total obedience or submission to their teachers', to be 'passive receivers of knowledge' and that they offer 'little input to the class'

(Song, 1995, p.35). Generalizations such as these are often expressed not only by outsiders but also by Chinese researchers as well (Littlewood, 2001). It is usually claimed that differences in power and authority are accepted most readily in more collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 1994; Smith & Bond, 1993). In a classroom-based setting, a general orientation towards (or dependence on) the group is also likely to lead students to accepting roles which are defined in terms of their position within that group, from the teacher at the top of the hierarchy to the students at the bottom (Littlewood, 2001).

The findings of *Item 44* seem to indicate that a change in concepts of learning and teaching has been taking place, especially among young people who now are exposed increasingly to the foreign cultures via TV, films, multimedia, personal contacts, and Internet. This change will, in principle, certainly have an impact on their English language learning and classroom behaviours. However, it is worth noting that the results of *Item 44* are not backed up by the findings in the follow-up interviews and classroom observations in a separate study.

When they were asked to comment on their attitudes towards teacher's authority in class during the interviews, many students said that they were reluctant to challenge teacher's authority in class. When asked to elaborate on perceptual mismatch between the interview accounts and questionnaire data, some students' comments are very informative. They said that they certainly held teachers' authority high in class and showed their respect to the teacher. They thought that it was the basic thing they should do in class, but they emphasized that only good teachers would deserve a heart-felt respect from students whereas those teachers whose lectures were found to be boring, would not receive the real respect from students. This indicates that while teacher authority is important to them, it also has to be won, not taken as given. Good teachers are really respected while incompetent teachers are not, even though they are perceived to have 'authority' in the classroom. Consequently, when students find the courses they have been taking are not up to their expectations, they will inevitably notch down the teachers' authority accordingly, at least in their minds.

This is similar to the Chinese equivalent of the English word respect - *Zun Jing*. Each of these two Chinese words has a separate meaning although, used in combination, they equate to respect in English. *Zun* means showing respect in action (body language or

facial expressions), but this is at surface level. The real respect derives from *Jing* which means a kind of admiration from the bottom of one's heart. Therefore we can say that the justification of real respect is based on good quality of teaching performance and teacher's being a moral example to students (Jiao shu yu ren) rather than a perceived unequal relationship between Chinese teachers and students in class.

As revealed in the open-ended questions, only 22% of the students under study found the current teaching methods satisfactory while 76% did not like the teaching methods used by teachers in their English classes at all. Moreover, the results clearly point to the necessity in using different research procedures to triangulate the validity of research findings in this study.

Major difficulties encountered in students' learning process

(Items 40, 41, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56)

The findings of Item 48 indicated that over half of the students surveyed considered their own learning styles to be rigid and not very efficient, and needed improving. The follow-up interviews with students revealed that they considered their learning styles, to a considerable degree, had been influenced by teachers' teaching styles in the classroom. Their learning experience reinforced their learning habits. The findings of this item are supported by *Item 54*, which shows that the current teaching methods focus too much on grammar and structure but ignore oral English practice. The results of the ANOVA Test show that *Item 54* proves to be significantly different between 2nd-year and 3rd-year students ($P < 0.014$). A possible explanation of these differences is that some teachers who taught 2nd-year English majors have attempted to use different methods in their classes to offer students more opportunities to practise their oral English. Therefore the 2nd-year students remained neutral on *Item 54* whereas the 3rd-year students considered current teaching methods too much focused on grammar and structure.

This finding supports some earlier studies by some western researchers in the related areas. Pintrich and Schunk (1996) point out that teachers and students have reciprocal effects on each other. Teacher classroom instruction affects students' learning orientation (Zubir, 1988 cited in Gow *et al.*, 1996), and, in turn, teacher instruction is affected by the way students respond to classroom activities (Salili, 2001). Linking *Items 40, 41* with

Item 48, we can see that the problems inherent in students' learning styles are mainly related to memory strategies, that is, while students memorize the vocabulary, they often ignore the context in which these words are used. In most cases, they separated vocabulary from its context. They listed all the new words in a notebook and tried to memorize as many as they could whenever and wherever it was possible.

This is not surprising because in China vocabulary books often take the form of providing learners with so-called 'shortcuts', i.e. learning by heart new words in order to pass the various exams, for example, TOEFL, GRE, EMT-4 and EMT-8. The findings of *Item 41* reveal that, in most cases, new words are not learned in a contextual or discourse manner. That is why students find it hard to retrieve these items when they want to use them appropriately. The traditional Intensive Reading teaching methods reinforce such learning styles. In terms of vocabulary learning, rote learning, it is true, plays a major role. However, these learning styles are not a merely cultural or psychological trait of Chinese students, but the result of acquired habits in school and the way the target language has been learned and practised within and outside class.

On *Item 50*, the majority of students thought that there was lack of authentic materials, both audio and visual, in EFL teaching. The ANOVA test showed the significant difference on this item between the 2nd-year MA students and the 2nd-year undergraduates ($P < 0.019$). A possible reason for this difference lies in the fact that the 2nd-year MA students had a higher level of exposure to the target language than the 2nd-year undergraduates, and this reflected their differing views from those of other groups.

Item 52 indicates that majority of the respondents think that they have very few opportunities to practise their spoken English in Intensive Reading class. The findings reveal that the current conventional teaching methods have to be improved in line with students' needs to improve their practical skills of the target language. On *Item 55*, 70% (149) of the students thought the textbooks were not suitable for CLT nor culture learning in English class. The findings indicated that the cultural information or knowledge contained in the text materials fell well short of what students would expect. As their English language proficiency improved, they would become more and more interested in target cultures and their curiosity about Western cultures would be aroused. The findings here show that a pedagogical framework of culture learning in EFL syllabus at tertiary

level is absolutely necessary in order to meet learners' needs and broaden their horizons - itself a key component in crossing the threshold to sociocultural competence.

To sum up, in judging the findings of this study in relation to the theoretical foundation of the communicative competence model (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983), it is obvious that these learners were deficient in major aspects of communicative competence. They were not content with their current linguistic competence and they found spoken English difficult. They called for a synthesized pedagogy to combine culture learning and English language learning in EFL programmes, which they see as an important step towards enhancing their sociolinguistic competence. The findings also show that most undergraduate students are not aware of conscious use of language learning strategies in their learning process.

6. Conclusion

The students in this investigation show, on the whole, more favourable attitudes towards communicative classroom activities than non-communicative ones. This sounds very encouraging for teachers who are engaged in innovations in teaching methods. Students also show strong interest in learning target cultures and call for innovation in combining English teaching and culture teaching. On the other hand, the students are not inclined to see *all* activities emphasizing formal linguistic competence as less effective than those emphasizing the communicative functions of language. They are not inclined to reject indiscriminately the traditional way of teaching English.

However, the results of the study do show a tendency that most of the students favour a well-planned combination of communicative and non-communicative activities that will enhance both effective teaching and learning at different levels. As is evident that there is no single 'cure-all' or 'the best' teaching method which can be expected to deal with everything concerning the target language teaching, such as its form, its use and its content. The ideal way to innovate English teaching and to meet learner needs at tertiary level is to modernize, that is, to reconcile communicative activities with non-communicative activities that are proved effective in English teaching and learning (Rao, 2002). Chinese students' learning English can be facilitated if teachers can develop

their own 'locally appropriate version of the communicative approach' (Thompson, 1996, p. 36).

It is worth noting that in the process of devising such teaching methods, teachers have to develop their own awareness and competence in both pedagogical and methodological sense. In other words, the gap between what communicative activities demand and what the EFL education in China admits has to be resolved 'through culturally and historically situated exploration of non-Western language learning classrooms (Sullivan, 2002) before Chinese students can benefit fully from these communicative classroom learning activities across the board. To find possible solutions to these issues, focused attention should be given, among other things, to the proper reconciliation between communicative and traditional approaches that are fine tuned and supplemented to each other. It should be noted that the findings should feed into classroom practice, and provide guidance for materials and syllabus revision and a pedagogical framework for developing learners' intercultural communicative competence.

My aim in writing this paper is not so much to report on the nature of the learning needs but to illustrate what sort of learning needs had to be considered, and how these needs had to be approached. It is believed the results of this study show the great value of obtaining learners' views on activities that form part of the learning process. The analysis of learner needs described in this paper has some major implications.

1. It is inappropriate for teachers to ignore learners' needs by sticking to teachers' own unaided intuitions for their classroom instruction.
2. It can be concluded that with the help of valid and reliable research it is possible to get a much more complete, complex and refined picture of learner needs.
3. The findings also provide a bank of information for dissemination and discussion in teacher development programmes, which can focus on a pedagogical framework on student-centred approach, and discussions on why student hold positive attitudes towards some classroom learning activities vis-à-vis others. The findings can also prompt a change from adopting a more teacher-centred to a more learning-centred approach, and also facilitate communicative classroom practice that influences lesson planning and lesson conduct. For instance, it will help teachers select activities that students like, to use certain classroom activities rather than others.

Note:

Communicative activities or student-centred activities are defined as those which involve students in using the language for communicative purposes, (e.g. work in pairs or group discussion or even role plays as a setting for a communicative task), and which focus more on fluency than accuracy, pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language.

The non-communicative activities or teacher-centred activities refer to the language classroom activities in which the teacher is very much the focal point of the class work, exercising considerable control over the activity and the language that is elicited from the students.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for English Majors students at university level

This questionnaire is designed for research purposes only and is done on an anonymous basis. All the information will be kept confidential. Answer the following questions in terms of how much you agree or disagree with them. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes about 20 minutes to complete.

age _____ gender _____ undergraduate _____ postgraduate _____

Please write the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) in the bracket at the end of each statement, which tells how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

1. In English class, I like to participate in group work with 2-4 people, e.g. English dialogues, group discussion, role play.
2. In group work, I like committing myself to achieving our common goal with my peers.
3. I like my teacher to divide the whole class into several small groups in which we do teacher-directed group work.
4. In English class, I like listening to my peers give English oral presentations of interesting stories or information that are well-prepared outside of class.
5. In group work, I like to ask and answer questions in English.
6. When working in a group, I like to help keep the atmosphere friendly and harmonious.
7. In group work, I do not like to 'stand out' by voicing my opinions or asking questions.
8. Sometimes I feel nervous answering a question in class because I am afraid of being wrong.
9. In class or in group activities, I like to prepare what I want to say in English mentally before I speak.
10. I work especially hard when my own success will benefit me and other people (e.g. my family or my relatives).
11. In English class, I like to learn about Western cultures including their way of life, social customs, etc.
12. I like learning English.
13. I am interested in the cultures of major English-speaking nations.
14. I learn English because I want to know about the economic, social, political and technological developments in other countries of the world.
15. I learn English because I want to find a good job.
16. I want to be enrolled in the Master degree program.
17. I want to go abroad for advanced study or work.
18. In English class, I like a teacher-centred teaching method employed by teachers.
19. In English class, I like a student-centred teaching method employed by teachers.
20. In the English Intensive Reading class, I like my teacher to deal with the text materials in a sentence-by-sentence way.
21. In English class, I like teacher-guided and text-related discussions on such topics as population problems, my favourite books, films, or how to be a better learner of English.
22. In English class, I like to watch English language films or videos, and then discuss them in groups with teacher' facilitation and guidance.
23. I learn a lot about western cultures from my English classes.
24. In English class, I like to do simulation test exercises and listen to my teacher' explanations.
25. In English class, I like my teacher to ask students text-based and thought-provoking questions to keep the lesson interesting in order that students have chances to practise their spoken English.
26. In English class, I like my teacher to translate some difficult paragraphs of text materials into Chinese to enhance my comprehension and translation skills.

27. Do you like a teacher-centred teaching method in English class?
Yes No Please state your reasons why you like or do not like it.
28. Do you like a student-centred teaching method in English class?
Yes No Please state your reasons why you like or do not like it.
29. If I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I depend on my native language to explain it.
30. I try to relax myself whenever I am feeling afraid of using English, especially oral English.
31. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
32. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.
33. I have at least one peer with whom I often practise English.
34. I like to participate in extra-curricular activities in which I can practise my oral English, e.g. English corner.
35. I like after-class activities in which I can practise my English writing skills, e.g. drama group and newspaper group.
36. My knowledge about Western culture(s) mainly comes from English classroom teaching and learning.
37. I like to read English language text materials which cover Western cultures.
38. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
39. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English. For example, I reward myself by going to a restaurant, etc.
40. I remember new words by thinking of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
41. I use new words in a sentence so I can remember them well.
42. I link its Chinese meaning to a new word to help me remember the word in English.
43. I expect my teacher rather than myself to be responsible for evaluating how much I have learnt.
44. In class I see the teacher as somebody whose authority should not be questioned.
45. I see knowledge, as something that the teacher should pass on to me rather than something that I should discover myself.
46. In English class, the teaching method used by the teacher is very important to students' English study.

The following statements (47-56) consist of some of difficulties confronting Chinese learners of English at tertiary level in adopting communicative activities. Do you think they might be difficulties for you in using communicative activities in China? What is your opinion?

47. I do not have a clear long-term aim of learning English, and lack motivation.
48. My learning styles are too rigid and inflexible.

49. I have few opportunities to practise my English.
50. There is a lack of authentic English materials, audio and visual.
51. The idea of finding a good job after graduation from the university exerts heavy pressure on me.
52. We lack chances to speak English in class.
53. EMT-4 (English Major Test-4) and EMT-8 exert heavy pressures on me.
54. Teachers place too much stress on the structure, grammar and reading comprehension in English class.
55. The English language textbooks are not compatible with the requirements of the student-centred approach in English class.
56. We have little knowledge or information about Western cultures.
57. I like to answer questions in English in class.
58. *Are you content with the current teaching methods used by your teachers of English in English class? Please explain.* _____

Appendix B: The Mean Value and Standard Deviation of Student

Questionnaire data (N = 210)

Item 1	3.98 .88	Item15	4.48 .92	Item31	3.25 1.05	Item45	1.91 .82
Item2	4.36 .74	Item16	3.97 1.39	Item32	3.89 .87	Item46	4.11 .98
Item3	3.90 .95	Item17	3.25 1.29	Item33	2.43 1.23	Item47	3.41 1.13
Item4	3.74 1.13	Item18	2.80 1.15	Item34	2.78 1.20	Item48	3.47 1.01
Item5	3.80 1.03	Item19	3.56 .97	Item35	2.90 1.12	Item49	4.18 .92
Item6	4.49 .71	Item20	3.04 1.22	Item36	2.99 1.10	Item50	3.47 1.21
Item7	2.99 1.10	Item21	3.98 .95	Item37	4.30 .82s	Item51	3.70 1.09
Item8	3.38 1.14	Item22	4.13 .90	Item38	3.73 1.00	Item52	3.90 .91
Item9	3.60 1.04	Item23	3.61 .98	Item39	2.91 1.21	Item53	3.17 1.16
Item10	4.31 .88	Item24	2.71 1.17	Item40	3.44 1.06	Item54	3.48 1.02
Item11	4.56 .66	Item25	4.19 .85	Item41	2.89 1.12	Item55	3.79 .87
Item12	4.21 .92	Item26	3.27 1.26	Item42	2.63 1.18	Item56	3.70 .94
Item13	4.29 .87	Item29	2.97 1.11	Item43	2.81 .99	Item57	2.93 1.02
Item14	4.06 .93	Item30	3.51 1.02	Item44	2.26 .90		

Appendix C
12 Items showing significant differences by the One-Way
ANOVA Test Across 5 student sub-groups

N = 210	<i>df</i>	<i>F-value</i>	ANOVA Sig. P < 0. 05
Q Item 1*	4	3.235	0.013
Q Item 5	4	2.829	0.026
Q Item 8	4	4.475	0.002
Q Item 18	4	3.514	0.008
Q Item 20	4	3.513	0.008
Q Item 24	4	4.152	0.003
Q Item 26	4	3.176	0.015
Q Item 29	4	5.344	0.000
Q Item 33	4	2.688	0.032
Q Item 42	4	3.306	0.012
Q Item 50	4	3.005	0.019
Q Item 54	4	3.210	0.014

*: The number of questionnaire items in this table corresponds with their ordinal order in the student questionnaire.



Prospective Teachers and L2 Writing Anxiety

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Abstract

There has been considerable research which documents the prevalence of writing anxiety in student populations in L1 and L2 settings, and explores the effects of teachers' writing anxiety on their teaching practices in L1 settings. The present study discusses the relevant issue from the perspective of prospective teachers. 85 Turkish prospective teachers (PTs) of English participated in this study. Data were collected by means of the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) (Cheng, 2004) and an open-ended questionnaire. Results of the SLWAI showed that more than half of the participating PTs had high or average writing anxiety. PTs' responses to the open-ended questionnaire indicated that those with high and average anxiety had difficulties in organizing their thoughts and producing ideas while writing in L2. In addition, PTs cited university instructors and their past L2 writing experiences as the major factors affecting their attitudes towards L2 writing, and discussed the psychological and physiological reactions they had during the writing process. Finally, the responses of the PTs revealed that their writing experiences may affect their future teaching practices.

Key Words: Writing, writing anxiety, teacher training

Introduction

Anxiety, among other affective variables, has stimulated particular interest in the field of language acquisition and learning over the last several decades. One of the major reasons for concern, particularly among educators and administrators, is its potential negative effects on academic achievement (Gardner, 1985; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997). As such, research into the nature of foreign language (FL) anxiety seems to hold great promise for improving language learning in the classroom.

Although most discussions of FL anxiety have centered on the difficulties caused by anxiety with respect to activities such as speaking and listening, suggesting that oral classroom activities are most problematic and anxiety-provoking for foreign language learners (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986; Mejias, Applbaum, Applbaum, Trotter, 1991; Price, 1991; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997), recent studies have provided validation for regarding writing anxiety as a specific type of anxiety, unique to the language-particular skill of writing (Bugoon & Hale, 1983; Daly & Wilson, 1983; Blin, Lowe, Meixner, Nouri, Pearce, 2001). According to Thompson (1980) writing anxiety is a 'fear of the writing process that outweighs the projected gain from the ability to write' (p.121). Tsui (1996), further believes that learning to write in the foreign language involves as much anxiety as learning the other skills, because writing is predominantly product-oriented, and it requires individual work, i.e., students are deprived of help, support and encouragement. As a result, learners suffer a 'distress associated with writing' and develop 'a profound distaste for the process' (Madigan, Linton, Johnson, 1996, p. 295).

Because writing anxiety research has been mostly restricted to school context, studies on the effects of writing anxiety on decisions and perceptions about writing have been mainly concerned with student populations. In contrast to the abundance of studies on L1 writing anxiety, research on L2 writing anxiety has been quite scant, and have revealed mixed and confusing results regarding the relationship of L2 writing anxiety to L2 writing performance (Hadaway, 1987; Wu, 1992), concern for content (Masny & Foxall, 1992), interest in taking more advanced L2 writing courses (Masny & Foxall, 1992), and to perceived L2 writing demands in one's major (Gungle & Taylor, 1989).

As research has demonstrated the important role teachers play in cultivating students'

notions about and attitudes toward writing (Palmquist & Young, 1992), a number of studies have explored how teachers' writing anxiety influences their teaching practices, again in L1 settings. For example, Claypool's (1980) study assessed how secondary school teachers' writing anxiety was related to the frequency with which they assigned writing tasks. She reported a significant negative correlation between teachers' writing anxiety and the number of writing assignments they made. In another study, Gere, Schuessler and Abbott (1984) investigated how teachers' writing anxiety was correlated with what they considered important and relevant about writing and writing instruction. The results of the study indicated that teachers with high writing anxiety were more rigid than the low anxious ones about style and self-expression. Moreover, a significant negative correlation was found between teachers' writing anxiety and their use of a variety of instructional techniques in the teaching of composition writing. Finally, Daly and his colleagues conducted two studies investigating the relationship between teachers' writing anxiety and their classroom practices (Daly, Vangelisti, & Witte, 1988). The results of these two studies revealed that teachers' writing anxiety affected the way they evaluated students' written products. Compared to teachers with high anxiety, low anxious teachers appeared to be less bound by rigid rules, to emphasize creative expression and effort more, and to worry less about mechanical structure. Teachers' writing anxiety was found to be negatively related to their use of exercises and activities that demanded writing.

To our best knowledge, there have not been any studies on the writing anxiety of in-service or prospective ESL/EFL teachers. Thus, the present study aimed to fill in this gap in the literature as it examined the extent of writing anxiety experienced by Turkish PTs of EFL. The study also focused on the ideas and experiences of the PTs related to writing anxiety. The major reason for choosing PTs as the target group was that learning their writing anxiety level and their perspectives on this issue seemed to have important implications for teacher education programs as well as for their own teaching careers.

Before discussing the methodology and results of the study, a very brief discussion about the role of L2 writing in Turkey will be presented.

The role of writing in English in Turkey

English language teaching in Turkey has expanded rapidly in the last years due to the instrumental power of English as the international language and due to the fact that Turkey is facing European integration.

The passing of a law in 1997 that introduced a new eight-year compulsory education system brought significant changes to foreign language education. Under this new law it became obligatory for public primary school students to start studying a foreign language from the 4th grade on. Before this date, English instruction was provided only in private schools. Today English education is offered from kindergarten level until university, either as a compulsory foreign language or as the means of instruction, e.g., there are many secondary schools and universities with a one-year preparatory class followed by English-medium instruction. In addition to the private English courses, the government encourages citizens of all ages to become proficient in English by expanding educational opportunities, such as free English courses organized by the municipalities.

For most Turkish people a high competence in oral and written English is a cornerstone to integration in the EU and as a means for both individual and national advancement, e.g., claiming higher status and gaining economic advantage.

Regarding the role of writing in English, we can say that it is highly limited in public primary and secondary schools. Students are generally asked to write guided and/or controlled paragraphs and/or short essays occasionally. The focus in writing classes is on the form of the written product rather than on how the learner should approach the process of writing. Paragraphs and essays are written in one draft and grammatical and punctual errors are corrected by the teacher. In general, students are asked to write on topics using the structures given in a relevant unit.

Yet, upon reaching the tertiary level, they face the challenge of writing in English, as they are expected to 'write well-organized papers' to pass the prep classes and/or to pursue their academic work in many universities. Thus, students who do not write in English risk becoming marginalized, as a high degree of written competence in English is generally a prerequisite at the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Method

Participants

A total of 85 PTs enrolled at the English Language Teaching Department of a highly competitive state university in Istanbul, Turkey, participated in this study. They were all fourth year students with an average age of 21.34 (SD =0.62) and had all studied English in primary and/or secondary school as a compulsory foreign language for 4-6 years before starting their undergraduate studies. The participating PTs were all native speakers of Turkish and none of them had stayed in English speaking countries more than a week. In order to enter the four-year degree program they either scored higher than 550 on the TOEFL exam or passed the proficiency exam prepared by the testing office of the university. Thus, they could be considered to have a high level of English proficiency. At the time of the study, there were 196 PTs in four classes and PTs for this study were selected randomly.

The university where the study took place is both an English and Turkish medium university. In the four-year English Language Teaching program the basic skills courses, e.g., Reading, Writing, Grammar and Speaking, and method courses, e.g., Approaches and Methods, Second Language Acquisition, are given in English throughout the four years. Students take Writing I and Writing II courses in the first and second semesters of the first year respectively, and Advanced Writing Skills course in the second year. The writing courses in the first year require students to write well-developed paragraphs and different essay types on different topics. The second year Advanced Writing course is an integration of reading articles on different topics of language learning and teaching, and practicing basic academic writing skills, such as summarizing, writing a response paper. In addition, in the third year students take a course on teaching writing to adult learners and young learners separately along with courses on teaching other skills in English. Most of the courses throughout the program require students to carry out written project work in English.

Materials

Two instruments were used in this study: the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) (Appendix A) (Cheng, 2004) and an open-ended questionnaire with

six questions. The SLWAI measures the degree to which an individual feels anxious when writing in an L2 and contains 22-items all of which are answered on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. SLWAI has good internal consistency, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient reported of .91. (Cheng, 2004). The Cronbach alpha for the present study was .84.

In many studies on second language writing anxiety (Hadaway, 1987; Wu, 1992; Lee, 2001) the Daly–Miller Writing Apprehension Test (WAT; Daly & Miller, 1975) and McKain's Writing Anxiety Questionnaire (WAQ; 1991) were used as the measurement instruments of second language writing anxiety. However, their effectiveness in measuring L2 writing anxiety has been questioned by a number of researchers (Shaver, 1990; Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Cheng, 2004) as they were both developed with reference to first language learners. The scale items used in SLWAI, on the other hand, were developed based on learners' reports of L2 writing anxiety experiences as well as with reference to other relevant anxiety scales.

The open-ended questionnaire was used to triangulate the data collected by the inventory and to gather in-depth information about the PTs' L2 writing anxiety experiences (Appendix B). PTs were told to give more than one answer to each question if they felt it was necessary. This data allowed the researchers to capture the PTs' own voices and to examine their perspectives in an attempt to understand the phenomenon. To be specific, the participants were asked to 1) describe the difficulties they faced when writing in English, 2) specify the situations and people in their own settings that may cause writing anxiety, 3) specify the psychological and physiological reactions associated with their writing anxiety, 4) explain whether they shared their writing anxiety with anyone, and 5) specify the effects of their writing experiences on their future teaching practices.

Data Analysis

For the purposes of the study, data collected from the above mentioned sources were analyzed by means of a combination of qualitative and quantitative strategies. Lynch (1996) calls this combination a mixed study design and claims that it provides the most thorough information possible as data is validated by means of triangulation.

The SLWAI was analyzed by summing the subjects' ratings of the 22-items. When statements of the SLWAI were negatively worded, responses were reversed and recorded, so that in all instances, a high score represented high anxiety. Data collected from the open-ended questionnaires were analyzed by means of pattern coding as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Procedure

The study took place in the second term of the 2004-5 academic year. In the first term of the year, the SLWAI and the questionnaire were piloted with a group of 23 PTs. Based on the results, two questions in the questionnaire were modified.

Results

Results of the inventory: Based on their scores on the SLWAI, subjects were divided into three groups. PTs whose mean scores were one or more standard deviations below the mean were judged to be low-anxious (LA), i.e., equal to or smaller than 58 (19 %); those whose mean scores were one or more standard deviations above the mean were judged to be high-anxious (HA), i.e., equal or higher than 83 (32 %). The rest were considered to have average writing anxiety (AA) (49 %). This was an interesting result considering the high level of English of the participants. A closer look at the results showed that students both HA and AA groups showed highest anxiety in statements related to aroused physiological arousal, called somatic anxiety by Cheng (2004). The statements which received the highest score from both groups were questions 6 and 11. The former one is about learner's mind going blank and the latter one is on the learner's thoughts becoming jumbled when writing English compositions. This result was also supported by the qualitative data discussed below. Table 1 presents the distribution of the PTs according to their scores.

Table 1: Numbers and Percentages of PTs in Three Anxiety Categories

Anxiety Category	Male	Female	Total	Percent*
High anxiety	9	18	27	32
Average anxiety	12	30	42	49
Low anxiety	6	10	16	19

*rounded off to nearest number

Results of the questionnaire: The first question aimed at finding out the difficulties faced by the PTs while writing in L2. Descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 show that there are differences among the three groups in terms of the perceived difficulties during the L2 writing process, yet, inability to organize their thoughts and to produce any ideas were considered as the major difficulties by the PTs in all categories.

Table 2: Perceived Difficulties during the Writing Process

	HA	AA	LA
Inability to organize one's thoughts	19	11	3
Inability to produce any ideas	16	5	2
Poor L2 vocabulary knowledge	9	4	-
Poor L2 grammar knowledge	6	4	-
Thinking in L1	5	2	-

In the second question PTs were asked to name the situations and/or people that may cause writing anxiety. As can be seen in Table 3, anxiety generated by teachers and by PTs' past writing experiences in L1 and/or L2 have received the highest scores from the PTs with HA and AA.

Table 3: Factors Generating Anxiety

	HA	AA	LA
Teachers	17	8	-
Past experiences	13	5	-
Time limit/due date	9	3	2
Exams	7	3	1
Classroom setting	6	3	
Peer effect	5	3	-
Topic	4	1	-

The following statements illustrate PTs' ideas related to the factors generating writing anxiety:

-When the teacher walks around the class and checks what I am writing I feel very nervous.

-Teachers generally assume that we know how to write well in English... in fact I did not have any writing classes before I came here.

-Writing for me was only copying things from books.. and now I'm expected to discuss my own ideas. It's so difficult for me. I always question my ideas about the topic. Are they too simple? What will the teacher think when she reads my paper?

-I wish the teacher helped us individually with writing. I feel that I can't show my knowledge the way I want to.

-When I have to write in a crowded, noisy classroom in a limited time I feel anxious and cannot write.

-During the exams I feel very nervous and nothing comes to my mind.

-If my friends finish their writing before I do and leave the class, I panic.

-If I have to write on a topic I do not like, writing turns into a nightmare.

The third question aimed to find out the emotions of PTs when faced with a writing task. The majority of the PTs in the HA and AA categories indicated that they felt nervous while writing in English (23 HA, 28 AA, 2 LA). The majority cited the following two reasons: fear of getting low marks (15 HA, 16 AA, 2 LA) and inability to concentrate (8 HA, 12 AA). There was another group of PTs (11 HA, 10 AA, 3 LA) who indicated that they felt 'unhappy' because they had to do a task they did not like but felt it was necessary to do. On the other hand, five PTs with LA and one PT with AA stated that they did not have any feelings that were generated by writing anxiety. The following responses of the PTs illustrate their emotions:

-Writing makes me feel nervous, because I know that I'll get a low mark. Before starting the university, I did not have any 'real' writing class.

-I get so nervous before I start writing, that I cannot concentrate. I start looking at my watch, I panic and things go on like this.

The fourth question investigated whether the PTs had any physical symptoms of anxiety

while writing in L2.

Table 4: Physical symptoms of writing anxiety

	HA	AA	LA
Perspiring	7	4	2
Blushing	5	3	-
Trembling	5	3	-
Foot tapping	4	2	-
Rapid heart rate	4	3	-
Stomachache	1	3	-
Headache	3	4	-
Nothing	5	12	14

In the fifth question, 20 PTs with HA, 17 PTs with AA and 3 PTs with LA indicated they shared their thoughts and feelings about writing only with their classmates because they felt relieved this way and they wanted to learn how their friends coped with this problem.

The following statement illustrates their points:

-I talked to my friends how I felt while writing the research paper and realized that I was not the only one who had all these 'weird' symptoms when starting to write. I really felt relieved.

Most of the PTs further indicated that it was the first time they had such a 'detailed' talk on their writing attitudes with anyone but their friends. They seemed to benefit from this reflective practice as indicated in the following statements:

-I have never been asked what I felt about writing before. I think we should carry out interviews like these with our students too. It helps the student to see where the problem lies and may encourage him to collaborate with his teachers to overcome it

In the last question PTs were asked to discuss how their writing experiences would affect their teaching practices in the future. The following statements illustrate their ideas:

-I don't like writing. Whether it's in Turkish or in English, doesn't matter. I have taken many courses on writing and teaching writing, yet, I have doubts about myself. How will I teach writing in class and make my students like it?

-I believe that writing in English should begin as early as possible. And it shouldn't be the typical boring things, like summarizing a book or writing the same paragraph three times. Students should be encouraged to express their ideas freely and teachers should appreciate their writings.

-I didn't do much writing when I was a student at the primary and secondary school. There was a writing section at the end of every unit of the coursebook but the teacher either skipped it or gave it as homework and nobody did it. So the writing classes have always been a nightmare for me. As a prospective teacher I don't want my students to be in the same situation. Although I don't like writing much, I know that we all need it. I believe that it is necessary to show the students how to organize their thoughts (this is my major problem). I will also make them read before writing on a specific topic because knowledge on a topic helps you a lot.

-While answering the questions in this questionnaire, I realized that I can use a similar one with my own students in the future. After finding out their anxiety level, I think a good way would be to have individual conferences with the ones with high anxiety.

To summarize, the results of the study indicated that 32% of the participating PTs had high writing anxiety and 49 % had average writing anxiety. The PTs indicated inability to organize their thoughts and to produce ideas as the major difficulties they had during the L2 writing process. According to the PTs, teachers and their past L2 writing experiences have an effect on their writing anxiety. PTs with high anxiety reported to suffer from nervousness caused by fear of getting low marks and lack of concentration along with a number of other physical symptoms. PTs with high anxiety also indicated that they felt relieved when they shared their anxiety with their friends. Finally, PTs, considering their own writing experiences, emphasized the role of teachers in making writing a positive experience in learners' education.

Discussion and Implications

The present study aimed to find out the level of writing anxiety of Turkish prospective teachers of English. The participants' beliefs, experiences, and feelings on L2 writing were also focused on in order to generate an enlightening narration of their perspectives on foreign language writing anxiety.

The results of the study have shown that the majority of the participating prospective teachers of English had high and average anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner's theory (1989) concerning the development of language anxiety seems to be relevant here. The

researchers maintained that language anxiety levels would be the highest at the early stage of language learning and then decline as learners reach higher levels of English. Their theory is supported by many studies in the field (e.g., Gardner, Smythe, & Bruner 1977; Chapelle & Roberts, 1986; Yan, 1998). However, evidence to the contrary was found in the present study. Although the focus of the present study was not on the development of the anxiety level, many PTs with high L2 competence had high writing anxiety and seemed uncertain of their ability to organize their thoughts effectively and to produce relevant ideas, thereby suffering high anxiety. This result may indicate that proficiency might not be the only factor that determines the level of anxiety. In fact, only a small number of PTs indicated 'poor L2 vocabulary and grammar knowledge' as difficulties faced during the L2 writing process.

A review of literature has shown that sources of anxiety are closely intertwined, creating a difficulty in teasing out a discrete factor or source. In the present study, PTs reported the pedagogical practices of their teachers and their own past writing experiences as the major sources of their L2 writing anxiety among many other sources. Teacher-generated anxiety was also documented by Price (1991) who reported significant teacher-generated anxiety and by Young (1992) who examined instructor-learner interactions.

Both qualitative and quantitative data showed that many PTs suffered from physiological arousal when writing in English. That is, many indicated that their minds went blank when facing the essay writing task in English or that they had difficulties to organize their thoughts when writing in English. These results should be shared with PTs, and reasons and solutions should be discussed together. As prospective teachers, the participants should be made aware of the results as their future students may face the same problems or difficulties when doing the writing tasks. One solution can be spending more time on pre-writing tasks, such as free-writing, outlining or discussion, regularly.

