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English Department, University of Zanjan, Zanjan, IRAN

Phone: 0098-241-515-2664   Fax: 0098-241-528-3201

URL: http://ijols.znu.ac.ir/
E-Mail: ijols@znu.ac.ir

DESCRIPTION

Iranian Journal of Language Studies (IJLS) is a quarterly journal devoted to all areas of language and linguistics. Its aim is to present work of current interest in all areas of language study. No particular linguistic theories or scientific trends are favored: scientific quality and scholarly standing are the only criteria applied in the selection of papers accepted for publication. *IJLS* publishes papers of any length, if justified, as well as review articles surveying developments in the various fields of language study (including Language Teaching, Language Testing, TESOL, ESP, Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, (Critical) Discourse Analysis, Curriculum Development, Politeness Research, Classroom Research, Language Policy, and so on). Also, a considerable number of pages in each issue are devoted to critical book reviews. *IJLS* commenced publication 2006 for people involved in language and linguistic studies.

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The effect of partial synonymy on second language vocabulary learning

Abbas Ali Zarei and Valeh Golami [1]
Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of the intra-lingual semantic similarities of words (partial synonymy) on second language vocabulary learning. To this end, two groups of participants were selected. Both groups received a pre-test. Then, the experimental group participants were taught semantically similar words contrastively, being made aware of the semantic similarities and contrasts, while the control group participants received the same words randomly with an interval of at least two weeks between the presentation of semantically similar words. A post-test was then administered and the means of the groups were compared using a case II t-test procedure. Results showed that the contrastive teaching of semantically similar words positively influences the learning of second language vocabulary.

Key words: partial synonymy; intra-lingual semantic similarities; vocabulary learning.

1. Introduction

There is now little doubt that without vocabulary, the story of language learning will not be worth telling. Rivers (1981) puts it this way:

> It would be impossible to learn a language without words. One could learn a language through some symbol system which would demonstrate relations and how they are realised, but this would be like examining the skeletal remains of a dinosaur and believing that one had actually encountered the creature. Language is not dry bones. It's a living growing entity, clothed in the flesh of words. (P. 462)

This means that if we had not thought about doing something about vocabulary learning and teaching before, we should most certainly do so now. However, this is something that is easier said than done. For, despite the unanimous agreement on the significance of words, when it comes to the methods of vocabulary teaching, all that is obviously noticed is controversy.

Over the past few decades, the fortunes of vocabulary teaching have waxed and waned. Yet the more vocabulary teaching methods have changed, it seems, the more they have remained the same. That is partly why vocabulary

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[1] Authors are members of faculty at Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran

teaching and learning is sometimes described as a typical example of what a cynical commentator once said about theory and practice:

> Theory is when one knows everything but nothing works; practice is when everything works but no one knows why. We have combined theory and practice: nothing works and no one knows why!

The finger of suspicion, in this regard, usually points at teachers, who, in the past, failed to reach a consensus on how to deal with words and treated vocabulary teaching in a way that was more or less reminiscent of the saying:

> There are three different answers to any conceivable question: your answer, my answer, and the correct answer.

Fortunately, recent years have witnessed a surge of interest in vocabulary teaching and learning. After a few decades of neglect, vocabulary learning has recently become an object of considerable interest and enquiry among researchers, teachers, and materials developers. A number of interesting and stimulating proposals have been put forward as to the teaching of vocabulary. Yet again, controversy is at the heart of such proposals.

One area of controversy is the so-called 'incidental' versus 'intentional' vocabulary learning. Some scholars like Wesche and Paribakht (1999) hold that owing to the generality of vocabulary, it cannot be the subject matter of any syllabus. They suggest, therefore, that learners read extensively so that their knowledge of vocabulary is expanded incidentally. Huckin and Coady (1999) enumerate certain advantages of incidental learning over direct instruction including: (a). contextualisation, (b). pedagogical efficacy, and (c). being more learner-centred and individualised. Similarly, Brown et al. (1999) are of the opinion that the comparison between the number of vocabulary items second language learners know and the number of words that can be explicitly taught suggests that more attention needs to be paid to incidental learning.

The counter-argument comes from those like Rudzka, et al. (1985) who argue that incidental vocabulary acquisition through extensive reading is extravagant of time, hence quite uneconomical. The proponents of the intentional approach to vocabulary learning maintain that intentional learning through instruction significantly contributes to vocabulary development (Nation, 1990; Zimmerman, 1997). Referring to Coady's (1997b) 'the beginner's paradox', hunt and Beglar (2002) conclude that explicit instruction is essential for beginning students whose lack of vocabulary limits their reading ability. Similarly, Nation's (2002) assumption is that vocabulary growth is such an important part of language acquisition that it deserves to be planned for, deliberately controlled and monitored. Also, Elley's (1989) studies of vocabulary learning through listening to stories

show that relying on meaning-focused input (incidental learning) alone is leaving too much to chance. Various strategies and techniques have been developed to help learners achieve the thorny task of learning vocabulary.

One such strategy proposed by Hatch and Brown (1995) is the use of semantic domain. With this method, words in the same semantic field, such as words for cooking etc. are taught together. For example, for the '*build*' domain, it is explained that verbs like *establish, found, set up*, and *organise* are used to describe the first step in starting a new company, an organisation, etc. It is also explained that some words in this domain give the idea of people working on a building, a bridge, or some other physical structure: *build, construct, erect*, and *put up*, while verbs like *make, produce*, and *manufacture* are general words that describe the whole process of making a new thing. Exercises following the instruction require the learners to substitute one word from the appropriate domain for another, or to choose between two possible words to fill a blank in a given sentence. For example:

'Paper was first … in China (manufactured, constructed)".

The purpose of such exercises is to appreciate the fact that although beginning learners seem satisfied with quite general meanings, more advanced learners often need more specific definitions in order to differentiate between near synonyms. Learners often get close to the meaning of English words, choosing meanings that have some features of the target word, but not all. Consequently mistakes like the following are not uncommon among Iranian learners of English:

*The box of the books was <u>hard</u>.	instead of	heavy
*<u>Once</u> hearing the news, …	instead of	upon
*We need a <u>string</u>.	instead of	rope
*I had the <u>credit</u> of introducing…	instead of	honour

Studies on the mental lexicon of bilinguals suggest that words are classified into semantic and phonological networks in such a way that each learnt word interacts with other words in the lexicon on the basis of semantic and phonological aspects. Maybe that is the reason why when we are tired, we may produce slips of the tongue in which we happen to utter a word that shares many features with the intended word. Fromkin (1973) gives examples where speakers substitute one body part for another – *'my knee hurts'* where <u>ankle</u> was meant.

Psycholinguistic discoveries have shown that the acquisition of a new word can be facilitated by the various relationships the learner can make between the word and the other familiar words in the target language. The main types of meaning relationship between words are 'hyponymy' (cat-animal),

'antonymy' (old-young), 'converseness' (parent-child), 'synonymy' (freedom-liberty). However, although "psycholinguistically, the association of words helps us to remember them" (MacKey, 1965), it is the association of contrasts that plays this role. There is empirical evidence that foreign language learners do not acquire synonyms easily. Besides, there is the principle of overgeneralization at work for synonyms. This is because some items are synonymous in some contexts, but not in others. Synonyms share features, usually varying in terms of collocations or register. For example, an *argument* can be *strong* or *powerful*, but *tea* can only be *strong*.

Although dictionaries list synonyms as words with similar meanings, the fact that X is a synonym for Y does not mean that Y is necessarily a synonym for X. Lyons (1995) stipulates the following three conditions for absolutely synonymous, hence interchangeable lexical items:

1. all their meanings should be identical;
2. they should be synonymous in all contexts;
3. they should be semantically equivalent on all dimensions of meaning, descriptive or non-descriptive

The essence of his argument is that two words might generally be regarded as synonymous. However, care must be taken not to confuse them, for they may fail to satisfy one of the above-mentioned conditions. For example, 'large' is not interchangeable with 'big' in:

1. You are making a big mistake.
*2. You are making a large mistake.

Rudzka et al. (1985) avow that the intra-lingual semantic relations allow precise information about meaning and use to be given in an economical and hence learnable way. They say in addition to the practicality of their approach, there is evidence to show that the mind makes use of semantic similarity in finding words from memory for use in speech. Studies of slips of the tongue made by native speakers of English have shown that many wrong words, far from being random mistakes, actually share some aspect of meaning with the intended word. For example:

I have my book and my *jigsaw*…I mean *crossword*.
I really *like* … *hate* to get up early in the morning.

A second type of evidence comes from the speech of people with certain kinds of brain damage. In tests of reading, some of them, instead of saying the word they are shown, consistently say another word from the same semantic field, for example, *canary* read as *parrot*, *ill* as *sick*, *city* as *town*, and *bush* as *tree*. This evidence suggests that the mind takes account of meaning in the way it stores and retrieves words. It may be that the mind stores words in the kind

of semantic sets mentioned above. If this is the case, the implication would be that words should be taught in semantic fields.

A semantic field includes words that have semantic relations. For instance, as many words as possible that carry the general meaning 'talking together' are presented concurrently : *chat, chatter, prattle, babble, blab, gossip*; or words having the general meaning of 'cause not be alive' are listed as follows:

> *kill, murder, assassinate, slay, slaughter, butcher, massacre, execute, exterminate*

Rudzka et al. (ibid.) present words in grids like grid A, where the differences and similarities between words are shown by the semantic features at the top of the grid.

	Cause not to be alive	As a result of previous decision	Object must be human	Object has political power or significance	By using force or a weapon	Stresses the ugly nature of the action	Object usually animal	For food	brutally	Object is usually a group of defenceless people	Object is sb condemned to death by a legal or psydo-legal procedure	Object is usually large number of pests	deliberately
Kill	+												
Murder	+	+	+										
Assassinate	+		+	+									
Slay	+		+		+	+							
Slaughter	+						+	+					
Butcher	+						+	+	+				
Massacre	+								+	+			
Execute	+										+		
Exterminate	+											+	+

Grid A: Words and their semantic features

McCarthy and O'Dell (1994) also believe that organising words by meaning facilitates their learning. They present words in pairs that are close in meaning, but are, in the meanwhile, different from each other in that one word in each pair is pejorative.

slim / skinny   cunning / shrewd
mean / thrifty   generous / extravagant

They also use the scale of formality as a technique to help learners learn words better by making intra-lingual contrasts.

Very formal	neutral	Very informal
offspring	children	kids
abode / residence	house / flat	place
alcoholic drink	drink	booze

Thomas (1989) advocates teaching vocabulary under a variety of topics such as, for instance, driving. In the same vein, Fitikides (1063) assumes that words with similar meaning can sometimes be confusing. He presents such words in pairs and teaches them contrastively. Here is an example:

Don't say : We _remained_ in a very good hotel.
Say: We _stayed_ in a very good hotel.

Don't say : Few figs have _stayed_ on the tree.
Say : Few figs have _remained_ on the tree.

Finally, Norouzi (1993) has collected some 780 word groups that share a core meaning but differ in some other aspects, and hopes that the knowledge of these subtle differences will enable the learners to learn words more effectively.

To put everything in a nutshell, the literature on vocabulary teaching and learning shows contradictory viewpoints as to the effect of semantic relationships between words on second language vocabulary learning. While some authorities advise language teachers to avoid presenting semantically related words simultaneously lest they would be confusing, others maintain that the concurrent presentation of such words and raising the learners' awareness of such similarities and contrasts can help facilitate vocabulary learning and prevent future misuse of such words. It is the purpose of the present study, therefore, to investigate the effect of the intra-lingual semantic similarities of words on second language vocabulary learning.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The participants of the study included 60 male and female university students at Qazvin Azad University, who were divided into two groups serving as the

experimental and control groups. Another group of 60 students at the same university acted as the peer group with whom the post-test was validated.

2.2. Instrumentation

Altogether, three tests were administered: a translation test given as the pre-test, a multiple-choice vocabulary test administered as the post-test, and the vocabulary subtest of a Michigan language proficiency test serving as the criterion with which to validate the post-test.

A correlational procedure was employed to validate the post-test, and a case II t-test was used to compare the experimental and control group means in order to investigate the effect of the treatment.

2.3. Procedure

The vocabulary items that were semantically similar were gleaned from various sources including Thomas (1989), Rudzka et al. (1985), and Nurouzi (1993). Out of the long list of the semantically similar words, those which intermediate students were least likely to know were subjectively selected. Still, to make sure that the participants did not know the words, a 50-item translation test was administered (see appendix A). Then, 13 items to which some students had correctly responded were removed from the list. From among the remaining words, 30 were chosen and included in the post-test. Meanwhile, all these words along with some more were listed to be used in the experimental treatment.

The next step was to give the experimental treatment. Both experimental and control group participants were taught the same words but in different ways. The participants in the experimental group received a contrastive instruction of semantically similar words (they received words such as 'obscure', 'vague', and 'ambiguous' concurrently). Participants in the control group were taught exactly the same words, but with an interval of at least a fortnight between the presentation of semantically similar lexical items. In other words, the experimental group participants were made aware of the semantic similarities and contrasts, while those in the control group were not.

While the participants were receiving their treatment, the post-test was constructed and validated. Using the participants' responses on the translation test, a 30-item multiple-choice test was developed (see appendix B). The newly developed test was then given to 60 students at 'Qazvin Azad University' along with the vocabulary subtest of a Michigan language proficiency test.

