

A Reflection upon Language Teacher Education Programs in Iran: Competency-Based or Reflection-Based?

Mostafa Mehdizadeh, Sajad Sepehrinia, Javad Rezaadeh

Keywords: *Teacher Education Programs, Competency-Based, Reflection-Based*

Much of the recent debate on language teacher education (LTE) has been focused on the competency- or reflection-based nature of LTE programs (Johnstone, 2004). Competency-based programs, reflective of pragmatic concerns of stakeholders rather than research findings, are directed at equipping teachers with a set of predefined skills or competences. Reflection-based programs, on the other hand, value teachers as autonomous and reflective entities who constantly adjust their teaching practice according to the realities of their classroom dynamics. Drawing on this basic distinction between these two approaches to LTE, we set out to examine the nature of two LTE programs offered to Iranian EFL teachers in this study: programs designed by the Ministry of Education for state school teachers and pre-service and in-service programs offered to the teachers of Iran Language Institute, the largest state-run language institute in Iran. Adopting a mainly exploratory approach, two LTE courses were observed in each context, interviews were conducted with teacher educators and their course agendas were examined. The findings revealed that these programs were heavily competency-based and primarily focused upon transmission of a set of skills to teachers. What is noticeably absent in such programs is any attempt to familiarize teachers with the principles of reflective teaching. The results are a wake-up call for teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers who are engaged in developing LTE programs at the national level.

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The interaction of content words and grammatical morphemes in online processing of L2 English sentences by L1-Persian low proficient learners

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Keywords: *content words, grammatical morphemes, online processing, overshadowing, foreshadowing*

In the literature on second language acquisition, there exist a number of theories examining the online processing of sentences in reading, the most prominent of which being proposed by N. Ellis (2006) with the major aim of explaining the cognitive limitations in second language processing and subsequently its acquisition. However, a question remains as to how learners interpret and learn the sentence components in the face of these limitations. But there is scarcity of research, especially in the case of low-proficient learners, on how these learners process the sentences. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the present study aimed to analyze the interaction between content words and grammatical morphemes in English sentences when processed online by L2 beginner learners (N= 42, assigned to two equal groups of control and experimental). Following a pretest, the experimental group received sentences with content words and the control group received sentences without the content words, then a posttest was applied and an independent sample t-test was run to explore whether there was a significant difference between their performances in the successful processing of the sentences. The results of the study suggest that content words seem to contribute to the learning of less salient features such as grammatical morphemes rather than overshadow them (Ellis, 2006) The results also support and get supported by the connectionist accounts of language acquisition. Theoretical and practical implications of the results for foreign language acquisition are also discussed.

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Mohammad Nabi Karimi holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics and is currently working as an assistant professor in the Department of Foreign Languages, Kharazmi University, Tehran, teaching MA and PhD courses to students of TEFL. His main areas of interest include L2 Teacher Education/Development, L2 Reading Literacy, Disciplinarity and Teachers'/Learners' Beliefs/Cognitions. He has published on these areas in well-accredited international journals including System, Modern Language Journal, Australian Journal of Teacher Education, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, etc. He has also presented papers in a number of (inter)national conferences including TEELSI, TESOL Persia, MELTA-Malaysia, and ThaiTESOL.

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The Effect of Reflective Thinking on Iranian EFL Learners' Language Learning Strategy Use, L2 Proficiency and Beliefs

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Keywords: *reflective thinking, language learning strategy use, beliefs about language learning and teaching*

The present study aimed at investigating whether reflective thinking differentiates Iranian EFL learners regarding language learning strategy use, beliefs about language learning and teaching, and L2 proficiency. To this end, the researchers adopted a mixed-method approach. First, 94 EFL learners were asked to complete Reflective Thinking Questionnaire (Kember et al., 2000), Beliefs about Language Learning and Teaching Inventory (Horwitz, 1985), Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990), and Oxford Quick Placement Test. The results of three separate one-way ANOVAs indicated that reflective thinking significantly differentiates Iranian EFL learners concerning: (a) language learning strategy use, (b) beliefs about language learning and teaching, and (c) general language proficiency. Furthermore, to see where the differences lay, three separate post-hoc Tukey tests were run the results of which showed that learners with different levels of reflectivity (high, mid, and low) were significantly different from each other in all three dependent variables. Finally, to increase the validity of the findings, thirty of the participants were given an interview, the results of which were content-analyzed and it was revealed that they supported the results of quantitative data analysis.