The physical manifestations of writing anxiety mentioned by the PTs were very similar to those reported in other studies, e.g., blushing, perspiring (Wörde, 2003). Another finding of the study was that the majority of the PTs with high anxiety preferred sharing their feelings with their peers to get support and to feel relieved. The fact that the PTs chose their peers and not their teachers may be considered as a cultural issue, i.e.,

teacher authority in teacher-student relationships in the Turkey.

Based on the results of the studies investigating the effects of teachers' writing anxiety on their teaching practices in L1 English contexts, we may assume that prospective teacher writing anxiety similarly would affect their ways of teaching writing negatively in the EFL settings. Thus, the study has a number of implications for English language education in general as well as for teacher education programs. Regarding the former issue, writing in English should not be limited to controlled exercises in the primary and secondary education as production-based writing at the university level seems to cause anxiety in students who are not used to this kind of writing. That is, students should be encouraged to express their ideas and knowledge in writing from the early stages of education on. If L2 writing is to be a pleasant experience, it seems crucial to establish a learning environment where students can write in their L2 without embarrassment, where every student writer's contribution is adequately valued and where self-confidence is built up. To this end, instructors need to offer more encouragement and positive feedback, and allow experimentation without evaluation.

To carry out these changes in the elementary and secondary schools, the importance of writing, particularly process writing, should be emphasized in the Turkish national curriculum and the time allocated to writing should be increased. Yet, Turkish teachers may show resistance against such a change, especially against following the steps of process writing, because of several reasons, e.g., their heavy workload, large sized classes and their beliefs in traditional methodology. To achieve this aim, the Ministry can provide the teachers with in-service programs in which they are informed about the importance of writing for the future studies and careers of the learners as well as about research results regarding learners' writing anxiety and ways to overcome it. For example, teachers can be encouraged to incorporate peer feedback in their writing classes. Relevant research has claimed that social dimension of peer feedback enhances the participants' attitudes towards writing, has an impact on affect, increasing motivation through personal responsibility, greater variety, and interest (Topping, 2000; Rollinson, 2005). Peer feedback has also been considered to lead to a reduction in writer apprehension and an increase in writer confidence (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

Regarding the teacher education programs, prospective teachers should be provided

with the opportunity to reflect on their feelings and attitudes towards learning and teaching different skills. This knowledge would enable the instructors to design the content of the methodology courses accordingly. Moreover, focus-group discussions may help the PTs realize that there are others who share the same fears and feelings of discomfort and they may share their coping strategies with each other and with their instructors.

Given the importance of anxiety on a student's performance and future career, future research might well investigate prospective teacher anxiety in relation to different skills, e.g., teaching and learning of reading, speaking and listening. Qualitative research that examines the underlying reasons seems to have highly significant implications for teacher education programs and for education in general. Studies regarding the level of writing anxiety of Turkish students at different levels along with the development of their writing proficiencies as well as experimental studies assessing the impact of different types of treatment on the writing anxiety of learners seem to be of utmost importance.

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Appendix A:

Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (developed by Cheng, 2004)

Read the statements below very carefully. For each statement, among the choices 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 circle the most suitable one for you. As the findings of this test are going to be used in for research, we kindly request you be honest while answering the questions.

1. I strongly disagree
2. I disagree
3. I have no strong feelings either way
4. I agree
5. I strongly agree

1. While writing in English, I am not nervous at all.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint.

1 2 3 4 5

3. While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I often choose to write down my thoughts in English.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

6. My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I don't worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure.

1 2 3 4 5

9. If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.

1 2 3 4 5

11. My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint.

1 2 3 4 5

14. I am afraid that the other students would deride my English composition if they read it.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

16. I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

18. I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when write English compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

20. I am afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample for discussion in class.

1 2 3 4 5

21. I am not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor.

1 2 3 4 5

22. Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B: Open-ended questionnaire

1. Do you experience any difficulties while writing in L2? If yes, what are they?
2. Name the situations and people connected with your writing anxiety.
3. What kind of physical changes occur while you are writing in L2?
4. How do you feel when writing in L2?
5. Have you shared your experience of writing anxiety with anyone?
6. How do you think your attitudes towards L2 writing will affect your future teaching practices?



Role of Cognitive Style of Field-dependence/ independence in using Metacognitive and Cognitive Reading Strategies by a Group of Skilled and Novice Iranian Students of English Literature

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the role of cognitive style of field-dependence/independence (FD/FI) in using metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies in novice and skilled readers. Therefore, a TOEFL test was used to select some low and advanced level subjects, and the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) was employed to determine the cognitive style of subjects. Ultimately, based on the results of TOEFL and GEFT, 12 subjects (3 skilled field-dependent, 3 skilled field-independent, 3 novice field-dependent and 3 novice field-independent) were selected. The subjects were sophomore and senior students of English at Ferdowsi University. Each group of skilled and novice subjects were given two reading texts and they were asked to read the texts and say aloud whatever occurred in their minds while reading (think-aloud method). The subjects' voices were recorded and then transcribed. The resulting transcriptions which are called "protocols" were analyzed on the basis of a classification of metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies and the employed strategies were identified. Next, the frequencies of metacognitive and cognitive strategies employed by each group of subjects were obtained and to compare these frequencies, a Chi-Square technique was used. The results of the Chi-Square technique showed that the difference between frequency of metacognitive and cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by novice field-independent readers is not meaningful. This may mean that cognitive style of field-dependence/independence does not influence the use of metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies in novice readers. However, the difference between the frequency of

metacognitive and cognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent and skilled field-independent readers was meaningful which may mean that cognitive style of FD/FI influences the use of reading strategies in skilled readers. It was also found that the difference between metacognitive and cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent and skilled field-dependent subjects was not meaningful. This may mean that the level of proficiency does not influence the use of metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies in field-dependent subjects. However, the difference between the metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies used by novice field-independent and skilled field-independent readers was meaningful which may mean that cognitive style of FD/FI influences the use of metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies when readers are field-independent.

Key Words: reading, cognitive style, field-dependence, field independence, cognitive reading strategies, metacognitive reading strategies

Introduction

Reading is a very important skill in learning a foreign language and reading comprehension is claimed to be the main purpose of foreign language teaching in Iran. But acquiring and mastering this skill seems complex to many learners and they often find it difficult to exploit this skill in their learning experience. On the other hand, the findings of many ESL/EFL research projects have shown the positive effect of learning strategy instruction on enhancing reading comprehension of learners. But the point is that many individual differences such as age, sex, attitudes, motivation, setting, level of proficiency, etc can influence the use of learning strategies. One factor which has rarely been investigated is the cognitive style of field-dependence/independence which has been suggested as “potentially important in second language acquisition” (Larsen Freeman and Long, 1991, p. 193). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the role of cognitive style of FD/FI in using metacognitive and cognitive strategies in reading by a group of skilled and novice field-dependent and field-independent readers. To investigate such a role, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by novice field-independent readers.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by novice field-independent readers.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-dependent readers.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-dependent readers.

H₀₇: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers.

H₀₈: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers.

Review of Literature

Cognitive Style

The term cognitive style refers to “variations among individuals in the preferred way of perceiving, organizing, or recalling information and experience” (Stansfield and Hansen, 1983, p. 263). Witkin, Oltman, Raskin and Karp (1971) also define cognitive style as “self-consistent modes of functioning which individuals show in their perceptual and intellectual activities” (p. 3). As mentioned earlier, among the various identified cognitive styles, cognitive style of field-dependence/ independence has been suggested potentially more significant for second language acquisition. Witkin, Oltman, Raskin and Karp (1971) provide the following description of field dependence/independence cognitive style.

In a field-dependent mode of perceiving, perception is strongly dominated by the overall organization of the surrounding field and parts of the field are experienced as ‘fused’. In a field-independent mode of perceiving, parts of the field are experienced as discrete from the organized ground (p.4).

Brown (1993) defines field-independent style as “the ability to perceive a particular relevant item or factor in a field of distracting items” and field dependence as “the tendency to be dependent on a total field so that parts embedded within the field are not easily perceived though the total field is perceived clearly as a unified whole” (p. 106).

In order to determine the field-dependence or independence of learners, various tests have been developed by researchers but the version most widely used in second language acquisition is the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT). This test contains three sections and in each section, some simple forms have been hidden in more complex geometric forms. The subject’s task is to locate these simple forms. The first section is used

essentially for practice and the time limit for second and third sections is five minutes for each. The score is determined by the number of correct simple forms identified in the second and third section of the test.

Subjects who score high on GEFT are considered field independent and those who score low are considered field dependent. But this classification has been rejected by some scholars (Brown 1993; Chapelle and Green, 1992; Elliott, 1995). They maintain that though a high score on GEFT indicates field independence, a low score does not necessarily imply relatively high field dependence. However, to establish a firmer criterion for field-dependence/ independence classification, Case (1974) and Scardamalia (1977) suggest a statistical operation. According to this criterion, subjects whose scores on GEFT are less than 1/4 standard deviation (SD) below the mean are considered field-dependent (i.e. $FD < \text{mean} - 1/4 \text{ SD}$), and those whose scores are more than 1/4 standard deviation above the mean are classified as field independent (i.e. $FI > \text{mean} + 1/4 \text{ SD}$). Subjects with a score between 1/4 standard deviation below the mean and 1/4 standard deviation above the mean can be called field-intermediate (FIInt) who may show characteristics of both field-dependent and field-independent people.

There are a considerable number of studies that have investigated the relationship between field-dependence/independence and L₂ Learning. Brown (1993) proposes two conflicting hypotheses regarding the relationship of field-dependence/independence cognitive style and L₂ learning. In his first hypothesis, he states that “field independence is closely related to classroom learning that involves analysis, attention to details, and mastering of exercises, drills and other focused activities”(p.106).

The second conflicting hypothesis proposed by Brown is that “primarily field dependent persons will, by virtue of their empathy, social out-reach and perception of other people, be successful in learning the communicative aspects of second language” (p.107). The findings of Johnson, Prior and Artuso (2000) provide evidence for this second hypothesis.

These “paradoxical” hypotheses lead Brown (1993) to conclude that “clearly both styles are important” and “language learning in the ‘field’ beyond the constraint of the classroom, requires a field – dependent style and the classroom types of learning requires conversely, a field – independent style” (pp. 107-8).

Seliger (1977), in a study, found that field-independent learners interacted more in the classroom. He argues that this was because of the field-independent subjects' indifference to the approval of others and their risk-taking characteristics (cited in Chapelle and Green, 1992). His result could be interpreted contradictory to the hypothesis that speaking ability may be closely related to field-dependent cognitive style (Hansen and Standfield, 1981, cited in Elliott, 1995).

Brown (1993) points out that field-dependence/independence are not in "complementary distribution" and students are able to exercise both field-dependence/independence in different situations.

Besides those who maintain a relationship between field-dependence/ independence and second language learning, there are some other researchers who deny any role for field-dependence/independence. Ellis (1994) states that the research into field-dependence/independence has shed little light on the relationship between this cognitive style and L₂ learning and concludes that "field-dependence/independence does not appear to be an important factor in SLA" (p.507). Moreover, Griffith and Sheen (1992), particularly dismissive of field-dependence/independence, argue that "field dependence/independence does not have and never has had any relevance for second language learning", because the concept of field-dependence/independence is "theoretically flawed" (p.133). However, Chapelle (1992) calls this view into question and states that "Griffiths and Sheen have confused fundamental theoretical and research issues" (p. 375) and the relation between field-dependence/independence and second language learning has a logical foundation and specific benefits might be gained through careful examination of its evaluational results.

Cognitive style of FD/FI has been also found important in language testing. Bachman (1990) hypothesizes that those "with high degree of field-independence would perform well on discrete point tests, in which the items are unrelated to one another and to the overall context in which they occur" (p.275). He also hypothesizes that persons with low field-independence degrees "perform well on integrative tests such as the cloze and the oral interview, in which they are not required to be conscious to discrete items". Chapelle and Roberts (1986) reported significant correlation between field-independence and cloze test in adult ESL students (cited in Chapelle and Green, 1992).

To summarize the research findings, field-independence has been shown to be significantly and positively related to scores on several standardized paper – and – pencil tests, to the use of monitoring, and to success on the integrative measures of imitation and cloze.

Learning strategies

The term 'learning strategies' refers to “special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 1). A distinction is usually made between learning strategies and communication strategies which “are problem-oriented, that is they are employed by the learner because he lacks or can not gain access to linguistic resources required to express an intended meaning” (Ellis, 1991, p. 181).

Factors influencing learning strategy use

Researchers investigating language learning strategies have found that various factors can affect strategy choice by learners. Oxford (1989) mentions some of these factors including the language being learned, the learning goals, the level of learning (or the proficiency of learners), the learner’s self-awareness, age and sex. Moreover, she maintains that affective variables such as attitudes, motivational level, motivational orientation, personality factors and learning experiences also play a role in the strategy use. Wharton (2000) also refers to proficiency level, cultural background, first and other languages learnt, motivation, foreign language versus second language settings, gender and language learning styles as factors affecting the types, numbers and frequency of use of language learning strategies.

Ellis (1994) in reviewing the factors that have been found to affect strategy choice refers to learner beliefs about language learning, age, strength of motivation, the type of motivation and goals, learner’s personal background, language being learnt, setting and the task. He maintains that little research has been done to investigate the role of factors such as aptitude, learning styles, personality factors, sex and socioeconomic status in learning strategy choice.

Learning strategy classification

Researchers have differently classified learning strategies but one classification which is based on Anderson's theory of information processing is the one resented by O'Malley and Chamot (1990).

O'Malley and Chamot identify three categories of language learning strategies, i.e. metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective learning strategies. Metacognitive strategies are "higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (p.44). The metacognitive learning strategies identified by O'Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:

1. Planning: previewing the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learnt, often by skimming the text for the organizing principle.
2. Directed attention: deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distracters.
3. Functional planning: planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task.
4. Selective attention: deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of input; often by scanning for key words, concepts and/or linguistic markers.
5. Self-management: understanding the conditions that help one learn and arranging for the presence of these conditions.
6. Monitoring: checking one's comprehension during listening or reading and checking the accuracy and/or appropriateness of one's oral or written production while it is taking place.
7. Self-evaluation: checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against a standard after it has been completed (p.37).

Cognitive strategies are "more directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material" (p.8). The cognitive strategies identified by O'Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:

Resourcing: using target language reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, or textbooks.

Repetition: imitating a language model, including overt practice and silent rehearsal.

Grouping: classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their attributes or meaning.

Deduction: applying rules to understand or produce the second language or making up rules based on language analysis.

Imagery: using visual images (either mental or actual) to understand or remember new information.

Auditory representation: planning back in one's mind the sound of a word, phrase, or longer language sequence.

Keyword method: remembering a new word in the second language by:

(a) identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word and

(b) generating easily recalled images of some relationship with the first language homonyms and the new word in the second language.

Elaboration: relating new information to prior knowledge, relating different parts of new information to each other or making meaningful personal associations with the new information.

Transfer: using previous linguistic knowledge or prior skills to assist comprehension or production.

Inferencing: using available information to guess the meaning of new items, predict outcomes, or filling missing information.

Note-taking: writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form while listening or reading.

Summarizing: making a mental, oral, or written summary of new information gained through listening or reading.

Recombination: constructing a meaningful sentence or larger language sequence by combining known elements in a new way.

Translation: using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing second language (p.138).

Finally social/affective strategies are referred to as “a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over affect” (p. 45). The social/affective strategies identified by O’Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:

1. Questioning for clarification: eliciting from a teacher or peer more additional explanations, rephrasing, examples, or verification.
2. Cooperation: working together or with one or more peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance.
3. Self-talk: using mental control to assure oneself that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety about a task (p.120).

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were 12 students majoring in English at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. In order to select these subjects, first, a group of 33 English seniors and 30 English sophomores were given a TOEFL test and on the basis of the results of the TOEFL, students were classified into elementary, intermediate and advanced level subjects. Then, the same students were given the Group Embedded

Figures Test (GEFT), and on the basis of the results of GEFT, they were classified as field-dependent, field-intermediate or field-independent. To select the ultimate subjects, from the advanced group, three field-dependent and three field-independent subjects were chosen to represent skilled field-dependent (SFD) and skilled field-independent (SFI) readers. From elementary group, three field-dependent and three field-independent subjects were also selected to represent the novice field-dependent (NFD) and novice field-independent (NFI) readers. It should be noted that since the design of the study was an Ex-post-facto design and the aim was NOT to investigate the effectiveness of strategy instruction in FD/FI subjects, the participants didn't receive any explicit instruction in using metacognitive and cognitive strategies in the course of this study.

Instruments

The measuring instruments used in this study consisted of a TOEFL test, the GEFT test, four reading texts and a tape recorder and some cassettes. To select the appropriate reading texts, since the participants were majoring in English literature, in order to control the effect of different subjects' familiarity with the topic and genre, eleven literary texts were selected and by using the Fog index of readability, the difficulty levels of the texts were computed. But, since the Fog index of readability is a linguistic formula, two university professors of English were also asked to judge on the appropriateness of the texts. Finally, two texts were selected for skilled readers and two texts were also selected for novice readers. (See appendix A).

Procedure

The data collection procedure in this study was think-aloud method. The subjects were given the two reading texts and they were asked to read the text and say the main idea of the texts but while reading they should say aloud whatever occurred in their minds and whatever they thought about while reading. To encourage learners to verbalize their thoughts, they were allowed to use their mother tongue i.e. Persian. The subjects' voices were recorded and then transcribed and in these transcription the following symbols which have also been used by Ghonsooly (1997) were used:

S2 = sentence number

/03/ = time seconds

/ / = utterance boundary

' ' = utterances read in English as it originally appeared in the text

----- = decoding

↗ = rising intonation

↘ = falling intonation

RS = reading silently

RRA = resuming reading aloud

The resulting transcriptions are called “protocols” (See Appendix B for a sample protocol). It was tried to analyze these transcriptions on the basis of O’Malley and Chamot’s classification of learning strategies, but since their classification was in fact a classification of learning strategies in general not reading strategies and furthermore, some new strategies were identified and some strategies were not exactly the same as those defined by O’Malley and Chamot, it was tried to define a new set of reading strategies. Some of these strategies which are accompanied by an asterisk (*) below have also been identified by Ghonsooly (1997).

Metacognitive reading strategies

1. Planning: This strategy refers to the reader’s decision on the way to read the text and what to search for in the text.
2. Monitoring (problem identification at word level): This strategy refers to the reader’s identification of a problem at word level and stating the existence of such a problem.
3. * Evaluation (Problem identification at sentence/discourse level): This strategy is observed when the reader comes across a problem in understanding a sentence or a set of sentences and states this difficulty.
4. *Evaluation (Reprocessing to get the gist): This strategy occurs when the reader fails to comprehend a sentence or part of the text and either states his aim to reread that part or starts to read the missed part again.

5. Self-questioning: This strategy refers to the reader's asking himself a question accompanied by rising intonation with the purpose of clarifying a problem in comprehension.
6. Self-correction (Correcting a previous hypothesis): This strategy occurs when the reader discovers the falsity of a prior guess or inference after reading more of the text.
7. Self-correction (Correcting a wrong pronunciation): This strategy occurs when the reader mispronounces a word and repeats the word to correct the pronunciation.
8. Selective attention (Identifying important information): This strategy occurs when the reader identifies the important parts of the text
9. *Selective attention (Ignoring trivial or difficult sections): This strategy occurs when the reader can not understand part of the text but he decides to ignore it either because he regards that part unimportant in comprehending the whole text or because he finds that part difficult to process.

Cognitive reading strategies

1. Using background knowledge: This strategy refers to using knowledge about the world and the contents of the text that contributes to understanding and processing the text. This strategy corresponds to what O'Malley and Chamot call elaboration.
2. Prediction: This strategy refers to predicting the content of the text based on the information presented in part of the text.
3. Repetition to get the meaning of a word: This strategy occurs when the reader repeats a word or a phrase in order to remember or retrieve the meaning from the long term memory.
4. Repetition before a difficult word: Sometimes the repetition of a word is not because of the reader's attempt to remember its meaning, rather the reason for repeating the word is that it occurs before a difficult word and by repeating the first word, the reader takes time to decode or understand the difficult word or item.
5. Paraphrase: This strategy refers to the reader's attempt to either provide synonyms and antonyms for a word or restating the contents of a sentence in his own words.
6. Inferencing: This strategy refers to using the context or the knowledge of suffixes and prefixes to guess the meaning of an unknown word.

7. Inferencing (Reprocessing to get the meaning of a word): This strategy refers to the act of rereading a phrase, a clause or a sentence in order to infer or guess the meaning of an unknown word.

8. Translation: This strategy refers to using L1 to provide equivalents for a word or stating the contents of a sentence.

9. * Watchers: This strategy refers to reader's attempt to keep an unfamiliar item or vocabulary in mind to be tackled later on by getting help from incoming information.

10. Using a dictionary: This strategy refers to the simple act of referring to a dictionary to look up the meaning of an unknown word or item. This strategy corresponds to what O'Malley and Chamot call resourcing.

11. * Decoding: This strategy refers to breaking a word into syllables in order to ease the pronunciation or processing its meaning. This strategy is often followed by a repetition of the word.

12. *Word identification based on phonological similarity: This strategy refers to the reader's attempt to get the meaning of an unknown lexical item by comparing it to its closest possible neighbor, which bears some phonological similarity.

13. Grammatical analysis: This strategy refers to using the knowledge of grammar to interpret and understand a word, a phrase or a sentence. This strategy corresponds to what O'Malley and Chamot call deduction.

14. Imagery: This strategy refers to using visual images and visualizing the content of a text in order to understand.

After identifying the employed strategies (See appendix C for a sample profile of data analysis), the frequency of metacognitive and cognitive strategies was computed. In order to test the hypotheses of the study, due to the nature of the data which are frequencies, a Chi-Square statistical technique was used.

A note which should be kept in mind is that as Brown (1993) maintains strategies are "contextualized battle plans" which vary intraindividually so that each person may use different learning strategies in different times and situations and for different purposes. Thus, the strategies used by the subjects should be interpreted as those employed in an academic setting for the purpose of main idea construction of a reading text.

Results and discussion

Having analyzed the subjects' protocols, the frequency of cognitive and metacognitive strategies was computed in each group of subjects. The following tables show the frequency of these strategies in each group of subjects.

Table 1: Total frequency and percentage of strategies

	Metacognitive	Cognitive
f	139	240
Percent	36.7%	63.3%

As Table 1 shows, the frequency of cognitive strategies is higher than the one of metacognitive strategies. Tables 2 and 4 show the frequency of each cognitive and metacognitive strategy in different groups of subjects. In these tables, the following abbreviations have been used:

Problem identification at word level = (PIWL)

Problem identification at sentence/discourse level = (PISL)

Reprocessing to get the gist = (RGG)

Self-Questioning = (Self-Q)

Correcting a previous hypothesis = (CPH)

Correcting a wrong pronunciation = (CWP)

Identifying important information = (III)

Ignoring trivial or difficult sections = (ITDS)

Using background knowledge = (UBK)

Repetition to get the meaning of word = (GMW)

Repetition before a difficult word = (BDW)

Reprocessing to get the meaning of a word = (RGMW)

Using a dictionary = Dic

Word identification based on phonological similarity = WIBPS

Table 2: Frequency of metacognitive strategies

Strategy	SFI	SFD	NFI	NFD
Planning	1	0	0	0
Monitoring (PIWL)	22	7	4	4
Evaluation (PISL)	9	1	4	3
Evaluation (RGG)	28	5	19	11
Self-Q	7	2	0	1
Self-Correction CPH)	1	1	1	0
Self-Correction(CWP)	0	0	1	2
Selective attention(III)	0	1	0	0
Selective attention(ITDS)	1	1	0	2
Total	69	18	29	23

Table 3: Frequency of cognitive strategies

Strategy	SFI	SFD	NFI	NFD
UBK	9	13	0	0
Prediction	1	0	0	0
Repetition (GMW)	23	3	8	10
Repetition (BDW)	0	0	2	2
Translation	9	0	7	3
Paraphrase	36	10	6	4
Inferencing	18	2	2	2
Inferencing (RGMW)	9	3	4	4
Watchers	2	0	1	0
Dic	0	0	3	1
Decoding	9	5	9	15
WIBPS	3	0	0	0
Grammatical analysis	1	0	0	0
Imagery	0	0	0	1
Total	120	36	42	42

As explained earlier, to test the hypotheses of the study, Chi-Square statistical technique was used to determine the significance or insignificance of the observed differences.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by novice field-independent readers.

The result of the Chi-Square test for this hypothesis is shown in the table below.

Table 4: Chi-Square test for H₀₁

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
0.69	1	<0.05	3.84

As the information in table 4 indicates since the value of observed χ^2 is smaller than the critical value of χ^2 , the first hypothesis of the study (H_{01}) is retained. In other words, there is no statistically meaningful difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and the metacognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers and the cognitive style of field-dependence/independence seems not to influence novice readers' use of metacognitive strategies.

The reason may be that language learners at elementary levels have no idea about metacognition, in general and metacognitive reading strategies, in particular. The small number of metacognitive strategies used by novice readers in this study (23 by field-dependent readers and 29 by field-independent readers) is indicative of such unfamiliarity. Even, from 29 metacognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers, 17 strategies are evaluation (RGG) strategies used by NFI₃ subject, and if we ignore these 17 strategies because they may be the result of some extraneous factors and individual differences which are not clear, and in fact are not in the focus of this study, the number of metacognitive strategies used by NFI subjects is 12 which is a very small number. In novice field-dependent readers also, from 22 metacognitive strategies, 8 strategies are evaluation (RGG) strategies used by NFD₁ subject. If we ignore these 8 strategies, the number of metacognitive strategies is 13 (compare 12 strategies used by novice field-independent readers).

All this indicates the necessity of explicit instruction on metacognition and metacognitive reading strategies at elementary levels. Learners at this level should know these strategies and should have opportunities to use them.

Regarding the high frequency of evaluation (RGG) strategy used by both NFI and NFD readers, it can be claimed that all learners are familiar with this strategy even in their L1 and they have often been told that they should reread a sentence or paragraph when they cannot understand it or when it does not make sense to them.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by novice field-independent readers. The result of Chi-Square test for this hypothesis is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Chi-Square test for Ho₂

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
0	1	<0.05	3.84

As it can be seen from the table above, the value of observed χ^2 is 0 which may mean cognitive style of field-dependence/independence has no influence on using cognitive reading strategies at elementary levels.

Looking back at table 3, it is seen that cognitive strategies of repetition (GMW) and decoding have been mostly employed by both NFD and NFI subjects. The reason may be that all readers are familiar with these two simple strategies and even a learner naturally repeats a difficult new word to see if it rings a bell to him or decodes and breaks it down into its parts especially if it is a long word. However, if we omit these two strategies from table 3, the number of cognitive strategies used by NFD subjects is 17 and the number of strategies used by NFI subjects is 25 which again indicate the necessity of strategy instruction and more practicing opportunities for readers at elementary levels.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers. The result of Chi-Square test for this hypothesis is shown in the table below.

Table 6: Chi-Square test for Ho₃

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
29.89	1	<0.05	3.84

As the result of Chi-Square test indicates, the third hypothesis of the study is rejected. In other words, the difference between metacognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent and skilled field-independent subjects is statistically meaningful.

Since these subjects are advanced, and they should be all familiar with metacognitive strategies such as monitoring (PIWL), evaluation (RGG), evaluation (PISL) and self-questioning, though not necessarily in technical terms, it can be claimed that the reason for such a difference in using these strategies may be the cognitive style of field-dependence/independence. This is in line with Abraham's (1983) finding that field-independent subjects used more monitoring strategy. What this indicates is the

necessity of perhaps explicit instruction and more practicing opportunities and conscious employment of metacognitive strategies by skilled field-dependent readers.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers. The table below shows the result of Chi-Square test for Ho₄.

Table 7: Chi-Square test for Ho₄

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
45.22	1	<0.05	3.84

The value of χ^2 rejects this hypothesis strongly and it means that the difference between cognitive strategies used by skilled field-dependent and skilled field-independent subjects is significant and meaningful.

Looking back at table 3, it can be claimed that since the level of proficiency of subjects is the same (i.e. advanced), the apparent difference may be because of the cognitive style of readers. Here again, the necessity of more practicing opportunities in cognitive strategies for skilled field-dependent subjects is clear.

Ho₅: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-dependent readers. Result of Chi-Square test for this hypothesis is shown in the table below.

Table 8: Chi-Square test for Ho₅

χ^2_{obs} value	Df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
0.6	1	<0.05	3.84

The value of χ^2 in the above table confirms this hypothesis i.e. the difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and skilled field-dependent readers, is not meaningful. What this implies is that in field-dependent readers, the level of proficiency does not have a strong influence on the metacognitive strategies used or put it in another way, subjects with cognitive style of field-dependence, regardless of their level of proficiency use a few metacognitive strategies. This finding implies the

necessity of strategy instruction and providing the field-dependent readers with practicing opportunities regardless of their level of proficiency.

Ho₆: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-dependent readers. Table 9 shows the result of Chi-Square test for Ho₆.

Table 9: Chi-Square test for Ho₆

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
0.46	1	<0.05	3.84

The value of observed χ^2 retains this hypothesis i.e. the difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-dependent readers and those used by skilled field-dependent subjects is not meaningful.

But looking at table 3, some eye-catching differences can be seen, e.g. UBK, repetition (GMW), paraphrase and decoding. Examining the table more closely, it appears that the frequency of some simple strategies such as repetition (GMW), and decoding is higher in novice field-dependent subjects (10 and 15 in comparison to 3 and 5 respectively), while the frequency of more complicated strategies such as UBK and paraphrase which require more command on the L2 is higher in skilled field-dependent subjects. Therefore, though the statistical computation shows no significant difference, based on the above-mentioned accounts it can be claimed that the level of proficiency of field-dependent readers influences the type of cognitive strategies they use so that novice field-dependent readers use simple cognitive strategies such as repetition (GMW) and decoding, while skilled field-dependent readers use strategies such as UBK and paraphrase. However, the possible role of other individual differences should be kept in mind and the results should be interpreted cautiously. In general, it can be claimed that both groups of NFD and SFD readers require strategy instruction and more opportunities to practice using cognitive strategies.

Ho₇: There is no significant difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers. The result of Chi-Square test for this hypothesis is shown in the table below.

Table 10: Chi-Square test for Ho₇

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
16.32	1	<0.05	3.84

The value of observed χ^2 rejects this hypothesis, i.e. there is a meaningful difference between metacognitive strategies used by novice field-independent and skilled field-independent readers. Looking back at table 2, this difference is clear. Even from among 19 strategies of evaluation (RGG), 17 strategies have been used by NFI₃ subject which is indicative of the possible role of other individual differences.

Therefore, it can be claimed that in case of field-independent readers, the level of proficiency influences the metacognitive strategies used by the subjects. What this means is the necessity of strategy instruction and extensive practicing opportunities for novice field-independent readers.

Ho₈: There is no significant difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-independent readers and those used by skilled field-independent readers. To test the final hypothesis of the study, the Chi-Square statistical technique was also used and its result is shown in the table below.

Table 11: Chi-Square test for Ho₈

χ^2_{obs} value	df	P	χ^2_{critic} value
37.55	1	<0.05	3.84

As the information in table 3 indicates since the value of observed χ^2 is much greater than the critical value of χ^2 , this null hypothesis is rejected. The rejection of this hypothesis means that the difference between cognitive strategies used by novice field-independent and skilled field-independent subjects is meaningful. Referring to table 3, this difference can be obviously seen. This table also shows that novice field-independent readers resort more to simple cognitive strategies such as repetition and using dictionaries.

To put this finding in other words, it can be claimed that field-independent readers' level of proficiency influences their use of cognitive strategies. This finding also indicates

the necessity of cognitive strategy instruction for novice field-independent readers. The finding of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. At elementary levels, the cognitive style of field-dependence/ independence does not seem to influence the metacognitive and cognitive strategies used by field-dependent and field-independent readers. The reason for this may be the fact that in elementary levels, learners do not use many learning strategies and the little difference between the few strategies used by field-dependent and field-independent readers can not be ascribed to the cognitive style of field-dependence/independence with certainty.
2. At advanced levels, the cognitive style of field-dependence/independence seems to influence the type of strategies used so that the field-independent readers tend to use more metacognitive and cognitive strategies.
3. The proficiency level of field dependent readers does not seem to have a great influence on using the metacognitive strategies in that neither skilled field-dependent readers nor novice field-dependent readers use many metacognitive strategies.
4. The proficiency level of field dependent readers seems to influence the use of cognitive strategies so that skilled field-dependent readers tend to use more cognitive strategies.
5. In case of skilled field-independent subjects, the level of proficiency is an important factor that influences the metacognitive and cognitive strategies so that skilled field-independent readers employ more cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Pedagogical implications of the study

The result and conclusions of this study indicate that level of proficiency and cognitive style of field-dependence / independence are both important factors in using metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies. Knowing from the previous research that reading strategy use leads to better comprehension and more successful reading, the findings of this study imply more careful planning in reading strategy instruction. The findings imply that at elementary levels explicit metacognitive and cognitive strategy instruction is necessary for both field-dependent and field-independent readers and all readers should be given adequate opportunities to practice all sorts of metacognitive and

cognitive reading strategies. Not only are this strategy instruction and practicing opportunities necessary for novice field-dependent and field-independent readers but they are also vital for advanced level and skilled field-dependent readers. Teachers should try to provide extensive opportunities for all readers and encourage all novice and skilled field-dependent readers to use these strategies. This statement does not mean that skilled field-independent readers do not need practicing opportunities, rather they may also benefit from these opportunities and become more aware of the reading strategies. The final word is that, since this research was a case study, its results and conclusions can not be generalized with certainty and many more research projects are still needed to replicate this study.