To determine the validity of the post-test, the 'Pearson Product Moment' correlation coefficient formula was used, and to estimate the reliability, the (KR–21) formula was employed. The validity and reliability of the post-test

turned out to be .95 and .78 respectively. At the end of the experimental period, the post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups. Having obtained the data, a case II t-test procedure was gone through to compare the two means.

3. Results and discussion

The analysis of data and the comparison of the experimental and control group means revealed that the observed value for t was 3.5 (data needed for the computation of the observed t are given in appendix C). Since the critical t-value checked in the t-table (Fisher and Yates) was 2.00, it may be concluded that the difference is significant enough to enable us to reject the null hypothesis and to suggest that the contrastive teaching of semantically similar words positively influences vocabulary learning. This means that students will learn vocabulary more efficiently if they are made aware of the intra-lingual semantic similarities between words.

This could have certain implications for syllabus designers. If the contrastive teaching of vocabulary does indeed facilitate vocabulary learning, then syllabus designers should take care to employ such a facilitating factor by including in the syllabus the semantically similar words.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The pre-test
Write the meaning of the underlined words

01. I hate to play games with a person who <u>cheats</u>.
02. The wound is not yet <u>healed</u>.
03. He politely <u>refrained</u> from saying what he thought of her hat.
04. <u>Subtract</u> 10 from 28 and add 1. What is the result?
05. Please <u>toss</u> me the matches.
06. Captain sent for the master, and <u>reprimanded</u> him for his oppression.
07. She escaped through a <u>secret</u> door.
08. <u>Artificial</u> respiration has saved the lives of many people who would have otherwise drowned.
09. I'm afraid our opinions <u>diverge</u> from each other from a common starting point.
10. The old man's ruddy complexion gave an <u>illusion</u> of good health.
11. She is <u>bashful</u> and blushes when she speaks with a man.

12. The garden <u>slopes</u> gently toward the river.

13. I want this room to be <u>neat</u> when I return.

14. A sprained wrist <u>disabled</u> the tennis player for three weeks.

15. His <u>financial</u> affairs are in bad condition.

16. They work hard, but their efforts are not very <u>productive</u>.

17. Colour and sex are hardly <u>relevant</u> when appointing somebody to a job.

18. The actor delivered his lines with <u>deliberate</u> emphasis.

19. His statement to the police was used as <u>evidence</u> against him.

20. The government <u>excludes</u> immigrants who have certain diseases.

21. There are two ugly, <u>gaudy</u> lamps in the room.

22. I feel nothing but <u>contempt</u> for people who treat children so cruelly.

23. The <u>ingredients</u> for a cake usually include eggs, sugar, flour, and flavouring.

24. In his <u>rage</u> at being publicly punished, he broke the teacher's favourite vase.

25. I have a <u>dislike</u> for studying and would rather play baseball.

26. Children were <u>tormented</u> by hunger.

27. Prices continue to show an upward <u>tendency</u>.

28. She has a <u>vain</u> hope of persuading him.

29. It was so noisy in the room that I had to <u>scream</u> my name.

30. 'She kissed her when she left' is an <u>ambiguous</u> sentence.

31. Love of liberty is <u>predominant</u> in struggles for independence.

32. There seems to be a <u>dearth</u> of good young players at the moment.

33. He <u>avenged</u> the enemy pilot for bombing a hospital.

34. The <u>obedient</u> boy did his chores, though his friends wanted him to go swimming.

35. Nothing could <u>diminish</u> her enthusiasm for the project.

36. Skiers <u>glide</u> across the snow.

37. He <u>menace</u>d her with a gun.

38. Her <u>pride</u> in her achievements is justified.

39. The breaking of a branch under my foot <u>alarmed</u> the deer.

40. He <u>cursed</u> the poor waitress who had spilled soup on him.

41. The old lady <u>climbs</u> up the stairs with difficulty.

42. Your help was greatly <u>appreciated</u>; we were grateful for it.

43. She <u>shivered</u> the thought of going into the dark house alone.

44. The blouse was <u>scorched</u> because the iron was too hot.

45. There were many <u>discrepancies</u> between the two versions of the affair.

46. She is too <u>inquisitive</u> about my friends.

47. A good mother would not <u>abandon</u> her baby.

48. The cat <u>crept</u> silently towards the bird.

49. Light the paper with a match to <u>kindle</u> the wood.

50. The boy was <u>meek</u> when the other boys made fun of him.

Appendix B: The post-test

Choose the best alternative.

1. The cut soon … up, but it left a scar.
    a. sloped
    b. crippled
    c. cured
    d. healed

2. He … from wrongdoing.
    a. excluded
    b. refused
    c. refrained
    d. abstained

3. She … the ball to the baby.
    a. tormented
    b. dwindle
    c. tossed
    d. cast

4. Their paths … at the fork in the road.
    a. shrieked
    b. tortured
    c. digressed
    d. diverged

5. The girl was so … that she blushed when asked to dance.
    a. bashful
    b. shy
    c. covert
    d. dominant

6. The land … towards the sea.
    a. kindles
    b. glides
    c. slopes
    d. slants

7. He was … by polio.
    a. crippled
    b. disabled
    c. digressed
    d. scorched

8. Even incidents seeming unimportant in themselves might be ….
    a. relevant
    b. pertinent
    c. unsightly
    d. biased

9. The lawyer made a … attempt to confuse the jury.
    a. dominant
    b. synthetic
    c. deliberate
    d. intentional

10. Women are often … from positions of authority.
    a. excluded
    b. eliminated
    c. alarmed
    d. cursed

11. Her face is very ....
   a. pertinent
   b. futile
   c. ugly
   d. unsightly

12. The child wept with ....
   a. disparity
   b. doom
   c. fury
   d. rage

13. I have a ... of rain and fog.

   a. dislike
   b. distaste
   c. homage
   d. conceit

14. He is ... by a racking cough
   a. esteemed
   b. reprimanded
   c. tormented
   d. tortured

15. The ... is toward higher taxes.
   a. contempt
   b. catastrophe
   c. tendency
   d. trend

16. The little girl ... with rage in a tamper tantrum.
   a. shrieked
   b. screamed
   c. menaced
   d, crept

17. He was left in a/an ... position by his friend's failure to appear and help him.
   a. rustic
   b. compliant
   c. vague
   d. ambiguous

18. The orphan suffered from a ... of affection.
   a. prejudice
   b. destiny
   c. scarcity
   d. dearth

19. They fought to ... the enemy's invasion of their country.
   a. revenge
   b. avenge
   c. cure
   d. deduct

20. The ... dog came out at his master's whistle.
   a. pastoral
   b. clandestine
   c. docile
   d. obedient

21. The medical bills during my sickness have ... my savings.
   a. diminished
   b. abstained
   c. dwindled
   d. alarmed

22. A storm ... the town.
   a. threatened
   b. menaced
   c. abandoned
   d. disgusted

23. I ... her for spoiling my plans.
   a. swore
   b. cursed
   c. screamed
   d. crept

24. His classmates don't ... him.
   a. value
   b. appreciate
   c. scorch
   d. sear

25. I crept … into bed.
    a. avenging
    b. diminishing
    c. quacking
    d. shivering

26. I … my shirt when I was ironing it.
    a. scorched
    b. seared
    b. slipped
    d. scared

27. The crew … the ship before it sank.
    a. scared
    b. alarmed
    c. abandoned
    d. deserted

28. The cat … silently towards the mouse.
    a. crept
    b. crawled
    c. healed
    d. cheated

29. This wood is too wet to ….
    a. kindle
    b. ignite
    c. swear
    d. toss

30. Mary came to the dead man's ….
    a. illusion
    b. homage
    c. destiny
    d. deference

Appendix C : the table containing data needed for the t-test

S	X	Y	X-X́	Y - Ý	(X-X́)²	(Y - Ý)²
1	30	29	5.87	9.77	34.45	95.45
2	30	29	5.87	9.77	34.45	95.45
3	30	28	5.87	8.77	34.45	76.91
4	29	27	4.87	7.77	23.71	60.37
5	29	27	4.87	7.77	23.71	60.37
6	28	27	3.87	7.77	14.97	60.37
7	28	25	3.87	5.77	14.97	33.29
8	28	25	3.87	5.77	14.97	33.29
9	28	24	3.87	4.77	14.97	22.75
10	27	23	2.87	3.77	8.23	14.21
11	27	21	2.87	1.77	8.23	3.13
12	26	21	1.87	1.77	3.49	3.13
13	26	20	1.87	.77	3.49	9.59
14	26	18	1.87	-1.23	3.49	1.51
15	26	18	1.87	-1.23	3.49	1.51
16	26	18	1.87	-1.23	3.49	1.51
17	25	18	.87	-1.23	.75	1.51
18	25	17	.87	-2.23	.75	4.97
19	25	17	.87	-2.23	.75	4.97
20	24	17	-.13	-2.23	.01	4.97
21	24	16	-.13	-3.23	.01	10.43
22	22	14	-2.13	-5.23	4.53	27.35
23	19	14	-5.13	-5.23	26.31	27.35
24	19	13	-5.13	-6.23	26.31	38.81
25	18	13	-6.13	-6.23	37.57	38.81
26	17	13	-7.13	-6.23	50.83	38.81
27	17	12	-7.13	-7.23	50.83	52.27
28	16	12	-8.13	-7.23	66.09	52.27
29	15	11	-9.13	-8.23	83.35	67.73
30	14	10	-10.13	-9.23	102.61	85.19

$\sum$X= 724
$\sum$Y= 577
$\sum$(X-X́)= 0
$\sum$(Y-Ý)= 0
$\sum$ (X-X́)² = 695.46
$\sum$ (Y-Ý)² = 1019.36

From reflective teaching to effective learning: A new class order

Mohammad Reza Taghilou, Tehran University, Iran
e-mail: mrtaghilou@teacher.com

Reflection has been very fashionable in all parts of teacher education for a number of years. Despite numerous articles, there is little empirical evidence that supports the view that it results in superior teaching practices, especially in EFL context. (Cornford, 2002) The objective of the present study was to explore whether there is a statistically meaningful relationship between the "reflective teaching practices" and the "learning outcomes" of the Iranian EFL students. For the purpose of this study two homogeneous groups of pre-university students were taught the same materials under similar pedagogical conditions by two teachers fundamentally different in their treatment of reflection on teaching practices. In fact, one was a strong supporter of the reflective pedagogy, and the other a total disbeliever in its use and effect on students' learning potential. The students mean score was significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) in the disbeliever teacher category (control group) than the mean score of students in the believer teacher category (experimental group). Also, the student satisfaction and support were more significant in the experimental group. All in all, reflective pedagogy contributed significantly to the learning/learner effectiveness. These results demonstrate for the first time the potential contribution of reflection and reflective teaching to the ease and effectiveness of learning on the part of the Iranian EFL students.

KEY WORDS: Reflection; Reflective Teaching.

1. Introduction

In the past few years, the phrase reflective teaching has become a "buzz word" in our profession. Reflective teaching is extremely valuable as a stance, a state of mind, a healthy, questioning attitude toward the practice of our profession. The main value of reflective teaching lies in its potential to clarify our thinking. (Bailey et al, 1996) It seems that approximately once a decade a new approach to learning or teaching appears, and captures the attention of practitioners so much that it comes to dominate thinking and research. Reflection and reflective teaching are related approaches that have been very fashionable in teacher education and adult education gatherings for the past decade in the world. There is a nice quotation from the opening of *"A Tale of Two Cities,"* written by Charles Dickens almost 150 years ago which characterizes the world that many teachers as well as students in schools, institutes, and even some universities now inhabit in Iran and elsewhere:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.

In simple sincere words, the story of TEFL in our country and in most of the others is not very dissimilar to the journey of going direct the other way. And -along some other reasons- this is mostly the result of not thinking before most of decision-making processes in our educational world. Reflection in general, and "Reflective Pedagogy" in particular are the missing elements of our academic realm. Reflective pedagogy necessitates multi-dimensionality, a consideration of "the whole" from all its possible angles. Brown (1994) asserts that becoming bilingual is a way of life. Your whole person is affected as you struggle to reach beyond the confines of your first language and into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting. Total commitment, total involvement, a total physical, intellectual, and emotional response is necessary to successfully send and receive messages in a second language. Reflective pedagogy is an attempt to understand the learner, the teacher, and the learning/ teaching process as a whole and help the pupils move toward a perfect competency to the extent possible. Furthermore, "Reflective teaching" is a means of professional knowledge development which begins in the classroom. Preparation for working with diverse populations in an ever-changing cultural and global context requires teachers who are knowledgeable, caring, and responsive. (Bailey et al 1996) Therefore, reflective teaching should not be viewed as a simple model whereby a solution is worked out for a problem without addressing the underlying causes of the problem. Rather, it examines the underlying assumptions and becomes a useful model to understand the interaction of dispositions (being), practice (doing), and professional knowledge (knowing). In a nut shell, reflective teaching is a conscious attempt to think before, during, and -of course- after the instruction for the betterment of the end product on the part of the students. At the heart of the model is a cyclical process leading to the construction of meaning. Meaning is constructed when awareness is created (1) by observing and gathering information, (2) by analyzing the information to identify any implications, (3) by hypothesizing to explain the events and guide further action, and (4) by implementing an action plan. (Richards, & Lockhart 1994) The model of reflection incorporates five categories of knowledge. These knowledge bases are centered on knowledge of self, knowledge of content, knowledge of teaching and learning, knowledge of pupils, and knowledge of context within schools and society. They are viewed

as essential for what prospective teachers should know and be able to do. (Pennington, 1992) In the present study an attempt is made to empirically test the relationship between reflective teaching and effective learning in an Iranian EFL context.