Bio data:

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The Impact of Novel Corrective Feedback Prompts on Field-Independent Learners' Regular Simple Past Tense Acquisition

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Keywords: *Corrective feedback prompts, Field-independent learners*

This study, based on input processing principle, lexical preference principle, and learning style, innovated two novel corrective feedback prompts. The study was an effort to examine the impacts of lexical-temporal-indicator (LTI) vs. metalinguistic prompts on field-independent (FI) learners' acquisition of regular past tense. To this end, 86 young-adult learners were chosen from four elementary intact classes at Iran Language Institute (ILI). Group Embedded Figures Test was used to specify field-independent learners and then the learners were homogenized through a pretest with a focus on regular past tense. Out of the aforementioned processes, two groups out of four classes with an equal number of FI learners (17 in each group) remained. Each of the groups was treated by corrective feedback of LTI and metalinguistic prompts respectively for the first 20 minutes of eight consecutive sessions. Having administered an immediate parallel posttest, in order to find the effect of each prompt type on regular past tense acquisition and compare the effect of each prompt type with each other, the data were respectively analyzed through paired-samples t-test and independent-samples t-test. The results showed that each prompt type had significant effect on regular past tense acquisition. And, the findings of comparison between two groups indicated that FI learners receiving metalinguistic prompt outperformed those exposed to LTI prompt. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that FI learners as strong analysts favour metalinguistic prompt more than LTI prompt to ascertain that individualized corrective feedback forms should be considered according to different learning styles.

Bio data:

Ehsan Narimani Vahedi is a PhD candidate in TEFL at the Islamic Azad University-Tabriz Branch, and got his MA in TEFL from Urmia Public University. He is currently teaching in Iran Language Institute. His research interest includes SLA, corrective feedback, and discourse analysis.

Touran Ahour is an assistant professor and head of English Department at the Islamic Azad University-Tabriz Branch. She has published several books and articles in scholarly journals and presented in the international and national conferences. Her research interests include reading-writing connection, materials evaluation, writing assessment, and ELLT issues.

Exploring the contribution of a Reflective Teacher Education course to EFL teachers' reflectivity and challenges involved in its implementation

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Keywords: Teacher Education, Reflective Teaching, Journal Writing

Although the concept of reflective teaching was introduced about three decades ago, it seems that comprehensive research has not been conducted on the contribution of a reflective teacher education program to ELT teachers' reflectivity, and challenges of attending and implementing a reflective teacher education course for teachers and for teacher educators respectively. To this aim, the researcher asked five ELT teachers at Khaneye Zaban private language institute in Rafsanjan to take part in a researcher-designed reflective program. Data were collected through stimulated recall, reflective journals, and focus group discussion. Prior to the program, stimulated recall was used to see how much reflective, teachers were before conduction the course. One week later, a four-week reflective teacher education program was conducted. In the first session, teachers were asked to write reflective journals, throughout the course, on the contribution of the program to their teaching reflectively. The researcher, himself, wrote journals on challenges of conducting a reflective teacher education course for teacher educators. The last session of the course, focus group discussion was conducted so as to ask about the challenges of attending the program for teachers. Shortly after the course, post-stimulated recall was employed to explore how much participants' reflective teaching improved after attending the program. Thematic analysis of the stimulated recall transcripts and teachers' journals revealed improvements in teachers' reflective teaching as a result of attending the reflective course. The

analysis of the focus group discussion transcripts and the journals kept by the teacher educator revealed the challenges of attending and implementing the reflective teacher education course for teachers and teacher educator respectively.

Bio data:

Kazem Pakzad holds an M.A. in TEFL and he graduated from Azad university of Bandar Abbas in 2014. His field of interest is Reflective Teacher Education and he has conducted three Teacher Education Courses and several workshops in southern cities of Iran.

Leila Tajik is an assistant professor of the department of English language teaching and literature at Alzahra University.. She has presented papers in national and international conferences and has published in refereed journals in Iran and abroad. Her areas of interest include both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, Teacher education, and more specifically, Morality in English language teaching.

Exploring the Role of Academic Background in EFL Teachers Expertise: A Case Study of Two Experienced Iranian EFL Teachers

Zahra Shafiee

Keywords: *Teachers' Expertise, Academic Background*

Teachers' expertise continues to receive attention in second language teacher education research. As a major contributor factor to language teachers' expertise, academic background constitutes a yardstick for language teachers' professional development (Tsui, 2005). To explore instances of expertise among EFL teachers with different academic backgrounds, a partial replication of Farrell (2013) was conducted among two Iranian, experienced EFL teachers during an educational semester (12 weeks). One of the teachers held a BA in TEFL and the second teacher held an MA in TEFL. The data for this study was gathered through classroom observations, interviews, and verbal reflections in teacher groups. Analysis of the data revealed the two teachers' major pedagogical concerns, which best fitted within the characteristics of teachers' expertise as proposed by Farrell (2013). Farrell classified these areas as "Knowledge of Learners and Learning, Engage in Critical Reflection, Access Past Experiences, Informed Lesson Planning, and Active Student Involvement." However, the grounded approach adopted in this study allowed for the emergence of other potential concerns. Statistical analysis of the data indicated significant differences between the two teachers' in the areas Knowledge of Learners and Learning, Informed Lesson Planning, and Active Student Involvement. Implications for second language teacher professional development, and suggestions for further research are provided.