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Appendix A

Text 1 - Skilled readers

With the obvious and important exceptions of Milton and Marvell, plus a scattering of minor poets like Francis Quarles and George Wither, very little of enduring literature of the early seventeenth century was the work of Puritans or Puritan sympathizers. The great Puritan art forms of the age were the sermon and the religious tracts. This is not just the joke it may seem. Puritan sermons, of which there were many thousands, explored in intimate detail the psychology of Christian groping for evidence of salvation, and Puritan tracts developed forceful ways of exciting the zeal of their readers. Yet on the whole, the Puritans mistrusted the adornments of literary art on the same principle that they suspected graven idols (statues, stained-glass windows, and paintings), music, and religious rituals. These were all allurements and enticements of the sensual word. They threatened to contaminate and diffuse the pure spiritual energy of divinely infused faith. Though the Puritans did not directly compete with the old forms of courtly literature, they subjected those who did not follow the old forms to heavy moral and social pressure. And

on another level entirely, philosophers like Bacon and Hobbes campaigned unrelentingly against the use of insignificant words and merely decorative language. Like the Puritans, but from another angle, they insisted on a plain, direct manner of unequivocal prose. Though doubtless not put forward with this intent, one effect of the plain new language (sometimes summarized as “one-word-one-thing”) was to undermine the whole intricate structure of the correspondent universe.

Text 2 - Skilled readers

Although favorable to the essay, literary conditions in the early nineteenth century were unfavorable in the extreme to writing for the stage. By a licensing act that was not repealed until 1843, only the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theaters had the right to produce “legitimate”—that is to say, spoken-drama. The other theaters were restricted by law to entertainments in which there could be no dialogue except to music, and so put on mainly dancing, pantomime, and various types of musical plays. The two monopoly theaters were vast and ill-lighted, and their audiences were noisy and unruly; as a result, actors played in a grandiose and orotund style. To succeed under such conditions, plays had also to be blatant and magniloquent, so that the drama of that period (fettered also by rigid moral and political censorship) tended to the extremes of either farce or melodrama. None of the plays written by the professional playwrights of the time is read nowadays. They survive mainly in the limbo of the scholarly monographs on the history of the theater.

Text 1 - Novice readers

There have been a number of important American novelists in this century, but F. Scott Fitzgerald is one of the more interesting ones. Born in 1896, educated at Princeton, his novels describe the post-war American society, very much caught up in the rhythms of jazz. In 1920, the same year that he published his first book, *This Side of Paradise*, he married Zelda Sayre, also a writer. His most famous book *The Great Gatsby* appeared in 1925. Fitzgerald had a great natural talent, but he was a compulsive drinker. A brilliant success in his youth, he never made the adjustments necessary to a maturing writer in a changing world. His later novels, *All the Sad Young Men*, *Tender is the Night*, and *The Last Tycoon*, were less successful, so that when he died in 1940 his books were out of

print and he had been almost forgotten. His reputation now is far greater than it was in his lifetime, especially since the film version of his novel *The Great Gatsby* was released.

Text 2 - Novice readers

There are many ways of communicating without using speech. Signals, signs, symbols, and gestures may be found in every known culture. The basic function of a signal is to impinge upon the environment in such a way that it attracts attention, as, for example, the dots and dashes of a telegraphic circuit. Coded to refer to speech, the potential for communication is very great. While less adaptable to the codification of words, signs contain greater meaning in and of themselves. A stop sign or a barber pole conveys meaning quickly and conveniently. Symbols are more difficult to describe than either signals or signs because of their intricate relationship with the receiver's cultural perceptions. In some cultures, applauding in a theater provides performers with an auditory symbol of approval. Gestures such as waving and handshaking also communicate certain cultural messages.

Appendix B

Transcription of the think aloud data revealed by SFI₂

/Ok/What is the gist of this text here?/I should have first a preview of the text/S1/'With the obvious and important exceptions of Milton and Marvell'
/Milton ↗?/I know him/'But Marvell/who's Marvell?↗/'plus a scattering of minor poets like Francis Quarles and George Wither very little of the enduring literature of the early 17th century was the work of Puritans or Puritan sympathizers'
/01/'sympathizers'/'sympathizers'/It may be related to sympathy/'very little of the enduring literature'/'enduring literature'/permanent or lasting literature may be
/S2/'The great Puritan art forms of the age'/02/'of the age?↗/of the era/'were the sermon and the religious tracts'/02/S3/'This is not just the joke it may seem'
/S4/'Puritan sermons of which there were many thousands explored in intimate detail'/02/'the psychology of Christian groping for evidence of salvation' /02/ 'and the Puritan tracts developed forceful ways of exciting the zeal of their readers'/02/What does it mean?/ 'the intimate detail'/the close detail'/the

psychology of Christian groping for evidence of salvation’/‘salvation’/perfect happiness/‘groping for evidence of salvation’ may be actually looking for evidence of salvation/S5/‘Yet, on the whole, Puritans mistrusted the adornments of literary art on the same principle that they suspected graven idols, statues, stained-glass windows and paintings’/02/‘music and religious rituals’/S6/‘These are all allurements and enticements of the sensual world’/02/S7/‘They threatened to contaminate and diffuse the pure spiritual energy of divinely infused faith’/03/‘They threatened to contaminate and diffuse the pure spiritual energy of divinely infused faith’ /01/‘the sensual world’/01/‘these are allurements and enticements of the sensual world’/02/they threatened to contaminate the pure world of religion may be/S8/‘Though the Puritans did not directly compete with old forms of literature, they subjected those who did not follow old forms to heavy moral or social pressure’/S9/‘And on another level, entirely philosophers like Bacon and Hobbes campaigned unrelentingly against the use of insignificant words and merely decorative language’ /02/ ‘campaigned’ /01/ campaigned unrelentingly’/They campaigned against the use of insignificant words/S10/‘Like Puritans but from another angle, they insisted on a direct, plain manner of unequivocal prose’/01/‘unequivocal prose’/I haven’t seen this word/ ‘unequivocal’ /S11/‘Though doubtless not to put forward with this intent, one effect of the plain, new language, sometimes summarized as one-word-one- thing, was to undermine the whole intricate structure of the correspondent universe’/02/‘to understand the whole intricate’/complex/‘structure of the correspondent universe’/02/this sentence is very complicated/‘the whole intricate structure of the correspondent universe’/the universe outside corresponds the universe in the literature/this outside universe actually has got intricate structure/the text talks about a school of literature, its followers and its philosophers/

Appendix C

SFI₂ Profile

Protocol	Strategy
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Text 1:

1	/what is the gist of the text here?/	Self-Q
2	/I should have first a preview of the text/	Planning
	<p>S1: With the obvious and important exceptions of Milton and Marvell, plus a scattering of minor poets like Francis Quarles and George Wither, very little of enduring literature of the early seventeenth century was the work of Puritans or Puritan sympathizers.</p>	
1	/'Milton'?/	Self-Q
2	/I know him/	UBK
3	/But 'Marvell'/	Repetition (GMW)
4	/Who's Marvell?/	Self-Q
5	/'sympathizers'/	Repetition (GMW)
6	/'sympathizers'/	Repetition (GMW)
7	/It may be related to sympathy/	Inferencing
8	/'very little of the enduring literature'/	Inferencing (RGMW)
9	/'enduring literature'/	Repetition (GMW)
10	/permanent or lasting literature/	Paraphrase

S2: The great Puritan art forms of the age were the sermon and the religious tracts.

- | | | |
|---|----------------|------------|
| 1 | /of the age?↗/ | Self-Q |
| 2 | /of the era/ | Paraphrase |

S3: This is not just the joke it may seem.

S4: Puritan sermons, of which there were many thousands, explored in intimate detail the psychology of Christian groping for evidence of salvation, and Puritan tracts developed forceful ways of exciting the zeal of their readers.

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|
| 1 | /What does this sentence mean?/ | Evaluation
(PISL) |
| 2 | /'The intimate detail'/ | Repetition
(GMW) |
| 3 | /the close detail/ | Paraphrase |
| 4 | /'the psychology of Christian groping for evidence of salvation'/ | Evaluation
(RGG) |
| 5 | /'salvation'/ | Repetition
(GMW) |
| 6 | /perfect happiness/ | Paraphrase |
| 7 | /'groping for evidence of salvation' may be actually looking for evidence of salvation/ | Paraphrase |

S5: Yet on the whole, the Puritans mistrusted the adornments of literary art on the same principle that they suspected graven idols (statues, stained-glass windows, and paintings), music, and religious rituals.

S6: These were all allurements and enticements of the sensual world.

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------|
| 1 | /'They threatened to contaminate and diffuse the pure spiritual energy of divinely infused | Evaluation (RGG) |
|---|--|------------------|

faith’/

- 2 /‘The sensual world’/ Inferencing (RGMW)
 3 /‘these were all allurements and enticements
 of the sensual world’/ Evaluation (RGG)

S7: They threatened to contaminate and diffuse the pure spiritual energy of divinely infused faith.

- 1 /they threatened to contaminate the pure
 world of religion/ Paraphrase

S8: Though the Puritans did not directly compete with the old forms of courtly literature, they subjected those who did not follow the old forms to heavy moral and social pressure.

S9: And on another level entirely, philosophers like Bacon and Hobbes campaigned unrelentingly against the use of insignificant words and merely decorative language.

- 1 /‘campaigned’/ Repetition (GMW)
 2 /‘campaigned unrelentingly’/ Inferencing (RGMW)
 3 /They campaigned against the use of
 insignificant words/ Paraphrase

S10: Like the Puritans, but from another angle, they insisted on a plain, direct manner of unequivocal prose.

- 1 /‘ūnēqūīvōcāl’/‘unequivocal’/ Decoding
 2 /I haven’t seen this word/ Monitoring (PIWL)
 4 /‘unequivocal’/ Repetition (GMW)

S11: Though doubtless not put forward with this intent, one effect of the plain new language (sometimes summarized as “one-word-one-thing”) was to undermine the whole intricate structure of the correspondent universe.

- 1 /‘to understand the whole intricate’/ Evaluation (RGG)

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 2 | /Complex/
/‘structure of correspondent universe’/ | Paraphrase |
| 3 | /This sentence is very complicated/ | Evaluation (PISL) |
| 4 | /‘the whole intricate structure of the
correspondent universe’/ | Evaluation (RGG) |
| 5 | /the universe outside corresponds the
universe in the literature/ | Paraphrase |
| 6 | /This outside universe actually has got
intricate structure/ | Paraphrase |



A Critical Analysis of Learning and Teaching Goals in Gardner's Theory of Attitudes and Motivation

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Abstract

This is a report of a critical analysis of one aspect of Gardner's theory of attitudes and motivation. The analysis examines a few pieces of discourse produced by Gardner and his associates on the topic of learning and teaching goals in that theory. Looked at from the perspective of critical discourse analysis, the theory is found to be problematic at least as far as the discourses on its learning and teaching goals are concerned. More specifically, the discourses on the topic assume a great deal of ideological slanting in the sense that they typically involve the superiority of the second language community and the things associated with it but the inferiority of the first language community and the things

associated with it. This ideology, whose main axis is the second or foreign language group's values, culture, etc., is termed here as 'xenocentrism'.

Key words: Critical discourse analysis, motivation

1. Introduction

A central concern of scholars interested in second/foreign language acquisition (S/FLA) has always been the factors most significantly contributing to success in S/FLA. Scholars in various camps of the discipline have laid emphasis on different situational or individual characteristics as the most important factor contributing to the process. One group of researchers led by R. C. Gardner, a Canadian psychologist, has chosen to underscore the role played by attitudes and motivation. Their speculations and studies for about the past half century on the issue, however, have received a number of criticisms as well as some support. Their evidence has not remained secure against counterevidence, nor their arguments against counterarguments. The present study will look at the products of this line of research from a new angle that differs from those of other studies which have so far reviewed the theory. More specifically, inspired by the views in critical discourse analysis (CDA) this study recognises a major source of controversies not in the manner in which facts speak but rather in the way in which we choose to speak on the part of facts that is the way in which facts are represented through our discursive practices.

Literature Review

A review of the literature would provide us with arguments or empirical evidence indicating in one way or another presence of some bias in the theory. The bias has almost always been reflected in the writings by Gardner and associates themselves as well as the critics. This is reflected, for instance, in Gardner and Lambert (1972) who thank "several colleagues who have forced us to think through the theoretical implications of our work and broaden our often biased interpretations: John B. Carroll, William W. Lambert, Dalbir Bindra, Lee Cronbach, Richard Tucker, and Susan Ervin-Tripp" (p. vi). The bias is attributed to a number of aspects of the work done by Gardner and his associates. One major source of criticism (Au, 1988; Crooks & Schmidt, 1991) concerns their viewing second language learning (LL2) as a social-psychological rather than an educational

phenomenon. This perspective that is reflected in various models of the theory to date has normally resulted in the formulation of the process with a narrow set of affective individual factors to the exclusion of other contributors. Thus, the theory is frequently attacked for its recognition of the superiority of integrative orientation over instrumental orientation (Lukmani, 1972). Another major source of criticism concerns the underestimation of the contribution of factors that are often held to moderate the relationship between integrative factors and achievement in LL2. This is usually taken to reflect an overgeneralization which in turn tends to assume a bias towards particular states. An instance of such criticism is related to the bias in the setting of the studies. As most of the studies supporting the theory have been conducted in Canada, the results derived from these studies are often charged with Canadian bias particularly in the sense that they make no distinction between second and foreign language acquisition (Dornyei, 1990; Oller, 1978). Critics would have it that integrative motivation might be more relevant for the former rather than the latter context. Other factors which are frequently proposed to moderate the relationship are the learner's age and experience with the language. Thus, unlike the position held by Gardner and associates, Crooks and Schmidt (1991), for instance, argue that the relationships between integrative motivation and achievement in a second language differ as a function of such factors.

In line with the critics of Gardner's theory but unlike Gardner and associates' claim, these researchers feel that the theory involves a considerable amount of bias and further that the bias is conveyed by the discourses advocating it. Unlike the traditional critical views, however, the CDA perspective looks for ideologically loaded bias in the sense of being in favour of one group and against another. In other words, according to CDA, any bias would have ideological functioning. From the same perspective, any discourse that has ideological bias would constitute a problem and a legitimate object for analysis and research.

Rationale

This article is a report of a critical analysis carried out on one aspect of the theory, namely learning and teaching goals. Building on the assumption that learning any foreign language inevitably involves aspects of at least two communities, the L1 group and the

L2 group, this analysis aims to show how critically they are represented in Gardner and associates' discourses on those goals. In line with theoretical underpinnings of CDA, the types of representation that suggest a bias in favour of the L2 group and/or against the L1 group will be identified as critical and will therefore delimit the scope of this analysis.

The rationale behind the choice of this theory in general for critical analysis here is twofold. First, the choice has been made because in SLA, it is known to be the most influential theory of language learning motivation, or rather "too influential" (Dornyei, 1994, p. 273). The second reason has been the extreme bias observed underlying the representations and formulations of the theory. However, as far as the available literature shows, the biased implications of the theory have not as yet been systematically investigated from a CDA standpoint. Nor do the recurrent revisions of the theory exhibit any substantial change in the nature of the theory as (Au, 1988). In addition to the general rationale, the reason for the focus in this analysis on the 'goals' has to do with the critical role they play in the whole theory particularly in the 'central' concept of motivation that is defined as "goal-directed behavior" (Gardner & Masgoret, 2003, p. 128).

2. Method

The data used here are based on the materials produced by Gardner and his associates throughout the life of the theory since 1959. Since this study is topic-bound and only some of the publications directly raise the topic of 'goals', the selected data are purposefully sampled. As the result of this sampling, the analysis primarily draws on the earlier texts published by Gardner's team although considerable attention will be initially paid to the most recent study, a meta-analysis, by Masgoret and Gardner (2003) to analyze some of its problems, particularly opacities. To save space, only those parts of the selected sources that are related to the 'goals' are reproduced here for analysis. These passages are referred to as 'subtexts' here. These subtexts are numbered, and the sentences in them are identified with letters of the alphabet put inside square brackets to facilitate referral.

The data will be analyzed within the framework of CDA. The approach to CDA that primarily inspires this analysis is the one known as critical linguistics and more fully developed in Fowler and Kress (1979) and Hodge and Kress (1993). However, an attempt

will be made here to draw less on the technical jargon in the field to facilitate access to the material.

3. Analysis

The discussion of learning and teaching goals, or ends, within the context of the Gardner's theory will be undertaken here from two major vantage points. These are (a) the learner's goals, and (b) the goals of the teacher and the educational program.

3.1. The learner's goals

The discussion here on the ends or goals of the learner is intimately linked with the concepts of motivation and orientation. The relationship of the learner's goals to motivation is reflected in the very definition of motivation as is proposed by Masgoret and Gardner (2003):

Subtext 1: [a] Motivation refers to goal-directed behavior (cf. Heckhausen, 1991), and when one is attempting to measure motivation, attention can be directed to a number of features of the individual. [b] The motivated individual expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals, desires, and aspirations, enjoys the activity, experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure, makes attributions concerning success and/or failure, is aroused, and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals. [c] That is, the motivated individual exhibits many behaviors, feelings, cognitions, etc., that the individual who is unmotivated does not. (p. 128)

This treatment of goal(s) through the definition of motivation raises several questions about the goal(s) of LL2 which will be addressed throughout this section. Among these include the nature of goal, the types of goals, and the relative status of goals (i.e., their relative contribution to success in LL2).

Concerning the nature of 'goal', the above discourse on the definition of motivation as 'goal-directed behavior' serves to make the key concept of goal backgrounded or vague. This state results from both the grammatical and semantic aspects of the phrase. Grammatically, it is created by both the function and the distribution of the word 'goal' in the above phrase while not being made explicit elsewhere in the text. In terms of grammatical function, the term 'goal' simply constitutes a dependent component of a compound word rather than an independent lexical category. However, taken together, the

compound functions as a non-head word within the phrase. Both these functional statuses contribute to the backgroundedness of 'goal'. What is more, the compounded construction serves to conceal both the countability and definiteness of the word 'goal'. The construction thus does not reveal the number of goals that might be involved in the behavior in question; nor does it signal the definiteness of goal(s) via articles or other determinants. More importantly, the compound structure has allowed the use of 'goal' without any modifier in a way which seems unequivocal. One might contrast this structure with an alternative relatively more expanded construction to see how quickly the equivocation meets the eye (e.g., "Motivation refers to behavior which is directed to a goal."). Faced with such a wording, the reader is more likely to wonder to what category of goals (e.g., linguistic or non-linguistic) this goal is intended to refer. Regarding the distribution, the term 'goal' is withheld from the final lexical category position which normally attracts more attention as does the unmarked position of new information in the distribution of old and new information.

Semantically, the above definition of motivation does not help to adequately clarify the concept of motivation in general and that of 'goal' in particular. The problem has to do with the fact that the definition is over-restricted in one respect, its class, and over-generalized in another, its distinctive feature. That is, it is over-restricted on the grounds that motivation is defined in this phrase in purely behavioral terms, which is not consistent even with the elaborations and operationalizations which are immediately brought up in the same text. What is more relevant to the present discussion concerns the 'goal-directed' phrase which serves as the distinctive feature component of the definition. The point is that the phrase is too general to perform the function expected of it. The over general concept of 'goal' can refer to both linguistic and/or non-linguistic goals. Accordingly, the behavior so modified is applicable to almost all non-linguistic as well as linguistic behaviors.

Of crucial importance in this representation of the concept of 'goal' is the obscurity created concerning the relative status of goals. The point is that the theory accords distinctive values and statuses to the so-called goals at different stages of the classification of the concept but the different discursive strategies employed have increasingly resulted in the above obscurity. At a primary stage, the theory discriminates

between linguistic and non-linguistic goals. At the next stage, it discriminates between the subcategories in either of the above types of goals. What makes the discriminations critical is not so much the mere differences as the fact that at each level the hierarchical order and value judgments attached to them display a conspicuous bias in favor of one side, the L2 group, and against the other side, the L1 group. The bias that is addressed elsewhere in this article is obscured in this subtext since the categories and nature of these goals are not made clear here. These aspects of the discourses on the theory particularly as presented in the meta-analysis will be raised again and further explained below.

The status quo mentioned above concerning the definition of motivation largely results from the application of multiple transformations to an underlying structure which is hardly recoverable. Put briefly, the underlying structure could be based on, for example, any one of the following roughly formulated statements which only focus on the variations of the noun phrase 'goal'.

- Motivation refers to a behavior which is directed to a goal
- Motivation refers to a behavior which is directed to some goals.
- Motivation refers to a behavior which is directed to a specific goal.
- Motivation refers to a behavior which is directed to specific goals.

The opacity of the phrase 'goal-directed behavior' goes beyond the above ambiguity and similarly spreads to other significant elements such as tense, modality, and agencies which are suppressed through multiple transformations (e.g., passivization, deletion, and movement transformations) applied to the underlying structure of the phrase. We can therefore see that in spite of the fact that the topic of 'goals' is held to be a defining feature of motivation and that motivation has a 'central' role in the theory in the sense that out of the three classes of factors in the theory only motivation is held to be directly responsible for achievement, no explicit attempt is made in the most recent forty-one-page meta-analysis to specify what is meant by 'goals'.

As far as the related literature shows, an entry point which can help to shed light on the nature of the learner's goal(s) and other relevant issues such as the types and relative statuses of the goals and the role of motivational component which are left opaque in the meta-analysis is the notion of orientations.

In Masgoret and Gardner (2003) the following account is given for the concept of orientations:

Subtext 2: [a] two scales of the AMTB refer specifically to classes of reasons for studying a second language. [b] The Integrative Orientation scale presents reasons for learning a second language that emphasize the notion of identification with the community. [c] The Instrumental Orientation scale presents practical reasons for learning the language, without implying any interest in getting closer socially to the language community.

[d] Orientations do not necessarily reflect motivation. [e] Noels and Clement (1989), for example, demonstrated that some orientations are associated with motivation and some are not. [f] That is, one might profess an integrative orientation in language study but still may or may not be motivated to learn the language. [g] Similarly, one might profess an instrumental orientation and either be motivated or not to learn the language. [h] In the socio-educational model of second language acquisition, the factor most directly linked to achievement is motivation. [i] Thus, it is conceivable that an individual who is instrumentally oriented could be more motivated than one who is integratively oriented and because of the differences in motivation may experience more success at learning the language. (p. 129)

There are certain meaningful aspects to orientation as treated here and elsewhere in the same text which require closer inspection.

An immediate issue of major concern for this section of the present analysis is the relationship between the goals and orientations in LL2. As the above passage on orientations and other discussions in the meta-analysis show – including that on the concept of motivation which is introduced as the major affective factor in LL2 and defined as 'goal-directed behavior', no reference is made to such a relationship. A review of the earlier accounts of the theory shows that by the learner's goals Gardner and associates essentially mean orientations. For example, Gardner and Lambert (1959) write:

Subtext 3: [a] It is our contention then that achievement in a second language is dependent upon essentially the same type of motivation that is apparently necessary for the child to learn his first language. [b] We argue that an individual acquiring a second language adopts certain behavior patterns which are characteristic of another cultural group and that his attitudes towards that group will at least partly determine his success in learning the new language. [c] Our use of attitude as a motivational construct presupposes an intention on the part of students to learn the language with various aims in mind, and to pursue these aims with various degrees of drive strength. [d] Our test battery consequently included

indices of motivational intensity and orientation. [e] The "Orientation Index" classifies purposes in one of two ways: "integrative," where the aim in language study is to learn more about the language group, or to meet more and *different* people; "instrumental," where the reasons reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement. [f] The "Motivational Intensity Scale" measures the amount of effort and enthusiasm students show in their attempt to acquire the language. (p. 192; see also Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner & Smythe, 1975).

Another opaque feature of the discourse has to do with the representation of different forms of orientations. In their discussions on the concept of orientation, Gardner and associates used to acknowledge the existence of miscellaneous forms of orientations (see, for example, Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner & Smyth, 1975). Of course, among the "many possible forms the student's orientation could take" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132), they would restrict their attention either to both integrative and instrumental orientations or just to the integrative one which was always conferred a superior status. In the present exposition of the theory, however, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) suppress any reference to those many possible forms of orientations. And this suppression takes place in spite of the over-general sub-title, 'orientations to language study' (ibid. p.129), and chosen for the relevant discussion quoted here (subtext 2). Following the more recent trend, the authors simply focus on what Gardner and associates usually regard to be the major orientations. The opening sentence of subtext 2 would seem to be revealing enough for the purpose of the analysis of this issue; the rest of the material just focuses on the integrative and instrumental orientations.

A further complicated issue that is closely associated with the goal–orientation relationship is the link between orientations and motivation. One claim made in the meta-analysis concerns Gardner and colleagues' frequently making "a clear distinction between motivation and orientation ... over the years." (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, p. 130) Charging a number of researchers whom they recognize as "influential writers" (ibid. p.130), with confusing orientation and motivation at least ever since 1972, Masgoret and Gardner (2003, p. 130) go on to propose the following.

Subtext 4: The socio-educational model of second language acquisition makes a very clear distinction between motivation and orientation, and over the years Gardner and colleagues have referred to this distinction

many times (Gardner, 1973 [originally published in 1968], 1985a; Gardner & Macintyre, 1991; Gardner & Smythe, 1975).

Unfortunately, a review of the relevant earlier studies by Gardner and associates is not unlikely to give one an opposite impression. As evidence, reference can be made to Gardner and Lambert (1972, p. 15) where integrative and instrumental orientations are referred to as "two forms of motivation". Similarly, in Gardner and Smythe (1975), integrative orientation is considered to be an index of motivation - while it is a subcategory of integrativeness in the meta-analysis.

A second suggestion made in the meta-analysis (subtext 2: [d]) about the relation between orientations and motivation is that "orientations do not necessarily reflect motivation". On the face of it, this conservative proposition might be interpreted as a radical modification of two of the most hotly-debated and correlated aspects of the theory, namely the superiority of integrative orientation over other types of orientations particularly the instrumental one and its indispensable role in determining motivation and achievement in LL2. Nevertheless, closer analysis would indicate that this sentence and the others which follow it in the same paragraph only add to the ambiguities in the theory's stance on the above issues. These two issues are in turn addressed below.

The superiority of integrative orientation over other types of orientations particularly the instrumental one should be seen from two angles, in terms of its relation to achievement and to motivation. The initial discourses on the theory refused to encourage such a dichotomous vision and generally stressed the superiority in question. This differential role assignment used to be simply justified on the basis of 'no reason' but of a 'feeling' that "the integratively oriented learner might be better motivated because the nature of his goals is more likely to sustain the long-term effort needed to master a second-language" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p.16; see also Gardner & Smyth, 1975; Gardner et al, 1976a).

The present formulations in the meta-analysis, on the other hand, would foster the dual perspective and would seem to deny the supremacy of integrative orientation in either case, in relation to motivation or to achievement. The former case is explained in sub-text 2: [d-i]. As was already mentioned, however, the explanations are far from transparent. First, the opening sentence (sentence [d]) is ambiguous at best. The generic

noun "orientations" leaves the sentence open to several interpretations such as the following.

- (a) It is possible that all orientations do not reflect motivation.
- (b) No individual orientation necessarily reflects motivation.
- (c) Some orientations always reflect motivation while others do not.
- (d) Some orientations always reflect motivation while others never do so.

Of course, the details provided in subtext 2:[e] tend to rule out all the interpretations except the last one [d]. This interpretation is signalled in this sentence (subtext 2:[e]) by the tense and the modality of the verb phrase "are associated" which serves to draw a rigid line dividing the two as yet unspecified groups of orientations without allowing for any functional variation for either group as a result of, say, contextual or individual factors. Yet, the above apparently only possible interpretation with its rigid dichotomy turns out to be false as soon as one reads the third sentence (sentence [f]). In other words, this sentence which is meant, through 'that is', to be an explication of the preceding sentence is indeed in direct conflict with it because according to this third sentence an individual orientation is subject to variation in terms of its motivational function across individual learners. Whereas the sentences of the paragraph to this point are in dire need of disambiguation, transparency, consistency and further development, one is surprised to read the next sentence [h] that is totally irrelevant to the main idea of the paragraph that must be concerned with the relation between orientations and motivation.

Aside from the above ambiguities, the paragraph (subtext 2: [d] to [i]) tends to give way to the questionable assumption that the theory prefers neither orientation to the other in terms of its potential relation to motivation. This assumption is primarily activated by sentences [f] to [g] and [i] taken together as they apparently hypothesize comparable potential functions for the two orientations.

Such an assumption that accords comparable roles to the two orientations and seems to be valid by itself, however, fails to receive adequate support even from the discursive practices within the same sentences. The invalidity of the assumption within the context of the theory is partly due to the fact that the comparison is made within a restricted scope, the scope of possible individual cases rather than that of a significant number of learners. In other words, it simply suggests possible exceptions rather than a general rule or a reasonably widespread propensity. Such a restricted scope is inferred from the tendency

in the text to marginalize the agents concerned by representing them as 'one' or 'an individual' rather than, say, 'some', or 'some learners'. The invalidity of the comparability assumption from the real point of view of the theory is further inferred from the very low probability assigned to the above underestimated cases. This assignment is signalled by the modality expressions, employed in the same sentences (subtext 2: [f] to [g], and [i]), such as 'may', 'might', 'is conceivable', and 'could'.

In addition to the discursive practices, what further give force to the above interpretations as to the invalidity of the comparability assumption are the present as well as past formulations of the theory. For instance, apart from the fact that Gardner and associates used to somewhat clearly underscore the supremacy of integrative orientation both through their explanations and through their often exclusive inclusion of this orientation in the theoretical framework, in the current formulations including the meta-analysis, in spite of their attempt to avoid being charged with bias toward a specific orientation, they nonetheless only include integrative orientation in their model and suppress others including instrumental orientation therein. A further piece of evidence in support of the above interpretations comes from the overemphasis in the theory on the notion of integration. This is textualized by the terms "integrative orientation", "integrativeness" and "integrative motivation" that are used in identifying the components of the theory (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

The current discourse on the theory thus represents a further instance of complex ideology. On the one hand, to avoid a long-standing criticism against the theory, it attempts to allow for comparable effects of the two orientations on motivation, which would be traditionally regarded as counterintuitive (e.g., Gardner & Lambert, 1972, pp.15-16). On the other hand, the discourse tends to suppress such an assumption by attributing the situations described to single individuals rather than certain groups of learners and by subjecting the occurrence of those restricted situations to very weak possibilities. The ideological complexity is further signalled by the exclusion of all orientations but the integrative one from the current model.

Similar arguments can be raised in regard to the relationship between orientations and achievement. On this, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) claim the following.

Subtext 5: Despite comments to the contrary (see Crooks & Schmidt, 1991), nothing in the model claims that an integrative orientation will be more highly related to achievement in the second language than an instrumental orientation. (p.130)

Here again, despite the above claim, the mere exclusive inclusion of the integrative orientation in the model is indicative of its privileged status in the model.

The superordinate concept of integrative motive has more forcefully suggested that kind of role assignment and its justification. The conclusion derived from such a formulation amounts to the recognition of LL2 simply as a means to an end which tends to be exclusively prescribed as one of group membership. The earlier discourses on the theory appear again to better articulate the theory's stance on various aspects of the learner's goal particularly through the concept of integrative motive or integrative motivation. For example, extending Mowrer's (1950) notion of identification in first language learning (LL1) to LL2, Gardner and Lambert (1972) propose the following. Please note that it deemed necessary to include a large body of the original text here. This text is important since it addresses the origin and the main aspects of the theory most of which have survived to date.

Subtext 6: [a] Our initial speculations grew out of the theoretical explanations of first-language development, particularly those of Mowrer (1950). [b] Mowrer suggests that the parents' activities and, indeed, their mere presence are reinforcing or rewarding because such activities are regularly associated in the infant's mind with satisfaction of basic biological and social needs. [c] Since this reinforcement is generally accompanied by verbalization on the part of the parents, the language sounds themselves can acquire "secondary" or derived reinforcing properties. [d] When the infant is alone and utters a sound sequence like one in the language of the parents, this act, through auditory feedback, is in itself reinforcing for him. [e] The tendency of the child to imitate the parents in this way Mowrer calls "identification." [f] Such a scheme may not explain the whole of first-language acquisition, since much of language learning takes place through subtle forms of perceptual learning where the role of reinforcement is much less obvious (see Hebb, Lambert, and Tucker, 1971) or through direct forms of reinforcement as when the parent withhold a reward until the child makes the appropriate language response. [g] Mowrer argues, however, that a good deal of instrumental learning of various forms—including perceptual learning itself—is based on an emotionally toned dependence between infant and parent.

[h] We reasoned that some process like identification, extended to a whole ethnolinguistic community and coupled with an inquisitiveness

and sincere interest in the other group, must underlie the long-term motivation needed to master a second language. [i] Other motivations such as a need for achievement or a fear of failure seem appropriate for short-term goals such as passing a language course, but seem insufficient to account for the persistence needed in the laborious and time-consuming task of developing real competence in a new language. [j] The notion of identification as used in the second-language learning situation differs in degree and substance from Mowrer's use of the term in his explanation of first-language learning. [k] As a consequence, we introduced a new term, "an integrative motive." [l] For Mowrer, identification derives from the reduction or satisfaction of basic biological needs while in most second-language learning situations more interpersonal or social motives are obviously brought into play. [m] (Their social needs are referred to technically as secondary or derived drives by Miller and Dollard, 1941). [n] In both the first- and second-language cases, however, language is a means to an end rather than an end itself, in the sense that languages are typically learned in the process of becoming a member of a particular group, and the sustaining motivation appears to be one of group membership, not of language acquisition per se. [o] We will, therefore, reserve the term identification for the first-language condition, and when it is a question of second-language learning refer to a willingness to become a member of another ethnolinguistic group as an integrative motive. [p] This distinction is useful since it emphasizes the desire for integration (common in both situations) but distinguishes it from identification and the antecedent conditions which promote such a motive.

[q] Numerous observations suggested to us that some integrative-like process plays an important role in second-language acquisition. [r] In an early study of bilingualism, for example, Lambert (1955) discussed the case of an English-speaking American graduate student who when measured with psychological tests proved to be clearly dominant in his use of French over English. [s] Interviews indicated that this particular student had a distinctive pattern of attitudes; he was disillusioned with the American scene, reacted against anything that was not European, and read only French newspapers and other reading material. [t] He claimed that he had recently been to France and was returning as soon as possible, apparently to stay. [u] This rather dramatic case typifies an extreme form of what we mean by an integrative motivation. [v] Less striking but similar cases are reported by Whyte and Holmberg (1956). [w] They found that among numbers of Americans working in Latin America those who believed that they shared physical attributes with Latin Americans and who wanted to interact with them as social equals learned the local language and became much more fluent than workers who could not or would not make this identification....