2. METHOD

2.1. Subjects

The subjects participating in this study were 66 pre-university students. They were selected from among the 98 male pre-university students through taking a standard test (CELT). Such a sample was taken from the students of a non-profit pre-university center. The subjects were divided into two groups randomly: (1) 33 pre-university students which were the representative sample of the students who received instruction from the reflective teacher, (experimental group) and, (2) 33 pre-university students which were the representative sample of the students who were given instruction by the non-reflective teacher as control group.

2.2. Instrumentation

Some testing and teaching/learning instruments were used in this study to serve the purpose of the researcher. Testing instruments were: (1) a standard test (CELT) to decide on the general language ability of the subjects as well as to categorize them into two control and experimental groups. (2) a standard achievement test on the materials taught during the 14 weeks (56 hours) of instruction as the fall semester in Iranian high schools and pre-universities. Teaching materials used in the experimental category as indicators of reflective pedagogy were: (1) video and audio recordings of the lessons (2) peer or expert observation checklists (3) students feedback checklists (4) teacher diaries (5) personal communications with experts and colleagues through e-mail, and (6) web- based conferencing with colleagues and experts nationally and internationally. For the control group, the materials and the teaching/ learning procedures were exactly the same as the current teaching practices in average pre-universities nationwide.

2.3. Procedure

As it was mentioned before, the purpose of this study was to determine whether reflective pedagogy had any significant effect on the learning outcome of the Iranian pre-university students. To arrive at the answers to this question, the researcher administered a pre-test to the subjects of the study (both experimental and control groups) to evaluate their present language ability. The students were given the instruction orally, although they were printed on the test sheets. A total of 45 minutes was allowed for answering the pre-test.

The next step was to score the pre-test. Since all the items were in a multiple choice format, the scoring was objective and easy. Table 1 repots on the results of the pre-test phase.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics (pretest)

Group	X	SD	V
Experimental	69.95	9.81	96.26
Control	69.40	10.09	101.8

In order to check the homogeneity of the variance of the two groups on the pre-test phase, the F-test is carried out. The F-observed value, (1.06) has a p-value equal to .87. Since this p-value is much greater than .05 it can be concluded that the two groups are homogeneous in terms of their variances. After the homogeneity of the groups was assured, an independent t-test was calculated to compare the experimental and control groups mean scores on the pre-test. Table 2 shows the results of this independent t-test.

Table 2.
Independent t-test experimental vs. control Group on pretest

Observed t	Degree of freedom	Critical t	P
.23	64	2	< .05

The result shows that there was no significant difference on the pre-test between the performance of the experimental and control groups prior to training because the observed t (.23) is well below the critical t (2). After the pre-test phase was finished, the teaching procedure began on the basis of the previously established syllabus for both experimental and control groups.

The treatment which the experimental group received was exactly the same as the treatment received by the control group except for the fact that in the experimental group all possible processes of reflection on action were carried out in order to meet the fundamental principles of reflective pedagogy. In fact, neither the methodology nor any other principles of teaching were different for the two groups. All that was different was the injection of a reflection flair to the experimental classroom flux to see if it could drive the teaching/ learning journey to a better destination or not.

As you know, the teacher should begin the process of reflection in response to a particular problem that has arisen with one of his classes, or simply as a way of finding out more about his teaching. He may decide to focus on a particular class of students or to look at a feature of his teaching - for example how he deals with misbehavior or how he can encourage his students to

speak more English in class. To this end, he can resort to a number of techniques. The first step is to gather information about what happens in the class. Here are some different ways of doing this:

1. Teacher diary

This is the easiest way to begin a process of reflection since it is purely personal. After each lesson you write in a notebook about what happened. You may also describe your own reactions and feelings and those you observed on the part of the students. You are likely to begin to pose questions about what you have observed. Diary writing does require a certain discipline in taking the time to do it on a regular basis. (The reflective teacher took 14 notes of what happened in his classes, and tried to study and analyze them in order to use the results for the betterment of his teaching. This was done systematically after every session to be applied for the next sessions.)

2. Peer observation

Asking a colleague to come into your class in order to collect information about your lesson is an asset. This may be with a simple observation task or through note taking. This will relate back to the area you have identified to reflect upon. For example, you might ask your colleague to focus on which students contribute most in the lesson, what different patterns of interaction occur or how you deal with errors. (The reflective teacher asked two colleagues and one expert to randomly observe three of his classes and report on his weak and strong points. The checklist used for this purpose was adopted from Brown 2001)

3. Recording lessons

Video or audio recordings of lessons can provide very useful information for reflection. You may do things in class you are not aware of or there may be things happening in the class that as the teacher you do not normally see.

Audio recordings can be useful for considering aspects of teacher talk.

- How much do you talk?
- What about?
- Are instructions and explanations clear?
- How much time do you allocate to student talk?
- How do you respond to student talk?

Video recordings can be useful in showing you aspects of your own behavior.

- Where do you stand?

- Who do you speak to?
- How do you come across to the students?

(All in all, five classes were video-recorded and five classes were audio-recorded. The audio and video tapes were carefully studied, and the possible improvements were injected into the next teaching sessions immediately.)

4. Student feedback

Asking your students what they think about what goes on in the classroom can be very helpful. Their opinions and perceptions can add a different and valuable perspective. This can be done with simple questionnaires or learning diaries. (The students in the experimental group were given two questionnaires: the first one was about the teacher behavior, and the second one was about the students interaction.)

After collecting enough information about the students, the teaching/ learning process, and yourself as the teacher, you need to move to the next stage in your reflective pedagogy. The following steps should be followed to arrive at a dependable approach in the educational journey.

1. Pondering

You may have noticed patterns occurring in your teaching through your observation. You may also have noticed things that you were previously unaware of. You may have been surprised by some of your students' feedback. You may already have ideas for changes to implement. (Some examples of the improvements made in the reflective teacher's thinking and behavior : 1. Establish good eye contact with your class, 2. Divide your students into small groups in an organized and principled way, 3. Arrange the seating in your class to suit the class activity, 4. Write more legibly on the blackboard, 5. Plan for "thinking time for your students so they can organize their thoughts and plan what they are going to say or do. 6. Promote an atmosphere of understanding and respect, 7. Begin your class with a simple activity to get your students working together.)

2. Talking

Just by talking about what you have discovered - to a supportive colleague or even a friend - you may be able to come up with some ideas for how to do things differently. If you have colleagues who also wish to develop their teaching using reflection as a tool, you can meet to discuss issues. Discussion can be based around scenarios from your own classes. Using a list of statements about teaching beliefs (for example, pair work is a valuable activity in the language class or lexis is more important than grammar) you can discuss which ones you agree or disagree with, and

which ones are reflected in your own teaching giving evidence from your self-observation. This talking can be face to face or through chats and web-based conferencing. (The reflective teacher talked about the potential problems as well as assets with peers and experts through web-based conferencing and face to face conversations.)

3. Reading

You may decide that you need to find out more about a certain area. There are plenty of websites for teachers of English now where you can find useful teaching ideas, or more academic articles. There are also magazines for teachers where you can find articles on a wide range of topics. Or if you have access to a library or bookshop, there are plenty of books for English language teachers. (The reflective teacher read almost 20 different articles and papers as well as a plethora of abstracts from different web sites on reflective pedagogy, critical thinking, cognition, etc.)

4. Asking

Pose questions to websites or magazines to get ideas from other teachers. Or if you have a local teachers' association or other opportunities for in-service training, ask for a session on an area that interests you. (For this purpose, the reflective teacher had personal communications with international experts through e-mail. In these communications different questions were posed by the reflective teacher about the problems arising from the classes and some informative comments were received from the aforementioned experts.)

After 28 sessions of instruction which lasted 14 weeks, a standard achievement test was conducted with the aim of statistically determining whether there was any significant improvement in the language ability of the subjects in the experimental group due to the reflective teaching practices. This was done through calculating and comparing the means of the students in both groups by a statistical technique called t-test. Complete data analyses are given in the next part.

3. Results

Only a small number of studies have been published that are empirical in nature, and have examined the effectiveness of reflective teaching or practice in achieving the desired objectives of a particular reflective approach. This lack of empirical studies may be attributable in part to those like Gore (1987) who considers that quantitative methods cannot be used to measure reflective teaching outcomes. Gore's stance reflects a period in which empirical research was frowned upon and the very nature of reflective

activity was much in accord with qualitative approaches. Also, there has been a tendency in language teaching to go from one extreme to another: "from teaching formal grammar rules to never teaching grammar rules, from always correcting to never correcting a student's errors, from an emphasis on form to an emphasis on function, and now perhaps from non-reflective teaching to reflective teaching or the other way around! In recent years, mainly due to the development of "teacher development programs" and " student centered approaches" the reflective pedagogy has found a place in the sun. In this article, the researcher adopted the view that creating a reflective atmosphere in the teaching/learning context and thinking about teaching processes and making your students think and help you in this way can result in better teaching practices, and consequently furnish the students mind with Persian carpets and Italian paintings. In other words, reflective teaching practices can contribute to the ease and effectiveness of EFL learning on the part of the Iranian pre-university students. As the result of the study indicated, reflective teaching of the materials for pre-university students had a significant effect on their language ability.

Having compared the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of both groups, the researcher found an increase in the post-test mean score of the experimental group which demonstrated empirically that reflective teaching plays an important role on the improvement of learners' language ability. The descriptive statistics is shown in table 3. This table presents the calculations for mean, standard deviation and variance for both sets of scores on post-test.

Table 3.
Descriptive Statistics (posttest)

Group	X	SD	V
Experimental	80.33	8.56	73.27
Control	73.37	9.76	95.25

An independent t-test was also calculated to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the post-test. Table 4 reports on the results of this calculation.

Table 4.
Independent t-test experimental vs. control Group on post-test

Observed t	Degree of freedom	Critical t	P
3.08	64	2	< .05

The t-observed value (3.08) at (64) degree of freedom, is greater than the critical value of t, i.e. (2). Thus, the null hypothesis as no significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the post-test is rejected. This means that the experimental group (X=80.33) outperformed the control group (X=73.37) on the post-test. In non-statistical terms, the reflective

pedagogy culminated in a better and more effective learning than the non-reflective teaching and education.

4. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

According to recent research studies, there is no dependable evidence that clearly establishes that reflective teaching approaches have resulted in superior teaching or learning. That is not to deny in any way that thinking and critical analysis are important. The problem is how to encourage these skills, while still building a solid foundation of technical teaching skills, which have been neglected in many reflective paradigms or even spurned as being technician (e.g. Gore, 1987). Retention of learning, practice and feedback, and developmental stages in teacher learning are important issues regardless of the teacher education paradigms employed. The work of Berliner (1988) on the stages in the development of expertise in teaching would appear to be linked conceptually with some reflective teaching paradigms, especially in relation to the development of problem-solving skills more effectively at proficient and expert levels. There is also reason to believe that the explicit teaching of thinking and analytical skills may assist teachers to become more critical and thoughtful practitioners. It is time to stop assuming that all students, even adults, are in possession of effective cognitive skills that develop naturally and without the need for specific teaching. As with all skill learning, regardless of whether it involves performance skills or cognitive skills, there is a need for programs that train for the desired skills. This must involve modeling of the skills, and involve considerable practice and feedback (Cornford, 1996).

Above all, there is one consistent message that emerges from consideration of the enthusiasm for reflective teaching paradigms. This means that all new paradigms should be assessed in an empirical way before there is wide scale adoption (Houston, 1996). As has been shown with results from empirical studies involving reflection, what may appear to be promising avenues for teacher training may not be effective in even the medium term. Simply rushing to join in a fashion in an uncritical way seems the height of social irresponsibility and a denial of possession of truly critical skills of analysis, which it would be expected that teacher educators and policy makers should possess. (Gore & Zeichner, 1991) In conclusion, the results of this research study proved empirically that reflective teaching approaches were able to bring about superior teaching and culminate in more effective learning on the part of the Iranian pre-university students. Also, the students' cooperation, satisfaction, and support were higher in this group of EFL learners. Last, but not least, there is no claim for perfection and some confirmatory research studies are deemed to be necessary.

The result of the present study will be of great interest to language practitioners who are interested in improving the quality of their teaching. Reflective pedagogy is a cyclical process, because once the teacher starts to implement changes, then the reflective and evaluative cycle begins again.

- What are you doing?
- Why are you doing it?
- How effective is it?
- How are the students responding?
- How can you do it better?

As a result of your reflection you may decide to do something in a different way, or you may just decide that what you are doing is the best way. And that is what professional development is all about, and we are allowed to claim that reflective pedagogy can culminate in effective pedagogy and learning.

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Definitions:

Reflection: The action of turning back or fixing the thoughts on some subject; meditation, deep or serious consideration (Oxford English Dictionary, 1994).

Reflective Teaching: Reflective teaching means looking at what you (as the teacher) do in the classroom, thinking about why you do it, and pondering about if it works (Henderson, 1996).

The Effect of Field Dependence-Independence as a Source of Variation in EFL Learners' Writing Performance

Nazanin Nilforooshan [1], Khorasgan Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
Akbar Afghari [2] , Sheikh-Bahaei University, Isfahan, Iran

In recent years, second language researchers have examined the role of cognitive styles such as field in/dependence and their relationship in learning English as a Foreign Language. Individual cognitive differences may constrain students' second language learning. The present study explores the effect of field in/dependency on second language writing performance. Eighty nine sophomore students (14 males and 75 females) who had enrolled in essay composition course formed the sample of the study. They were majoring in English Translation at Khorasghan University. A TOEFL test was administered in order to determine the level of the participants' English language proficiency. The standard Group Embedded Figures Test was used to assess field dependency. The students were asked to write essays on the two modes of narration and argumentation. The collected essays were evaluated according to ESL Holistic Scoring Guide. The obtained data were subjected to the statistical procedures of MANOVA, T-Test and Scheffé test. The results revealed a significant difference between the two groups of field dependence and field independence in writing skill in general and narrative writing in particular. Field independent learners outperformed field dependents (p<0.05). However, no significant difference was found between field dependents and field independents in argumentative writing. Based on the previous studies, the potential sources of difference between the performance of field dependents and field independents may be attributable to the difference between the two groups in the kind of reasoning, the restructuring ability, the use of strategies in processing information and in writing process, and memory retrieval.

Key Words: cognitive style, field dependence, field independence, writing skill, process and product approach to writing

1. Introduction

The effect of cognitive styles in learning a foreign language has received much attention in recent years. Field in/dependence is one kind of cognitive styles

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[1] Nazanin Nilforooshan is an M.A. Graduate from English Department of Khorasgan Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: n_nilfo@yahoo.com

[2] Akbar Afghari is Assistant Professor of TEFL at the English Department of Sheikh-Bahaei University, Isfahan, Iran. E-mail: afghari@shbu.ac.ir

which was introduced by Witkin, et al. (1971) to resemble "the degree to which one perceives analytically or globally" (Hadley, 2003). The ability of a person to extract the 'message' or 'signal' from the 'noise' or irrelevant information or the cognitive restructuring ability is associated with field independent characteristics. Field independents have the ability to break a complex stimulus into separate elements and to give it a different structure or organization based on previous experiences or restructure it in their own way. If it is difficult to do such a thing, the person will be field dependent (Mancy & Reid, 2004).

In the same vein, in language learning, the learners have to understand language items in their context and to extract them and use them in new contexts (Stern, 1983). For instance, the learner may encounter situations in which s/he has to understand the meaning of an ambiguous sentence or to understand the meaning of a word in its context and use it in other contexts. S/he may be exposed to ill-structured sentences in the process of language learning. In such circumstances, the field in/dependent cognitive style will bear influences on language learning.

With respect to the effect of field in/dependence on different dimensions of language learning, the aim of this study was to investigate this effect on writing skill.

2. Review of Literature

Field dependency is defines as "the tendency to depend on the field so that the parts embedded within the field are not easily perceived, though that total field is perceived more easily as a unified whole" and field independency as "the ability to perceive a particular relevant item or factor in a field of distracting items" (Brown, 1994). Field dependents 'see the forest rather than the trees' and field independents 'see the forest for the trees'.

Field independent learners are analytic, independent, and socially insensitive, while field dependents tend to be holistic, dependent, and socially aware (Wyss, 2002). Since field independent learners have greater restructuring skills (Musser, 1998), they are able to extract an embedded simple figure in a field or a complex figure. Field in/dependency is under the influence of a lot of factors such as age, sex, hemisphere lateralization, child rearing, and socioeconomic status (Musser, 1998).

Field independence is correlated with more language success especially second language learning (Chapelle and Abraham, 1990; Chapelle and Green, 1992; Alptekin and Atakan, 1990). In fact, researchers show that both field dependent and field independent styles may enhance second language

learning (Tianjero & Paramo, 1998). However, field dependents and field independents learn in two different ways and they have different learning strengths (Town, 2003). Field independents excel at classroom learning which requires analysis and attention to details. Field dependents excel at learning the communicative aspects of language learning (Brown, 1994).

Writing is a complex cognitive process in which the writer should have control over a number of variables. Writing ability, as a component of language learning, has been approached from different angles. Different approaches to teaching writing have been developed like the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach, and the process-genre approach (Badger & White, 2000). Writing is a difficult task not only for second or foreign language learners but also for the native speakers. Moreover, several factors such as social, personal, cognitive, linguistic and cultural, L1 transfer, different modes of writing, audience, writing instruction methods, and second language proficiency have influences on writing.

Regarding the relationship between field in/dependency and writing, Kinsella (1996) reported that learners with analytical faculties (field independents) have easier access to the traditional teaching model a part of which is completing writing assignments. According to Entwistle (1988), on writing tasks, individuals with holistic cognitive style are more likely to use a global strategy of drafting and redrafting rather than filling an initial outline. They may experience difficulties in evaluating form and attending to task and deciding what is essential in the early stages. On the other hand, field independents make extra effort to brainstorm for approaching the subject. They may have difficulty in evaluating content (Town, 2003).

Based on the objectives of the study, there was an attempt to see whether there is a significant difference between the performance of field dependents and field independents in writing skill in general and the two modes of narration and argumentation in particular. Moreover, it was explored whether there is any significant difference between the performance of field dependents and field independents in the EFL proficiency test.

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 89 sophomore students (14 males and 75 females) with the average age of 22 who were majoring in English Translation at Khorasgan University. They were enrolled in Essay Composition Course when the study was conducted.

3.2. Instruments

The Proficiency Test: Since language proficiency underlies the ability to write in the second language (Myles, 2002), the students' EFL proficiency was determined by a TOEFL Test. The test was taken from "Intermediate TOEFL Test Practices" by Keith s. Folse (1994). The test consisted of three sections: structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The reliability of this test was calculated as 0.91.

The Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT): The GEFT (Witkin, et al., 1971) was used to determine the participants' cognitive style of field in/ dependency. Witkin and his associates reported that the reliability of the instrument was .89 and its validity was .82. (Foel and Fritz, 1994).The test contains three sections with 25 complex figures from which participants were asked to identify and trace specified simple forms embedded within the complex figures. The first section was given for practice purposes containing seven items. The second and the third sections contained nine items each. The allocated time for completing the task was about 20 minutes. The score of each person ranged from 0 to 18. Cakan (2003) stated that the advantage of GEFT is that it is non-verbal and requires a minimum level of language skills for performing the task. In addition, the psychometrical properties of the instrument have been confirmed to be quite reasonable in cross-cultural settings. The reliability of the GEFT in this study was estimated as 0.72 using split half method.

Writing Tasks: The writing ability of the students was evaluated by two tasks of writing. The students were asked to write on the two modes of narration and argumentation.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The data was collected during the spring semester of 2006. The students were first administered the TOEFL test. The students who scored more than one standard deviation above the mean were assigned to the advanced group. Those students who scored less than one standard deviation below the mean were assigned to the beginner group and those students who scored between one standard deviation below and above the mean were regarded as the intermediate group. After two weeks, the GEFT was administered. The students who scored 11 or below were identified as field dependent (FD) and those who scored above 11 were classified as field independent (FI) (Abraham, 1985). Again, after a two week interval, two writing samples were collected from each student in two different sessions. There was a lapse of time (one week) between the administrations of the two writing tasks. Three raters evaluated the essays based on the ESL Holistic Scoring Guide with a six-

point scale (Petersburg Junior College, 1999). Using SPSS software, the inter-rater reliability for the narrative mode was 0.72 and for the argumentative mode was 0.76.

In this study, Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the difference between the performance of FD and FI groups in writing and in narrative and argumentative modes. Moreover, T-Test was used to determine the difference between FD and FI groups in terms of EFL proficiency.

4. Results

Out of 89 participants in this study, 50 were field independent and 39 were field dependent. Also, the number of participants at the beginner level was 26, and the number of participants at the intermediate and advanced levels were 36 and 27 respectively.

See table 1 on the next page. As it is indicated in Table 1, the mean score of FI group is higher than the mean score of FD group in writing skill, narration, and argumentation.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics for Writing Skill, Narration, Argumentation

		Writing Skill		Narration		Argumentation	
Field	PL*	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Independence	Beginner	3.12	0.37	3.12	0.50	3.12	0.54
	Intermediate	3.22	0.53	3.19	0.68	3.25	0.55
	Advanced	4.09	0.58	3.93	0.73	4.26	0.63
	Total	3.51	0.67	3.44	0.75	3.59	0.76
Dependence	Beginner	2.92	0.64	2.89	0.66	2.95	0.72
	Intermediate	3.30	0.50	3.24	0.50	3.36	0.70
	Advanced	3.48	0.48	3.22	0.71	3.74	0.32
	Total	3.20	0.59	3.10	0.62	3.29	0.70
Total	Beginner	3.01	0.54	2.99	0.60	3.03	0.65
	Intermediate	3.25	0.52	3.21	0.60	3.30	0.60
	Advanced	3.89	0.61	3.69	0.78	4.09	0.60
	Total	3.37	0.65	3.29	0.71	3.46	0.75

*: Proficiency level

In order to see whether this difference between the two groups of field dependence and field independence is significant or not, MANOVA was run within the SPSS program (Version 9). Table 2. shows the obtained results of MANOVA.

Table 2.
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Writing Skill, Narration, and Argumentation

Dependent Variable	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Writing skill	Field	1.23	1	1.23	4.28	0.042
	PL*	7.59	2	3.79	13.22	0.0001
	Field×PL	1.69	2	0.84	2.94	0.059
Narration	Field	1.77	1	1.77	4.28	0.042
	PL	4.08	2	2.04	4.92	0.010
	Field×PL	2.05	2	1.03	2.48	0.090
Argumentation	Field	0.78	1	0.78	2.11	0.150
	PL	12.24	2	6.12	16.62	0.0001
	Field×PL	1.36	2	0.68	1.85	0.163

*: Proficiency level

The difference between the means of the FD and FI groups is significant in writing and in narration ($P<0.05$). However, there is no significant difference between the performance of field dependents and field independents in argumentative writing ($P<0.05$).The difference between the means of the three levels of proficiency is significant ($P<0.05$) and the interaction between field in/dependency and proficiency level is not statistically significant ($P<0.05$) in writing, narration, and argumentation.

The mean score of writing in writing skill, narration, and argumentation increases as the level of proficiency increases. Since the difference between the mean scores of the three levels of proficiency in writing skill, in narration and in argumentation is significant ($P<0.05$), Scheffe Test was applied in order to find the exact areas of difference between them. The results of the Scheffe test are shown in Table 3.

Table 3.
Results of Scheffe test for multiple comparisons in writing skill, narration, and argumentation

Variable	PL (I)	PL (J)	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Writing skill	Beginner	Intermediate	-0.25	0.14	0.205
		Advanced	-0.88	0.15	0.0001
	Intermediate	Beginner	0.25	0.14	0.205
		Advanced	-0.63	0.14	0.0001
	Advanced	Beginner	0.88	0.15	0.0001
		Intermediate	0.63	0.14	0.0001
Narration	Beginner	Intermediate	-0.22	0.17	0.404
		Advanced	0.70	0.18	0.001
	Intermediate	Beginner	0.22	0.17	0.404
		Advanced	-0.48	0.16	0.017
	Advanced	Beginner	0.70	0.18	0.001
		Intermediate	0.48	0.16	0.017
Argumentation	Beginner	Intermediate	-0.27	0.16	0.228
		Advanced	-1.06	0.17	0.0001
	Intermediate	Beginner	0.27	0.16	0.228
		Advanced	-0.79	0.15	0.0001
	Advanced	Beginner	1.06	0.17	0.0001
		Intermediate	0.79	0.15	0.0001

The results of the Scheffe test show that the difference between the means of beginner and advanced group and intermediate and advanced group is significant (P<0.05). However, there is no significant difference between beginner and intermediate students in writing skill, in narration, and in argumentation (P<0.05).

Moreover, the descriptive statistics showed that the mean score of proficiency in FI group (mean=55.88, sd=14.07) was higher than FD group (mean=49.08, sd=12.13). In order to examine whether this difference is significant or not, a T-Test was run. The results indicated that the difference between the two groups of field dependence and field independence in EFL proficiency is significant at the confidence level of 0.05 (t=2.40, df=87,

sig=0.018). Field independents outperformed field dependents in EFL proficiency test.

5. Discussion

The results of this study revealed that FI students outperformed FD students in writing ability in general. This is in line with the results reported by Large (1998) and Graffin (1983). In addition, the same result was found for narrative writing in particular.

One of the possible reasons may be the kind of reasoning: inductive or deductive. In deductive reasoning, one observes the individual parts from the whole, that is, he reaches a conclusion by having a general principle in mind (moving from the whole to the parts). Deductive reasoning is inferring specific facts from a general principle. On the other hand, in inductive reasoning one makes a generalization based on the individual observations he has made (moving from the parts to the whole) and general principles are derived from particular facts or instances (Brown, 1994). Field independent subjects use their repertoire of information processing strategies, restructuring ability, analytical way of thinking, and creativity which is derived from the individual development of criteria on a rational basis. Field independent learners have the capacity to extract a part from a whole or field and restructure it themselves. Therefore, it is assumed that they have a deductive reasoning. On the other hand, field dependent learners are less able to extract a part from the whole. It is assumed that they think inductively since they seem to be concerned about finding parts by external cues to make a whole. They are not aware that one of the parts they are placing within the other parts is the same they are looking for.