[x] Finally, Nida (1956) presented a case history that illustrates the influence of a factor like identification in second-language achievement, but in this instance one sees how an overemotional desire to be integrated

in one linguistic group can deter the acquisition of another group's language. [y] Nida describes a missionary who had extreme difficulty in acquiring a usable command of a foreign language despite good teachers, a great deal of effort, and a high level of intelligence. [z1] Under study, it turned out that this man's parents had immigrated to the United States, and as a boy he had dissociated himself from his foreign [sic.] cultural background and insisted on speaking English exclusively at home. [z2] His desire for integration into the American culture was so intense that he denied knowing the parental language. [z3] Nida suggests that this person was unable to overcome his intense emotional reaction to a "foreign" non-English language.

[z4] The notion of an integrative motive implies that success in learning a second language depends on a particular orientation on the part of the learner, reflecting a willingness or a desire to be like representative members of the "other" language community, and to become associated, at least vicariously, with that other community. [z5] Hence the acquisition of a new language involves much more than mere acquisition of a new set of verbal habits. [z6] The language student must be willing to adopt appropriate features of behavior which characterize members of another linguistic community. [z7] The words, grammatical patterns, mode of pronunciation, and the sounds themselves should have a significance for the successful learner that goes beyond simple translations or equivalences given by a teacher, a grammar book, or a dictionary. [z8] Instead these come to be regarded as distinctive aspects of the behavior of the other cultural group. [z9] The student's attitudinal orientation toward that group, we argue, will influence his progress and efficiency in adopting these novel and strange linguistic habits into his own repertoire.

[z10] We felt one could estimate or measure the value orientation of a prospective student of a foreign language by means of structured interviews or carefully planned questionnaires. [z11] If a student when questioned about his interest in foreign-language study and the potential value it held for him assigned high priority to learning more about the other ethnolinguistic group as a people (be it the ancient Greeks or Spanish-speaking immigrants from Cuba), or to meeting and becoming acquainted with the members of that community, this we would take as a reflection of an integrative orientation. [z12] Hence when the rationale for studying a foreign language reflected an inquisitiveness and genuine interest in the people comprising a cultural group, being it an interest in an ancient people or a contemporary one, or a desire to meet with and possibly associate with that group, we take it to be a symptom of an integrative outlook. [z13] Of course, an intelligent manipulator of people would pass this filter, too, since he would also realize the need know about and associate with the other group in order to exploit them. [z14] No attention was given to this manipulative form of motivation in the studies presented here, but the fascinating work of Christie and Geis (1970) on Machiavellianism provides researchers with a valuable means of

measuring manipulative personality dispositions. [z15] Future research on foreign language learning could well profit from a consideration of this form of motivation.

[z16] The contrasting form of motivation we did give attention to is referred to as an *instrumental* orientation toward the language-learning task, one characterized by a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of a foreign language. [z17] The perspective in this instance is more self-oriented in the sense that a person prepares to learn a new code in order to derive benefits of a non-interpersonal sort. [z18] This notion is a simple extension of Skinner's (1953) and Parson's (1951) uses of the concept "instrumental." [z19] The contrast we have drawn, then, has at one extreme an integratively oriented learner who in considering the learning task is oriented principally towards representatives of a novel and interesting ethnolinguistic community, people with whom he would like to develop personal ties. [z20] At the other extreme the instrumentally oriented language learner is interested mainly in using the cultural group and their language as an instrument of personal satisfaction, with few signs of an interest in the other people per se. [z21] Our index of these two forms of motivation for language learning is, at this stage, crude, since in categorizing students, we pay attention only to the order of priority—instrumental reasons given priority over integrative ones, or the converse—labeling each student with one or another form of orientation....

[z22] There is another form of orientation to language learning that could come into play, but again we have only superficially touched on it in our analyses. [z23] This is the resentment members of one linguistic group (usually the minority group) can have toward another group whose language or dialect they are forced to learn through social or economical pressure. [z24] We will see the influence of this orientation on certain American-French students studying through English in the United States and among certain Filipino students who also study through English. [z25] Comprehensive modes of analyzing this outlook could of course be developed and the topic certainly merits special consideration in research.

[z26] When behavioural scientists talk about motivation they usually make a distinction between the goal toward which concerted activity is directed and the effort or persistence demonstrated in the process of striving for the goal. [z27] Dunkel (1948) suggested that this dichotomy was useful for the case of second-language learning, where the attention should be given both to the objectives or purposes of second-language acquisition and the intensity of motivation shown by the language learner. [z28] In our work, we see the major motivational goal—from the point of view of the learner—to be a general orientation or outlook toward the learning process which can take either an integrative or an instrumental form....

[z29] There is no reason to expect to find a relationship between one form or the other of motivational orientation and motivational intensity,

since the instrumentally oriented learner could be as intense or more so than the integratively oriented student. [z30] Still, we felt that the integratively oriented learner might be better motivated because the nature of his goals is more likely to sustain the long-term effort needed to master a second language, especially when one starts only at the high school age level. [z31] This becomes one of the working hypotheses in our studies and we will return to it at several points in the chapters to follow. (pp. 12-16)

This formulation of the means and ends of LL2 by drawing on certain hypothetical notions concerning LL1 involves certain critical assumptions that merit closer analysis. Of crucial importance is the alternative concept to identification, integrative motive, and the role assigned to it. The choice of verbal processes in general and of modality and tense expressions in particular is quite meaningful in this respect. Take, for instance, sentence [h] wherein the authors use the strong modal verb "must" to indicate the probability of the motivation in question. Like other modal auxiliaries, *must* is vague about temporality. The vagueness involved serves to interpret the whole statement as a general principle which applies to any time. Similarly, the claim made here is not context-bound. In like manner, as can also be understood from the agentless passive verb of "needed", the general law is implicitly extended to any learner who seeks to develop "real competence" in a new language. What is more, the general necessity expressed by *must* is claimed to be based on an appeal to certain "reasoning" [h]. However, upon reading the following discussions concerning orientations (sentences [z29] and [z30]), one finds that the universality expressed by *must* had been based on "no reason" [z29] but personal "feelings" [z30].

The overemphasis on integrative motive and integrative orientation particularly through linking them to LL1 conditions gives them and their elements an unwarranted superior status. Likening LL2 learners to infants learning their L1 and conferring a parental status to the L2 community, vis-à-vis L2 learners, trigger the assumption that the learners are not mature enough to decide their own way. In other words, the learners belonging to the L1 group (hereafter G1) must, according to the theory, consider the members of the L2 group (hereafter G2) as their parents and 'imitate' them as infants imitate their parents. Furthermore, the scope of imitation in this formulation goes far beyond the linguistic issues and is extended to almost all spheres of the learner's life. The

corollary assumed here would be that like parents, G2 also must have a dominant status in almost all spheres of the learner's life if s/he wants to master the L2. Such value judgments are indeed frequently passed overtly or covertly in favour of G2 both in the earlier discourses on the theory as well as the more recent ones.

In addition to the dominant power conferred to the G2, a further bias often tends to represent this group as a homogeneous entity. The homogeneity bias is covertly realized by expressions such as "a whole ethnolinguistic community" and "the other group" [h]. Such representations of the target community overlook the groups of individuals within that community with distinct subcultures and identities.

An important aspect of such discourse concerns the way the two concepts of identification in LL1 and integrative motive in LL2 are classified in terms of their nature. The comparison made between the two concepts appears to be problematic from several respects. For example, the comparability of the two concepts is not sufficiently clarified. On the contrary, they are compared through inconsistent phrases such as [h] and [q], "differs in degree and substance" [j], and elsewhere (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 192) "essentially the same". Moreover, the two concepts cannot be cross-compared because they do not share the same class, one of them, identification, pointing to some imitation process [e] although elsewhere [p] it is referred to as a motive, but the other, integrative motive, to the motivation underlying such a process [o].

What is the most significant about the above discourse is the way ends and means of language learning are formulated. Sentence [n], for example, is quite noticeable in this respect. On the face of it, the sentence formally serves to persuade the reader of the distinction between the means and the end, which is emphasized twice in the same sentence. The distinction that is offered as new information, however, has been far less controversial than certain other ideas which are taken for granted as given information. One is that the means and end are equally defined for and applied to both LL1 and LL2, though with apparently different motives (i.e., biological motives in the case of LL1 but social motives in the case of LL2). However, while in sentence [l] the motivation for identification in LL1 is said to be biological, it is redefined in sentence [n] as "one of group membership" that is actually a social rather than biological motive. Thus, apart from the similarity ascribed to the two processes in LL1 and LL2, the two situations are

claimed to involve a single process variously worded as "becoming a member of a particular group" [n], "group membership" [n], and "integration" [p]. The questionable assumption made here is that the process in both situations represents a single identity, namely an end, which in that context means a goal - also called an orientation [z28]. However, while it may be conceivable to refer to the above process in LL2 as an 'end' meaning 'goal', it is meaningless to identify the similar process in the case of infants learning their first language with that label with the same meaning because according to the theory the nature of motives which bring about identification in the case of infants is basically biological [1]. As a consequence, perhaps it would be more appropriate to view 'identification' in LL1 as a side effect of the process or as an 'end' in another sense of the word, namely 'result' or 'outcome', and "the satisfaction of basic biological needs" as the 'goal'.

Moreover, one is surprised to see how in the attempt made in sentence [n] to clarify the distinction between the means and the end, the end in LL2, as well as in LL1, is instantiated in a manner as if it could have almost only one form, "becoming a member of a particular group". The modality expressions employed in the same sentence reflect the authors' judgment about the truthfulness of this view across time and learners. For instance, 'are' serves to represent certain 'speculations' and 'theoretical explanations' as statements of known facts. Similarly, 'typically' activates the assumption that the goal of "becoming a member of a particular group" is a dominant and natural one that requires no evidence, while in the following paragraph the authors feel compelled to provide certain observations as evidence. (A similar naturalizing strategy is used through the phrase 'are obviously' in sentence [l].) This mode of classification of ends suggests a bias in favor of one group, G2, whose membership is 'known' to be 'typically' sought by the learner through identifying with it, and against another group, G1, whose membership is assumed to be gradually abandoned by the learner at least in 'extreme' cases as the authors' observations suggest.

Other attempts made by the authors to classify the ends are problematic too. In one attempt [i], the authors set out to classify the goals into short-term and long-term goals. In sentence [i], in contrast to short-term goals such as passing a language course, "developing real competence in a new language" is assumed to be a long-term goal. The

writers, however, do not make it clear what they exactly mean by 'real competence' for the development of which a process like identification is needed. A search through other writings by Gardner and associates will make it clear that by the 'real competence' they simply mean one that "facilitates communication with the G2". This definition is underscored in several places including in Gardner et al. (1976), Gardner et al. (1978), and more recently the following by Gardner (nd) himself;

Subtext 7: [a] Last year I gave a talk at the AAAL in which I suggested that, in the context of the notion of integrative motivation, learning a language meant the development of near native-like facility, and that this took time. [b] In fact, in a Psychological Review article on expertise in 1993, Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer claimed that it took about 10 years to develop the language skills of the typical adult. [c] Whether or not one considers this a meaningful goal of language learning, it is important to define just what one means about language learning before considering the variables that might influence success in achieving that goal. [d] Recall that Markwardt (1948) felt that different motives had different linguistic objectives. [e] For many of them something akin to "job Spanish" in Whyte and Holmberg's terms was a sufficient linguistic objective.

[f] In our research, we have assumed that by language learning we mean more than learning a few words of vocabulary, some grammatical rules, non-fluent utterances, and the like. [g] At a minimum, we assume that to say one has learned a language, one is at least able to understand and carry on a relatively fluent conversation, and probably can read and write text of a reasonable level of difficulty....

.... [h] We may...say "If the student learns the language just to get a good grade in the course, then he or she has little incentive to go beyond the class requirements. [i] If he or she views it as a means of establishing real bonds of communication with another people, then she or he truly learning the language". [j] This is the distinction between using the language as a means of communication, and using it in order to make oneself understood. (p. 11)

In this setting of the linguistic goal, or rather means as reclassified by Gardner, there are two important points. These include the degree of proficiency and its scope. As can be understood from subtext 7, the formulation provided in either case is biased toward G2. Thus, in subtext 7: [a], the criterion for the proficiency level in LL2 is generally prescribed as "near native-like facility", disregarding the fact that "different motives had different linguistic objectives". This idealistic level of proficiency can be compared with the narrow scope of the "true" or "real competence" that is defined at the necessary level as the "ability to understand and carry on a relatively fluent conversation." This

conversation-based definition of proficiency is presumably justified on the grounds that "language [is viewed] as a means of establishing real bonds of communication with another people." Conversation, in other words, is the type of skill that typically directly "involves another people" and assumes a more determining role for them unlike, say, reading or writing which may be the preferred target skills for the instrumentally oriented learners who may wish to use the language to expand their knowledge or "to make themselves understood." Here again the over-restricted definition of proficiency in the theory is indicative of a sharp bias in favour of G2 with no respect being paid to the learner's needs.

Certain other discussions by Gardner and associates appear to be more straightforward on the issue of the classification of the learner's goals in LL2 and other related issues. One of the most extended expositions is the following by Gardner et al. (1978). Please note that the inclusion of this text is also necessary. The text is important because it provides us with roughly the most elaborate statements of goals in Gardner's work.

Subtext 8: [a] The model [proposed by Gardner (in press) with respect to second language acquisition] is based on the assumption that since language is an integral part of culture, the acquisition of a second language is dependent upon the individual's willingness or desire to make aspects of another culture part of his own behavioural repertoire. [b] Because of this, it is hypothesized that an individual's attitude toward the other language group, or toward other groups in general can influence the extent to which he acquires the language.

[c] The model proposes that second language acquisition is facilitated by an integrative motive, which "reflects a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second-language community in order to facilitate communication with that group" (Gardner, Smythe, Clement & Glikzman, 1976, p. 199). [d] Elaborations of the model (Gardner, in press) have postulated that attitudes serve as the foundation of the motivation; that is, attitudes influence the individual's level of motivation and differences in motivation affect how successfully an individual learns the language. [e] It is argued that the acquisition of a second language is a long and difficult process and that a stable attitudinal base is needed to maintain motivation for these long periods. [f] Such long range implications require that the ultimate goal be something other than the "acquisition of the second language", and that it involve the other cultural community since acquiring the language involves acquiring aspects of that culture. [g] The concept of the integrative motive emphasizes this ultimate goal in that it bases the motivation in a desire or

willingness to become closer psychologically to the other language community. [h] It will be noted that this concept is similar to Mowrer's (1950) concept of identification in first language learning, and like Mowrer's conception suggests some rationale for actually learning the language. [i] It is more specific, however, in that it proposes that there will be associations among individual differences in generalized attitudes toward other ethnic groups, attitude toward the appropriate language community, attitudes toward contexts involving the language, etc.... and motivation to acquire the language.

[j] The model proposed by Gardner (in press) borrows from the more general formulation of Lewin in that *motivation, as goal directed behaviour, is central to it*. [k] Furthermore, the concept of motivation is viewed as involving effort to achieve the goal of "learning the language", wants and desires to achieve this end, and favourable attitudes towards second language learning. [l] It views the goal of "learning the language" as an intermediate one, however, where the ultimate goal is viewed as a psychological integration with the other community. [m] Individual differences in the desire to attain this goal are considered to be associated with individual differences in attitudes toward social objects related to this goal (i.e., the language community concerned, outgroups in general, etc.), and individual differences with respect to which more intermediate goals (i.e., mastering some particular language skill, visiting a second language community, etc.) will be approached. [n] That is, the integrative motive is assumed to reflect a particular motivational complex with a number of associated attitudinal components.

....[o] The motive can be viewed as a multifaceted—yet unidimensional force where the ultimate goal would be integration with the other language community. [p] Obviously not all students of a second language seek integration (a few, however, appear to). [q] Furthermore, this motive is not some static force with which students enter language programs. [r] Students might enter language programs with the goal of integration; they might enter because of some requirement. [s] The expectation is, however, that where such a motive develops, or exists, second language acquisition will be made successful. [t] The major characteristic of this formulation is that a number of quite diverse attitudes are associated with the motivation to learn a second language. (pp. 181-182)

One point in this subtext 8 concerns the way in which goals are classified. The point here is that in their attempt to divide the goals into intermediate and ultimate goals, the authors often suppress any motive other than an integrative motive and thereby imply that there could only be one ultimate goal, psychological integration with the other community, for success in LL2. In sentence [a], for instance, it is claimed that LL2 'is dependent upon' the learner's integrative motive. The claim is taken for granted by being identified as an

'assumption' and further stressed by the certainty expressed by 'is'. Thus on the basis of the implications of this verbal process, Gardner's model assumes that any instance of L2 mastery depends on integrative motive, any successful learner is integratively motivated, and as a consequence the ultimate goal for any learner seeking to master an L2 is that of psychological integration with G2. The attempt to give the exclusive role to an integrative motive and to the ultimate goal associated with it can also be inferred from sentences [e] and [f]. In [e], almost everything is formulated in absolute and universal terms including learning situations ('the acquisition of a second language'), learners ('is needed'), type of motivation ('motivation', i.e. integrative motivation). Similarly, the ultimate goal in [f] which is rightly said to be a requirement of the earlier implications is assumed to be applicable to any instance of LL2 and to any L2 learner.

The authors, of course, admit that there might be other groups of learners with other motives and goals. They are, however, backgrounded or totally suppressed either in theory or through the systematic choice of discursive practices. Sentences [r] and [s] illustrate such a strategy where other goals are represented by 'some requirement', and the non-integrative motives and goals tend to be assumed to result in a failure in LL2.

What is particular about the integrative ultimate goal and distinguishes it from any other potential ultimate goal is that, like integrative motive, G2 is the center of attention. In other words, G2 is assumed to play the dominant and determining role in the LL2 process owing to the presumed appealing nature of its aspects for the successful learner. The centrality of G2 is reflected in many places including in the authors' utterance in sentence [f] that the ultimate goal must "involve the other cultural community."

Consistent with the above systematic biased assumptions, Gardner and associates sometimes also pass more explicit value judgments about orientations. Gardner and Lambert (1972), for instance, evaluate different orientations in democratic terms:

Subtext 9: [a] we have approached this absorbing question not as linguists or language teachers but as behavioural scientists—in particular, social psychologists—interested in the matter of learning. [b] When looked at from a sociopsychological perspective, the process of learning a second language takes on a special significance. [c] Over and above aptitude, one would then anticipate that a really serious student of a foreign or second language who has an open, inquisitive, and unprejudiced orientation toward the learning task might very likely find himself becoming an acculturated member of a

new linguistic cultural community as he develops a mastery of that other's group language. [d] Advancing toward biculturalism in this manner could have various effects on different language learners. [e] For some, the experience might be seen as enjoyable and broadening. [f] For others, especially minority group members, it could be taken as an imposition, and learning the language would be accompanied by resentment and ill feeling. [g] In other cases, it could be accompanied by deep-seated and vague feelings of no longer fully belonging to one's own social group nor to the new one he has come to know. [h] At another extreme, a learner with a less democratic orientation might consider the language learning task as a means of becoming more cultured (in the superficial sense of the term) or as equipping him with a skill or tool useful for some future occupation, with little genuine regard for the people or the culture represented by the other language. [i] In certain circumstances, the learner might be anxious to develop skill in another group's language as a means of getting on the "inside" of another cultural community in order to exploit, manipulate, or control, with personal ends only in mind. (p. 2)

In this passage, the authors describe three types of orientations which they call elsewhere in the same book (*ibid.*, pp. 3-4) integrative, instrumental, and manipulative orientations. Beyond description, however, value judgments are passed for or against these orientations. The judgments are embedded in this discourse as well as other discourses on the theory at two levels: the level of theory and the level of discourse. Theoretically, the judgment is displayed by the fact that one orientation, the integrative one, is consistently included in the framework, whereas others are downgraded through systematic exclusion from it. Discursively, the judgment is implicitly or explicitly incorporated into the discursive practices through various strategies such as nomination, other value-laden descriptive terms, and degree of exposition or development. The labels chosen to nominate the integrative, instrumental, and manipulative orientations are distinctively loaded. While 'integrative' conveys a positive loading as it connotes unity, the last two suggest increasingly a negative sense on the grounds that they connote selfishness and selfishness plus a disposition to treat others unfairly respectively. The distinctive bias shown concerning these orientations is also reflected in other descriptive lexical items. The integratively oriented student, for example, is described, in sentence [c], with positively loaded terms such as 'open', 'inquisitive', and 'unprejudiced'. The instrumentally oriented learner, on the other hand, is explicitly charged, in sentence [h], with having a less

democratic orientation, thereby implicitly assigning at once the superior status to the integrative orientation. The use of democratic is quite meaningful in this context. What category of demo (e.g., G1, G2, etc.) is going to hold the supreme power in determining the right path to LL2? Finally, the manipulatively oriented learner is presumably regarded to have an antidemocratic orientation because s/he is judged, in sentence [i], to aim to exploit, manipulate, or control, with personal ends only in mind. The differential treatment of the orientations is also reflected in the extent to which the discussions about them are developed. Thus, we see that the topic of integrative orientation [c] to [g] is the most fully developed compared with those of instrumental orientation [h] and manipulative orientation [i]. What distinguishes the different types of orientations and the judgements made about them is interpreted to be the relative status of G2 and whatever belongs to it, hence bias toward G2. The authors describing the instrumental learner as having little genuine regard for the people or the culture represented by the language [h] illustrates an example that activates this assumption.

To recapitulate, as the analyses of the samples of the discourses in this section hopefully demonstrate, Gardner's theory involves a great deal of bias in favor of the second or foreign language community (G2) but against other groups especially G1 in terms of its view of the learner's goals in learning a second or foreign language. The bias is shown to be related to the theoretical formulations of the learner's linguistic and non-linguistic goals as well as to the discriminatory discursive treatment of the goals. In other words, both theory and discourse alike confer almost consistently a superior status to the goals associated with G2 but an inferior status to those of other groups especially G1. What is more, the bias tends to be systematically mystified especially in the more recent treatments of the issue.

To further clarify the critical significance of the stuff in this section, the above pro-G2 bias is identified here for the want of a more telling term as an instance of xenocentric ideology underlying the theory and its discourses. The bias in the theory and its discourses is seen as an instance of xenocentric ideology in the sense that, from the CDA (critical discourse analysis) perspective (see, for example, Fairclough, 1989; Hodge & Kress, 1993) the discourses on the theory are characterized by three critically significant shades of meaning. For one thing, they serve to polarize the various categories of agents

(including G1 and G2 as well as the learners themselves) involved directly or indirectly in the process of LL2. Secondly, the polarization is typically characterized by a value judgment passed by the producers of the discourses under analyses in favor of one party (i.e., G2) to the disadvantage of the others, particularly G1. That is, the foreign language community is represented as the dominant party, but the learner's native community is represented as the dominated, under-privileged group. Thirdly, these attributes are most often textualized, particularly in the more recent discourses, via various discursive devices, techniques, and deformations (e.g., particular linguistic transformational operations, lexicalisations, rhetorical devices, modality expressions, etc.) in a quite covert manner. Critically speaking, discourses produced (irrespective of the level of consciousness involved) with these distinctive features to present the nature of a theory can serve to manipulate the opinions of the intended readers (who are in this case typically the variety of agents involved in the process of theorization and application of teaching and learning a second/foreign language) and as such to control them in the interest of a particular party (i.e., the G2), hence a xenocentric ideology.

3.2. Goals of language programs and teachers

As in the case of the learner's goals, the more recent discourses on the theory, including the meta-analysis, are quite silent or vague about the theory's stance on the goals of language teachers and programs. So the discussion in this section, also, draws largely on the few remarks made in the earlier discourses by Gardner and associates on the topic.

In a manner similar to their making a distinction between the learner's goals, Gardner and associates divide the goals of a L2 program into linguistic and non-linguistic goals. Thus, Gardner (1985) at the very beginning of his article classifies and defines these goals as follows:

Subtext 10: [a] The goals of any second language programme are partly linguistic and partly non-linguistic. [b] The linguistic goals focus on developing competence in the individual's ability to read, write, speak and understand the second language, and there are many tests available with which to assess these skills. [c] Non-linguistic goals emphasize such aspects as improved understanding of the other community, desire to continue studying the language, an interest in studying other languages, etc. (p. 1)

In an earlier slightly more revealing article, Gardner and Smythe (1975, p. 228-229) make the following remarks on the goals of L2 teachers and programs:

Subtext 11: [a] It has long been accepted that language aptitude is an important variable in determining second-language achievement. [b] However, language aptitude is somewhat of a static variable in that it is relatively stable characteristic of the student. [c] An integrative motive on the other hand is a complex interplay of attitudinal and motivational variables and it is generally accepted that such characteristics can be modified, although not easily. [d] Realizing that an integrative motive facilitates second-language achievement and the tendency to continue in the program, we then have a means by which we can work on the integrative motive and as a result actively promote second-language acquisition.

[e] This is, of course, a goal of many teachers of a second language. [f] Many teachers introduce French days, bicultural excursions, bilingual immersion experiences and the like in order to make the second language more meaningful to the student as a communicational medium. [g] Such incentive programs are felt to be important to make the language come alive and make the course something more than just another school subject. [h] As such, these programs are directed, in our terminology, to affecting changes in the integrative motive.

Having made these remarks, Gardner and Smythe (*ibid.*) now refer to a recent study by themselves on the facilitating effects of one type of incentive program on the integrative motive and then go on to add:

Subtext 11 (cont'd): [i] What then does all of this mean for one who teaches a second language? [j] To begin, it does suggest that the motivation to learn a second language is not a matter of simply wanting to learn the language. [k] Many students may want to learn, but their attitudes may prevent them from doing so. [l] Such students deserve as much sympathy and understanding as the student who does not have the aptitude. [m] More importantly, however, there undoubtedly exist many students within whom the integrative motive lies dormant. [n] Encourage it and develop it and you may have a trigger by the tail! [o] There are many incentive programs which can be considered which might develop in many students a true appreciation of the language and the group who speaks the language—in short, an integrative motive.

[p] It would seem, however, that these results are also relevant to the goals of second language programs. [q] If we accept that student attitudes and motivation influence their degree of second language competence, and their willingness to continue in second language programs, we might ask whether it is reasonable for teachers to aim for a

high degree of second language competence. [r] We are not recommending complacency, but we are questioning whether this is a meaningful goal. [s] We teach mathematics throughout a student's period in school but we don't expect our high school graduates to be mathematicians. [t] We hope that they will be familiar with the language (and logic) of mathematics. [u] Some students go on to become mathematicians; some, too, go on to become French scholars. [v] We hope, however, that all students, if they have taken either or both programs, will develop some sophistication and expertise in either or both so that in the future they will be able to profit from the enthusiasm and knowledge which they have developed in their early education. [w] Surely, this should be the goal of our educational programs.

The arguments raised in subtext 11 concerning the goals of teachers and programs can be challenged on several respects. The authors have hypothesized two possible 'goals' [a] to [e] for teachers to promote LL2: modification of language aptitude and modification of integrative motive. However, although "it has long been accepted ... [as] an important variable," language aptitude is ruled out by the authors as a determining factor simply on the basis of a personal opinion represented as a fact, via two uses of *is* in sentence [b], concerning its relative stability (but see Gardner (no date), p. 8). The alternative 'goal', modification of integrative motive, on the other hand, is supported here [c] on the questionable grounds that its possibility "is generally accepted" and that this motive "facilitates" LL2. However, for one thing, no documentation is provided for the so called 'general acceptance' (see also Gardner (no date)) and, for another, the facilitating effects of the motive which is indeed a hypothesis, that, if confirmed, would only be applicable to a subcategory of L2 learners, is represented as a universal fact via the present tense of the verb 'facilitates'. What makes this bias critically significant is what might be called for the want of a better term the foundation of the two goals. The vote for language aptitude would trace the main source of achievement within the capabilities of the learners themselves while the emphasis on the integrative motive would confer the dominant role, in the learner's achievement, to the G2 since this latter view recognizes the G2 and its characteristics as the source of attraction and motivation. The bias in favour of or against one or another goal, in short, would assume a bias in favour of or against the group of individuals associated with that goal.

Moreover, a further bias implied in the above subtext concerns the manner in which the 'goals' especially the one related to the integrative motive are identified or classified. Unlike the usual emphasis made by Gardner and associates in classifying or reclassifying the learner's goals on the basis of their hierarchical status into, for example, goals and means (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) or intermediate goals and the ultimate goal (Gardner et al., 1976a; Gardner et al., 1978), no such attempt is explicitly made in the case of the goals of teachers and programs. On the face of it, of course, absence of judgment about the relative status of the goals is usually interpreted as a lack of bias in favour of one goal and against others. However, if such classification demands one, due to lack of adequate justification, to give an inferior status to a concept that is consistently preferred in the theory, then the absence of the classification and judgment that is typically made in similar cases could more reasonably be indicative of a mystified bias in favour of that concept. Yet, there still seems to be a strong tendency to make such an attempt. The attempt is tried in subtext 11: [e] where modification of integrative motive is classified through nomination as a 'goal'. As is also implied in subtext 11: [d] and subtext 13 below, the modification actually serves as a means, or rather a learning condition and more particularly a pedagogic treatment to promote second-language acquisition and as such it would be implausible to be reclassified by being called a 'goal' [e]. This nomination strategy involves an evaluative judgment in favour of integrative motive and the objects associated with it, including G2.

The comparison between the goals of the learner on the one hand and those of the teacher and the program on the other, and the differential strategy adopted by the authors in identifying and classifying the goals in those two areas merits special notice. While Gardner and associates' attempt to reclassify certain 'goals' of the learner into ends and means or intermediate goals and ultimate goal may eventually turn out to be plausible in a sense, replicating the same attempt in the case of the goals of the teacher and the program by applying the same differential categories of goals or means to the same instances of the actual 'goals', or in other words, identifying the same 'goals' with the same statuses identified in the case of the learner's goals, would be quite misleading. This is because while it may, for example, be possible for some learners to try to acquire a second language (the means, or intermediate goal) in order to integrate with the G2 (the ultimate

goal), this categorization cannot in theory be applicable to the goals of second language teachers and programs simply because these are by definition educational rather than, say, political agents, even though political and cultural considerations may and do indeed often affect their decisions and activities in practice. Now, although Gardner and associates do not of course make such a comparable attempt in the case of the goals of the teacher and program, their non-transparent discourse on this matter not only fails to make the distinction any clearer but also on certain occasions it even helps to foster an assumption to that effect.

Another bias reflected in the above discourse (subtext 11) concerns the adherence of the educational agents to the integrative goal. In sentence [e], for instance, modification of integrative motive is claimed to be "a goal of many teachers of a second language" but this opinion is again represented and underscored as a fact through the modality markers 'is' and 'of course'. Furthermore, while this goal of the one category of teachers is foregrounded in that paragraph and those following it, no discussion is raised here about the goal(s) of other teachers. Having pretended to be the mouthpiece of facts in the initial paragraph, the authors turn out to be authoritative in the following paragraph [i-o], indirectly by formulating the implications of their own experience universally for "one who teaches a second language", and directly by using imperative verbs [n]. In the last paragraph [p-w], the authors begin to establish the relevance of the teacher's goal, modification of integrative motive, and other issues raised in the preceding paragraph to the goals of programs in a very conservative manner. The authors are conservative in the sense that in this case they neither seem to talk about facts nor appear to directly prescribe such a goal for the programs. The conservativeness, however, seems to result in a failure to make the relevance transparent enough to the point that the paragraph might appear to be lacking in unity and coherence. The more important problem, however, has to do with the fact that the discussion on the relevance systematically suppresses any motivation other than integrative motive by tending to assume that it is only this kind of motive that will guarantee achieving a high degree of L2 competence and therefore only modification of this kind of motive should be the goal of our educational programs.

Still more importantly, the discriminatory treatment of motivational concepts in the area of the goals of the teacher and the program is tantamount to discriminating in favour

of or against different groups of people. That is, the inclusion or exclusion of one or another type of motive in the theory means in practice the inclusion or exclusion of one or another group of learners. More specifically, in the theory in question, it is the integratively motivated students who are assumed to be the true and legitimate learners and it is only this group of learners for whom the whole theory has been exclusively or predominantly serviceable while learners with other motivations are roughly excluded from the theory, particularly when viewed from the perspective of the focus of the relevant discourses. The preceding piece of discourse (subtext 11) as well as other discourses on the theory to date would account for this interpretation. Take the fourth paragraph [i-o] of subtext 11. Sentences [k and l] activate the assumption that the many students who are non-integratively motivated (and who do not already have 'a high level' of language aptitude) will not be able to learn the language. (The use of 'may' in the second clause of sentence [k] may only disguise the inevitability of the relationship interpreted and expressed here by will since in the same article the authors recognize only integrative motive and language aptitude as the two independent avenues to success in LL2.) Those many non-integratively motivated students are therefore identified as incompetent and relatively 'unimportant' and the teachers are simply advised to forget about them. These suggestions, however, are not made in a straightforward manner but by way of an analogy with learners without the aptitude and the use of the euphemistic phrase "deserve as much sympathy and understanding" in sentence [l]. The status of the integratively motivated students, on the other hand, is considered, in the formulation of the goals of the teacher and the program, to be 'more important' [m] than that of other students, or rather the only thing that is important because the whole theory as represented in the relevant article focuses on this motive exclusively.