According to Abraham (1985), field independent learners were more successful in deductive lessons, while field dependent learners performed better in inductive lessons. Therefore, it is assumed that field independents reason inductively and field dependents reason deductively. These two kinds of reasoning may have effects on the ways students write in a foreign language as in deductive approach to the process of writing with the emphasis on the development of ideas and deductive approach focusing on the product and form of writing (Allami & Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006).

The second possible reason is that field independents apply more strategies and operational intermediates (intervening stages between rhetorical techniques, i.e. language structures, and rhetorical functions in the process of writing) than field dependents. These operational intermediates deal with the development and outline of ideas using logic and reasoning (Allami & Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006).

The third possible reason is related to memory retrieval. Willing (1988) asserted that it is likely that field independents may have better information retrieval from memory as their mental processing is strongly activated by low-intensity stimulus. On the other hand, field dependents' access to information stored in memory is via the effectively charged associations and the mental processing requires high-intensity stimulus to be activated (Town, 2003). Mancy and Reid (2004) reported that field independents access information stored in working memory more efficiently since their working memory space is not cluttered with irrelevant information to the problem being faced and they do more chunking in processing and storing information. As a result they are better problem solvers too. Daniels (1996) asserted that field dependents have difficulty in retrieving information from long-term memory and field independents retrieve items more effectively.

In narration, since field independents reason deductively, they have the topic (whole) and from the topic they reach parts of the event. Moreover they can remember events better because information retrieval is easier for them than field dependents.

With regard to the argumentative mode of writing, as Allami & Salmani-Nodoushan (2006) put it, argumentation requires more reasoning capacity in comparison to narration and it is more difficult to write about. No significant difference was found between FD and FI groups in composing argumentation. The possible reason may be that students can reason the issue by approaching it either from a deductive or inductive approach. They can convince the reader either by reaching the parts from the whole or by reaching the whole from the parts. Therefore, the effect of field in/dependence on argumentation is not statistically significant. Some other possible justifications may be the difference between teachers' and students' cognitive styles, the content, and the method of writing instruction which have different effects on field dependent and field independent students, and certainly the effect of mode of writing.

The finding that field independents outperformed field dependents in proficiency test is in accordance with the results obtained by previous studies. Earlier researches suggested a significant association between cognitive styles and academic achievement (Moore and Dwyer, 2001; Lynch, et al., 1998). Results show that field independence correlates positively and significantly with language success in classroom (Brown, 1994; Chapelle, 1995; Chapelle & Roberts, 1986; Chapelle & Abraham, 1990; Mancy & Reid, 2004). According to Tianjero and Paramo (1998) "Field independent subjects consistently achieve higher academic levels than field dependent subjects, whether specific subjects or global performance are considered". Witkin, et al. (1977), explaining the relationship between field in/dependency and

academic achievement, pointed out that field dependents apply less strategies for completing a task. Therefore, their poor performance in contrast to field independents in proficiency tests is attributed to their weakness in applying strategies for information processing rather than cognitive inefficiency. Field independents use internalized strategies such as hypothesis testing, analytical thinking, etc which assist them in performing better in reverse situations and perceptually ambiguous tasks (Hacker, 1990). Another possible reason for obtaining this result is that the instructional method in East Asian countries favors field independent students against field dependents (Zhenhui, 2001).

6. Conclusion

It was found that field in/dependency influences EFL learners' writing performance especially the narrative mode. However, it had no effect on the argumentative mode of writing. The study provides the following implications:

Theoretical Implications: Learner differences and cognitive styles should be considered in any comprehensive theory of second or foreign language acquisition and second language teaching. Cognitive styles give insights about the nature of learning process. Although cognitive processes underlying second language acquisition are not easily explored and identified, having a grasp of cognitive styles sheds light on our understanding of language learning.

Educational Implications:

1. The findings may help material developers and curriculum designers in considering the role of cognitive styles in learning a foreign language. Different materials should be provided for learners with each kind of cognitive style of field dependence or field independence. Town (2003) stated that field independents favor abstract, impersonal, analytic, and factual materials, whereas field dependents favor materials with social, personal, humorous, musical, and artistic content. The result of considering cognitive styles and the process approach to writing are more in line with the cognitive theory of learning which emphasizes the role of internal processes (Hadley, 2003).

2. The role of teachers is highlighted in this respect. They should adopt a cognitive approach or process approach rather than a product approach to teaching writing. They can help students to discover their preferences and they can give constructive feedback about the advantages and disadvantages of field in/dependent styles (Kang, 1999). They can help students to invoke their cognitive style preference and to encourage them to be flexible

regarding their cognitive style preference in diverse situations of learning so that they become more effective language learners.

3. Setting appropriate educational conditions and instructional methods for field dependent and field independent cognitive styles is of great importance too. Field independents have left hemispheric strengths, while field dependents have right hemisphere strengths (Kang, 1999). Kinsella (1996) pointed out that field independents with analytical faculties are not strong at problem solving and tasks requiring creativity which are functions of the right brain. Teaching methods should help students to develop the flexible use of both hemispheres by helping them perceive information in both an analytic (field independent) way and a relational (field dependent) way (Kang, 1999).

4. Another implication is matching teaching styles with students' cognitive style or learning style as it is labeled by some researchers. Matching has a positive impact on students' achievement, interest, and motivation (Brown, 1994; Kang, 1999). However, some researchers believe that some mismatching may be appropriate. It can help students learn in new ways not previously experienced (Claxton & Murrel, 2003).

5. Cognitive styles influence the strategies applied by learners (Winke, 2005). The learning strategies include cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies which are all involved in the process of writing as well (Myles, 2002). Since giving guidance and instruction outside the classroom to learners is impossible, students may become more self-directed and self-aware in the process of learning by having an awareness of their cognitive styles (Kang, 1999; Smith & Associates, 1990) so that they can compensate for their weaknesses using appropriate strategies.

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Speech Acts in English Language Teaching

Sasan Baleghizadeh, Shahid Beheshti University, Iran

This paper is an attempt to investigate the role of speech acts in second/foreign language teaching. It first starts with an analysis of the term grammatical competence and its comparison with the more comprehensive term communicative competence. It then deals with the components of the communicative competence emphasizing the role of speech acts in our daily use of language. Next, it looks into various techniques used in teaching speech acts. Finally, the term speech act set is introduced and its application in developing language teaching materials is examined.

1. Introduction

As teachers of English as a foreign language we all have encountered students who are able to produce grammatically well-formed utterances which are not appropriate for the context in which they are used. A student who in reply to "Could you do me a favor?" says "Yes, I could" instead of "Sure, I'd be glad to" is an example of a person who might possess a good grammatical competence, yet does not know how to communicate appropriately. Olshtain and Cohen (1991) in this respect narrate an incident which again stresses the importance of mastering saying the right thing at the right time. A stewardess on a European airline was walking down the aisle with a coffeepot and some cups, saying "Coffee, please!" with a smile. A young American decided to tease her by saying "You're the one who is serving the coffee, ma'am, not me." This comment from the young American made the stewardess embarrassed for a while, but what really happened here was that the stewardess's utterance "Coffee, please!" in English is interpreted as a request not an offer. The stewardess *might* have mastered the rules of grammar, but it is obvious that mastering these rules, though necessary, is not sufficient for successful communication.

2. Grammatical Competence

Following Chomsky's tradition, a native speaker's knowledge of his mother's tongue, technically known as grammatical competence, is the tacit knowledge which enables him to form and interpret words, phrases and sentences in his

native language (Radford, 1997). Hence it is a native speaker's grammatical competence which informs him that the word *pin* is made up of discrete sound units, so that the initial sound /p/ can be replaced with a minimally different sound /b/ to form a different word *bin*. This tacit knowledge also allows any native speaker of English to know that the word *unhappy* is made up of two similar units, the negative prefix *un* and the adjective *happy.* In addition to this, the grammatical competence enables native speakers to arrange words in different order so as to create different meanings (Ouhalla, 1999) as in:

1. The girl likes the boy.
2. The boy likes the girl.

This is what constitutes a native speaker's knowledge of language in the Chomskyan paradigm. Based on this knowledge, he can produce an infinite number of sentences in his mother tongue. Besides, he can tell the difference between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences which he comes across.

An important question raised in the early 1970's was that if the rules of grammar are what constitute our knowledge of language, then how is it that we are able to use language appropriately in different contexts? For instance, how is it that while talking to a close friend, we say, "Hey John, can you lend me some money?" whereas while talking in a non-intimate situation we might say, "I was wondering if you could lend me some money"? For sure our grammatical competence is not at work here. There must be knowledge of another source responsible for this state of affairs.

About three decades ago, Hymes (1972) criticized the Chomskyan notion of grammatical competence by arguing that it does not adequately reflect our knowledge of language. As a result, he used the term communicative competence to depict a more colorful picture of our language ability. Thus, according to Hymes, communicative competence is the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to recognize where and when to use these sentences. Below we shall see the components which constitute our communicative competence.

3. The Components of the Communicative Competence

The first practical model of the communicative competence was offered by Canale and Swain (1980). This model was later revised and developed by Canale (1983). According to Canale, the communicative competence is made up of the following components.

3.1. Grammatical Competence

This kind of competence deals with the mastery of the language code. It embraces features and rules of the language such as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, etc.

3.2. Sociolinguistic Competence

This competence addresses the appropriacy issue, i.e. how utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts. According to Canale (1983) "appropriateness of utterances refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form" (p.7). Appropriateness of meaning deals with the extent to which particular communicative functions (e.g. commanding, apologizing, etc.) are judged to be proper in a given situation. For instance, we do not expect a waiter in a restaurant to command a customer to order a certain item on the menu even if he uses well-formed sentences. Appropriateness of form concerns the extent to which a given meaning is represented in a verbal or non-verbal form that is proper in a given sociolinguistic context. For example, again we do not expect a waiter in a luxurious restaurant to say, "Ok, chum, what are you gonna eat?"

Seen in another light, the sociolinguistic component of Canale's model refers to the rules of speaking which depend on social, pragmatic, and cultural elements. This means that certain pragmatic situations might call for the performance of certain speech acts. Thus, the sociolinguistic competence has to do with appropriate performance and use of speech acts which will be investigated later in this paper.

3.3. Discourse Competence

This type of competence deals with how sentences are combined to form unified spoken or written texts. This unity is achieved through cohesion and coherence. Cohesion deals with how utterances are glued together through pronouns, ellipsis, conjunctions, etc. Coherence, on the other hand, refers to the logical relationships among different parts of a text. Thus, it is possible to have a text which enjoys coherence without any cohesive ties as in Widdowson (1978, p.29):

> A: That's the telephone.
> B: I'm in the bath.
> C: OK.

3.4. Strategic Competence

This component deals with the mastery of using communication strategies to compensate for breakdowns in communication and to enhance the

effectiveness of communication. For example, when a person does not remember a given grammatical form, a good compensatory strategy that can be used is paraphrase. So if a learner did not know the English word "vet", he might say "a doctor treating animal diseases". This, according to Canale, is an instance of using strategic competence.

4. Speech Acts: A Historical Overview

In the previous section, it was mentioned that speech acts play an important role in effective communication and hence are important components of sociolinguistic competence to be mastered. In this part of the paper, I would like to provide a brief historical overview of how this term found its way in the literature of sociolinguistics. A speech act is usually defined as a functional unit in communication. Austin (1962) argued that utterances have three kinds of meaning. The first kind is *locutionary* meaning, i.e. the literal or propositional meaning of an utterance. If someone says, "It is cold in here," and only means this and nothing beyond it, then his concern is just the cold temperature in the room. The second kind of meaning is *illocutionary* which has to do with the social function of an utterance. Thus, the social function of "It is cold in here" may be a request to close the window in a certain room. The third kind of meaning, i.e. the *perlocutionary force* deals with the result or effect that is produced by an utterance. Thus, if the previous utterance leads to the closing of a window, then the utterance has had its perlocutionary or intended effect.

A few years later in 1969, another scholar called Searle worked more on speech acts and assigned functions to them. He then classified them according to five categories, which according to Yule (1996) are as follows:

1- **Declaratives,** which are those kinds of speech acts that change the world through their utterance. For example:

  • I now pronounce you husband and wife.

2- **Representatives,** which are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Statements of fact, assertions, and conclusions belong to this category. For example:

  • William Faulkner wrote *The Sanctuary*.

3- **Expressives,** which are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker feels. They express various psychological states such as likes, dislikes, joy, sorrow, etc. For example:

  • I'm really sorry.

4- **Directives,** which are those kinds of speech acts through which the speaker gets someone to do something. Commands, orders, requests, and suggestions belong to this category. For example:

  • Don't play with the matches.

5- **Commissives,** which are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action such as promises, threats, refusals, etc. For example:

  • I'll be back soon.

5. Should Speech Acts Be Taught?

Based on what was mentioned in the previous sections, it is now quite clear why speech acts have an important role in our daily use of language: they are important because they allow us to perform a wide range of functions. They enable us to compliment, apologize, request, complain, etc. Now if speech acts give us the chance to do all this in our native language for sure they can do the same thing in the second/foreign language that we are attempting to learn. It is important to master speech acts while learning a second language because they not only facilitate the process of communication, but also make it more effective. The important question to be considered is this: Are speech acts haphazardly picked up in the process of second language acquisition, or should they be systematically taught? Olshtain and Cohen (1990), Ellis (1992), and King and Silver (1993) have argued that teaching speech acts to foreign students has a marked effect on their performance. For example, Olshtain and Cohen (1990) at first pretested a group of learners on their apologizing behavior. Then they provided them with some instruction on how to make apologies in a native-like manner. The result of the posttest revealed that the utterances produced by the learners were more in line with native behavior.