A next important discursive bias in favour of the integrative goal is related to the identification of the nature of the activity involved in achieving that goal. Achieving this integrative goal that, according to the theory, requires changing the learner's attitudes and motivation is almost always represented by a particular class of lexical items that tend to present a biased picture of reality. Far from being negative, the items selected either convey a positive connotation or are less frequently neutral (an exception being the use of manipulate by Gardner et al. (1976b)). Some of the words which are more or less

frequently used in referring to the change include 'modify', 'develop', 'promote', 'increase', 'encourage', 'alter', 'change', 'improve', and so on. We may just consider a sample technique recommended in Gardner and Lambert (1972) for inducing changes in attitudes and see how well those words could describe the process involved in the application of the technique:

Subtext 12: [a] To help teachers and parents to *effectively modify* the attitudes of children, there is now available a growing body of *knowledge* in the social psychology of attitude change (see for example the *excellent* overviews of Triandis, 1971; Zimbardo & Ebbesen, 1969; Fishbein, 1967). [b] To take a simple example, Zimbardo and Ebbesen (1969) mention a technique which *they believe* is one of the most effective in *changing* perceptions and attitudes or increasing *tolerance of contrary ideas*: namely, *to have the person involved "publicly espouse a set of opinions with which he strongly disagrees"* (p. 57f.). [c] In this scheme, the person *is made* an *active* participant rather than a passive receiver of persuasive communications. [d] *A good deal of research shows* that thinking about and *publicly defending* the other person's point of view, much as a debater or lawyer does, has a tremendous impact on *stubborn* attitudes and stereotypes. [e] *Talented* teachers could make good use of this and related insights from psychology. (pp. 144-45, italics added)

Apart from a number of other points which are significant from a critical standpoint, the simple question to be raised here is whether the process described above especially in sentence [b] can be adequately represented by the above-mentioned set of words or should indeed be characterized as an instance of 'manipulation' of attitudes, a term which Gardner and associates avoid using. Put briefly, words such as 'change' mystify the fact that the process involved is systematic, purposeful, and value-laden. Similarly, words such as 'modify', the most frequently used term, also distort reality but on the grounds that in this context they typically assume that G2's attitudes are better than G1's. In other words, the use of the latter category of words constitutes a more striking instance of discursive bias in favour of G2.

The interpretation made above about the systematic bias in the choice of the words related to attitude change is indeed consistent with the explicit judgments that are sometimes passed about this type of goal. For instance, discussing about a suggestion made concerning two basic approaches to remedy the problem of declining enrolments

and referring to one as "reinstating formal language requirements", Gardner et al. (1976a) introduce the second approach as follows:

Subtext 13: [a] A second approach which would involve a less coercive tactic would be to attempt to modify students' motivation and attitudes towards language study. [b] In view of the fact that most second language courses endorse (or at least pay lip service to) both linguistic and non-linguistic goals, the second approach would appear to be more productive in attaining both sets of outcomes. [c] For example, if such goals as greater cultural understanding and a generalized interest in foreign languages are to be promoted it is reasonable to speculate that at least some students held captive in compulsory courses might develop negative attitudes. [d] Not only are these non-linguistic goals worthy outcomes in and of themselves, but as the preceding section has demonstrated, appropriate student attitudes and motivation [i.e., non-linguistic goals] are also related to success in attaining the more purely linguistic outcomes. (p.204)

In subtext 13 the authors explicitly express their partisan opinions about non-linguistic goals on a few occasions. In sentence [a], the second approach, modification of students' motivation and attitudes which is elsewhere (Gardner & Smythe, 1975) referred to as a goal, is claimed to "involve a less coercive tactic" (but see subtext 12). In sentence [d], too, the non-linguistic goals are definitely judged to be "worthy outcomes in and of themselves". The more important point is that these personal opinions are represented as statements of definite facts through the use of the modal verbs 'would' in sentence [a] and 'are' in sentence [d]. Moreover, the associated clause in each case is more likely to escape attention than the rest of the material in the same sentence because it involves such a distribution and structure that help to naturalize its content. Both clauses are placed toward the beginning of the sentence typically occupied by given information, and one is structured in a subordinate clause and the other in a coordinate one which tends to function as a subordinate structure while in either case no justification is provided for the judgment.

Unlike the earlier doubts raised concerning the concept of 'goals' in subtext 11, however, subtext 13 might in a sense be more accurate and somewhat more explicit about the official goals of the programs in the theory. For example, in sentence [c], the authors refer to two instances of hypothetical non-linguistic goals, greater cultural understanding and a generalized interest in foreign languages (see also subtext 10:[c]). Two important

points, however, should be taken into account with respect to these goals especially that of "greater cultural understanding". Firstly, as might be understood from 'if' in subtext 13:[c], they should not be seen as simply hypothetical goals on the grounds of arguments raised in the paragraph. More specifically, this is because these goals are judged [d] to be not only inherently worthy but also related to success in LL2. This interpretation is also supported by the following subtext by Clement et al. (1978) that emphasizes "cultural appreciation".

Subtext 14: [a] The intimate relationships between attitudes and motivation exemplified by the results reported here, suggest that the royal path to alerting the individual's motivation is through attitude change. [b] More specifically, increases in attitude toward the second-language community and second-language course should have a definite impact on the individual's motivation and persistence through the elaboration of inter-ethnic contact programs, such as bicultural excursions and exchanges. [c] As already documented by Clement, Gardner and Smythe, these special "incentive" programs could have an impact, not only on the student's attitude toward the language community, but also on his motivation to learn the second a language.¹¹ [d] An implication of these results is that programs emphasizing cultural appreciation as opposed to exclusively linguistic outcomes should have a beneficial effect on persistence in second-language study. (p. 694)

The second very important point is that, paradoxically enough, the above official non-linguistic goal of "greater cultural understanding" can hardly be interpreted as the real goal or at least the ultimate goal of the programs (and the teacher) in the theory. The point is that in the light of its surface meaning the term 'understanding' (or even 'appreciation') can hardly represent the nature of the learning process or that of the learning conditions as conceptualized in any model of the theory up to the present time. This is because this concept refers to cognitive processes in the sense that it is textualizing the goal as a matter of 'knowledge' and as such would seem to presuppose a purely cognitive definition of the learning processes and learning conditions in the theory whereas the ways in which these two concepts of learning are actually conceptualized in the theory go far beyond the cognitive domain and extend to the affective and overt behavioural (action-oriented) domains. In other words, the ways in which learning processes and learning conditions are defined for the achievement of such a goal demand

a change not only in the knowledge of learners but also in their value systems and overt behavior while the above official goal, greater cultural understanding, mystifies this fact. This requirement for the affective and behavioural change by the two dimensions of the theory, learning processes and learning conditions, is further examined below.

As for the learning process, as is frequently emphasized in the preceding subtexts we should note that the process in this theory has always involved modification of integrative motive which pertains to the affective domain. More specifically, modification of integrative motive that in its more recent formulations is composed of three sets of factors (one motivational and two attitudinal sets of factors) has always demanded the change of attitudes as a prerequisite to enhance motivation (e.g., subtext 14:[a]). Attitudes extend beyond the cognitive (knowledge) domain and more centrally involve affective features as they are conceptualized in terms of "beliefs and evaluation", or "evaluative beliefs" (Gardner et al., 1978). Furthermore, the learning process is eventually defined in the theory in terms of "adoption", rather than merely knowledge or "understanding", of aspects of the behaviour which characterize G2, or in other words, in terms of 'identification' with G2. This is partially, though still vaguely, reflected in subtext 6: [z4-z6]. These sentences are vague in that they seem to attribute the success of the learning process only to "a willingness or a desire" to adopt those aspects. However, when attention is directed to the nature of motivation as one of the components of the theory, it becomes evident that the success in that process also depends, according to the theory, on another necessary element of motivation, namely "the effort or persistence demonstrated in the process of striving for the goal" (subtext 6:[z26]). This point is made more clearly in the more recent representations of the theory including the following statements, particularly sentence [b], by Masgoret & Gardner (2003):

Subtext 15: [a] The concept of integrativeness refers to an openness to identify, at least in part, with another language community. [b] This concept was hypothesized (cf. Gardner, 1985a) to influence second language acquisition because learning a second language requires the adoption of word sounds, pronunciations, word orders and other behavioral and cognitive features that are part of another culture. [c] Integrativeness implies openness on the part of individuals that would facilitate their motivation to learn the material. [d] Individuals who want (or are willing) to identify with the other language group will be more motivated to learn the language than individuals who do not" (p. 126).

As for the learning conditions, Gardner and associates have always emphasized the importance of the "modification of attitudes" to increase motivation rather than simply promotion of learners' 'understanding' or 'knowledge' of the target culture (e.g., subtext 14). Still more basically, this modification of attitudes is brought about, according to Gardner and associates, by exerting a change in the various features of the behavior of the learner (e.g., subtext 12). It would be highly questionable, however, whether a mere cultural understanding demands as a prerequisite a modification of attitudes and behavior rather than the other way round. Overall then, viewing the matter intertextually, one is likely to wonder as to how s/he should classify in terms of means and end or intermediate and ultimate goals the various linguistic and non-linguistic 'goals' of the teacher and the programs raised in the relevant discourses on the theory, including the promotion of greater cultural understanding, the modification of attitudes and motivation (already referred to as modification of integrative motive), modification of behavior, modification of language aptitude, or development of linguistic competence.

In a different sense, the goal of "greater cultural understanding" (subtext 13: [c]), particularly the so-called concept of understanding turns out to be significant too. In this covert sense, it can be interpreted in a way more consistent with the notion of integrative motive on the basis of which learning processes and learning conditions are conceptualized. According to this interpretation, given the fact that in the theory motivation is directly responsible for achievement in LL2 and an "increase" in attitudes (e.g., "a generalized interest in foreign languages" subtext 13:[c]) can only contribute to achievement indirectly through motivation, then "greater cultural understanding" (subtext 13: [c]) must, if it is to be considered as a goal of 'integrative teachers and programs', play much the same part as improvement of attitudes does. That is to say, greater cultural understanding will result in an increase in motivation and increased motivation in turn improves achievement in LL2. This interpretation of the above goal, of course, assumes a value judgment in favour of the target culture because it is expected to increase motivation. Thus it assumes that that culture is something desirable. Furthermore, it also tends to imply that the target culture is superior to the learner's native culture because the

serious learner is expected to identify with G2 and thus become an acculturated member of that group.

To sum up this section, as the samples of the discourses analyzed here were meant to illustrate, Gardner and associates' accounts of their theory are critically significant in terms of their view of the goals of the language teacher and program, too. A number of particular discursive practices (e.g. lexicalization, modality markers, linguistic operations, verbal tenses, etc.) have been chosen which point rather consistently to a particular direction. Here again, as in the case of the learner's goals, the above direction is characterized by three main features. First, some discursive practices serve to polarize the abstract concepts, goals, and the related peoples into integrative and non-integrative. An instance of such practice is the authors' occasional tendency to assume a comparison between the learner's goals and those of the language teacher and program. Second, the categorization of the goals and groups of people associated with them has been subjected to discriminatory value judgment in the interest of one category (i.e., the goals and groups associated with G2) but against other groups. An instance of such practice is the authors' undocumented vote for the superiority of modification of integrative outlook as almost the only practical goal for the teacher and the program. Third, the preceding two features of the texts are typically textualized in an opaque manner. This aspect of the discourses is realized, for example, in classifying the nature of the non-linguistic goal of the program as one of developing "greater cultural understanding" and thus mystifying the fact that the theory is primarily aimed at the manipulation of the learner's attributes in the affective and overt behavioural domains rather than those simply in the cognitive domain. Once more, such discursive practices could, as far as CDA is concerned, contribute to the maintenance of an unequal social relationship between the parties involved in the process of LL2.

4. Conclusion

Generally speaking, theoretical issues in our discipline need to be examined from a 'critical' standpoint by analyzing the discourses representing them as well as from the conventional scientific perspective. This is because discourses of any genre including scientific ones can in principle be and, as is frequently demonstrated by critical analysts,

are indeed often plagued with value judgments passed in favor of one party and against another. So, unlike the assumption often made by non-critical researchers as to the objectivity of scientific discourse, discourses belonging to this genre too may be ideologically loaded. Kerlinger (1979) tends to point to this possibility in the distinction he makes between scientists and scientific procedures: "the procedures of science are objective, not the scientists. Scientists, like all men and women, are opinionated, dogmatic, ideological [...], that is the very reason for insisting on procedural objectivity, to get the whole business out of ourselves" (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 879). A more radical observation is also reflected in Peirce's (1995) first of the six tenets of critical research that are intended to inform qualitative research in language learning and teaching: "Critical research rejects the view that any research can claim to be objective or unbiased" (p. 570).

A striking example of such a tenet or dominant ideologically oriented tendency can be seen upon closer analysis in the discourses generated on Gardner's theory of attitudes and motivation. As demonstrated in the few instances in this report, regardless of what are claimed to be found as hard facts, one encounters a large number of explicit judgments, implicit assumptions, opacities, silences, conflicting propositions, backgroundings, foregroundings, universalizations of particulars, etc. built at different levels in the discourses on the theory. These phenomena have been taken to suggest a particular ideology. What accounts for the ideological interpretation of these phenomena is not so much the mere occurrence of them in the discourses under analysis as the consistency between them. In other words, these phenomena systematically point to a certain direction, tending to overestimate one particular category of concepts, the integrative concepts, to the disadvantage of another, the non-integrative ones.

Moreover, the particular treatment of the concepts has its own critical social significance. That is, when viewed from the perspective of reality in terms of their relevance to the human participants and to the social relation between the participants, those concepts and the way they are represented and formulated in the discourses on the theory can no longer be regarded as abstract entities and processes. Thus any bias in favour of, say, integrative motive would not be regarded just as one in favour of an abstract concept simply because it assumes differential roles for different groups of

participants and as such has a critical social significance. That is, any bias towards this concept contributes consciously or unconsciously and for the right or the wrong reason to the maintenance or development of unequal social relations between the two groups, G1 and G2, involved in the LL2 process in the interest of the latter group. This is, in short, the ideological functioning observed in the discourse under analysis.

An adequate explanation of the specific nature of this ideology within the context of the present analysis, learning and teaching a second language, calls for attending to a level or context of analysis broader than that of discourse, which exceeds the space and scope of the present paper. Such a global level explanation would demand taking care of a number of issues such as bias in the Canadian setting of the studies conducted to support the theory, blurring the distinctions in the acquisition of a first, a second, and a foreign language, present state and status of international languages, and the unequal relationship between the developed and underdeveloped or developing countries. Still, at a minimum, a critical perspective would recognize the ideology in question as an ethnocentric, or rather 'xenocentric' one on the grounds that the discourses at issue exhibit a sharp bias toward another ethnolinguistic and cultural community. Beyond that the adequate explanation might even open the possibility for 'Anglocentrism' or 'Francocentrism' as in a bilingual setting such as Canada in the interest of "acculturation", or even for a mixture of both of these in the interest of "biculturalism".

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Data-driven Learning and Teaching Collocation of Prepositions: The Case of Iranian EFL Adult Learners

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was threefold. First, to see if concordancing materials presented through data-driven learning (DDL) have any effect in the teaching/learning collocation of prepositions. Second, to find out if knowledge of collocation of prepositions could differentiate among the different levels of EFL learners' proficiency. Third, to determine the extent to which Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of collocation of prepositions is affected by their L1. To this end, 200 senior English majors studying at three universities in Shahrekord served as the participants of this study. A Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency was used to determine the participants' level of proficiency. The subjects were then randomly divided into two groups. One group underwent the conventional treatment on prepositions and their collocational patterns. The second group received treatment through the DDL instruction that was based on concordancing lines. Two completion tests on collocation of prepositions were administered as the pre-test and post-test to check the effects of the treatments. The obtained data were then submitted to different statistical analyses such as analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA), and post hoc comparison using the Scheffe test. The results of the study yielded the following results. First, the DDL approach proved to be highly effective in the teaching and learning of collocation of prepositions. Second, learners' performance on collocation of prepositions was shown to be positively related to their

level of proficiency. Third, the analysis of errors of collocations indicated that Iranian EFL learners tended to carry over their L1 collocational patterns to their L2 production.

Key Words: Data-driven Learning, concordancing, collocation, prepositions, concordancer, KWIC, Corpus Linguistics

Introduction

Prepositions are generally troublesome to the learners for whom English is a foreign/second language (Celce-Murcia, and Larsen-Freeman 1999, p.401). Boers and Demecheleer (1998, p.197) argue that prepositions are difficult for ESL/EFL learners because they have literal as well as figurative meanings. Jimenez Catalan (1996, p.174) claims that Spanish students have difficulty with mastering English prepositions. Jabbour-Lagocki (1990, p.162) believes that English prepositions are notoriously difficult for ESL/EFL learners to master because of L1 interference. For native speakers, prepositions present little difficulty, but for a foreign/second language learner they are confusing and largely problematic. For instance, we say, *we are at the hospital*; or *we visit a friend who is in the hospital*. *We lie in bed but on the couch*. *We watch a film at the theater but on television*. All these indicating that prepositions have strong collocational relations with other elements of language, and thus they are problematic for the EFL learners.

Although it is generally accepted that collocations are both indispensable and the same time problematic for foreign language learners and they therefore should play an important role in second language acquisition (SLA), especially for adult learners, learners' difficulties with collocations have not been investigated in detail by EFL practitioners so far (Nesselhauf, 2003). Both the conventional approaches (such as Grammar Translation Method) and the modern approaches (such as Communicative approach) to SLA have in different ways underplayed the role of collocations. Shei and Helen (2000) believe that collocations have been largely neglected by researchers, course designers and EFL practitioners.

The majority of Iranian EFL learners have a good knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary; however, they seem to have serious problems with the production of

collocational patterns, specifically collocations of prepositions. This inefficiency seems to be, to some extent, due to the lack of collocational knowledge among Iranian EFL students, and to a large extent, the inadequate emphasis given to collocational patterns in their textbooks, and the type of instructions they receive. Moreover, such multi-word lexemes, i.e., prepositions and their collocational patterns have not usually been a major focus of teaching and research in our country.

The importance of prepositions and their collocational properties on the one hand for the non-native learners of English, and the problems that Iranian EFL students have with collocation of prepositions on the other hand, highlight the significance of the present study. Furthermore, there is an abundant stock of phrasal and prepositional combinations in English that represent innumerable collocations, and the mastery over them and their collocational power can affect Iranian EFL learners' fluency as well as accuracy in both speaking and writing..

One possible solution is to use the more recent Data-driven (DDL) as it emphasizes the collocational properties of language through concordancing lines. The present paper aims at investigating the role of DDL in the teaching collocation of English prepositions to Iranian EFL adult learners.

2. Literature review

One problematic question that remains unresolved concerns whether or not having a large store of vocabulary and a basic knowledge of grammar are enough for fluent and successful communication in second language acquisition (Rudzka , Channell, Ostin, and Putseys, 1985). But it is usually the case that the majority of EFL learners, even advanced ones, have various problems in their oral or written productions (Bahns and Eldaw 1993; Rudzka , et al , ibid; Taiwo, 2004). This is in spite of the fact that they apparently seem to have sufficient lexical or grammatical knowledge. Such erroneous utterances like *'the manager of the university'*, *'heavy tea'*; *' to take fish'* and *'to be bad in something'* are not due to poor lexical or grammatical knowledge. These problems arise partly from lack of knowledge about the companies that words keep, i.e., collocation.

Hill (1999, p.4) states that lack of collocational competence can be a cause of EFL students' problems in learning English collocations. It may also be suggested that one

reason for the EFL students' problems in learning English prepositions is that they usually try to learn the meaning and use of prepositions individually without paying sufficient attention to their collocational properties (Flowerdew, 1999). Zarei (2002) found that Iranian EFL learners have problems with English collocations. He classified English collocational patterns into ten categories of which the collocations of prepositions are among the most problematic patterns, while 'adjective+adverbs' and 'fixed expressions' rank among the least problematic collocational patterns for them. Zarei (ibid) further concluded that knowledge of collocations is an essential part of achieving native-like competence in English. Delshad (1980), too, found that Iranian EFL/ESL students have difficulty in the use of English prepositions. According to Delshad (ibid), Iranian EFL students usually misuse or omit English prepositions.

With the introduction of digital computers and corpus linguistics, new trends are introduced into the teaching of collocations. One of these trends that is called concordancing has begun to find its way in language teaching. Concordancing is a method of analyzing language by studying structures and lexical patterns found in digital databases. This program allows for the study of large bodies of texts called corpora with a computer program, i.e., a concordancer. The concordancer can find a selected word and list sentences or portions of sentences containing that word, called the Key-Word-In Context (KWIC). In this format, the lexical or grammatical items that collocate with the key word are sorted to the left and right side of the key word. It can also identify collocations or words most often found together with the key word. This information can provide students with information on lexical or grammatical patterns in sample sentences of real language.

Later on, the idea of DDL was proposed by Johns (1991) as an innovative approach to the implementation of concordancing materials in the realm of second language acquisition (SLA). In DDL, a concordancer searches huge amounts of linguistic data (called Corpora). The concordancer is electronic software that depicts frequent lexical/grammatical patterns of language within authentic contexts. According to Johns (ibid) the language learner using this approach is essentially a research worker whose learning is driven by access to authentic linguistic data.

In the same vein, Batstone (1995) claims that DDL is a pedagogic continuum from product to process. It has the advantage of product approach since the specific aspects of language are presented to the learners by multiple exposures within contexts. At the same time, it has a process approach towards learning because DDL promotes creativity and self-discovery learning among learners. While still very much a new methodology, DDL appears to utilize the strengths of both product and process approaches to teaching grammar successfully (Hadley, 2004).

DDL approach suggests that grammar learning should consist largely of consciousness-raising activities rather than the teaching of rules. Consciousness-raising is defined as the deliberate attempt to draw the learner's attention specifically to the formal properties of the target language. In DDL approach, learners are not seen simply as recipients of knowledge, but as researchers studying the regularity of the language. Teachers encourage learners' search without knowing in advance what patterns they will discover.

One of the important factors that shape learners' inter-language (IL) is transfer, and it has been a controversial issue in SLA research. Ellis (1986) remarks that SLA is strongly affected by the learners' first language, and the best support for such a claim is the foreign accent in the second language learners' speech. Towel and Hawkins (1994) enumerate five observable phenomena about SLA of which transfer of L1 patterns into L2 is of prime significance. They further write that, "Transfer seems to affect all linguistic levels: pronunciation, syntax, morphology, lexicon and discourse, (p. 7)." Gass and Selinker (1983) believe that two interrelated processes are affecting SLA: first, the learner's built-up body of knowledge formed based on the available second language data, and second, the learner's utilization of the knowledge of the first language (L1) and other languages known to him or her.

The importance of transfer as a property of second language has been evaluated differently throughout the history of SLA. Although its origin goes back to behaviorism, it remains one of the most fundamental aspects of second language acquisition. Oldin (1989) asserts that transfer has been documented to occur at all the levels of linguistic analysis such as phonology, syntax, lexis, and grammar. Although phonological transfer

is most common in SLA, lexical and collocational transfer seems to be the major cause of poor proficiency.

EFL learners have trouble where collocations are language specific. Thus, in such a case, they tend to carry over the collocational patterns of their L1 into L2 settings. Gabrys-Biskup (1992) contends that lexical transfer occurs in the learners' use of collocations.

Consequently, the question of transferability of collocational patterns from L1 into L2 setting is an indication of cross-linguistic effect in the context of inter-language acquisition. There is now abundant empirical evidence that first language transfer is a real and central phenomenon that must be fully taken into account in SLA (Ellis, 1986). And one of the areas of SLA that is strongly influenced by L1 is the transfer of collocational patterns (Gabrys-Biskup, *ibid*).

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research questions

The introduction of the DLL approach to the teaching of collocations is rather new and a number of questions and controversial issues are awaiting answers and clarification. Based on our review of the literature and the reported results of the pre-studies done in this area, this study sets itself the goal to shed some lights on the following research questions:

1. What is the role of the DDL approach in the development of collocational knowledge of prepositions among Iranian EFL students?
2. To what extent is the collocation of prepositions affected by Iranian EFL learners' L1?
3. Does collocation of prepositions exert the same degree of difficulty for different levels of language proficiency among Iranian EFL students?

3.2. Research hypotheses

For doing this research, the afore-mentioned questions were then formulated into the following null hypotheses.

- Ho.1. DDL approach has no role in the development of collocational knowledge

of prepositions among the Iranian EFL students.

Ho.2. Iranian EFL learners' L1 has no significant effect on their knowledge of collocation of prepositions.

Ho.3. There is no significant difference in the collocation of prepositions in terms of difficulty for different levels of language proficiency among the Iranian EFL learners.

3.3. Participants

Two hundred English majors served as the participants of this study. They were selected through cluster random sampling from among 450 EFL majors studying at three universities in Shahrekord. At first, the Michigan Test of English Language proficiency (MTELP) was administered to determine their level of proficiency. The possible scores range from zero to one hundred. The mean score and the standard deviation of the MTELP were 54 and 21 respectively. Then according to the mean performance and the standard deviation of the test, subjects were assigned into high, mid and low groups. Those students whose scores fell one standard deviation below and above the mean were assigned as the mid group. Those subjects whose scores were two standard deviations below and above the mean were classified as the low and high groups respectively. In the next step, the participants in each low, mid and high group were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The schematic representation of the participants in different levels in this study was shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Schematic representation of the participants in control and experimental groups

Group	Level	No	Level	No	Level	No	Total
Control (conventional)	high	30	mid	40	low	30	100
Experimental (DDL)	high	30	mid	40	low	30	100
						total	200

3. 4. Instrumentation

In order to test the research hypotheses, four testing instruments and two types of teaching materials are developed and used by the researchers in this study. They are as follows:

1. As it was already mentioned, in the first phase of this study, the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) was given to the participants to determine their levels of proficiency.
2. To determine the collocational knowledge of the participants, a completion test on collocations of prepositions was given to the students as the pre-test. This test comprised 60 items, and its reliability was estimated to be 0.86 using Kr-21 formula. This test was given to 200 participants who had been selected through cluster random sampling.
3. Having received fifteen two-hour sessions instructions on collocation of prepositions with specific treatment for each group, a completion test on collocation of prepositions was administered as the post-test in order to determine the impact of specific instructions the participants received. This test also contains 60 items, and its reliability was estimated to be .82.
4. A translation task that deliberately included problems of Iranian students with prepositions and their collocations was assigned to the students in order to determine the possible effects that students' first language might create in their development of collocational knowledge of prepositions. Two experts in TEFL (Ph.D. colleagues) were consulted for the accuracy and appropriateness of the translated texts.
5. Teaching materials on collocations of prepositions were taken from Brown Corpus (2005). These texts were concordanced by the Web Concordancer Online.
6. Teaching materials on the prepositions were selected from different grammar books such as 'The Comprehensive English Grammar by Quirk et. al (1998), Modern English Part (I) written by Marcella Frank (1993) and English Idioms by Seidl and McMordie ((1987). All the teaching materials in the conventional and DDL groups were at the same level of difficulty for the participants.

3.5. Procedures

As it was already mentioned, at first the participants were randomly divided into control and experimental groups. In the second stage, the Michigan Test of English Language proficiency (MTELP) was used to determine the overall proficiency of the participants. Then the mean score and the standard deviation of MTELP were used as criteria for dividing the participants into low, mid and high levels of proficiency. Altogether six groups participated in this study, i.e. three experimental (DDL approach) and three control groups (conventional approach). In the third stage, they were pre-tested by a completion test on collocation of prepositions. The reliability coefficient of this test was estimated to be 0.86 using the Kr-21 formula. In the fourth stage, the participants attended English classes one hour per week in a fifteen-week semester. The structures taught to the students were prepositions and their collocational properties. The rationale behind such a decision was that most of the EFL students showed to have problems with the selection and use of English prepositions and their collocational properties.

To conduct the present study, six general patterns of collocation of prepositions are recognized and investigated by the researchers. These patterns are as follows:

1. adjective + preposition collocation: *good at, bored with, superior to, tired of*
2. preposition + noun collocation: *in astonishment, with embezzlement, on credit, with distress, by car*
3. noun + preposition collocation: *motivation in, admiration for, argument about*
4. verb + preposition collocation: *consist of, insist on, indulge in, resist in*
5. preposition + preposition collocation: *out of, next to, in front of, in lieu of*
6. idiomatic expressions: *to be at best, to be in the air*

Then the participants went through a fifteen-session treatment, i.e., the control groups underwent a conventional instruction in which prepositions and their collocational patterns were explicitly taught to the participants in English or Farsi. The materials used for the conventional-based instruction were taken from conventional grammar books such as Practical English Grammar, Comprehensive English Grammar and English Idioms. On the other hand, the experimental groups received a data driven-based instruction that was based on concordancing lines presented in KWIC format. The concordances were taken from the Brown Corpus Online (2005) which were searched by the Web Concordancer.

These lines were then given to the participants in printouts. The materials which were taught to the two groups were at the same level of difficulty. Finally, after the specific treatments given to each group, a post-test was administered to check the effects of the instructions.

For the second research hypothesis, errors of collocations were extracted and classified. Since there was not a systematic approach to the classification of collocational errors, the researchers used Jack C. Richards' taxonomy of errors. In his taxonomy, Richards (1974) classifies L2 errors into two major categories, i.e., inter-lingual and intra-lingual. According to Richards, while inter-lingual errors are due to the interference of L1 collocational patterns into L2 settings, intra-lingual errors reflect the arbitrary and unpredictable nature of the English collocations, as well as the learners' lack of adequate knowledge of L2 collocations. Blank items were excluded in this study. Finally, the post-test was given in order to compare the mean performance of the groups.

4. Data analysis and results

Concerning the first research question, the researchers intended to investigate whether the effect of DDL instruction on the development of collocational knowledge of prepositions among Iranian EFL students was significant. To answer this question, the researchers formulated the first null hypothesis:

Ho.1. DDL approach has no role in the development of collocational knowledge of prepositions among Iranian EFL students.

To statistically verify the first research hypothesis, the collected data were subjected to the statistical analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA). The results of this analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the performance of the participants in the DDL group and conventional group. Table 2 displays the results of the ANOVA for the first research hypothesis.

**Table 2. The results of ANOVA (one-way) for the first research hypothesis
(The comparison between conventional approach and DDL approach)**

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	Sig
Between Groups	949.125	2	474.563	.001
Within Groups	1484.875	97	15.308	
Total	2434.000	99		

As table two indicates, the observed p-value was estimated to be .001. This level of significance was far less than the expected p-value ($p=.05$) which was set to test the first research hypothesis. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected. In other words, concerning the use of collocations of prepositions, the participants who took Data-driven instruction showed to be superior in the use of collocation of prepositions to those who received instruction in the conventional approach.

The second research question dealt with the effect of Iranian EFL learners' L1 on the collocational knowledge of prepositions. In order to answer this research question, the second null hypothesis was formed:

Ho.2. Iranian EFL learners' L1 has no significant effect on their knowledge of collocation of prepositions.

To test this research hypothesis, a translation task comprising sixty fill-in-the blanks items on the collocation of prepositions was used. Then the total numbers of errors were calculated. Altogether, 4365 errors were extracted from the learners' productions. Then, based on the percentage of errors, it was concluded that first language interference in the production of collocation of prepositions was statistically significant. The results of this analysis are summarized in table 3.

Table 3. The distribution of collocational errors among Iranian EFL Learners

Types of errors	Number of errors	Percentage of errors
Inter-lingual	2987	%68.4
Intra-lingual	1378	%31.6

As table three shows, the influence of L1 on the use of collocations is considerable. About 68.5 percents of errors are due to interference from L1. This result showed that the impact of L1 on the use of prepositions seemed to be highly significant.

In the third research question, the researchers' aim was to see whether collocation of prepositions exerts the same degree of difficulty for different levels of language proficiency among Iranian EFL students or not. To test this research question, the following null hypothesis was formed:

H.3. There is no significant difference in the collocation of prepositions in terms of difficulty for different levels of language proficiency among Iranian EFL learners.

The findings for the first research hypothesis showed that there was a significant difference between the performance of the subjects in the conventional group and the DDL group. To test the third research hypothesis and to determine the differences among the levels in each group, the statistical analysis of post hoc comparison using the Scheffe test was conducted. The results of this analysis are represented in Table 4.

Table 4. The results of the Scheffe test for differences among EFL learners' levels of proficiency (Multiple Comparisons)

		Mean	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
		Difference (I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(I)	(J)					
HI.MI.LO	HI.MI.LO					
high	mid.	6.8750	.9450	.002	4.5258	9.2242
	low	6.5000	1.0102	.001	3.9886	9.0114
mid.	high	-6.8750	.9450	.005	-9.2242	-4.5258
	low	-.3750	.9450	.004	-2.7242	1.9742
low	high	-6.5000	1.0102	.003	-9.0114	-3.9886
	mid.	.3750	.9450	.006	-1.9742	2.7242

- The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

As the results in table 4 show, all the observed p-values estimated for the six groups of the study were much less than the level of significance ($p=.05$) set for testing the third hypothesis. Consequently, the third research hypothesis that claimed that knowledge of collocation of prepositions does not differentiate significantly among the participants in the three levels of proficiency was rejected.

5. Discussion and conclusion

In this study, the researchers compared two approaches to the teaching prepositions and their collocational properties. The three research questions addressed in this study intended to investigate the role of DDL and concordancing materials in the production of collocation of prepositions. The results have shown that DDL instruction had an advantage over the conventional one, since students in the DDL groups outperformed those in the conventional groups. This finding showed that DDL seemed to have a greater explanatory power and led to highly significant results in the use of collocation of prepositions. Thus, the researchers concluded that it is possible to develop a new approach (such as DDL) towards the teaching of collocations, and specifically collocation of prepositions using concordancing materials.

The results of the first research hypothesis of this study are in line with Bahns and Eldaw's argument (1993) that a part of EFL teaching should be based on ready-made chunks (collocations) which enhance accuracy as well as proficiency of the EFL learners. Language instruction, therefore, should focus on collocations, and the way they are pieced together, along with the way they vary and the situations in which they are used. Moreover, poor achievements of the learners in the production of collocation of prepositions in conventional groups in comparison with those in DDL groups verify Shei and Helen's contention (2000) that collocations have been largely neglected by researchers, course designers and EFL practitioners.

The results obtained for the second hypothesis confirm Bahns' argument (1993) that EFL/ESL learners sometimes transfer collocations in their first language inappropriately to the second language, and language interference is the major cause of learners' errors in L2 production. This finding is again in line with Gabrys-Biskup's (1992) claim that interference is the prime cause of L2 learners' errors. Moreover, the results for the second

hypothesis confirm Ellis's (1986) belief that there should be a reappraisal of the role of L1 into the L2 setting. However, this outcome ran counter to the claims made by some researchers who hypothesized that L1 influence on errors of collocations is not very significant (Dechert and Lennon, 1989). Based on these results, it might also be concluded that not only should collocations be selected for teaching with reference to L1, but they should specifically be taught with reference to L1. As a result, contrasting L1 and L2 collocations might help EFL learners to attain a higher proficiency.