The findings of the above studies together with many similar researches indicate that teaching speech acts should be an important component of any language teaching program that aims to train students who are communicatively competent. By reviewing the literature of language teaching, we still see that in recent years the following techniques have been suggested to develop effective speech act behavior among foreign language learners. Whichever technique we use in teaching speech acts, there is one principle which should not be forgotten at all. This point rightly observed by Tajvidi (2000, p. 226) is as follows:

> Activities should be expanded to include practice in performing speech acts with addressees of different ages, sexes, and social status so as to give the learners the required practice in selecting *language strategies* [emphasis added] according to these variables.

Strategies used in Tajvidi's remark is an important issue in teaching speech act sets which will appear later in this paper. For the time being, let's review four main techniques used in teaching speech acts.

a. The model dialog. Through this useful technique, we can present students with examples of speech acts in use (Olshtain and Cohen, 1991). At first, students listen to a dialog and then they identify the kind of speech acts used. Next they are presented with more dialogs without any information concerning the particular situation, and they have to do their best to guess the age, social status, and the relationship between the speakers.

b. Role-play. This is a very useful technique which can follow the model dialog. After students have analyzed a number of dialogs in terms of their language functions, it is time to divide them in pairs and have them act out these dialogs. Again here it is important to bear in mind Tajvidi's previously quoted guideline as to give students enough information on the age, sex, and social status of the participants so that they will not blindly exchange a number of utterances.

c. Discourse completion task (DCT). This is one of the most popular tools in interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics research in which students are required to do a completion exercise and provide appropriate responses to various scenarios (Cohen, 1996). Below, is an example from Eslami-Rasekh (2005, p. 202):

> Please write in the provided spaces whatever you would say in the following conversational situations.
>
> You forget a meeting with a friend; this is the second time that the same thing has happened with the same person. At the end of the day your friend phones you and says:
>
> 'I waited for you for more than twenty minutes! What happened?'
>
> You: ……………………………………………………………………………………

This type of exercise is a good elicitation device which can be effectively used in second language acquisition research.

d. Discourse rating task. This type of task requires the learners to rate various responses on a continuum (e.g. unassertive to assertive, indirect to direct, or impolite to polite) based on a given scenario (Lee and McChesney,

2000). The following is an example of a discourse rating task which appears in Lee and McChesney (p. 163).

> Bob is a senior manager who has worked at the company for 20 years. Two months ago a college student intern, Barbara, started a three-month project there. There is a "no smoking" policy at the company. However, Bob, who is not Barbara's supervisor, has seen her openly smoking in the office several times, even after he has told her that there is "no smoking" policy. Bob feels very strongly that the smoke is harmful to the employees. He is trying to persuade Barbara to stop smoking in the office.

Bob: Barbara, can I talk to you for a minute?
Barbara: Sure, what's up?

a) I would appreciate it if you could smoke outside.

      nonassertive   assertive
        0   1   2   3   4   5   6

b) Look, smoking is not allowed in here. Please smoke outside.

      nonassertive   assertive
        0   1   2   3   4   5   6

c) Don't you think it might be a good idea to smoke outside?

      nonassertive   assertive
        0   1   2   3   4   5   6

d) I've been smelling smoke in the office, have you?

      nonassertive   assertive
        0   1   2   3   4   5   6

e) How many times do I have to tell you there is a "no smoking" policy in the office?

      nonassertive   assertive
        0   1   2   3   4   5   6

These tasks are good devices to promote language awareness; however, like model dialogs they will not have the intended effect unless they are role played with students.

The above techniques were some of the current models which in recent years have been employed in teaching speech acts. In the next section, I will talk

about another useful strategy which, in my opinion, is much more effective than the previous ones in that it addresses the issue of strategic use of language. This strategy discussed in Olshtain and Cohen (1983) is known as *speech act sets.*

Speech Act Sets

According to Cohen (1996), an important point in teaching a given speech act such as apologizing, requesting, complaining, etc. is "to arrive at a set of realization patterns typically used by native speakers of the target language, any of which would be recognized as the speech act in question, when uttered in the appropriate context" (p.385). This set of strategies is referred to as the speech act set of a specific speech act. As Cohen rightly observes, lack of even partial mastery of different speech act sets may cause serious breakdowns in normal communication.

Although it is almost twenty years since Olshtain and Cohen (1983) drew the attention of scholars to the concept of speech act sets, the literature of TESOL still lacks abundant research papers on this issue. Perhaps the most frequently quoted paper about speech act sets, i.e. strategies employed by native speakers in fulfilling a particular speech act is Cohen, Olshtain, and Rosenstein (1986), which addresses the strategies used in apologizing by native speakers. These strategies summarized in Cohen (1996.p.386) are as follows:

1. An expression of an apology, whereby the speaker uses a word, expression, or sentence which contains a relevant performative verb such as *apologize, forgive, excuse, be sorry.*

2. An explanation or account of the situation which indirectly caused the apologizer to commit the offense and which is used by the speaker as an indirect speech act of apologizing.

3. Acknowledgment of responsibility, whereby the offender recognizes his or her fault in causing the infraction.

4. An offer of repair, whereby the apologizer makes a bid to carry out an action or provide payment for some kind of damage which resulted from the infraction.

5. A promise of nonrecurrence, whereby the apologizer commits himself or herself not to have the offense happen again.

This concept of speech act sets could have a wide application in developing language teaching materials. Unfortunately, this strategic-based use of speech acts is still not extensively used in ELT textbooks. Most of these textbooks

present speech acts in the form of model dialogs and at best require students to role play them. Based on my investigation of a number of recently published ELT textbooks, *New Interchange* by Richards et al. (1997) is one of the few which should be given credit for employing the concept of speech act sets. The following extract taken from the second volume of this series (p.37) clearly illustrates how the concept of speech act set of apologizing is used in a well developed language teaching material which has a strong theoretical base.

APOLOGIES

People apologize in different ways.

For example, if someone complains about the noise from your stereo. You can:

Apologize and (a) give an excuse "I'm sorry. I didn't realize."
(b) admit a mistake "I forgot I left it on."
(c) make an offer "I'll turn it down right now."
(d) make a promise "I'll make sure to keep the volume down."

A. Class activity. How do people usually apologize in your country?

What do you usually do when you apologize?

B. Listen to three people complaining. What are they complaining about? How does the other person apologize? (More than one answer is possible.)

Complaint	Type of apology			
	Give an excuse	admit a mistake	make an offer	make a promise
1 ...				
2 ...				
3 ...				

As can be viewed in this activity, at first students are acquainted with different strategies used in making apologies. Then they discuss how they make apologies in their native language. This discussion allows the teacher to make the students aware of cross-cultural differences which might sound impolite to native speakers of English. Finally, students practice what they have learned by listening to a number of conversations. This method of working on speech acts, in my opinion, is more effective and informative than the earlier mentioned techniques in that it gives students more language awareness.

6. Conclusion

I started this paper with an emphasis on the role of speech acts in language teaching. After reviewing a number of techniques used in teaching speech

acts, I introduced the concept of speech act sets and their application in developing language teaching materials. There are two points which I would like to point out here. First, the literature of applied linguistics still suffers from a paucity of studies which like Cohen, Olshtain, and Rosenstein (1986) systematically present the set of strategies used in performing different speech acts. There are still a lot of things which we need to know about speech act sets of complimenting, complaining, etc. Second, language teaching materials should benefit more from the concept of speech act sets and employ them more frequently so as to give more awareness to the learners about the nature of strategies used in performing speech acts in the target language. As we observed on the previous page, Richards et al. (1997) teach the speech act of apologizing through the set of strategies discussed by Cohen and his colleagues. That is, at first they make students aware that if they want to apologize to someone, they can either use an apology word, or use an apology word and extend it by adding something like a promise of non-occurrence to it. This, in my opinion, is something that gives more depth to the teaching of speech acts, and hence ought to be more widely used in ELT textbooks and classes.

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BIO DATA

Sasan Baleghizadeh is an assistant professor of TEFL at Shahid Beheshti University. He teaches language testing, materials development, and applied linguistics at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Baleghizadeh has a number of published papers in various journals including *Language and Literature,* and *Journal of Human Sciences.* He has designed and compiled the workbooks of the ILI English Series and currently serves on the editorial board of the *ILI Language Teaching Journal.*

Urban linguistics in Nigeria: A Case of Language Use in Lagos Metropolis

Harrison Adeniyi and Rachael Bello, Lagos State University, Nigeria[1]

The rate at which languages come into contact these days informs this research. In time past, the study of languages in contact are linked with situations that arise from war, colonization and or conquest. Today, however, languages come in contact to be alive or keep their users alive. Lagos, for instance, being a commercial neutral ground as conceived by some, does not only provide comfort for residents but also allows for growth, linguistic growth, inclusive. Lagos was the former capital of Nigeria and the state, being one of the thirty-six states in the country, although some Nigerians refer to it as 'no man's land'. In this paper, we examine how true it is to claim that Lagos belongs to nobody given the speech group in particular. To do this, we investigate the use of Yoruba in a number of domains to see whether or not it justifies the inclusion of Lagos as one of the Yoruba speaking cities. Some of the domains examined are homes, offices/companies, religious functions, in education (schools) and in radio and television. This paper is the outcome of a study that has been on for close to three years running. The major methodology adopted is participatory observation. Other methods used include the administration of questionnaires and the interview. The work is anchored on community practice. Our findings show that other speech communities other than the Yoruba community try to create a place for themselves in the state. In spite of this, however, our findings show that they do not only agitate to identify with the larger group, the Yoruba group, but are also expected by the mainstream, the Yoruba, to be Yoruba literate.

1. Introduction

Lagos, according to the 2006 population census, has the population of about 9,013,534 people with majority of these people in the urban canters. Lagos was visited by the Portuguese traders in 1472 and named for a port in Portugal. In 1914, the Lagos was named the capital of the colony and Protectorate in Nigeria. It later became the capital of Nigeria when it gained independence in 1960.As at today; the state has about twenty Local Government Areas. Lagos metropolitan area spreads over much of Lagos State (3345 sqkm/1292sq mi).The state is the smallest in the federation as it

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[1] Authors are affiliated with Lagos State University in Nigeria, Africa. Correspondence: nigeriaenet@yahoo.com

constitute only 0.4% of the land mass of the federation. Though it is no longer the capital of the country, it continues to pride itself as the commercial nerve center of the entire country. This, invariably account for the rural –urban drift. Lagos has a very diverse and fast growing population, resulting from heavy and ongoing migration to the city from all parts of Nigeria as well as neighboring countries. The United Nations predicts that the city's metropolitan area, which had only about 290,000 inhabitants in 1950, will exceed 20 million by 2010, making Lagos one of the world's five largest cities. Although, Lagos can be said to be the linguistic melting point of the country with many of the inhabitants speaking various languages, only Yoruba with its dialects such as, Awori, Ijebu and Eko are indigenous to the state. Also, Ogu, a major language in the Republic of Benin is spoken in the Badagrry area of the state. In Nigeria, there are about 400 languages that are indigenous to the people, apart from English, and French that are languages of the colonial masters. Of these 400 languages, only three of them are recognized alongside English and French by the constitution as official languages. These are Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. In spite of this, these Nigerian languages are not being used as prescribed in the constitution. Contact between people speaking different languages can have a wide variety of outcomes. In some cases only a few words are borrowed; in others whole new languages may be formed. But many other contact situations have led to language transfer of various types, often so extensive that new contact languages are created. In some other cases too, a language with many more peakers tend to obliterate other smaller languages that it come in contact with.

2. Research Problem

Nigeria today is recognized for her growth in urbanization. Migration of citizens from the rural parts of the country to the cities brings about such urbanization. It is common these days, for instance to see Nigerians not only move to New York, or London or Paris- wider cities of urbanization-but also to 'minor urban cities' such as Lagos, Kano, Port-Harcourt, and Abuja all in Nigeria. In Bamgbose's (2000) view, "findings from a survey show that urbanization in Nigeria is characterized by a high rate of population growth, a fairly equitable distribution of sexes, a high dependency ration, because of the very high proportion of youths and unemployed people, relatively stable families characterized by a low rate of divorce, a very high illiteracy rate and a large proportion of the population in need of education and employment." This is the case with migration of Nigerians and non-Nigerians alike from all parts of the world to Lagos. In this study, we look at language use in some domains in the Lagos metropolis. Further more, we examine the frequency and roles of the languages used in the city to help justify or refute the claim that Lagos does not belong to any group in particular but rather a no man's land. Related to this research problem is our aim to investigate the attitudes

of the Yoruba group to the non-Yoruba speaking inmates as far as acquiring and or learning Yoruba is concerned. Thus, we aim to do the following:

   a) find out the dominant language in the Lagos metropolis;
   b) find out factors which determine language choice in the different domains studied; and
   c) investigate languages used in some selected domains.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on the theory of language and identity, though we borrow ideas from the community practice model. The community practice model theory holds that peer groups will ordinarily use a common language to achieve related goals. Although community practice is branch of social work in the United States that focuses on larger social systems and social change, we intend that the close relationship which exists among members of the group be extended to them using a common linguistic medium. The assumption therefore is that much more than participation in the social work, members of a group have special characteristics emerging of their own will. Like members of a social group, we see our informants in the different domains being drawn to one another by a force which is both social and professional-what they unconsciously do is teach one another .

Tabourei-Keller's (2000) Language and identity highlights the link between language and identity holding that there is a strong affinity between the two concepts to classify members of related groups. Members of a group employ means, linguistic and non-linguistic alike to associate and or equate with the larger groups. In Keller's (2000:317) view, 'language features are the link which binds individuals and social identity together" He goes on to say 'The language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of this language is inseparable… language acts are acts of identity" (3215). In this study, we examine the correlation between our informants' identity and the languages they speak, with the Yoruba group, a mainstream in Lagos by examining the various reasons for identity. Using Keller's complex binds, we look at the confluent identification of mother and new-born child which ordinarily ensures automatic identity. Secondly, we examine the sameness talked about by exploring members' imitation of one another where someone adopts consciously or unconsciously, a feature or a set of features of another's behavior.

4. Scope of Study

This research is a study of the language situation in the Lagos metropolis, an urban center. By Lagos metropolis, we mean the central part of Lagos excluding Epe, Badagry, and Ikorodu which are local governments on the fringe of Lagos. We look at the hybrid of languages used this urban city. The

domains selected to be used are the home, the school, the office, and the church. We have chosen to study these domains because they are contexts in which our informants relate now and then. Lagos is an erstwhile capital of Nigeria before the capital was moved to Abuja in 1993.This populated city, however still remains the industrial and commercial heart of the nation not only because of its age long advantages but also because of the port. Lagos is peculiar for its business/commercial base. There are in the state a number of companies, small and multinationals alike. Also, 'housed' in the state are a federal government owned University and a state owned including some Polytechnics and Colleges of education. This study is the product of the researchers' observation for the past three years running. However, it is difficult if not impossible to get all the residents in the state and or examine all domains there are. We could however, get to all by sampling a few. To do this, we had divided the studied part into zones based on given criteria. This we explain in the sub-section below.

5. Methodology

Four major means of eliciting data were adopted in this study. They include researchers' participatory observation, the administration of the questionnaire form interview, (both formal and informal) and the content analysis of the programs of some selected radio and television houses.

The researchers are both lecturers of the Lagos state University. We had been on the teaching roll for over sixteen years. By implication, researchers had lived these numbers of years in the Lagos metropolis. This study is the conscious observation of the researchers concerning the use of and function of Yoruba in Lagos in the last three years running. We had been interested in the language contact situation in the state and more importantly in knowing if the language which is predominantly acknowledged and attracted to could give us a clue to who 'owns' Lagos.

Lagos is a state, small on the map, but big on group to occupy more than its geographical diagram depicts. In order to get to all through some, we had divided the city into three different groups with one of them serving as control. The group one consists of literate or fairly literate communities such as Lagos Island, Eti-osa, Surulere and Ikeja. The second group represents the non-literate communities such as we have in Òjó, Musin, Alimoso and Àwórì-Ajéròmí.The control group consists of the new or fairly new settlements such as we have in Ifako-Ijaye and Agege. Our classification is relative and so the local governments cannot be strictly taken as labeled. The various domains examined via the questionnaire forms include language use in official domain, homes, religious functions, in education and in radio and television. One hundred questionnaire forms were administered in all. One of the methodologies adopted is the context analysis of Radio programs. The

selected radio and television houses are Star FM, Ray Power100.5 FM, Bond FM, 92.5Radio Lagos, Paramount FM, Ogun State TV, AIT, NTA, Channel 10, MITV and Lagos Television. We must state here that though, Paramount FM and Ogun State Television (OGTV) are situated in Ogun State, they transmit mainly for Lagos state residents.

6. Data Analysis.

To investigate the language situation in the four domains chosen, we did not only observe but also administered questionnaire forms. The method of sampling and the number questionnaire forms analyzed had been stated in 1.4 above. In this section, we do various analyses of the questionnaire forms domain by domain.

6.1. Language Use in Official domain

Nigeria is a multilingual nation. There are over 400 indigenous languages spoken in the country. There are, however, other recognized foreign languages co-existing with the indigenous languages. These include English, French, and Arabic Languages, with English and French being the official languages. English, however, is the more recognized and acknowledged of the two official languages. Thus, English is used in transacting every official business. We must as a matter of fact; say that though English is the official language by legislation, its usage in this official sector is not strictly adhered to. Thus, we find the use of indigenous languages by government workers (either with other workers or with visitors) even when topics of discussion center around official business.

74% of the informants are bilingual speakers while 26% are multilinguals. The languages common to them are Yoruba and English, though some speak Arabic and or their mother tongues such as Urhobo and Delta Igbo. One of the informants who claim they speak five different languages indicated their having lived in Ghana for some years. To her, she picked one of the Ghana's indigenous languages during her stay in the country. The implication of this is that urbanization, apart from providing economic and social amenities also provides opportunities learning a new language.

From our analysis, it is clear that the relationship that exists between our informants and their interlocutors rather than the topic of discourse or the legislation guiding the language to be used determines their language choice. While all informants will discuss official business with their boss using English eighty-two of the informants (82%) will maintain the official language when discussing with their colleagues. However, ninety three (93%) of the informants use the official language, when they have to communicate with visitors. In instances, bosses have to initiate a discussion with their

subordinates, seventy-nine (79%) of them opt for the various indigenous languages in cases the subordinates speak same mother tongue with them, or Pidgin English where they do not speak the same indigenous language as do their subordinates. From the foregoing, we see an unsaid alliance built around members of a group with this determining their choice of language in discourse irrespective of what the law says.

Situations where informants had had to write in other languages other than English are when they have to communicate with their spiritual fathers (i.e. spiritual leader of their assembly), write prayer requests write letters to their family members or write to some customers who does not know how to write in English, and or when they have to write Examination or tests in their indigenous languages.

6.2. The Religious Domain

Nigerians are identified with three main religions, which are Christianity, Islam and traditional religion. The first two, are however becoming more pronounced especially with socialization, education, and exposure. In this respect, we investigate the language use in observing religious beliefs and practices and the factors that determine choice. Only five percent (5%) of our informants do not have a need for interpretation of discussion from English to other languages in their assemblies. The other informants had messages interpreted into Yoruba or Igbo. Out of the ninety-five percent (95%) in this group, eighty-seven percent (87%) of them will have interpretation done in Yoruba. The remaining six percent (6%) have interpreters in either Igbo or Arabic. The reason for this difference is traceable to the fact that Yoruba is the language of immediate environment. The assumption of the various assemblies therefore is that a reasonable number of the worshippers will speak Yoruba and if by chance, they do not understand English, they will better appreciate interpretation of whatever in Yoruba.

Forty-five (45) of the informants representing 45% hold their programs of events in the churches/mosques are printed in English. The remaining fifty-five claim that programs are printed in English as well as in Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo or Arabic as the case may be. The group constituting members of the various assemblies of the informants are Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, others that descending order.

6.3. Designated areas (Homes)

 The choice of language by the informants is informed by several factors ranging from their interlocutors, subject of discourse to goals of discourse. It is interesting to note that while sixty-six (66%) of the informants will speak the indigenous languages to their children at home, twenty-three (23%)

would prefer to use the English language with them saying that they would want their children to understand this language better. Others prefer to communicate with their children using English because; to them English is the language children these days ordinarily speak. The remaining eleven percent (11%) use either English or Yoruba as situations demands.

Most situations require informants' to use the Yoruba language. For example, the informants need to speak to their landlords/landladies who are Yoruba, to the security manor neighbor who are also Yoruba speakers. However, the Pidgin English is also adopted in situations both participants in discourse don't speak the same languages. Generally, the languages informants would opt to learn in addition to the ones they already speak are Yoruba, Arabic, French, Hausa, Igbo and Spanish in that descending order. The knowledge of these languages are needed for interaction in the neighbor, to promote business or to satisfy inner linguistic yearnings.

Eighty-seven of the informants would opt for TV, and radio programs relayed in English with their reasons for this being that the programs are both interesting and educating. We must observe, however, that most of these programs are soap operas (foreign and local) musical shows and cartoons. Five other informants prefer to watch/ listen to Yoruba programs. They also prefer to listen to news in Yoruba. Three of the informants would listen to or watch programs in other indigenous languages other than Yoruba. The remaining five percent appreciate programs relayed both in Yoruba and or in English.

6.4. Language Use in Schools.

English is the medium of instruction in the classroom. The English language is therefore, not only the country's official language but is also the language of education. Though the national policy on education allows the pupils in both pre primary and primary schools to be taught in the various language of immediate environment, English still enjoys the sole language of instructions even at this lower level. This is especially so in the urban areas where pupils in the classroom speak different languages. The teacher is therefore, forced to disseminate information via a common language. It is important to note, however that, when it is very necessary for the teacher to further simplify the message, he does that in the language of immediate environment which in this instance is Yoruba.

From the analysis of the questionnaire forms, official discourses are conducted in English. Informants however discuss personal topics either with colleagues, or their boss (i.e. the Principal, Vice-Principal) using Yoruba or any other indigenous language. They are careful however, not to use the Pidgin English in the school environment. It is important to note the rate the

Arabic language is gaining prominence in both informal and formal situations in Nigeria. From our analysis, it appears many more Nigerians are not only being introduced to the Arabic language but are also beginning to appreciate it.

Another observation both from the questionnaire forms and the interviews is that residents of the city are prepared in all ways and by all means to be Yoruba literate. Thus, we observe that non Yoruba speakers in the city are communicated to in Yoruba whether or not they speak Yoruba. This is particularly noticeable in the market situations where non-Yoruba traders are communicated to via Yoruba. It is little wonder, there fore, that some of the non-Yoruba speaking informants would opt to learn Yoruba as an additional language.

6.5. Content Analysis of the Programs of selected Radio stations

(i) Content Analysis of the Program schedule for the Ray Power 100.5FM

This is a private owned station established in 1996. Its goal, among others, is to transmit programs that will influenced and benefit the entire community including the non-educated. Our analysis of its January-March 2007 programs' schedule shows that a bulk of the stipulated programs is relayed in English. These range from political update, Ums-global news, power express, prime time Africa, Saturday Jazz, to milo world of sports. Only two languages, other than English have programs relayed via them. The programs are 'Mini-jojo' a Yoruba program, and Afemai nekhai, a program in an Edoid language. The implication is that listeners who want to enjoy these two programs must be Yoruba and Afemai speakers. If not, then they will need interpreters.

(ii) Content Analysis of the Program schedule for the Bond FM 92. 9

The Bond FM92.9 was established in 2000. It is a Government owned Radio station. Its goal, among others, is to get to residents of the state through its use of the major indigenous languages. It is little wonder; therefore that it has as its slogan; "we talk to the people in the language of the people'. For the purpose of this study, we investigate its program schedule of January to June 2005. It is clear from our analysis that programs of all days of the weeks are spread among English, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Pidgin English with programs in English featuring least. Thus, the programs are alternated daily to cover areas of interest of the se group of inmates. Some of the Yoruba programs are 'Iroyin, Oro ree, Ayoka alarinrin and Ijinle oro. The Pidgin programs include wetin paper talk, Aids dey o, and I salute una .Some of the Hausa programs are 'Sana 'a sa' a' (you and your profession), Labaru (news) and 'Daga jaridu' (paper review). For the Igbo, programs, we have 'Akuko Ala

Anyi' (home news) and 'Ozi ekele' (request show). It is paramount to say here that there are not only more Yoruba programs than we have in other languages but also that there are noticeable variants of the Yoruba programs.

(iii) Content analysis of the Program schedule for the Paramount FM 94.5 station

The Paramount F.M 94.5 station, a relatively new but exciting station was established in 2001. Though the station is situated in Abeokuta, Ogun state, Lagos is its major target audience. We examine programs schedule of January-march 2007. Unlike what obtains in Bond FM 92.7, the Paramount F.M94.5 radio transmits programs solely in two major languages namely Yoruba and English with these programs overlapping. However, the Ogu language is distinguished by this station by its having a slot everyday for news in Ogu. Similarly, on Saturday, there is a slot for a request program in Ogu tagged 'Mifon Azonbe'. Only once throughout the week is the Pidgin English featured. This is on Saturday through the program, 'how una dey'. No other language is featured.

(iv) Content Analysis of the Program schedule for the Radio Lagos

The Radio Lagos is a state owned station. It as established in 1976. Our examination of the programs shows that most of the programs are relayed in Yoruba. Contrary to what we have in the program schedule of Paramount F.M 94.5, the English programs available in the Radio Lagos come in trickles. Thus, throughout the week what we have are a bulk of Yoruba programs. However, there are two programs conducted in Ogu. They are 'Oyele Madley', and 'lin lin ledo'programs in Ogu.

6.6 Content Analysis of the Programs of selected T.V houses.

The Ogun Televison Abeokuta (OGTV) is a state owned television house established in 1978. We are observing the programs schedule for January-March 2007. A bulk of the programs in this televison house is relayed in English. Few of these are in Yoruba while a handful is in Ogu. It is interesting to note that of all the radio stations examined and also the television houses; only this television house has a space for a program in French, 'parlez francias' (speak French).