Concerning the findings for the third research hypothesis, it may be concluded that knowledge of collocations can be used as a factor to determine the general proficiency of the EFL learners. As William (2000) points out, collocational knowledge was found to correlate strongly with general proficiency of the EFL learners, and it seems that EFL learners prefer to pick up words through ready-made chunks rather than isolated lexis.

As Bahns (*ibid*) suggests, excessive exposures to huge amounts of linguistic data can enhance learners' sense of discovery learning and problem solving activities. The use of concordancing materials as a basis for developing models and descriptions of language showed to be among the most far-reaching achievements made in the realm of second/foreign language instruction

Based on the findings of this study, some suggestions can also be made about how to teach collocations. First, it is not sufficient merely to teach lexical combinations, including collocations of prepositions in isolation. Rather, they should be taught within context. Second, not only should the selection of collocations but also their teaching should be with reference to L1, because L1 showed to be highly influential in the production of collocations. Third, since the use of collocations was highly correlated with EFL learners' language proficiency, collocations should be considered as an important factor in determining their overall proficiency.

6. Implications of the study

The findings of the present study are of practical as well as theoretical importance to the EFL practitioners in the teaching of collocation and lexis to the EFL students. It seems that collocational competence can influence EFL learners' overall language ability. Collocations have an effective role in the successful and native-like performance of EFL

learners. Since teaching prepositions is of utmost importance to the EFL students, a conscious knowledge of those prepositions will help them in their struggle towards the acquisition, manipulation and production of English as a foreign language. Moreover, the findings of the present study will give teachers some hints and guidelines as to overcome EFL students' problems in collocations of prepositions. Concordancing materials can even help the material developers to write suitable materials for the students through concordancing programs.

Furthermore, DDL provides numerous contexts for collocations of prepositions, and enhances students' sense of discovery learning and problem-solving activities. The students draw their own conclusions about the use of the given words by focusing on certain points in the context in which these words appear.

7. Limitations of the study

During the completion of the present study, the researchers encountered the following limitations.

1. Since the context that the DDL materials provided for each key word was limited to just forty characters, in some cases the participants had access to partial linguistic data.
2. Some concordances contain words and structures which were beyond a number of participants' current level of language proficiency.
3. Some concordances were culture-bound, thus making the comprehension of the data rather difficult for Iranian EFL learners.

8. Suggestions for further research

Throughout the research process, the following questions came to the attention of the researchers, and they suggest themselves to readers for further investigations.

1. What effects might DDL have on the learning of different kinds of lexical/grammatical collocational patterns of language?
2. Are patterns of collocations affected by learners' cultural background?
3. Can parallel (bilingual) concordances help EFL learners to get rid of L1 interference?

4. Can DDL be used to teach other aspects of language such as phonology, discourse and pragmatic aspects of language?

Thus conducting other research procedures for finding out the answers to the afore-mentioned questions would further complete the results of this study.

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Using Children's Literature for Reading and Writing Stories

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Abstract

This paper first discusses the advantages of using literature in language learning, explains why children's literature is suitable for EFL learners, and then illustrates a project which used children's literature to engage EFL university students in reading and writing stories. Participants of the project were two cohorts of first-year English majors (n=43) from a national university in southern Taiwan. Students' opinions were gathered from their reflective statements and interviews. Themes were first identified by two raters and data then coded independently. A majority of the students considered the selected stories were good writing models, the process of story writing was rewarding, the web postings nurturing, and the authors' computer chair empowering. The paper concludes with some suggestions for classroom practice in the EFL university classroom.

Keywords: Children's Literature, EFL Writing Instruction, Literature-based Instruction

Introduction

Narrative is one of the two modes of our thinking (Bruner, 1986). While communicating with others, we may describe an incident as a way of explaining our thoughts or a part of our argument. As such, narration is usually an essential prose genre required to practice in a university composition course for learners of English as a foreign language (henceforth, EFL). However, when it comes to the first-year composition in Taiwan, some students who are lacking in practice and stimulus for imagination and creativity often do not have

much to say. Their writing in general reads plain and dull; their stories are simply displays of chronological events, having no life and content.

Since reading and writing have a close relationship with each other (Grabe, 1991; Reid, 1993), carefully selected reading materials double as effective prompts and models for writing. For years, literature has been recognized as a valuable resource for reading and writing instruction. But, in EFL context, full-length novels or fiction may not provide input as comprehensible as stories written for children nor model examples of language style and length for production. Thus, for several years I have attempted to use children's literature in my composition course and developed a task of reading and writing stories to empower my student writers and activate their imagination.

In this paper, I will first discuss the advantages of using literature in language learning, next address the issue of literature selection for EFL learners, argue that children's literature is a suitable material to engage EFL university students in reading and writing activities, then present a project of reading and writing stories for university English majors in Taiwan, and provide some suggestions for classroom practice and instruction design in the end.

2. Using literature for language learning

2.1. Why literature?

The use of literature has been acknowledged as conducive to academic, intellectual, cultural, and linguistic learning (McKay, 1982; Oster, 1989; Sage, 1987; Spack, 1985). In L1 context, educators, especially whole language advocates, have recommended the use of literature and authentic materials (e.g. Goodman, 1992; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984). At schools, literature is not only operated as a pragmatic vehicle for teaching reading and writing, but also as a powerful way of knowing about oneself and the world. There are so many teachers seeing its benefits for students and so much empirical and anecdotal documentation verifying its positive results (Rudman, 1993; Smallwood, 1996). Palardy (1997) states that through literature, student readers "will have the opportunity to develop insights and understandings of the cultures and people of the world; to develop their imagery and visualization abilities; and to gain new perspectives by testing their ideas with those found in books" (p. 67). Likewise, Root (1971) maintains that literature

helps the readers better understand themselves, their world, and the aesthetic values of the written text.

L2 researchers and practitioners who seek communication as the primary goal of instruction also encourage the use of literature. Sage (1987) argues that literature represents various uses of the language, conventional and literary, displays a broader range of communication strategies than any other single language teaching component, and extends linguistic knowledge on the levels of usage and use. When students read literature, they learn the target language in a whole context rather than memorizing words and rules. This way of getting knowledge about language resembles the subconscious process of language acquisition proposed by Krashen (1976). Not like formal learning of vocabulary and language structure in the classroom, literature provides an informal but supportive environment for students to naturally develop their linguistic system. Also, Mitchell (1989t) asserts that the use of literature is a way of ensuring informal encounters between the ESL learners and the proficient native language user (the author) with the language, both inside and outside the classroom. Widdowson (1983) maintains that literature “sets up conditions for a crucial part of language learning - the ability to infer meaning by procedural activity” (p. 33). In addition to reading, Moody (1971) states that literature helps build up students’ listening comprehension when used aurally, encourages oral practice through discussion and offers many interesting chances to write. In other words, as input, literature presents different but natural language communications to students; as prompts, literature, being naturally involving, can stimulate students to discuss, share, and write. Functional language skills are therefore developed in meaningful, communicative activities.

Literature also serves as a valuable source of language input in the EFL context. For EFL learners, reading perhaps mainly channels the input of the target language. As Nuttall (1982) contends, “The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers.... the next best way is to read extensively in it” (p. 168). Krashen (1982) also states that reading is a convenient way to receive comprehensive input within the four walls of the classroom. This input does not necessarily have to be gained from direct contacts with English native speakers. When it comes to reading materials, Gajdusek (1988) argues that literature is a more satisfying

input than other reading sources. In addition to the linguistic benefit, literature especially opens the door for EFL learners to the target culture. Abulhaija (1987) asserts that we can never learn or teach English in EFL situations in isolation from literature because “literature is a vehicle through which we can get contact of all roots with other cultures, peoples, and societies, [and] language is the means to carry that out” (p. 3). Through literature learning a foreign language leads to a cultural understanding and cultural communication. To learn English for cross-cultural communication, Marquardt (1967) maintains that “knowledge of deep structures of the target language and perceptions of the underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, and inter-group attitudes of the target culture are now considered as important as control of structural patterns....Literature has been found ready to suggest ways of meeting these new needs” (p. 9). Kintanar (1972) also notes that literature plays a significant role in the connection between cultural learning and language learning. Obviously, the natural convergence between literature, language, and culture suggests the use of literature in the EFL curriculum.

2.2. Why children’s literature?

When we face numerous literature resources, selection becomes the first and foremost issue. To choose appropriate materials for EFL students, generally we need to take three important factors into consideration: language, content, and length.

Adeyanju (1978) argues that the language of literature text should not be stylized, dialectal, or otherwise difficult. This does not mean simplifying the text by limiting the length of sentences or the number of words within the text. Krashen’s (1982) Input Hypothesis asserts that comprehensible input should be $i + 1$, i referring to the learner’s current level of competence and $i + 1$ representing a slightly higher level which can be comprehended because of non-linguistic and contextual factors. That is to say, the input should not be so simple as to kill readers’ interest, nor so difficult as to hinder their understanding. The text should be challenging but not frustrating. It is agreed that readers do not have to comprehend everything they read; general comprehension occurs though they cannot grasp some difficult structures (Buckton, 1983; Povey, 1967). The comprehensibility of the target language can also be supplemented by some non-linguistic cues such as illustrations or story structure (Allen, 1989).

With regard to content, Adyanju (1978) recommends three criteria: cultural information, material accessible to students' schemata, and strong story lines. The first two are concerned with students' affective involvement, and parallel Pugh's (1989) criteria, which suggest that good literature should involve the reader at three levels: personal, cultural, and universal. Priority must be placed on stories that enable students to relate their own experiences and feelings to the reading. Students' interests and backgrounds may influence their responses to and comprehension of the stories. To be involving, the story line should be strong enough to carry the students onto the next page. If the plot is too flat, or does not satisfy the students' expectations, the story is not good.

Length is another important element in choosing literature. Sage (1987) explains that shorter stories make the students' reading task and the teacher's coverage easier. Overly long stories often make the students impatient and unwilling to wait till the end to know what happens to the protagonist. Students' anxiety may also increase consequently. In other words, the story should be short but long enough to stimulate students' interests and feelings.

Based on the above criteria, children's literature appears a better source to foster extensive reading and creative writing abilities for EFL university students than those required and used in literature programs. Literature is usually confined to those aesthetic texts written for adults, when addressed at the college level in Taiwan. In the department of English or Foreign Languages and Literatures, literature required to study mostly refers to British and American literature. The texts used for the literature courses are often heavily worded, with contents fairly new to students, and presented in very long pieces. However, like all good literature, "first-rate children's literature offers the same benefits that any high quality literature and art offer, including the pleasure of a good story, the experience of knowing other people and places, and the opportunity to reflect or examine ideas and values" (Bloem & Padak, 1996, p. 49). In addition, as Smallwood (1996) states, high quality children's literature "characterized by an economy of words, stunning illustrations, captivating and quickly moving plots" (p. 1) can help adults as well as children in developing language and literacy skills and content knowledge. Given this, children's literature, with vocabulary and style accessible to EFL students, doubtlessly can serve as an introduction to English-speaking culture because its "cultural values are

frequently conveyed with greater directness than in literature addressed to adults” (Clark, 1992, p. 5). In addition, children’s stories are often shorter, or at least felt shorter when the language of the text does not hinder so much readers’ comprehension as adult literature.

To sum up, in an EFL classroom where mastery of linguistic and cultural literacy forms the center of attention, children’s literature can be suitable material for literacy development due to its simple language style, embedded cultural information, and comfortable length.

3. A project of reading and writing stories

3.1. The writing course

This project was intended to use children’s literature to promote EFL university students’ narrative thinking and enhance their writing ability through a task of story reading and writing. It was conducted in a required composition course for English majors. The course meets two times three hours a week. It aims to build up students’ writing ability and confidence through assorted tasks such as narration, classification, comparison and contrast, and argumentation. Specific objectives include learning how to generate and develop ideas on a topic, apply appropriate rhetorical patterns to a specific writing task, review peer writers’ drafts and offer constructive feedback, evaluate and revise their work, and use English correctly and properly.

The task of reading and writing stories in the project was one of the course requirements. The task was arranged to develop students’ narrative thinking, awaken their imagination and inspire their creativity. It lasted for four weeks: the first week focused on reading stories, the second, drafting stories, the third, peer review and revising, and the fourth, conference and revising. In addition to story writing, students were required to post their weekly journals (reading responses to the selected stories) at the course forum on the Internet.

3.2. Participants

Participants of the project were two cohorts (n= 24, 19) of first-year English majors from a national university in southern Taiwan. Altogether there were 43 students, 33 females

and 10 males. Before this project, the students had studied English for 6 to 12 years. On average they rated their English reading ability at 3.6 and writing ability at 3.1 on a 5-point scale (5 for excellent and 1 for poor). Their learning problems, as students stated, mainly consisted in limited vocabulary, syntactic and discourse knowledge. 65% of the students had read English children's literature as outside reading at high school before; the rest did not read or did not realize they had read any children's literature before. About 20% of them had not been given much chance to practice real writing before. They had centered their attention on English word usage and sentence structures as well as translation to better prepare them for college entrance examinations.

3.3. Materials

Cricket Magazine was used as the reading material and writing prompt for the course. This is a children's magazine of literature and art which I selected for a number of reasons. First, the stories in Cricket mostly contain universal themes, which students can always have something to relate to. Second, the language used in Cricket is simple, direct, and natural. Stories published in the magazine can show students that language of good writing can be simple, clear, and elegant. Reading good models of writing and doing activities with these texts can provide students scaffolds when they are creating their own stories and manipulating the English language. Third, each story in Cricket is about three to four pages long. Students can finish reading one story in a sitting without too much frustration. The assignment of responding to a story in Cricket would be a reasonable task for them. The whole structure of a story can be perceived easily and thus provide an accessible framework for students to aid their comprehension and reinforce their sense of completion. Fourth, there are quality illustrations and different stories related to a theme covered in each issue of Cricket. Students can have a variety of choices; they can choose whatever reads appealing.

3.4. Instruction design

3.4.1. Reading and writing stories

In my class reading stories consists in observing the essential elements and learning how stories are best told. It is to comment on the title and first line, explore voices woven in

the plot, visualize characters through their remarks, identify the conflict, and notice the ending. To explain the importance of these elements, I guide students to read a story together in class. The story is first briefly introduced, with some key vocabulary explained. Then I demonstrate my reading with the technique called “think aloud” (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000; Wilhelm, 2001). I attempt to show students that it is fun to talk about and make connections with the text while reading. I read the story slowly, modify the language as needed to facilitate comprehension, comment on the text itself, pause occasionally for dramatic effect, and check for comprehension. After my reading, I bring students’ attention to some story writing strategies by asking questions as follows:

- 1 What do you think of the title of the story? Does it imply the theme the author intended to convey? Is it catchy enough for readers?
- 2 Do you like the first sentence and the first paragraph in the story? Are they interesting enough to carry you further in the story?
- 3 In what voice/viewpoint (first person or third person) was the story told? What’s the difference between telling a story in first person and doing it in third person?
- 4 Are the images of the characters in the story clear to you? Are they clearer when they speak? Do you think dialogue helps in developing characters?
- 5 Is the plot/incident intriguing to you? Is there a conflict or climax?
- 6 Do you like the ending of the story? Why?

I stress especially on the elements of voice and dialogue because I assume they compose the soul of a story. To help my students perceive the characters’ voice, I ask them to read out loud the dialogue to their peers or role-play the characters. By so doing, they learn not only how people communicate with each other in different cultures but also why story characters are better given their voice and perceived by dialogue.

Reading one story in class is certainly not inspiring enough for narrative writing. Since frequency ensures fluency in writing (Chen, 1997), I demand students to write journals regularly after class. They each check out at least one issue of Cricket Magazine from my library after browsing its cover, contents, and illustrations, and then post their story reflections at the course on the Internet. In their postings, they can talk about their favorite parts in the story, how the story makes them feel, something they have learned

from the story, or a similar incident that has happened to them.

For some students, free responses to stories may not be an easy task at the beginning. For this matter, I have designed some guided questions to help them get both linguistically and cognitively engaged in story responding. They are required to answer some, not all, of the questions because the questions are meant to focus their attention on the special features in the stories as well as similarities and differences between cultures. The guided questions are as follows:

- 1 How would you feel if you were the main character in the story?
- 2 Which part of the story do you love or hate most? Why?
- 3 Does the story remind you of anything?
- 4 What does the author try to say in the story?
- 5 Do you like the way the author wrote the story? Why?
- 6 What is your biggest problem reading this story?
- 7 Is the language of the story within your grasp? Did you learn some new words, expressions, or structures? What?

After the so-called pre-writing activities, that is, reading to analyze and make connections with the text and self, students create and draft their stories based on their personal experiences or the stories they have heard or read before. To help them get started, I ask the students to describe some conversation situations and use dialogues to present the events. Then within peer groups they exchange drafts and give each other oral and written feedback. With peer feedback, they revise their drafts to get their stories in shape. Then, I read their second drafts and have conferences with individual students to give another perspective of their stories, and if necessary, help clear their confusion as they revise their work. During the conferences, I also share my writing experience with those who are anxious about the seemingly endless revising process. I talk about how I feel and go through my writing process to illustrate the notion that writing is not only drafting but continuous revising; it ends only when the product is ready for publication. By doing so, my students can see me as a learner and a model, and revision as a natural and necessary process of their writing.

In the EFL writing classroom, language is doubtlessly one of the major concerns. To help my students get immediate linguistic feedback in the first draft, I ask them to read

out loud their drafts to their group members and give each other comments on language use and usage. My suggestions are provided in the second draft; extra assistance is sought through the Internet too.

3.4.2. Sharing and publishing stories

In Taiwan writing is often practiced for practice's sake in the university composition class. Students do not see a need or purpose for their writing. But when it is done for sharing and publication, students are empowered as writers (Chen, 2000). To make my students perceive their authorship, I integrate the following techniques into my writing classroom.

Author's Chair (Calkins, 1983; Graves, 1983; Graves & Hansen, 1983) is a social, collaborative activity that helps the one sitting in the author's chair develop a sense of audience as their peers and teachers ask clarifying questions that guide subsequent revisions. In my class, this activity is conducted as sharing and publishing final products in a networked classroom like Labbo's (2004) technique of Author's Computer Chair. I ask students to talk about and showcase their stories while sitting in the chair of the monitor computer. With graphics, music, or even animations, students not only read out loud the stories, but also describe how their story ideas are generated, how much revision they have done, and which part they like most. During the process, students are having the control of the page and acquiring authorship of their writing.

After the electronic presentation, my students revise their stories again for the publication of the class anthology CD. This is a formal publication of the class. Student writers introduce themselves as authors in a passage attached to their masterpieces. The story anthology reflects not only the efforts the whole class has put into writing but also marks a crucial step in students' acquiring ownership and authorship. Its audience is expanded beyond the classroom when the CD circulates among all other composition classes in the Department, and gets posted on the Internet.

When it comes to participation in a writing contest, my student writers become more serious about writing and revision. In general, we try to participate in two writing contests: the Xin-Ho Literature Award, an annual writing contest organized by our University, and the Heinemann ELT Graded Reader Competition in Taiwan. Students become very serious in revisions when they are asked to do commissioned writing. In

general, each entry for the literature award is revised at least two times, but most of the students are willing to do more, and the results obtained are always very encouraging. As to Heinemann ELT Readers Competition, students first read Heinemann's graded readers and then create adaptations of the books. For example, in the year of 1999-2000, six out of twenty-four students in my class won good places in the Heinemann ELT Readers Competition. Such an award-winning experience effectively motivated them to write more in the future. One of these students submitted an entry to the contest again the next year though she was not required to do so for any course. To her great joy and satisfaction, she was awarded the second place in the contest.

The process of story writing is certainly a mixture of confusion and comfort, joys and sorrows. Student writers feel fearful and lost while drafting, but expect curiously what feedback they will get from their peers and teachers. The comments they get can either provide them a hint for smaller changes, or tap them into another story line. Pain and anxiety diminish while students perceive their writing is published and awarded. Publication and sharing spark students' motivation and interest in story writing, which carry them all the way from confusing moments to joyful processes till the completion of their stories.

4. Evaluation of the project

To examine whether the task of reading and writing stories served the purpose as designed, students' opinions and feedback were gleaned from their reflective statements and interviews. Themes and categories were first identified by two raters with the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Then data were coded independently and presented in frequencies and percentages in relation to themes and categories. Regarding coding reliability, 87% agreement was found at first; problem codings were further discussed until agreement was reached.

The evaluation of the project was supported by three themes: stories selected for reading, process of writing stories, and liked and disliked activities. Table 1 summarizes the students' opinions regarding the themes and their subcategories.

Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of students' opinions about the program of reading and writing stories (N=43)

Themes/Subcategories	Frequency	%*
Stories Selected for Reading		
Good writing models	38	88%
Simple language	40	93%
Varied cultures	32	74%
Short/comfortable length	25	58%
Universal topics	20	47%
Process of Writing Stories		
Rewarding	41	95%
Confusing and frustrating	9	21%
Self-healing or adventurous	4	9%
Liked and Disliked Writing Activities		
Web-posting	37	86%
Author's chair	36	84%
Revising	6	14%
Revising (disliked)	2	5%

*Numbers are rounded in percentages.

The stories chosen for reading were considered having simple language (93%), varied culture (74%), short and comfortable length (58%), and universal topics (47%). The perceived characteristics match with the criteria I utilized to select the reading material for the program. The stories in Cricket Magazine not only provide comprehensible input to the students but, as was said earlier, also demonstrate models of writing in simple and elegant language. The students stated that they had little problems in understanding the selected stories because they are narrated clearly with daily use vocabulary. They also noted that stories can be told well without *cream of language*, and language simplicity is no less powerful than complex discourse. Because of this feature, 88% of the students thought the selected stories are good writing models too. In reference to this some students pointed out:

I found most of the words used in the stories are words in the daily life. The stories in Cricket are not very difficult to understand, and there are some pictures inside. They use simple words to tell us the story. We don't have to spend much time on looking the words up in the dictionary. (S02, Reflection)

The language used in children's literature is always so simple that readers can easily understand its meaning. I like to read this kind of article because it is fluent and clear. Its clear narration attracts me. (S05, Reflection)

I feel at ease to read the stories because the writers don't use a lot of difficult words. The stories were told well in such a narration. (S12, Reflection)

The stories are written well in such simple language. Now I see why the teacher always said, "Make your writing simple, clear, and elegant." Simple words and expressions do not equal baby English. (S04, Reflection)

I admired the author of the story 'Sicilian Father' very much. The language is so simple and the story attracts me a lot. It is really a successful composition. Hope someday I can write such a masterpiece too. (S11, Reflection)

As to the content of the selected stories, two features emerged in students' reflective statements: The stories reveal varied cultures such as Korean, Indian, Native American, African, European, and Chinese, but they also have universal topics. The students enjoyed reading about people and incidents foreign to them in English. Despite cultural discrepancies, the topics often reflected their childhood experiences. Students could easily get engaged in reading and self-reflection. They especially pointed out the relationship between childhood and imagination, and lamented they outgrew and lost the latter as grownups. But reading children's literature brought back their childhood memories and creative potentials.

Although these stories are written in English, they still introduce some classical stories in different countries including China and so on. I like reading stories of foreign cultures. (S13, Reflection)

I have read two stories in Cricket, and their contents also show in Taiwan. The stories I read are situations that may happen everywhere in the world. (S22, Reflection)

The first story I read in Cricket was one that brought back my memory right away. The debate that appeared in the story was something that still

forms a vivid picture in my mind. It's fascinating to learn that the same things happen in a totally different country. Perhaps I should create a Chinese version of a similar story! (S28, Reflection)

I feel most of the stories are quite interesting and full of imagination. Reading them, I feel as if I went back to my childhood. It's a pity that I seem to lose my imagination as I grow older. I studied only the textbooks for the university entrance examination, and forgot how much fun it is to read stories. (S04, Interview)

Writers are sensitive about their surroundings. Their keen observations usually guide us to see things from different angles. They contrive stories from their own or others' experiences.... We did not read too much outside reading in senior high. Textbooks and tests filled our lives then. I hope I can get more exposure to literature in the university and become as imaginative and creative as those writers. (S02, Interview)

Regarding the length of the stories, 58 % of the students stated they felt comfortable with the length of the stories because of two reasons. One was the length itself, that is, how many words or pages are included; the other pertained to the narration of the story. The latter referred to whether the writer was able to build up enough suspense and climax within the actual length of the story. Appropriateness of length in this sense was perceived in terms of whether the story was told well enough to carry the readers till the end. For example, a student stated,

I read two stories in Cricket. They are short. We can spend less time reading such a short story. There are new words in them. But I can guess their meanings. (S37, Reflection)

This finding in length is consistent with the pedagogical assumption I had about length while selecting the reading material. A short story would be appealing to the learners not only because its shortness might be psychologically supportive of the students' reading but also because the whole structure could be perceived easily so that comprehension is facilitated and maximized.

When the students reflected on the process of their story writing, 95% of them considered the task worthwhile and rewarding. Their statements demonstrated that they had learned how to draft and help peers revise to make stories more intriguing and captivating in terms of the story elements mentioned previously. They pictured the scenes or events in the story by using dialogues, giving voices to their characters. They paid attention to the topic, conflict, and ending of a story when reading stories.

When I was writing the story, I felt the characters in my story jump out and speak to me. I could hear them.... In fact, it's those who I knew that I wrote in the story. Their words are still ringing in my mind. (S05, Reflection)

My story was very flat and not interesting at first. Thanks to Christina and Vicky, they gave me some suggestions for the ending. There's a surprising ending in my story at last. (S25, Reflection)

I talked to Ellen and James, my reviewers, about the part in which I was stuck in the first draft. They suggested I should delete some parts and create a conflicting point so that my readers would like to find out what happened next. They said I should make the characters fight seriously about who should own that place, not simply ignore each other's existence... The topic Ellen suggested also helped. It's more interesting now. (S23, Interview)

I think it's quite effective to use dialogue to show readers what happened in my story. I don't know many words...enough adjectives to describe an event well. Now I know readers can hear and feel themselves when my characters speak. (S37, Interview)

All the students said that they had made efforts to complete their products, and those who were awarded in the contests were especially proud of and satisfied with their achievements. Through the task of reading and writing stories, one male student especially found his potential in creative writing. He started to read extra novels and writing additional stories in his journals. His remarks below implied his desire to be a writer.

I've found that I am better at story-writing than expository writing. I like creating a world of my own. I like writing the people I know and the things happening to them. (S14, Interview)

Rewarding as the task was, 21 % of the students (9 out of 43) regarded their story-writing processes as confusing and frustrating. A couple of them felt frustrated that they did not have any inspiration or idea for a story at first. They dreaded they had no imagination. Two others said they read and heard others' stories, but they did not know how to adapt or reconstruct these stories into their own. Three of them said their stories were reviewed as not interesting enough, but they were true accounts of their life. Two mentioned that their language was identified as Chinese English, especially the conversations between people. They did not think they had mastered a good command of the language to tell stories in good English.

Four (9%) other students had different opinions about their story writing experiences. These students discovered meaning and constructed desired realities through the process of creating stories. They found their writing process either a self-healing, revealing means, or an adventurous discovery. One female student wrote a story about how she got a scar on her leg, expressing her feelings about her parents' unhappy marriage and divorce. She never talked about this to others but after she made the story public in class, she felt relieved and happy. She realized that she should walk out of the shadow of her parents' divorce and learn to be an independent woman. Another female student recalled happy memories with a friend she had met in the United States. She wrote how this friend had helped her go through the difficult times she had had when she just got to a new environment. She said she chose to emphasize the positive part of her stay in a foreign country, though her school life then was miserable because some schoolboys mocked at her all the time. She considered her writing process filtered out the negative feelings and helped her find happiness. Likewise, another female student realized she did not loathe the teacher she wrote about so much after she got her fear and repulsion out of her chest through writing. Different from these female students who revealed and healed themselves through their stories, one male student created a story out of imagination. He described how a poor man desired to be rich and famous by writing like a well-known novelist and eventually Death played a joke on the writer. He deemed his process of the story writing as fun and exciting. He did not expect his story would have such a plot at first. He thought he would write some horrible scenes to scare his readers but he changed his mind after reading more stories. He said the experience was exciting especially when he tried to visualize how his readers would think or feel when they read his story.

The activities students liked or disliked emerged as a category in students' learning reflections. Web posting (86%) topped the list and author's computer chair (84%) came a close second. Students posted reflections of reading and writing stories on the web because they had to at first, but they became quite fond of doing so later. As time went by, the class developed into a supportive writing and learning community. Responses nurtured student writers so much as they shared their experiences in life and responded to each other. Some had taken to writing and sharing so much that they formed a habit of reading and responding at the forum. For instance, two students stated:

It is a place of sharing emotions and feelings with each other. Moreover, you can find you have many friends that they know you and show considerations to you. The invisible gap smashed little by little with classmates' reflection and reading your articles. (S23, Reflection)

In the past, I post the article in this composition site because the professor asks us to do it...At first, I did not feel comfortable to write about my feelings. I thought they're personal and private, should not be read by all in the class. But little by little, when others reply to my article, I always felt warm and happy...Now, I like this place very much. (S27, Reflection)

A majority of the students felt fond of presenting their stories through the computer. 84% stated they enjoyed the activity of author's computer chair and considered it challenging but fun. Although some of them were not familiar with multimedia programs at first, gradually the students took pleasure in incorporating text, graphics, music, and pictures into their presentations. To them, Author's Computer Chair provided a playground for learning where, apart from learning how to write stories, they could explore technological information in a playful way. In addition, it also reinforced their authorship. At the author's computer chair, they felt amused as readers and empowered as writers. As one female student reflected,

It's amazing to see my masterpiece presented with the computer. When I heard myself talking through the microphone and saw the classmates amused by my story, I felt I was a real author. All the efforts put into the work were paid at that moment. (S08, Reflection)

Interestingly, the activity of revising appeared favorable to a group of students (14%) and intimidating to a handful (5%). Compared with web-posting and author's chair, this activity was not liked as much. But those who liked it stated that readers' feedback had helped them revise their work effectively and they enjoyed seeing their progress and products polished and praised. A student in an interview said,

Revising a story is like riding a roller coaster. It's scary when I received suggestions for enormous revisions. But I felt excited when seeing my story being shaped on the computer screen. (S04, Interview)

A couple of students however showed an unfavorable attitude toward revising. One thought it might change her original story structure if she followed readers' suggestions. She preferred keeping her own thoughts because revision required time and work. The other student said she was intimidated by the amount of suggested revision and always

felt depressed by the act of revising.

I like my way to tell the story more. If I take reviewer's feedback, I need to revise a lot. It needs a lot of time and work. (S06, Interview)

I don't like revising my story. It drives me nuts when I have to go through the whole thing and follow the suggested feedback for revision. I know my story is not written well. But I'd rather write a new one. (S11, Interview).

4.1. Discussion

The project aimed to foster students' ability to communicate ideas through a task of narrative reading and writing. The data were mainly drawn from students' statements. It was recognized that students' remarks, like all self-report data, were limited to reflect conscious knowledge and might be biased by their desires to please the teacher researcher. All the same, they provided one useful source of data on effects of teaching the narrative genre, which can be investigated further in additional studies.

In general, the students' positive feedback about the tasks completed demonstrated that the learners benefited profoundly from the training in writing given as the goals set were accomplished. The students deemed that the stories they read were appropriate choices for writing models, the whole writing process effectively involved them in reviewing and revising their products, and the activities of web postings and author's computer chair nurtured and empowered them as writers.

With regard to material selection, students' views of the selected stories appeared germane to the teacher's assumptions about children's literature. Published stories for children are simple in language style, embedded with varied cultural information, and within comfortable length. Such result suggested that children's literature could be a reasonable choice for these students and other EFL learners in similar or different contexts. As described above, children's stories of the type used in this small-scale research could be used as reading prompts and writing models in any EFL class.

As to how reading stories impacted on the learners' writing process and product, the students' statements coming from the questionnaire indicated that they transferred their knowledge of the genre gained from reading to writing. The element of voice seemed most salient to them when they were drafting their stories. The other elements such as topic, conflict, and ending were highlighted in students' review feedback. It appeared that

explicit teaching increased students' awareness of genre characteristics in narrative texts they read and write. The result supports research on reading–writing connections and the potential of addressing both skills in the same classroom (Grabe, 1991; Reid, 1993).

Throughout the process of these tasks, web postings and author's computer chair were identified as the two most liked activities. The students' favorable attitude toward these two computer-assisted language activities indicated the power of technology in the EFL classroom. It seemed that in an EFL class, if designed carefully, reading response and writing communication through the Internet can draw participants closer and create a learning community within the class, and that sharing written products through multimedia programs may promote students' authorship and information literacy.

During the process of writing, some students encountered confusion and frustration about generating story ideas, creating intriguing plots, using appropriate English, or revising. These problems are not unusual for EFL learners and unskilled writers. Apparently, extra support and intervention were needed for such student writers along the process. Readers' feedback could be stimulating for more details and provided suggestions for interesting adds-on. Conferences could help clarify individual bewilderment regarding revision. Even so, the fact that only a handful of students revealed their confusion implied the procedures designed for the task of reading and writing stories were feasible and reasonable.

5. Conclusion

In terms of classroom practice and instruction design, this project has the following implications. First, children's literature, when selected carefully, can be a valuable resource for integrative EFL learning. Since stories tend to invoke our imagination and desire for creating, composition classes can be conducted more than the drab routines of students-write-and-teacher-correct. When my class read and discussed how a story was written together, the students were inspired to use different ways to analyze, review, and play with a story. Students read out loud the story and role-played the parts. They also shared their reflections on what they had read at the course forum, and oftentimes revealed themselves when they found the stories related to their personal experiences. Moreover, they presented their works as published authors when the writing task was

completed. Using stories as designed in the project, a composition class can integrate writing with other modes of learning.

Second, sharing and publication with the assistance of computer technology can empower student writers and develop a writing community in the class. Publication in a composition classroom refers to sharing ideas in a polished piece of writing with others. It could be sharing among students themselves or with other classes, or tied to the *real world* of publication outside of academe. My students appeared most motivated for sharing ideas on the Web and presenting their stories in a multimedia classroom. These activities enabled them to see the authentic value of doing the task, and take writing seriously to apply good skills to *real life*. Indeed, sharing and publishing provides students not only a tremendous incentive to acquire the writing skills they need in college, but also a means to build up their self-esteem as writers.

Third, time, support, and practice can provide scaffolds for unskilled or low self-esteemed writers. A few of my students had not had much experience in writing, so they often felt puzzled about how to generate ideas and tell their stories clearly. Students like them may need more individual conference, specific feedback, and extra time for revision regarding how to go about their reviewing stage.

Fourth, narrative genre knowledge gained through explicit instruction can promote EFL students' narrative thinking and facilitate the task of reading and writing stories. Such approach to "paradigmatic thinking" (Bruner, 1986) through models of expository writing may have similar effects.

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In ELT, It's Time for Constructivists to Get Real

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Abstract

The philosophy and psychology of constructivism has become more and more influential in English language teaching, especially through the popularity of books such as Williams' and Burden's *Psychology for Language Teachers* (1997). However, so far there has not been much critical examination of constructivism in ELT. In this article I argue that the subjective and dualistic notion of reality that some constructivists espouse is incompatible with their professed experimental and social interactionist conception of English language learning. This leads them to an incoherent understanding of language classroom realities. I propose a more philosophically robust and consistent understanding of those realities to serve as a background for reflective teaching practice.

Introduction.

In recent years various psychological and philosophical theories of constructivism have become influential in English language teaching. In part this is owing to their compatibility with already extant, popular educational theories. Like humanism, constructivism focuses on developing the inner world of the individual student. Like progressivism and pragmatism, constructivism emphasizes the creative, autonomous power of the student to discover the world in her own way, and to predict the course of its events in experience rather than be a passive recipient of facts. Yet constructivism has also weathered strong criticisms concerning its alleged subjectivism and relativism. Unfortunately, some constructivists' convictions about the subjectively construed nature of reality and the opaqueness of the 'real world' to our subjective constructions of it

render them vulnerable to such criticisms (Phillips, 1995; Mathews, 1998; Reinfried, 2000; Fox, 2001; and Derry, 2005 all pursue these criticisms). Such convictions are ultimately incompatible with constructivists' conception of learning as an experimental undertaking responsive to events in the world, and with their conviction that learning is a socially mediated process. Here I propose to show how this is the case; and I shall work from a philosophically pragmatist perspective to show how a more viable, and robust conception of language learning realities can rescue constructivism in ELT from its critics, and from its own unacknowledged incoherencies.

1. The consequences of constructivism's subjectivism and dualism.

For most constructivist perspectives language learning is, ideally, an active process of discovery in which the learner builds up his own complex of interpretations or *constructs* of the language he is learning. Since these constructs count as knowledge of the language, the learner therefore develops his own knowledge rather than receiving it ready-made from a teacher. The learner experiences curiosity about some unknown aspect of language, and doubt or conflict when it does not match with his existing knowledge. He is then motivated to experiment with it and, through practice (the more varied and stimulating the better), to develop and refine constructs that more and more approximate the general, predictable patterns in the learned language. Not surprisingly, constructivists emphasise the importance of learner autonomy, while still acknowledging initial dependence of the student upon the direction of others (although the question of how much learning is socially mediated divides some constructivists). Such an emphasis upon student autonomy puts constructivism at odds with established teaching traditions in some countries. One important aim for constructivist teachers is to foster self-directed learning in East Asian EFL classrooms, to counter the effects of teacher-centered, teacher-dependent English learning habits in traditional schooling. As I shall argue presently, this is a bone of contention for some EFL theorists. In a constructivist classroom setting, teachers still manage learning, however. They ensure that students are exposed to an organized curriculum of language targets always pitched just above their current level of development, and correct students discreetly, while giving them maximum scope to co-operate with and correct one another (Paul, 2003 provides a

composite, accessible summary of constructivism in an EFL setting, which I have drawn on here).

Constructivism has been criticized on philosophical grounds because its adherents supposedly believe that when we build up knowledge of the things we are learning, we are constructing our own 'reality'. This subjective reality is either the only sort of reality there is for each person, or if an objective reality 'in itself' is admitted, it is believed to be inaccessible to our understanding, so we only have our own subjective realities to build and work with. The implication is that constructivism can be dismissed as a self-refuting relativism. For in the end there is no objective viewpoint available to distinguish the validity, the correctness or incorrectness of different constructs, including the constructs about constructivism of the constructivists themselves! If this is true, there are awkward consequences for constructivist English teaching and learning practice. In the end, what recourse does a constructivist teacher or learner have in determining the correctness or incorrectness of that learner's constructs of a language, or in monitoring her progress towards competence and excellence in a second language? Are not everyone's constructs of a language equally true and real for them? But 1) if we do reject such relativism and subjectivism, 2) if we do take seriously the teacher's or more skilled peer's role in correction and guidance, and 3) if they do make corrections and assessments about progress with reference to general, objective standards external to the student's individual perspective, what difference would this make to a constructivist understanding of language learning and teaching processes? These ultimately practical questions require a certain level of philosophical engagement, for the ideas they trade in have a philosophical pedigree. I ask for the reader's patience as I address those questions.

A careful reading of constructivist psychologists influential in English language teaching such as George Kelly, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky yields an ambivalent defense against the criticisms discussed above. If a minimal philosophical definition of realism holds that at least some things are objectively 'out there' in the world independently of our conceptions of them, then their realist credentials all appear pretty solid. So there seems little reason to accuse them of believing in 'subjective' realities. George Kelly, whose version of constructivism has been increasingly influential in recent English teaching theory, held that our mental constructs and the nature which those

constructs fit upon are both real. Constructs are themselves events 'in nature', not things that are external to reality. They are also more or less accurate representations of nature which can be tested by their ability to predict other events going on within it (Kelly, 1963, p.8, 43-44, 135-136). Kelly made it clear that human (mental) representations of nature, including even erroneous representations of it, are parts of (physical/real) nature (Kelly, 1963, p. 8, 43). His claim that our constructs of the world are 'transparent patterns or templates' which 'fit over the realities of which the world is composed' (Kelly, 1963, pp. 8-9) is consistent with this perspective. Jean Piaget emphasized rather more than Kelly did the constraining effect of a causally effective world or reality upon the formation of our 'schemata', our interpretations of that world. He noted that from early childhood a conjoint process of assimilation of objects as means to fulfillment of the self's physical/emotional/cognitive needs and an accommodation to a reality of objects increasingly recognized as external and independent of the self's will is integral to cognitive development (Piaget, 1955).

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky also had straightforward realist credentials. In Vygotsky's thought word meaning rather than 'constructs' is a basic unit of human discourse analysis. Meaning reflects reality, but not in the same way as perception does, in the sense of a correspondence between perception and perceived object. Meaning reflects reality in its generalized characters, referring to classes of things existing in the world independent of mind (Vygotsky, 1962).

So why is there so much bother about constructivism being subjective and relativist? Some ambiguities in Kelly's thought provide clues to understanding this. Kelly does not appear to have embraced completely the idea of reality as something inclusive, that incorporates both constructions of goings-on in the world and those goings-on together as directly interacting events. At times, Kelly can be read as accepting a dualism between the mental and the physical. On this understanding, we (mentally) construe the physical world as it is for us through our constructs. However, the physical world 'in itself' remains separate from us and inaccessible to us. We have access only to reality as it is construed through our constructs, which stand between us and the 'real world'. This at least is how Kelly's followers in psychology and education have understood him (Salmon, 1995, p.23; Bannister and Fransella, 1974, pp. 86-87; Fransella, 1995, pp.45-48). In a

passage that appears to support this interpretation, Kelly wrote: “The fact that my only approach to reality is through offering some possible construction of it does not discourage me from postulating that it is there. The open question for man is not whether reality exists or not, but what he can make of it” (Kelly, cited in Fransella, 1995, p.46). On this point Kelly’s thought converges with the views of philosophical radical constructivists such as Ernst Von Glassersfeld (Glassersfeld, 1995, p.42). What these latter constructivists mean by reality breaks down into a dualism between the reality that learners subjectively construct in the process of learning and an objective reality inaccessible to them. In the English language classroom then, when students experiment with language, they create a reality for themselves, namely the learned aspect of the language *as it is for them* at that point. The ambiguous strands in Kelly’s thought have combined with the more straightforwardly subjectivist stance of radical constructivists in recent constructivist theory in language teaching (Williams and Burden, 1997, pp.2, 27-29, 96).¹

The dualism between subjective realities and an objective, inaccessible reality imposes a high cost on the coherence of constructivist thought in English teaching. I can only imagine that in this state, it will more likely obscure than aid a “reflective practitioner’s” insight into the realities of day-to-day learning and teaching. Marion Williams’ and Robert Burden’s book *Psychology for Language Teachers* (1997), an influential introduction of constructivist ideas in English language education, provides a salutary lesson. They understand constructivism in dualistic and subjectivist terms. They are dualistic in asserting that “the objective world may be real but it is not directly accessible to us” (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.96). They are subjectivist in asserting “that each individual constructs his or her own reality and therefore learns different things in different ways even when provided with what seem to be very similar learning experiences” (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.2). It is important to understand what these extraordinary claims entail for a constructivist interpretation of learning: “learning is essentially personal and individual; no two people will learn precisely the same thing from any particular learning situation”. Learner self-perceptions and constructs of the learning process will differ from person to person. One important job for the teacher is to

help these diverse learners (make) “sense of their learning in ways that are personal for them” (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.96).

Be that as it may, at least three inconsistencies are apparent in these claims:

1. A world in which each person constructs his/her own reality, and for whom the objective, real world is directly inaccessible, would be a solipsistic world, and one that could only be logically possible. These are strong words indeed, but a term such as ‘reality’ cannot be bandied about lightly. It comes with considerable philosophical and cultural baggage attached. This limits its range of accepted meanings in usage, no matter how much certain philosophers or educational psychologists may strain against it. In established usage, there is a presumption in favour of reality denoting something general and objective. Reality is the sum of what there is in the world for each and every one of us, independent of individual whim or fancy. Moreover, when we say that this or that thing is real, we are giving expression to tacit beliefs about what there is and how it is in the world and – more importantly – distinguishing it from what there isn’t, or what is fictional, fake, inauthentic and so forth.² That such beliefs are shared is the normal expectation in the run of experience, with disagreement and difference being the exception.

Anyone who deviates from established usage must be prepared to justify why she is doing it, and be prepared to face the consequences of this deviation. One such consequence is the accusation of inconsistency. The easiest philosophical objection to Williams’ and Burden’s subjectivist view is to say “You assert that every person constructs his or her subjective reality. But in saying this very thing, you are adopting an objective viewpoint, making a statement about reality which encompasses each and every person’s viewpoint on reality. A consistent subjectivist could only say “in my subjective construction of reality at least, everyone has their own subjective reality”” (this ultimately self-refuting dimension to radical constructivism has been highlighted by Marcus Reinfeld. See Reinfeld, 2000). But there are problems with Williams’ and Burden’s view which go closer to the concerns of English language teachers.

If Williams and Burden are right, each person would be secure in her own construction as *the* construction of the world, with its events and things, including other people, being what they are for her. However, she would have no means of checking

independently of her point of view that others had the same or different constructions, or of adjudicating which were accurate or not, beginning with her own. For firstly, the very notion of general, verifiable agreement on sameness or difference, accuracy or inaccuracy about constructs presupposes ability to “climb outside” of one’s own point of view and commit oneself to belief in a reality encompassing those constructs as constituent parts, which provides an objective field for assessing their accuracy. Those constructs can then be analysed and compared in concert from several points of view. And secondly, in not being able to experience the objective world directly, a person locked within her own subjective reality would not be able to experience other people or their constructs directly. For they are parts of that objective world too. Then any reflective individual could fall into a kind of perpetual skeptical suspense about the accuracy of her constructs (‘are my *constructs* of things in the world, or of other people and their beliefs anything like what they are *in themselves*? How can I check to see if they are or not?’).

Yet Williams’ and Burden’s own interactionist variety of constructionism displays tacit commitment to the idea of a reality encompassing individual constructs, and they at no point succumb to solipsistic skepticism. They admit that in spite of inhabiting a “unique experiential world” we must find ways of “reaching a common understanding together with others”; “The human enterprise depends on a shared reality”. They approvingly cite another constructivist theorist, Phillida Salmon, to the effect that “the teaching-learning encounter is, essentially, a meeting between the personal constructions, the subjective realities of teacher and pupil” (Salmon, cited in Williams and Burden, 1997, p.28). Acknowledgement of classroom efforts to reach a common understanding incorporating different constructs within it undermines commitment to the view that reality is a subjectively construed affair. But drop the whole complicated *impedimentia* of ‘subjective’ realities, and we have something like a non-dualistic conception of an objective reality or nature encompassing human constructs, constructs which can be directly communicated, shared or ‘subsumed’ and assessed in social transactions (Kelly, 1963, pp.9, 95-102, 136).

2. The very notion of ‘Man (sic) the scientist’ championed by George Kelly and other constructivist psychologists, of human beings as organisms capable of constructing

perspectives on their world which can be tested, verified or falsified against it implies a 'something' independent of subjective point of view which provides the ground for such testing. Williams and Burden also subscribe to the idea that "people carry out their personal experiments, construct hypotheses and actively seek to confirm them or disconfirm them" (1997, p.27). In relation to *what?* Here they smuggle in tacit acknowledgement of things in the world independent of individual constructs *which constrain their development and are accessible to them*. Thus they speak of us reshaping our understanding of the world as we adapt "existing knowledge to new information" (pp.96, 22). Where they speak of 'information', Kelly more straightforwardly spoke of 'the reality of (the) universe' providing the testing ground for constructs (Kelly, 1955, p.12). They also speak approvingly of interlanguage theory, "Which holds that a learner's knowledge of the language is gradually re-shaped as it more closely approximates the target language" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.23, 66). 'Approximates' implies an independent something to be more or less accurately conformed to or matched; an independent something against which our hypotheses are confirmed, disconfirmed and changed. Moreover, what is approximated (and presumably also accessed) is *the* target language, and not, it would appear, a subjective construction of it.

3. Such approximation is obviously not a matter of solitary interaction between student and language. Drawing upon social interactionist psychologists such as Lev Vygotsky and Reuven Feurstein (Williams and Burden, 1997, pp.38-42, 65-84) Williams and Burden argue that the learning of a language is a socially mediated process. It is mediated by teachers, peers and significant others, who select, organize and present learning materials in what they consider to be optimal ways for appropriation by learners. In line with this interactionist emphasis, Williams and Burden stress the importance of feedback in the learning process (Williams and Burden, 1997, 134-136). They particularly emphasise the importance of feedback providing "information to students that enables them to identify specific aspects of their performance that are acceptable and capable of improvement by some specified means" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.136).

Yet if the "teaching-learning encounter is, essentially...an encounter between the subjective realities of teacher and pupil" and if knowledge is "transitory, provisional and

relative” (Williams and Burden, 1997, p.96) why should the student trust in and be guided by the teacher’s or any other significant other’s feedback? Are their constructs not as equally subjective as the student’s construct? Is their knowledge of the language therefore not just as valid as the teacher’s? What is missing here - but which I think is essential – is some idea of an authority in linguistic usage, in its general meanings, standards and norms. This authority stands independently of the individual perspective of learners or teachers, but it is embodied (albeit fallibly) in teacher or peer corrections, monitoring and feedback. It is these standards and meanings, binding for both teachers and students, which they can refer to in order to correct well, and to progress well.

If we are to overcome all of these inconsistencies and develop a robust constructivism for English language education, we need a more fully rounded account of realities in the language learning environment than that which many constructivists have to offer. And to do *that*, we must turn to some original philosophical discussions of what reality is. One of the richest understandings of reality can be found in the thought of the 19th century American pragmatist philosopher Charles Peirce.³

2. The reality of existing things and of meanings

In the course of his philosophical career, Charles Peirce came to write about not one, but two dimensions of reality. One – the one that Piaget (1955) also spoke of - is brute (or almost brute) reality, manifested in *existing* things that causally resist and constrain our will (Peirce, 1955, pp.79-80, 87-91, Hausman 1993, pp.221-224). Moreover, “the real is something which insists upon forcing its way to recognition as something other than the mind’s creation” (Peirce, 1955, p.79). This reality is in experience, or in what is possibly (but not yet) experienced. Peirce had no place in his philosophy for a real world of things ‘in-themselves’ that is not accessible to experience (Peirce, 1955, pp.299-300). Other people – and their beliefs, expectations and actions – are of course parts of this accessible reality. To give one instance of this, immediately relevant to language learning settings, I may muddle my Japanese verb conjugations in a classroom speaking exercise, believing all the while that I have extemporized in a witty way. But there is nothing like the whispered corrections of a more knowledgeable fellow-student to bring me back down to earth. This is not quite ‘brute’ causality, for inasmuch as I interpret my peer’s correction

and acknowledge her right to correct me I am not a wholly passive agent. However, I do experience this interaction as one where my will is constrained by something external to it.

The other dimension of reality is harder to understand, and it was Peirce's genius amongst modern philosophers that he grasped it. Lev Vygotsky was one of a number of thinkers who came close. As I have already noted, he held that word meanings reflect reality, but unlike sensation or perception, meanings are a 'generalized reflection of reality'. Vygotsky argued that human communication is conditional upon a stock of meanings which render the world's goings on into general, comprehensible forms (Vygotsky, 1962). The perspective that I take here from Peirce is a little different; it holds that many (but not all) general ideas, including kinds, types and word meanings, are themselves real. They are not causally effective and they do not exist. However, they are SO independent of and external to our individual whim and thought, "independent of the vagaries of me and you" (Peirce, 1955, p.247). On the other hand, they are not independent of thinking in general, for they have no currency, and no circulation, outside of human linguistic usage (see Peirce, 1955, p.114).⁴

Generals or meanings are often (but not always) correct symbolizations of the rule-like or habitual tendencies for existing things and events to be what they are, to do what they do in experience (Peirce, 1955, pp.76, 78, 112-115, 220-221). They represent how things are to us, in ways that can be communicated to, shared with and disputed over with others. If there were no generals, we would not be able plot the overall course of future events, nor talk with each other about them; there could be no construing of events in Kelly's sense of the word (Kelly, 1955, pp.50-52). Generals evolve within human communication but are subject to the constraints of the experienced world, and they are 'instantiated' in existing things. That is to say that when things capture our attention, and become subjects of conversation or thought, they articulate to us the repeatable qualities or forms which allow us to make sense of them – and speak of them - as animal or vegetable, as moving at a certain velocity, as solid, red, loveable, boring and so on.⁵

Now what we say or write about things also exists. Spoken or written words are actual things, but if they are to be intelligible they must be bound by this realm of meanings that holds sway through sustained, popular uptake. Thus, Peirce said of a word such as 'man'

that, apart from its written and spoken settings, “The word itself has no existence, although it has a real being, consisting in the fact that existents will conform to it” (Peirce, 1955, p.112). The final thing to note is that generals are fixed by common consent and cannot be budged or fooled around with by individual whim. But they do not comprise an immobile, determined reality. Reality is dynamic, for Peirce argued that generals are subject to growth and change (Peirce, 1955, p.115; Hausman, 1993, pp.26-27). For example, word meanings do of course change, or simply drop out of usage, not by dint of individual will but by change in prevailing thought, fashion and custom.

Apply these insights to language learning, and to some constructivist notions of reality as what we ‘make’ in the course of learning a language, and what are the consequences? The learner’s mental map or overall, ‘superordinate’ construct of a language does not constitute the whole reality of that language for her, and she knows that inasmuch as she is striving toward ‘something’ accurate and correct that is so independent of her whim. Still less is that construct something internal and separated from a reality outside. It is an adaptive, creative, ‘localized’ part of reality. It exists, and has causal effect, insofar as it issues in spoken and written output which influences the thought and actions of others, and through its influence upon the reception and comprehension of input from others. Moreover, it is something that a teacher and peers can come to understand through analysis of the student’s spoken and written output.

It is localized, and it exists in an interdependent relation with the other real constructs that other persons have, within environmental conditions (such as classroom or foreign language communication settings) which sustain, constrain and shape it. In a different sense, it also interacts with the reality of general meanings, and rules for intelligibly ordering meanings, in language. These are the very building blocks for our constructs. Through encounters with causally efficacious aspects of reality such as the reactions of others to our spoken or written utterances in the classroom, we as students are constrained, independently of our will, to accept the ways in which things conventionally have meanings, in which words refer generally to things in some ways and not in others. These causally efficacious aspects are both social and physical. We learn the various meanings of ‘hot’, including its harmful aspects for us, through encounters in which we directly experience hot things, and, at the same time, through the way such experiences are

mediated by others. They communicate to us the different, rule-like respects in which 'hot' is a sign for something painful, uncomfortable, etc. We respond unreflectively not only to the physical experience of hot things, but also to the significance of the word 'hot' as it is communicated to us in different, socially mediated experiences. 'Hot' consists of general meanings, but in spoken or written utterance, hot is a 'thinginess' that can have causal effect upon its hearer or reader, accordingly as she interprets its implications ('Don't touch that! It's hot!' 'It's hot in here. Can you turn down that heater', etc).

An important point to remember is that some generals, some meanings are not generally real. They may be fictional because falsified in experience, or they may be somehow idiosyncratic and subjective, dependent on the whim of a particular individual. Language learners provide instances of the latter when they misremember recently acquired lexis. They may then use words that bear a homophonic relation to the intended lexical item, but which are either incomprehensible to their foreign language audience or possess meanings other than that intended. Now from the learner's subjective viewpoint, such words have general validity and extension, at least prior to correction. And in spoken and written output, they are real, since they are events that have a causal effect on their (bemused) audience. But the words 'subjective' and 'real' do not add up to mean that these are items of a learner's 'subjective reality'. In not having any currency in the community of language users, they are not real in the general sense at all and have no objective standing. There is no 'subjective reality' of the language learner counter-posed to the 'subjective realities' of skilled or native language speakers. There is rather a realm of objective, real meanings which the latter mediate to the former.⁶

I have spoken so far of meanings as being general, but the overall rules governing how we combine those meanings into comprehensible utterances also have their own general character. In the Japanese classroom example I discussed above, I may muddle the passive form for 'eat' and say something like 'I was eat by a shark' (Watashi wa same ni tabemashita). My more learned fellow student's efforts to correct my addled attempt at humour ('it's 'taberaremashita'!') are something that I experience as a constraint on my will. But the rule that is embodied and made authoritative in her correction ('in Japanese base verb forms with 'e' endings, the passive conjugation is 'rareru') is a different matter. Certainly, it does not exist, it cannot constrain or resist my conduct. Nonetheless, it has

general currency, a currency that by definition holds beyond my individual perspective, independently of what I think. I feel bound to respect it, inasmuch as I recognize that, generally or 'as a rule', skilled speakers tacitly conform to it, transmit it to others in communication and explicitly uphold it when necessary.⁷

There is a dependent, receptive aspect to the language learning situation that constructivists sometimes overlook, captivated as they are by 'man the scientist' or 'man the inquirer' models of learning (Kelly, 1963, p.4; Bannister and Fransella, 1974, p.10). Certainly, experimentation, trial and error practice are integral to how humans – and indeed other organisms – learn about their environments. But we must pay more attention to how aspects of that environment shape and direct such experimentation, and to the ways in which constructions and their elements are socially transmitted and not just individually formulated. We act, but we also undergo, and one of the most important aspects of this undergoing is the reaction of other human beings to our experimentation within our environment – human beings who are of course themselves part of that environment, constituent parts of a reality which we cannot ignore.

The inescapable fact about many of these interactions is that such individuals, by virtue of their greater skill, age, experience and so forth, have assimilated more ideas and meanings than us. We are dependent upon their guidance and instruction to gain access to them. They mediate our access to them by transmitting aspects of them to us in comprehensible, practicable forms. This is a point that Vygotsky made repeatedly. In the course of their mental development human beings appropriate culturally established meanings through interactions with others who are more skilled and knowledgeable. "Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88). Williams and Burden (1997) also want to acknowledge that "a vital role for both parents and educators is the transmission of culture from one generation to the next" (pp 67-68) but their efforts in this direction are seriously compromised by their adherence to subjectivist notions of knowledge and reality.

My discussion has proceeded at a level of abstraction that may leave some readers irritated. What difference, they might think, do these arcane ideas about reality make to reflective practice? Admit, if only hypothetically that my criticisms of constructivist

notions of reality are correct. Admit that the two aspects of reality described above are operative in language classroom interaction – 1) at the level of objective, authoritative meanings, and rules for intelligibly ordering meanings, in a language which students must assimilate; and 2) at the level of experiential constraint in learning, as teachers and more knowledgeable peers embody that authority, and shape and direct a student's learning process. I argue that acknowledgement of these two factors does make a difference to practice; and I shall proceed to explain how below.

3. A more realistic constructivism for classroom practice

To bring the claims made above into sharper focus, I want to consider an example taken from EFL classroom practice – one of my classes, as it turns out. A while ago my private English school class of four final year elementary school children encountered third person conjugations of present simple verb tenses for the first time. They had already learned the first, second and third person forms for present continuous tense verbs, and thus were aware that auxiliary verbs vary between first, second and third person sentence forms. They had been experimenting with these new simple present tense forms in class, for example by interviewing each other about their hobbies and then writing down what their partner had said in their writing exercises.

A consistent pattern of error appeared in their initial written homework exercises using these forms. All were tacitly assuming that an auxiliary verb follows third person pronouns in subject-verb formations, as they had learned is the case when writing sentences using present continuous tense forms. On the other hand, they had not yet grasped (not consistently at any rate) that third person singular simple present tense verb forms are conjugated with an 's' or 'es'. So all four were writing sentences such as 'she's play dodgeball' 'he's go to school at 8:00' and so on, although the frequency of this error varied with each student.

We can imagine that all the students possess a 'construct' of tense conjugation that is undergoing continuous development and adjustment. Having assimilated the pattern of third person continuous tense auxiliary verb conjugations, they tacitly assumed that this was the only correct verb pattern that sits well with those mysterious 'he', 'she' or 'it' words and they proceeded to write on this assumption. However, their experimentation

was ultimately limited, constrained. It certainly had an effect upon their reader. In Vygotskian terms, their errors provoked an episode of 'scaffolding' as both I and then peers who were 'in the know' provided supportive feedback in order to help the other students extend their third person conjugation skills above their present level. I initially hinted at the error in order to help them correct it independently, and progressively became more explicit in highlighting it, asking other students to model the correct form where necessary (see Yu, 2003 for a discussion of Vygotskian feedback strategies).

Let me consider this situation in light of the three critical points about constructivism made in section 1 above. 1. As the reader will recall, Williams and Burden argue that "each individual constructs his or her own reality and therefore learns different things in different ways even when provided with what seem to be very similar learning experiences" (1997, p.2). Were this true, my English classrooms would resemble nothing so much as towers of Babel, with students struggling to understand their teacher and also struggling to help each other in improving their second language communication skills. If they learn in such different ways, and are locked into their own separate realities and 'unique experiential worlds', how can they empathise with each other's learning difficulties and assist one another? Moreover, with such differentiation in student learning processes, how could teachers discern any general patterns such as in, say, student errors, and think up ways for anticipating them and helping students overcome them?

My own classroom example hardly measures up as an empirical refutation of Williams' and Burden's argument. But I do hope that it speaks to the experience of readers who have encountered similar situations in their classes. Yes, there are differences in how students learn, differences in their self-perceptions as learners and differences in their preferred learning strategies that must be taken into account. Williams and Burden emphasize the need for a theory that enables us "to focus upon the uniqueness of individuals as well as helping us to see what they have in common" (1997, p.95) and stress the importance of teachers developing insights into how differently learners perceive their world and their learning processes regarding it.

However, with all this emphasis upon the differences between learners (let alone upon their allegedly separate senses of reality!) it is easy to forget the commonalities, the general patterns in the learning processes, and errors, of English students from the same

linguistic background working with the same English as a foreign language school syllabus. If we stress the uniqueness and individuality of each student's learning processes too much, we will lose sight of how teachers also need to construe their general features, so that they can work out strategies for helping students overcome commonly experienced learning difficulties. We should remember here that from George Kelly's constructivist perspective, construing is a process involving abstraction and generalizing, as the individual acquires a sense for the replications in the flux of events (Kelly, 1955, pp.50-52, 72-73). In the case of Japanese learners for example, often replicated learning difficulties include problems with third person singular verb conjugations, stress timed pronunciation, pronunciation of double or triple consonant combinations, spelling errors based on transference of consonant-vowel formations from Japanese and so on. To insist so much upon differentiation between individual learner experiences and realities is not only philosophically questionable; it also obscures insight into the shared realities of learning and teaching experiences.

2. I noted, and agreed with Williams' and Burden's alignment with interlanguage theory, "Which holds that a learner's knowledge of the language is gradually re-shaped as it more closely approximates the target language" (1997, p.23, 66). How quickly the dualism between subjective reality and an opaque, objective reality breaks down once we take this assumption seriously. What the students discover and experience, through textbook reading passages, teacher and more skilled peer talk are bits of reality which embody general meanings, habits and rules. They experience these directly and often unreflectively, even though they may not fully comprehend them. Their constructs are more or less successful ways of making sense of and coping with the target language, of integrating it with already possessed knowledge. In my classroom example above, the students erroneously construed third person singular simple present tense conjugations by assimilating them to already learned third person present continuous tense conjugations.

The process by which the students more closely approximated the target language involved experiential constraint. They underwent teacher and peer feedback and corrections, self-corrected or comprehended others' corrective statements, and adjusted their construals accordingly (with their homework exercises improving thereafter). These

corrective actions were real events which had a compulsive effect upon students' conduct. And they had this compulsive effect inasmuch as the students acknowledged the authoritative meanings and rules embodied in feedback and correction. Invoking a dualism between subjective realities and an inaccessible 'in-itself' reality in this context makes comprehension of the learning process over-complicated and bizarre. On this view, taken to its logical conclusions, students could never progressively approximate the target language, for it would ultimately be opaque to their constructs of it; and they would experience not the corrections and feedback of their teachers and peers, but their constructions of them.

3. In part one I quoted Williams and Burden as saying that the "teaching-learning encounter is, essentially...an encounter between the subjective realities of teacher and pupil" and that the knowledge fostered in educational settings is "transitory, provisional and relative (1997, p.96). My earlier philosophical criticisms aside, I hope the example from my own classroom experience shows more clearly what is wrong with these assumptions. I hope it also makes clearer how much of what is valuable in Williams' and Burden's ideas, especially their discussions of mediation in learning, will be better served by dismissing the subjectivist and dualistic aspects of constructivist thinking. Rather than an encounter between subjective realities, language learning involves structured encounters with the general realities of language, its meanings, and rules and conventions for ordering meanings. Rather than being subjective, the knowledge embodied in those meanings, rules and conventions is objective, holding independently of individual will, but nonetheless subject to change. And finally, the learner's encounters with the target language are mediated by others such as teachers, native speakers or more skilled peers, who constrain and shape the learning process.

There is room here for some brief remarks on the problem of autonomy in language learning. Williams and Burden stress the importance of mediation working towards greater student self-direction in learning. They distinguish their preferred notion of the teacher as mediator from the traditional notion of the teacher as a 'disseminator of information' by stating that teachers as mediators should help learners "to become autonomous, to take control of their learning, with the fundamental aim of enabling them

to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers” (1997, p.68). There is a growing post-colonial literature in English language education which criticizes this notion of autonomy as ‘native-speakerist’. Such post-colonial critics argue that the very notion of training learners to be more autonomous in English study involves a tacit affirmation of the superiority of the native speaker teacher’s culture over the learners’ own culture, in which such autonomy is believed to be discouraged (see for example Holliday, 2003, pp.114-117; Williams and Burden are aware of this issue – see 1997, p.161). This argument presents serious challenges for EFL teachers and theorists in countries such as Japan, where there is a standing temptation to dismiss, in simplistic terms, the prevailing education culture for failing to cultivate this trait.

The point I want to make about learner autonomy comes from a different, less political angle. If we drop the philosophically untenable talk of constructs as ‘subjective realities’ as I recommend we do, and adopt an objective, realist view of the meanings and linguistic conventions that students must assimilate in building up their constructs, I believe a more practical idea of student autonomy will result. Autonomy in the sense of self-directed freedom to experiment and solve problems will always be constrained autonomy for learners, in or out of the classroom. As in my own classroom example above, it is constrained by the feedback and corrections of teachers and peers authoritatively mediating foreign language meanings and norms, providing an experiential testing ground for the students’ constructs-in-progress. The freedom to experiment and make mistakes is vital for any meaningful, active learning experience. But the very notions of experiment and ‘making mistakes’ make no sense without a social, experiential setting that imposes conditions on experimental success, and which embodies objective norms for distinguishing what is correct from what is in error. On this view, dependence and autonomy are interdependent aspects of any desirable learning process (for further discussion of this interdependent relation, see O’Dwyer 2006).

Conclusion

I have argued that some constructivists have foisted on a notion of reality that is at once too distant and opaque (the real world in-itself) and too subjective (reality as we individually construct it) to be a sound background assumption for reflective teaching

practice. I have detailed the inconsistencies that result from accepting it. I have argued instead that the day to day reality for language learners is what they experience in teachers', native speakers' or skilled peers' shaping of their learning processes; and it is in the general meanings and rules of the language they are learning. Language students construct their own local parts of reality, their understandings of a language, in the classroom or in the everyday exchanges where they pick up and practice it. But their autonomy in doing this is constrained by others, and dependence upon them unavoidable. For it is these others –such as teachers and more skilled peers – who mediate to them general meanings and norms in linguistic practice, which are so independently of 'the vagaries of me or you'.⁸

Notes

1. Kelly credited the pragmatist philosopher John Dewey as having a strong influence on his thought (see especially Kelly 1955, p.154). But Dewey rejected root and branch the dualism between subjective reality and an objective, opaque reality, arguing that "things –anything, everything, in the ordinary or non-technical usage of the term 'thing' - are what they are experienced as" (Dewey 1997 {1910}: p.227).
2. For a clearheaded philosophical analysis of the term 'real' - an analysis which inspired the discussion above – see chapter VII of J.L. Austin's *Sense and Sensibilia* (Austin 1962, pp.62-78).
3. Charles Peirce (1839-1916) was the elder of the three thinkers regarded as the founders of pragmatism, alongside William James and John Dewey. He is remembered today for his pioneering work in logic and semiotics.
4. The idea that universals or generals are real has an ancient philosophical lineage dating back to Plato. The notion that they are real but do not exist as particular things do is an insight owed to the 13th century scholastic philosopher Duns Scotus.
5. Naturally when things are just dumbly had, savored or suffered they are not so articulate. They are just *there*, their qualities taken for granted until inquiry or conversation intervene.
6. Of course, some idiosyncratic coinages do become subject to general uptake, and acquire objective status. This is the main source of linguistic innovation. However, language learners are rarely lucky enough to achieve this goal in their second language (though their idiosyncratic usage may find its way as a loanword into their first language).