7. Findings

From our analysis of the various domains and the content analysis of the scheduled programs on the selected Radio stations and television houses, it is clear that the languages used in Lagos (indigenous and foreign) get promoted in varying degrees depending on a given media house. The reason for the different degree of usage in these programs may not be unconnected with the

personal interest of the executive directors of the various media houses on these languages. For instance, the Edo language enjoys the benefits of being used in the Ray Power 100.5 fm Radio station as the director himself, Raymond Dokpesi is from Edo state.

We also found out that most of the programs, as a matter of general analysis, are conducted in Yoruba, The reason for this may not be unconnected with the media houses' aim to get to as many as possible. By doing this, they do not only help to get information to the grassroots but also promote themselves financially making themselves more popular. The study also reveals that Yoruba is the language of the immediate environment. It shows from the various responses of the informants that the language must be simply be reckoned with if inmates have to get along meaningfully. Contrary to what some hold therefore, that Lagos is no man's land, our findings show that in spite of the cosmopolitan nature of the state, both natives and non-natives alike unconsciously admit that the state belong to the Eko, Awori and Ogu indigenes. It is little wonder, therefore, that the media houses give recognition to these two major dialects and the Ogu language. The act does not only help in promoting the dialects in question but also help establish the rightful owners of the state. If other inmates must identify with the state therefore, they do have to learn the language (at least the Eko dialect) either consciously or unconsciously.

Furthermore, this study found out that the Yoruba speaking community expects the residents in the state to aspire to speak Yoruba if they do not hitherto speak. It is a common practice therefore to have the Yoruba residents communicate generally in Yoruba even in contexts where non-Yoruba are present. The assumption is that once one finds himself in Lagos, he must be ready to speak the Yoruba language. Some non-Yoruba speaking Nigerians in Lagos, as a matter of fact, have found themselves using the language, whether forcefully, unknowingly or against their wish.

8. Conclusion.

In this study, attempt was made to investigate the dominant language(s) spoken in Lagos metropolis. At the end of the study, it is discovered that Yoruba, which is the language of the immediate environment, is the language that is widely spoken in the Lagos metropolis.

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Foreign Language Anxiety

Feryal Cubukcu[1]
Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey

This paper reports the results of a study designed to investigate the effects of anxiety in the foreign language classroom. The aim was to focus on the relationship between anxiety and second language learning and the ways to cope with anxiety among university students. 120 students were asked to write down the things that led them to feel anxious in the classroom and then the researcher held interviews with these students as to what caused anxiety in the department. The main sources of anxiety were identified as: (a) Presenting before the class, (b) Making mistakes, (c) Losing face, (d) Inability to express oneself, (e) Fear of failure, (f) Teachers, and (g) Fear of living up to the standards. It is concluded that teacers should consider the possibility that anxiety is responsible for the student behaviors before attributing poor student pereformance to lack of ability, inadequate background or poor motivation.

1. Introduction

Scholars, teachers, practitioners and language learners have maintained the idea that anxiety affects language learning (Hill and Wakefield 1984; McIntyre 1995; Horwitz 2001; Jackson 2002; Cheng 2004). Empirical findings and studies conducted in this area attest to the significance of anxiety with respect to student learning and achievement. The aim of this article is to focus on the relationship between anxiety and second language learning and the ways to cope with anxiety among university students.

2. Background

Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with the arousal of the

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[1] Author is affiliated with Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir, Turkey. Correspondence: cubukcu.feryal@gmail.com

nervous system. Anxiety can be classified into two kinds: anxiety as a personality trait and a transient anxiety state which is regarded as a response to a particular anxiety provoking stimulus.

Anxiety is believed to consist of two components :

- Cognitive anxiety which refers to the mental aspect of anxiety experience including negative expectations, preoccupation with performance and concern about others' perceptions.

- somatic anxiety which refers to learners' perceptions of the physiological effects of the anxiety experience as reflected arousal and unpleasant feeling states such as nervousness, upset stomach, pounding heart, sweating, and tension (Morris, Davis and Hutchings 1981).

To some researchers (Lang 1971; Cheng 2004) anxiety has three different components rather than two: cognitive, physiological (somatic), and avoidance behavior (behavioral). It is believed to involve a variety of dysfunctional thoughts, increased physiological arousal and maladaptive behaviors. Some studies find somatic anxiety and cognitive anxiety covary and are hard to separate. Learners experience apprehension, worry and dread. They exhibit behavior such as missing the class and postponing the work or assignment. The relations among anxiety, cognition and behavior are best seen as recursive or cyclical where each influences the other. A demand to answer a question in a foreign language class may cause learners to become anxious and anxiety leads to worry and rumination. Cognitive performance is diminished because of the divided attention and therefore performance suffers, leading to negative self evaluations and more self deprecating cognition which further impairs performance. In an educational setting anxiety may impair the ability to take in information, process it and retrieve it, can limit the use of both short and long term memory.

Although Horwitz, Horwitz and Coper (1986) state that anxiety centers on the two basic requirements of foreign language learning; listening and speaking, Cheng (2004) mentions anxiety in relation to writing as well. However, difficulty in speaking in class is the most frequently cited concern of anxious foreign language students.

Foreign language anxiety shows up in testing situations as well. Students say they know the subject but they forget it during the test. Their frustration is

understandable , that is why teachers hear students complaining that they overstudy but they do poorly in the tests. Anxiety makes learners unreceptive to language input.

There are three main types of   foreign language anxiety on which all practitioners agree:

1. communication apprehension
2. test anxiety
3. fear of negative evaluation

Communication apprehension is a type of shyness characterized by fear of and   anxiety about communicating with people. Difficulty in speaking in public, in listening or learning a spoken message are all manifestations of communicative apprehension. Communication apprehension in foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty   understanding others and making oneself understood; that is why many talkative people are silent in the class.

Test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure. Test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves. Test anxiety is believed to be one of the most important aspects of negative motivation. It can be defined as "unpleasant feeling or emotional state that has physiological and behavioral concomitants and that is experienced in formal testing or other evaluative situtaions" (Dusek 1980:88). It emerges for some children during the preschool or elementary school years when parents begin to make some demands or hold overly high expectations for their children's performance (Hill and Wigfield 1984:106). The parents react negatively to their children's failure and children turn fearful of evaluation. Through the years, some other factors such as parental, peer or self-induced aspirations, teachers' attitude and classroom atmosphere enhance evaluation anxiety (Hill 1970;1980;1996). Low anxious children are more motivated and they do not have fear of failure whereas high anxious children have a proclivity to either overstudy or avoid criticism and failure. Low anxious children are likely to persist in and are less concerned with reaction and they strive hard to do well on difficult tasks, whereas high anxious students are overly concerned with parents' or teachers' evaluations and choose tasks where success is certain. They have difficulty attending to relevant task information and they are easily distracted by incidental stimuli, being overly

preoccupied with the possibility of failure. Various studies show that test anxiety is a problem from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, for both boys and girls and for middle and working class children from all major sociocultural groups (Hill and Wigfield 1984:109).

Fear of negative evaluation, apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations and the expectation that others will evaluate them negatively is the third type of anxiety. It may occur in any situation ; learners may be sensitive to the evaluations-real or imagined- of their peers.

There is a law named as the Yerkes-Dodson law related to anxiety. This law describes a curvilinear relationship between anxiety and performanceas a function of task difficulty (McIntyre 1995:92). To the extent that a given task is relatively simple, anxiety seems to have little negative impact and may actually improve performance through increased effort. However, as the demands on the system increase , the extra effort may not fully compensate for the cognitive interference and anxiety will begin to have a negative effect. As demand exceeds ability, the impairment caused by anxiety arousal worsens. Thus, those who do not experience anxiety will be able to process the information more quickly and more effectively.

Scovel (1978) believes that the growing number of the literature indicates both facilitating and debilitating effects of language anxiety. On one side there are Chastain (1975) and Kleinmann (1977) who find positive relationships between language anxiety and second language achievement. On the other hand, there is a study by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) who hold that foreign language anxiety is responsible for students' negative emotional reactions to language learning and this anxiety stems from immature foreign language communicative abilities. Second language learning and communication entails risk taking and complex mental operations are necessary to communicate , that is why any performance in the second language is likely to challenge the learners and to cause them to fear or even to panic. McIntyre and Gardner (1989) find negative correlations between a specific measure of language anxiety and performance on a vocabulary learning task. This finding is replicated by Rodriguez (1985), Saito & Samimy (1996) and Kim (1998) who have similar results on negative correlations , which raises the possibility that language anxiety is a significant issue in language learning. In Gardner and McIntyre's study (1993) higher

negative correlations are found between student anxiety scores and their self ratings of French competence than with their actual performance on the tests of French ability. This anxiety varies depending upon cultures. Truitt (1995) finds relatively higher levels of anxiety in Korean students whereas Kunt (1997) points out lower levels of anxiety in Turkish-Cypriot learners.

It seems logical to conclude that students who do poorly in language classes would naturally become anxious. In the case of the   advanced learners, anxiety would   probably be a greater hindrance to their ability to perform than to their development of second   language proficiency (Young 1986). There is a   confounding research by Sparks, Ganschaw and Javorsky (2000:251)   who propose the Linguistic Coding Difference Hypothesis: foreign language learning is based on one's native language learning ability, students' anxiety   about   foreign language learning is likely   to be a consequence of their   foreign language   learning   and students'   language learning ability is a confounding variable when studying the impact of affective differences on foreign language learning. They ask whether anxiety is a cause or a result of   poor achievement in language learning and they believe language difficulties are likely to be based in   native language learning. They find that less anxious language learners perform better on oral and written foreign language measures as well as on the Modern Language Aptitude Test.

A student does poorly in foreign language learning and consequently feels anxious or he might do well in the class and feel confident with little or no anxiety. The challenge is to probe whether anxiety is the cause or a result of poor language learning. Horwitz (2000) says that many successful language learners experience language anxiety.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Participants in the present study were 120 students enrolled in the last year from a large western state university. Of the 120 students 100 were females aged between 20-22. They were asked to write down the things that lead them to feel anxious in the classroom and then the researcher held interviews with these students as to what causes anxiety in the department. Participants

were told that their participation was voluntary and their answers could remain confidential.

3.2. Data Gathering Instruments

Students were asked to list what leads them to feel anxious in the classroom and Cronbach's alpha was found to be .92.

4. Results

Students indicated that they had a great number of fears in class, which led to an increase in anxiety.

Table 1.
The fears in the class

Fears in the class	f	%
Test taking	95	16.23
Presenting before the class	80	13.67
Making mistakes	80	13.67
Losing face	78	13.33
Inability to express oneself	77	13.16
Fear of failure	62	10.59
Teachers	58	9.91
Fear of living up to the standards	55	9.40
Total	**585**	**100**

Students have a great number of fears in the class which leads to an increase in their anxiety. Test taking is related to the test taking techniques and preparation but the situation is aggravated if students have language barriers and they think they cannot express themselves clearly in the classroom. Fear of losing face and making mistakes are very common among students who think that the others might embarras them and scorn them regarding their language proficiency. Peer approval is still an important factor and scores the fourth most important item in the table.

5. Discussion

It is reasonable to investigate the possible sources of language anxiety so as to minimize it. Learners feel more comfortable in pair work and personalized activities, but this is a relative concept; some activities judged as comfortable

by some are also regarded as stressful by others (Horwitz 2001). Teacher support is also one of the factors affecting anxiety. The help, support and care shown by teachers has a motivating effect on students. Negative self assessment may lead to anxiety (Aydın 1999) . When teachers bolster students' good image and help them develop some coping strategies such as studying, deep breathing, self talk and when they do not call on individual students and become sensitive to the needs of students, students feel less anxious. In a semi-structured interview (Jackson 2001) when Chinese students are singled out for a question, their common reaction is fear and anxiety. This study shows some parallel results with the study of Jackson (2001) who says this foreign language anxiety is frequently associated with speaking and that is why students are reticent and cannot speak before the class comfortably. When students' opinions are asked, they indicate some concern about their ability to express their thoughts and others are anxious about being the centre of the attention , most are engaged in self deprecation, reflecting one of the values of traditional culture, modesty or lack of confidence. Some students list the sources of their reticence as

preference for harmony
reluctance to lose face
lack of confidence
preference to speak in small group settings
fear of making mistakes
language barrier
lack of incentives
shy personality
class atmosphere.

All these show similarities with the results of Turkish students. The preference for harmony is non existent in the Turkish context because of the different sociocultural values.

6. Conclusion

It is often difficult to determine whether anxiety has interfered with learning or not. Teachers must acknowledge the existence of foreign language anxiety. They should consider the possibility that anxiety is responsible for the student behaviors before attributing poor student pereformance to lack

of ability, inadequate background or poor motivation. It might help students more if

> teachers offer some incentives, and more grades for participation,
> they use groups during the full class discussions
> they create an open and safe environment
> they allow more time for responses
> they organize more interactive discussions
> they address the needs of students
> they become careful with the selection of error correction techniques
> they do not single out students for questions
> they should not call on shy students first.

Both parents and teachers might have separate grades for achievement and effort and checklist for strengths and weaknesses in each area.

With a deeper, more realistic understanding of the challenges facing second language students and teachers, courses can be organized and taught in ways that are much more socioculturally appropriate and effective. It is imperative that efforts continue to be made to help foreign language learners overcome their fears and become more confident, proficient communicators and problem solvers.

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