7. The native or skilled language speaker, responding to a language learner's complaint about some odd convention in language usage, who says 'sorry, that's just the way it is' is evincing a (somewhat brutal) commitment to the realism discussed above.

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Promoting the Prevalence of Literature in the Practice of Foreign and Second Language Education: Issues and Insights

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Abstract:

The course-book culture rampant in current foreign and second language settings appears to promote a reductionist view of language learning. Under its hegemony, language learners have been led to believe that language is a set of transactions, which they need to master in order to meet exam requirements/academic standards. Such a belief has precluded our students from looking at language learning as a life-long educational endeavour and as an instrument of constructive social change/empowerment. The course-book drills neither provide frameworks for the learners to have an emotional engagement with the language nor nourish their capacity for imaginative and expressive use of language. Consequently, the students are subject to an educationally unrewarding language learning experience, which denies them of agency and voice. In light of this educational malaise, the use of imaginative content becomes an urgent educational priority in the language classroom. The prevalence of imaginative content in the language classroom can lay the groundwork for personal and social construction of meanings by the students. As literature abounds in imaginative language, this paper will argue for the inclusion of literature in mainstream EFL/ESL. Further to this, the paper will examine a set of issues and insights, which are meant to augment our understanding of the role of literature in the foreign and second language classroom.

Key Words: Literature in EFL, imaginative language learning

Introduction

The current prevalence of calculative thinking in higher education settings appears to view educational practices in terms of a rationalistic-technological stance. Under its influence, materials and methodologies that articulate fact-based, transference-based models of learning have acquired prominence and substance in foreign language learning (FLL) and second language learning (SLL). The following views of Lehtovaara (in Kohonen et al 2001, p. 145) serve to illustrate the pernicious effects of such thinking on our current educational practices:

According to this line of thinking, schools are often seen as production plants, curricula as production plans, students as raw materials, products or customers, teachers as production managers or producers of 'educational commodities' and so on. Further, in the interest of measurable efficiency and the accompanying quality control, schools, teachers and students are forced to compete against each other for resources and power. This development results from a one-sided view of man and also maintains this view. People tend to be seen as nothing but competitors, either successes or failures, winners or losers.

Far from helping our students into becoming better readers, writers, thinkers and citizens, calculative thinking has promoted a poverty of reading and writing among them. Denied and deprived of pedagogies and practices of experience and response, our students read and write merely to meet college requirements and standards. When students read and write just because they need to pass exams and graduate, it is unlikely that they will appreciate the value of what they read and write. It is also likely that such a situation will influence them to view literacy as a mechanical acquisition of reading and writing skills. Consequently, literacy fails to transcend its literal meaning for want of a meaning that will emphasize its educational, social and transformative nature. In short, our students become casualties of 'a cultural ignorance and categorical stupidity crucial to the silencing of all potentially critical voices' (Giroux in Freire and Macedo, 1987, p. 13).

Although our students read and write in FLL/SLL settings, seldom do they understand how their world is affected by their reading and writing, and in turn how their reading and writing affect their world. This is reminiscent of a complaint voiced by Candlin (in Widdowson, 1975, vii):

For too long materials have remained at the surface patterns of linguistic text and

have not drawn learners towards an understanding of the layers of meaning which can be peeled off from utterances; learners have seen sentences only as illustrations of grammatical patterns and have not asked pragmatic and sociolinguistic questions of what communicative value they have in given settings.

In this respect, our students are illiterate even if they can read and write. This kind of illiteracy has far-reaching implications. It not only threatens the economic status of a society but also constitutes an injustice by preventing the illiterates from making decisions for themselves or from participating in the process of educational and social change. In short, it strikes at the foundations of democracy.

The poverty of reading and the culture of ignorance it creates need to be addressed in institutions of higher learning (McCormick, 1994; Rosenblatt, 1995). In light of this, language pedagogies and practices that promote students' experience and response assume immediacy and primacy. It is argued that such pedagogies will teach our students to assert their rights and responsibilities. It will not only teach them to read, understand and transform their own experiences but will also teach them to redefine their relationship with their society. As a result, our students will be better equipped to process knowledge that is beyond their experience and to view their reading and writing as acts of empowerment (Freire and Macedo, 1987). In light of this, the use of literature in FLL/SLL becomes an urgent educational priority and I propose to examine the issues and insights that underlie its prevalence in our educational practices.

What is literature?

At this juncture it will be helpful to attempt a workable definition of literature in order to put this paper into its fitting context. The question alerts us to the problem the term literature raises. However, at one level the term is inconsistent and refers to a body of written texts produced by a culture and highly valued within that culture over a period of time as part of its literary heritage. Thus English literature, in schools and colleges, includes selected works of English writers such as Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley, Charles Dickens, and a host of many others. Reading the texts of these writers is considered an important part of English culture as well as literary development. It can be especially valuable in generating intellectual growth, aesthetic appreciation, and an

understanding of how experiences of people in the past and present can be represented (Cox, 1991; West, 1994).

At another level, literature is seen as a discourse. Such a view articulates the interpersonal nature of literature, which serves to illustrate how a particular way of language use is intrinsic to the social, economic, technological and theoretical needs of the cultures concerned (Fowler, 1981). If we accept Fowler's view of literature, then we should see literature as a social artifact constructed and validated within the discourse practices of a society. This view serves to deinstitutionalize literature by rejecting the right, which schools, colleges and examination boards arrogate to themselves for authorizing a set of texts as literature. As a way of expanding his view of literature, Fowler (1981, p. 21) underscores the social dimensions of discourses by pointing out:

Some of the varieties used in the constitution of a specific 'literary' text may tend to occur regularly in some, but not all, other 'literary' texts but they are not restricted to literary texts (rhyme and alliteration are found in advertisements); and 'literary' texts also draw upon patterns, which tend to occur in 'non-literary' texts (conversation, news report).

This suggests that stylistics and literary studies must take sociolinguistic theory and methodology seriously as a way of accounting for the specific linguistic properties of the texts concerned.

By imploring us to view literature as social discourse, Fowler questions the formalist theories of literary language. Viewed from a constructivist standpoint, literature as social discourse could be instrumental in promoting interpretive discourse among students and, as a result, dehegamonize and democratize literature from its exclusionist and elitist shackles (Carter, 1997, p. 109). In the light of this, the paper will look upon the problems that result from the extent and variation of the use of the English language in the world, as prospects for promoting sociolinguistic sensitivity among the students and the teachers who use literature in the service of language education.

It should be noted here that English is the language of literature in countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, India and Malaysia, where English is the institutionalized language of the country, although not the first language of the writers. Much of the most

highly valued writing in English in the past fifty years has in fact been produced in such contexts. This is currently referred to as 'Literature in English', this term being preferred as more inclusive than the term 'English Literature'.

Literature in English will not necessarily conform to standard versions of the language and may deliberately develop alternative models of creative language use. The heritage of English literature as the literature of the English is often judged to be the vehicle whereby a standard international version of the language is established in its dominant role (Cox, 1991; West, 1994). Syllabuses are therefore crucial to the presentation of particular versions of the English language and the English literary heritage. These terms of reference generated much debate in the formulation of a literature curriculum within the National Curriculum in England and Wales during the 1990s (West, 1994). This debate has emphasized repeatedly that the exclusion or inclusion of a text in the curriculum is not a neutral act but one that expresses different presuppositions about the quality and value of the texts, their relevance to personal experiences about the English language and about cultural and national identity. Literary scholars and linguists have raised a number of issues regarding the division between language and literature. While literary scholars uphold the centrality of literary criticism as a traditional approach to literary studies, linguists have often been critical of the deviant use of language in literature, especially poetry and have raised serious questions about the privileged status accorded to the language of literature. Jacobson (1960) has made an attempt to synthesize these conflicting views in his paper, 'Linguistics and Poetics' (see Lodge, 1988, pp. 32-57). The paper states that "A linguist deaf to the poetic functioning of language and a literary scholar indifferent to linguistic problems and unacquainted with linguistic methods are equally flagrant anachronisms".

Jacobson's view suggests that literature, primarily, is to be taken as text, as discourse; the language of literature is the medium through which a writer conveys a message about reality to the reader. Proceeding along this line of inquiry; Jacobson suggests that 'literariness', meaning, the language of literature is its poeticity. It is like oil in cooking. It cannot be had on its own. But when used with other foods, it is more than a mere addition; it changes the taste of the food to the extent that some dishes no longer appear to

have any connection with their oil-less ingredients. This is to suggest that there is some connection between poeticity (i.e. literariness) and reality.

The connection between poeticity and reality might serve to illustrate the indestructible link between the human mind and the figurative aspects of language and thought (Gibbs, 1994). As this paper rejects an exclusive view of literature, it looks upon the notion of literariness as one of disposition brought to bear upon the text by the reader. If this position is accepted, then one needs to accept that literature with a capital 'L' canonical literature, and literature with a small 'l'-- non-canonical texts ranging from proverbs to advertisements, could co-exist (Carter, 1997; McRae, 1991). Teachers, who support an exclusive view of literature, (one in which canonical texts reign supreme) might view this co-existence offending. However, it is argued that the canonical status of literature is not as important as the creative and imaginative potential of literature in facilitating an emotional engagement with the target language for the L2 learner. Given that literary language is patterned in creative play, the emotional involvement of the reader results in creative and imaginative interpretation of the words and structures, which sets it apart from a literal reading (Carter, 1997). The provisionality of these interpretations provides scope for multiple readings through renegotiated discourse, which in turn might serve to rehearse the readers' meaning-negotiating capacity. In sum, this inquiry situates literature in tentative readings of text and discourse rich in creativity and imagination (Carter, 1997).

History of literature in foreign/second language learning

Given the fluidity of attitudes and approaches, and the plurality of pedagogies and practices in FLL/SLL settings, many FL/SL teachers today might not have a well-informed understanding of the history and role of literature in FLL/ SLL settings. So, it might be useful to examine the prevalence and pertinence of literature in FLL/SLL from a historical perspective.

For hundreds of years, the use of literary texts in language education was looked upon as a venerable tradition; so, its role in the foreign language curriculum was unquestioned. The grammar-translation method was regarded as a preparation for the study of literary works (Kelly, 1969). The traditional scholastic approach used the grammar-translation

method to equip learners in the eighteenth century with a reading knowledge of foreign languages and applied this knowledge to the interpretation of literary texts with the use of a dictionary. The texts of reputed literary authors assumed particular relevance and significance in the traditional methods of the school curriculum and examinations. As a result, the literary texts became a tool for promoting grammar-oriented and dictionary-referenced learning practices. Such practices were believed to promote an ideal version of education during that time. After World War I, a movement called 'Kulturrekunde' (Stern, 1983, pp. 247-259) originated in Germany. German educators viewed this movement as a unifying force, which had the power to integrate the teaching of German language, German literature, German history, and the geography of Germany into a core of educational practices. In the inter-war period, 'Kulturrekunde' was applied to foreign language teaching in Germany. To some educators, it meant a foreign equivalent to German Kulturrekunde: treating language appropriately in relation to a foreign literature, history, and geography to widen the scope of language teaching. To some other educators, it meant a history of ideas of another country: for example, in teaching English as a foreign language, instead of reading an English author out of context, teachers were encouraged to focus on an era. As a result, the study of literature examined a literary writer in relation to the period he or she belonged to, and the underlying cultural and political ideologies. During the same period, culture teaching in Britain and America focused on historic institutions and customs, as well as on the contributions of the foreign country to human civilization, as the aim was to discover the underlying 'structure' or 'mind' of a foreign nation and evaluate literary and artistic works in the light of the 'Kulturrekunde' principle. A similar principle operated in the British colonies where the study of English literature in high school and college curriculums was meant to promote a deeper understanding of the English language and culture (Kachru in Brumfit and Carter, 1986, pp. 140-149). Such a study presupposed that learners could only appreciate a foreign language through the study of its highest form of expression – literature. The 1970s and 1980s saw a different language-learning trend. Language teachers were trying hard to bring the outside world into their classrooms (Wilkins, 1976). To do this they used authentic materials, such as train timetables and newspaper extracts to help learners to cope with the real world that in turn emphasized

that the language of literature was not the language of real life. So, literature was pushed into the background. However, students continued to major in English literature in many universities across the globe. Notwithstanding this, there appears to be a resurgence of interest in Literature. This is largely due to a rediscovery, by many practising language teachers of the benefits of using literary text as a source of imaginative, interactive and discussion activities (Collie and Slater, 1987; Duff and Maley, 1990; McRae, 1991). This approach to Literature in the FL/SL classroom has achieved a more reasonable balance in that, it has moved away from the traditional approaches that treated literary texts as objects of academic enquiry. As a result, this new approach has enhanced the usefulness of a literary text in stimulating language-learning activities (Duff and Maley, 1990). By engaging the students and teachers interactively with the text, in the performance of tasks involving literary texts, the present approach encourages the students to generate language and develop proficiency in the use of the target language by providing them with an emotional involvement with the target language (McRae, 1991).

Having discussed the history of literature in foreign/second language teaching with reference to its love-hate relationships with syllabus designers and teachers in FL/SL settings, the paper moves on to discuss the benefits of using literature in language teaching.

Benefits of using literature in FL/SL classrooms

The paper referred to the educational and social concerns underscoring the need for pedagogies of experience and response in the Introduction. In light of this, an understanding of the benefits of using literature with FL/SL learners becomes a necessity and priority for this inquiry. Therefore, it will be helpful to discuss the benefits of using literature in the language classroom under two categories. The first category of benefits relates to language learning dimensions of the second language learners. The second category of benefits relates to the educational and social outcomes of using literature as an instrument of response and reaction.

Category 1: Language learning dimensions

The use of literature promotes language acquisition. In most second language classrooms, students read and write in order to decipher the input in the target language. The need to

decipher written input in English becomes an important instructional objective demanding that students process and interpret the target language. In such situations, by providing interesting contexts for students to generate input, negotiate meaning and develop motivation, literature can become an efficient vehicle for language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). As literary texts contain multiple layers of meaning, they can promote classroom activities that call for exchange of feelings and opinions. Such activities trigger the response potential in students. So learning a foreign language becomes a process of response (Collie and Slater, 1987; Duff and Maley, 1990; Lazar, 1993). The students find the activities and the context in which they engage with these activities so absorbing that they enjoy taking risks in their search for meanings.

The use of literature promotes motivation in the classroom. By strengthening the affective and emotional domains of students, literature develops a sense of involvement in them (Carter and Long, 1991; Collie and Slater, 1987; Lazar, 1993). Course-books do not provide for any emotional and reflective engagement with the target language. This is because course-books, for want of interesting and engaging content, focus the learners' attention on the mechanical aspects of language learning. The form-focused practice that most course books demand, subjects the learners to a lot of anxiety, stress, demotivation in addition to monotony and boredom. As a result, the arid and trivial content of the course books fails to bring about a sense of involvement (Wajnryb, 1996). The failure to instill a sense of involvement in the learners prevents them from an emotional engagement with the target language and denies them the pleasures of using the language imaginatively and reflectively (McRae, 1991). In the light of this discussion, motivation becomes synonymous with a process of engagement through which the learners begin to feel a sense of involvement with the target language. The following view, expressed by Collie and Slater (1987, pp. 5-6), locates our understanding of motivation as an outcome of engagement with literary texts:

Engaging imaginatively with literature enables learners to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system. When a novel, play or short story is explored over a period of time, the result is that the reader begins to inhabit the text. He or she is drawn into the book. Pinpointing individual words or phrases may make them less important than pursuing the development of the story.

The above stated quotation viewed in terms of Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, can add to our understanding of how a willingness to engage and sustain that engagement with written input in the target language can contribute to the success of SLA. In this regard, literary texts can offer a beneficial alternative to the rule-based language learning promoted by course books. Furthermore, it should be noted that the points raised above reinforce the concerns expressed in the Introduction with reference to students' personal sense of involvement in reading and writing as a basis for promoting literacy in society.

The use of literature develops cultural awareness in students. Literary texts contain copious examples of practices, attitudes and beliefs of people across the cultures of the world. While these examples serve to promote a comprehensive view of culture, they can also raise problems regarding the notion of culture in the target language. This is because English is used across the world as a first and second language and a stereotypical view of the target culture can endanger the use of literature in FL/SL classrooms (Kachru in Brumfit and Carter, 1986, pp. 140-149; Lazar, 1993).

In the earlier part of this paper, I proposed a workable definition of literature as social discourse. This can serve to free literature from its exclusivist and isolationist credentials by 'democratizing and dehegamonizing' access to literature (Carter, 1997, p. 109). It is argued that such a position can encourage an interactive and inclusive approach, in other words, a flexible approach to understanding the target culture of literary texts. Such an approach can help 'students become broadly aware of the social, political and historical events which form the background of a particular play or novel. At the same time literature does seem to provide a way of contextualizing how a member of a particular society might behave or react in a specific situation' (Lazar, 1993, p. 17). As a result, students will be able to develop their perceptions as to how people of different cultures relate to their experiences and assess them. Such perceptions help students to see the core of human situations that can occur cross-culturally. Furthermore, these perceptions equip them with the critical sensibilities they need to question, accept or reject the cultural assumptions of texts (Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993).

The use of literature develops language awareness in students. The interesting contexts provided by literary texts serve to illustrate the noticeability of lexical and syntactical features. Prolonged exposure to literary texts not only familiarizes students with the numerous interesting features of the written language but also develops the response potential in them. As students respond to literary texts, they begin to realize how meaning as an outcome of response can open up contexts for imaginative use of language (Collie and Slater, 1987; Gibbs, 1994). The scope provided by literary texts for using imaginative/figurative meanings alerts them to 'the richness and variety of the language they are trying to master' (Collie and Slater, 1987, p. 5), and to the need to develop it through their interpretative experiences with literature. It is argued that the human mind is naturally inclined to use language figuratively rather than literally, given that the notion of literal meaning is a problematic one (Gibbs, 1994). Research findings in psycholinguistics point to how the meanings we construct are informed by imaginative possibilities. This is to suggest that literal meanings cannot withstand the overpowering influence of the human mind to use imaginative meanings in its attempts to create opportunities for growth and progress. I believe that any development of language awareness in students should be viewed as a capacity to use figurative meanings (Gibbs, 1994). In this respect, literary texts can become an efficient vehicle for promoting language awareness in students. It should be noted that the views discussed in this section and the views to be discussed in the following section are theoretical possibilities suggested by language practitioners who believe in the efficacy of literature in foreign language education. Their views focus on the unique characteristics of human existence, which can be best understood through literature. In this connection, these practitioners have suggested that literature has the potential for generating language learning approaches that are sensitive to the unique characteristics of human existence.

The views examined so far, should be interpreted as intuitive beliefs and values that support our intuitions and belief systems underlying pedagogies of experience and response. Therefore, it is not necessary to affirm these views as outcomes of rationalistic inquiries just for the sake of labeling them as 'objective'. As pointed out earlier, what is touted as 'objective' in language learning research has harmed our educational and social practices. Therefore, it is argued that theoretical possibilities indicating suggestive ways

of using literature should remain subjective, as literature is not an objective field of inquiry. Furthermore, as asserted by Eagleton (1983, 14), 'the claim that knowledge should be value-free is itself a value judgment'. Such an assertion not only points out the naivety of researchers who relate language learning to scientific research paradigms but also alerts us to the futility of objectifying and reifying literature in language learning research (Polkinghorne (1988, x). It is then argued that the views in question will be used to support this paper, which is meant to examine the benefits of using literature in foreign language education indicatively, discursively and impressionistically.

Category 2: Educational and social outcomes

I will use this part of the discussion to examine the educational and social outcomes of using literature. The Introduction referred to a culture of ignorance and the poverty of reading and writing it characterized. In this connection, I referred to the need for pedagogies of experience and response in order to help students understand the dialectic nature of their reading and writing. Therefore, it is argued that the educational and social benefits of using literature in FL/SL classrooms far outweigh the instrumental needs of foreign /second language education.

Literature educates human emotions. It does this by channeling our emotional energies and providing an emotional release. An engagement with literature exercises our senses more actively than we can otherwise achieve. Through literature we enjoy the beauty and splendour of nature as we travel to far-away lands. We go through experiences that will not be possible in our real lives. As we read literature filled with images of action, adventure, love, hatred, violence, triumph and defeat, we create an outlet for our emotions. As a result our perceptions of real life experiences become sharper and deeper.

The imaginary situations we participate in through literature enable us to identify with others and their experiences. The paper regards this ability as a valuable human attribute which only literature can nurture in us (Rosenblatt, 1995). It is argued that this ability underlies fluency in reading and writing. Literature helps our students enlarge their knowledge of the world. By reading about the experiences of others, our students come to understand the multidimensional nature of the human being. The interactions with the literary text provide 'a living through not simply knowledge about' (Rosenblatt, 1995, p.

38) the world and the experiences of human beings in it. It should be noted here that the generalized and impersonal accounts of historians, sociologists, anthropologists and even scientists could only provide our students with factual information rather than an experiential understanding of it. In contrast, literature can disseminate all this information through a dynamic and personal involvement with the experiences that are necessary to augment our students' understanding of the information. This benefit has direct bearing on the students' capacity to read the world, which can act as an antidote to illiteracy.

Literature contributes to social sensitivity by illustrating the need for social adjustments. A prolonged engagement with literature puts students in frequent contact with the personalities of different types of people. Thus they learn to imaginatively put themselves into the places of others. As a result, they are able to understand how their actions affect others. A sense of plausible deniability dictates their judgment of what is acceptable or unacceptable social conduct. This can result in successful social adjustments in their daily dealings with others (Rosenblatt, 1995). The study is aware of the potential dangers that can arise in the absence of social adjustments. As our students live in a competitive and pragmatic world, it is likely that they will be indifferent to the feelings and needs of others. In such a situation, the prevalence of literature can militate against anti-social tendencies by promoting social sensitivity in our students (Rosenblatt, 1995). Literature can effect constructive change of attitude and outlook. We are aware of how the culture we are born into exerts its influence on us through our family and community. This influence can lead us to believe that there is just one way of life. So, in the absence of a need to consider different ways of life and the new ideas that characterize them, we can get trapped in a provincial mindset. In this respect, literary texts can provide an escape route for us. Literary texts illustrate cultural patterns that represent a plurality of attitudes, beliefs, ideas and ways of life. By emphasizing the need for diverse ways of thinking and living, literature gives us a sense of how complex our societies are and how complex their cultures are. The written literature which books represent alerts us to various possibilities and alternatives that exist outside the culture we are born into. This influence can play a vital role in helping us envisage new social and economic orders. In this context, the study notes that an illiterate or an unread person will either have little or no understanding of how his/her society functions on the basis of its culture. Thus he/she

will not be able to contribute to social or democratic change. 'Democracy requires a body of citizens capable of making their own personal and social choices. The corollary of this is they should be emotionally and intellectually aware of the possible alternatives from which to choose' (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 184).

The view expressed above alerts us to the dangers of provincialism and its impact on democratic societies. Therefore, it is argued that the deployment of literature as educational practice can shield us against the dangers of provincialism.

Resolving opposition to the use of literature in FLL/SLL

Given that the current focus in FLL/SLL is on meeting the specific academic and occupational needs of the students, it is normal to discount the efficacy of using literature in language teaching. It is therefore necessary to review the arguments against using literature in language teaching and resolve them (McKay, in Brumfit and Carter, 1986, pp. 191-194).

First, literature fails to make a significant contribution to the goal of teaching the grammar of the language since literature uses language in a complex and unique way. Second, the study of literature will not adequately help students fulfill their academic or occupational goals. Third, the presence of a particular cultural perspective in literature could create difficulties for the students at a conceptual level.

Let us address these arguments. The first argument, that literature, due to its complex and unique use of language, fails to contribute to teaching grammar, which remains one of the main goals of language teaching, is ill founded. The use of literature, in fact, encourages language acquisition and expands students' language awareness, for the following reasons (Lazar, 1993; Collie and Slater, 1987; Widdowson, 1975): a) literature stimulates language acquisition by providing contexts for processing and interpreting new language; b) literature supplements the restricted input of the classroom; c) listening to recorded literary texts exposes students to new language; d) rich in multiple levels of meaning, literature provides students with a framework for sharing their feelings and opinions; e) literature could promote an elementary grasp of English to internalize vocabulary and grammar patterns.

Povey argues (1972, p. 187) that literature increases all language skills because it extends linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax. Though literature has always been associated with the teaching of language usage, we cannot disregard the advantage of using literature to teach language use, since it presents language in discourse in which the parameter of the setting and role relationship are well defined. In the light of this observation, we can confidently state that literature could contribute to knowledge of language use.

A second common argument against using literature is that it will contribute nothing towards promoting the student's academic or professional goals. However, it is clear that literature, by fostering an overall increase in reading proficiency, may well contribute to these goals. Widdowson (1979) and Gaies (1979), regard reading not as a reaction to a text, but as a dynamic interaction between writer and reader mediated through a text. This perspective of reading as interaction presupposes that a reader is willing to interact with a particular text, and for this reason, the motivational factors involved in reading assume critical importance. Therefore, by developing reading proficiency, literature can contribute to student's academic and occupational objectives.

Finally, critics of the use of literature object vehemently to literary texts that have a particular cultural perspective, which according to them could pose difficulties for the reader at a conceptual level. Marshall (1979) and Frye (1964), point out that prolonged exposure to literature would promote greater tolerance of cultural differences, for both the teacher and the student. Furthermore, an examination of a foreign culture through literature may well increase their understanding of that culture and might encourage them to view the target culture in a positive light.

This paper takes cognizance of yet another, more recent attack on the use of literature in FLL/SLL by Edmondson (1997), who argues that: a) 'a special and specific function for literary texts in the business of language teaching and more importantly language learning seems not to obtain' (ibid, p. 53); b) claims for a specific role for literature serve to provide a weak justification for learning modern languages; c) it would be beneficial to subject such extraneous goals and traditions to critical scrutiny and reject them

consequently. The paper acknowledges the principal responses by Paran (2000), whose views assign a facilitating and an empowering role for literature within the enterprise of language learning envisaged as an educational endeavour.

Edmondson's attack on literature necessitates a revisit to the educational and social concerns expressed in the Introduction. The discussion there pointed out the urgency to use literary texts to reverse the culture of ignorance and illiteracy through a reading-the-world approach. In the light of this, it is argued that the educational and social developments of our students are inextricably linked to reading and writing. In this respect, the contaminating and disempowering role of course books need to be eliminated through the use of texts. Therefore, Edmondson's disbelief in the power of texts is an ill-informed one. It is only through reading and provisional understanding of texts that our students can come to realize the transformative and the empowering influences of education. Such a realization is crucial to the functioning of civilized societies and democracies. As Rosenblatt (1995, p. 171), observes:

Education in this era of social transformation must serve both critical and constructive ends. On the one hand youth need the knowledge and the intellectual tools required for critical appraisal of ideals and social mechanisms -new and old. On the other hand, youth need to develop positive emotional drives that will quicken intellectual insight. Thus they will be enabled to free themselves from antisocial attitudes and will be impelled to achieve a world that will safeguard human values.

At this juncture it should be noted that safeguarding of human values demands an assimilation of ideas and attitudes, which could be accomplished through reading literary texts and writing about them. As argued in the Introduction, the need to use engaging and persuasive texts becomes an inevitable educational practice in the light of the problems discussed there. Furthermore, the educational and social benefits of using literature in the language classroom far outweigh the drawbacks and disadvantages pointed out by Edmondson. Yet again the objections of the literature-wary may fail to make a case. Conversely, they serve to reinforce the efficacy of literary texts in the educational practice of reading and writing (Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993; McRae, 1991; Rosenblatt, 1995).

The charges merely serve to reveal his aversion to functional competence in reading (as he has strongly discounted the use of written texts in language teaching) and a critical consciousness formed on the basis of ill-informed theoretical inquiry and interpretation. In sum, Edmondson's criticism is a good example of reading and thinking at its worst. Ill-founded criticisms such as Edmondson's cannot in any way detract from the values and merits of using literature as a language teaching resource in FLL/SLL.

On the contrary, they serve to situate literature in the heart of FLL/SLL. Edmondson's attack on the use of literature in language teaching uncovers numerous theoretical constructs, which underscore the role of imagination and creativity in language learning. The essentialist-non-essentialist dichotomy used by Edmondson renders his cognitivist stance untenable. I hasten to suggest that a rationalistic research approach to literature for the sake of quantifying the findings will serve no educational purpose. Objectifying the language of literature in order to support the use of literature in FLL/SLL settings will be 'like polishing shoes with a nail file' (van Lier in Candlin and Mercer, 2001, p. 90). It is argued that the efficacy of the role of literature in language teaching can only be understood hermeneutically and not rationalistically. In this regard, the dynamics of using literature texts in foreign/ second language education can be understood well only through longitudinal studies. Therefore, Edmondson's opposition to the use of literature in language teaching on the grounds that it does not provide empirical justification is an ill-founded one. Moreover, the paper views his attack on literature as a blatant rejection of the educational values that accrue through the use of literature in language teaching.

Conclusion

Those of us who learned a foreign language through an exposure to its literature will always be willing to speak in support of its primacy and efficacy in foreign language teaching. This is to suggest that we have a deeper understanding of literature's positive impact on our affective and emotional dimensions. By contrast, SLA research, which claims to account for second language learning, has not been able to provide a convincing explanation of affect in second language learning situations. In this respect there appears to be 'a gap of significant proportions' in SLA research (Shanahan, 1997, p. 166). It is argued that a focus on motivational factors necessitates a focus on subjective and

inter-subjective experience in foreign/second language settings. In this regard, the prevalence of literary texts in FLL/SLL is better placed to examine the cultural, motivational and social dimensions that characterize/conceptualize our students' attempts to read and write. Such an outcome can provide a basis for formulating research agendas aimed at providing a far more humane/beneficial understanding of SLA than the rationalistic-technological stance that hegemonizes our current educational policies and practices at the cost of denying voice and subjecthood to our students.

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Book Review

Reflective Practice in Action: 80 Reflection Breaks for Busy Teachers

Thomas S. C. Farrell. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2004. Pp. xi + 107.

Reviewed by John Baker and Nashwa Badr
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Dr. Thomas Farrell's *Reflective Practice in Action: 80 Reflection Breaks for Busy Teachers (RPA)* is an excellent resource for teachers from all disciplines who are interested in pursuing professional development. Its practical and grounded suggestions for busy and dedicated teachers are the result of the author's twenty-four years of teaching reflection; extensive publication in the areas of reflective teaching, language teacher education, teacher beliefs, and methodology, and proven application in seminars and workshops in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Asia.

RPA is a welcome addition to the literature on the *new scholarship* of reflective teaching (Ziechner, 1999), for, while it, like Edge (2000) and others, offers a collaborative model, it also provides opportunities for individual teachers to "examine their beliefs, values, and teaching practices" (p. 36) through a systematic method which helps seasoned and student teachers alike to reflect individually or as a group at their own paces and at the levels they choose. Towards these aims, its coherent structure and friendly jargon free prose invite readers to explore its comprehensive selection of topics in a linear step-by-step fashion or to use the easy-to-follow contents and index to go directly to their area of interest: Chapter 1 offers the reader an overview and choices about how to use the book; chapter 2 explains the benefits of engaging in reflective practice; chapter 3 outlines key historical research in reflective practice; chapter 4 defines reflective practice and discusses the different levels of reflection; chapter 5 offers a five-component model of reflective practice; chapters 6 through 9 detail activities that can promote reflection (group discussions, classroom observations, journal writing, and

maintaining a teaching portfolios); and chapter 10 concludes with activities to help the teacher generate their own topics for future reflection.

RPA offers teachers, both individuals and groups, an opportunity to use “the book as a mirror to help them see how their backgrounds have influenced them, who they are now, and where they intend to go in their practice” (p. xi) through the array of topics and activities available in its chapters. It even ventures into Internet applications with suggestions about e-mail for more global reflective projects, but it does not directly address more advanced information technology. Inventive teachers, can, however, adapt its tested methods to the steady stream of communication applications that become available.

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Book Review

The Story of English in India

N. Krishnaswamy and Lalitha Krishnaswamy.

New Delhi: Foundation, 2006. Pp. vii + 227.

Reviewed by Deepti Gupta

Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

In *The Story of English in India*, Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy offer a panoramic view of the journey of English through the annals of India's history. The survey details all the foreign influences on Indian culture, beginning with the Aryans who came to India around the second millennium B.C. and ending at the globalization phase of contemporary Indian society.

According to the authors, the book's five chapters outline "the growth and development of English in India, with a view to redefining the aims and goals of teaching English in post-independence India" (p. v). The first chapter, The Exploration and Transportation Phase, traces the various foreign influences on the country up to the year 1830. The beginning of English education in the country is also painstakingly uncovered through the presentation of excerpts from original British government documents. The Consolidation Phase: The Grand Design, the second chapter, is divided into eight sections and traces the growth of English in Education up to the year 1892. It also gives a very detailed account of two extremely important documents of the period: Macaulay's Minute and Wood's Dispatch. The next chapter, The Dissemination Phase, covers the period from 1893 to 1947 and describes the process whereby English became a second language in India. The fourth chapter, The Identity Phase, deals with the emotional struggle that Indian society faced after the departure of the British and continues the documentation of the conflict between the emotional Angrezi Hatao (Remove English) Brigade and the Rational English for Development Group. There is also a useful account of ELT in India up to the year 1990. The concluding chapter, The Globalization Phase, discusses the

dynamics of globalization in the context of English in India and gives a useful description of Indian English.

The Story handles a vast array of historical material quite efficiently, but ELT watchers may feel that the book should pay more attention to ELT itself. In places, the authors attempt to address ELT concerns, but the vast canvas somehow defeats that intention. Readers may, especially in the last chapter, wish the discussion were less wide-ranging and more focused on specific issues. Nevertheless, the presentation of excerpts from original documents, the timelines that follow each chapter, and the comments from contemporary writers make this text a worthwhile resource for pedagogues and researchers alike.



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