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The Effects of Cooperative versus Non-cooperative Activities on EFL Students' Motivation and Proficiency in Afghanistan

Elaheh Sotudehnama, Zahra Ghorbanzadeh

Keywords: Cooperative vs non-cooperative, Motivation, Task, Proficiency

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of cooperative versus non-cooperative language learning on EFL students' English learning motivation and their English language proficiency in Afghanistan. To do so, a sample PET (2004) was administered among 103 students in Khatam-ol-Anbia Scientific and Cultural Organization, from whom 62 students were chosen as participants for this study and then were randomly assigned to the experimental and comparison groups. In the experimental group, English language was taught for three months, using cooperative activities such as four-step interview, team correction, round table, and role plays in groups. In contrast, in the comparison group, English language was taught non-cooperatively for the same amount of time, mostly adopting non-cooperative language learning activities from the traditional methods such as Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual methods. The data was collected from sample PET (2004) and the motivation questionnaire (Taguchi, Magin, & Papi, 2009), which both were administered in both groups. Conducting two independent samples t-tests, the data analysis of the study shows that cooperative language learning helped the experimental group to outperform the comparison group significantly not only in English language learning motivation but also in English language proficiency. Since no study investigated the effect of cooperative language learning on Afghan EFL students, the results of this study suggest the teachers of English to integrate such language learning activities for such purposes in Afghanistan.

Bio data:

Elahesh Sotudehnama is an associate professor of Alzahra University and holds Ph.D in TEFL and has been teaching more than 20 years in the Department of English Language at Alzahra University. Her area of interest is teaching skills in general and strategies, culture, and motivation specifically.

Zahra Ghorbanzadeh graduated from Heart University in Afghanistan, studying English Literature at BA and from Al-Zahra University in Iran, studying Teaching English as a Foreign Language at MA. Her main interest is in searching motivation and finding the ways that increases students' motivation toward learning English as an L2.

The Effect of Different Educational Systems on Language Learners’ Communicative Competence & Autonomy

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Keywords: State University, Payam-e-Noor University, Communicative Competence, Autonomy

Teachers’ expertise continues to receive attention in second language teacher education research. As a major contributor factor to language teachers’ expertise, academic background constitutes a yardstick for language teachers’ professional development (Tsui, 2005). To explore instances of expertise among EFL teachers with different academic backgrounds, a partial replication of Farrell (2013) was conducted among two Iranian, experienced EFL teachers during an educational semester (12 weeks). One of the teachers held a BA in TEFL and the second teacher held an MA in TEFL. The data for this study was gathered through classroom observations, interviews, and verbal reflections in teacher groups. Analysis of the data revealed the two teachers’ major pedagogical concerns, which best fitted within the characteristics of teachers’ expertise as proposed by Farrell (2013). Farrell classified these areas as “Knowledge of Learners and Learning, Engage in Critical Reflection, Access Past Experiences, Informed Lesson Planning, and Active Student Involvement.” However, the grounded approach adopted in this study allowed for the emergence of other potential concerns. Statistical analysis of the data indicated significant differences between the two teachers’ in the areas Knowledge of Learners and Learning, Informed Lesson Planning, and Active Student Involvement. Implications for second language teacher professional development, and suggestions for further research are provided.

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Posters Presentations

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Interpersonal Construct and Technological Orientations: A Case of Technophobic and Technophilic EFL Teachers

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Keywords: *Interpersonal construct, technological orientations, language teachers, technophobic, Technophilic*

Emotional intelligence is, in essence, a multi-drop circuit encompassing five constructs (Bar-on, 1997). Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to digest, harmonize, and control emotions in interactions. Success in dealing with interactional difficulties and newly-met circumstances is, therefore, much dependent upon the reification of the concept of emotional intelligence which can be manifested through interpersonal skills. This study is an attempt to identify whether EFL teachers' inclination toward the use of technology is contingent upon their degree of interpersonal asset as a subscale of their emotional intelligence or not. Accordingly, a total of 45 male and 7 female high school English teachers were selected based upon simple random sampling. Regarding interpersonal construct, 28 items were then excerpted from Baron's (1997) Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EQ-i) to evaluate EFL teachers' interpersonal assets. Afterward, Kessler's (2005) teacher attitude toward technology questionnaire was implemented to identify EFL teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in their classroom settings. The correlational analysis showed that the relationship between EFL teachers' interpersonal construct and their attitude toward taking advantage of technology in the classroom is highly positive. Therefore, it can be concluded, both apprehensive and inclined feelings toward the use of technology can be rested upon interpersonal traits.

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Synchronous Computer-mediated Communication (SCMC): An Inventory of SCMC-based Mediational Strategies for Teaching Reading

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Keywords: *Synchronous Computer-mediated Communication (SCMC), Mediation, Zone of proximal development (ZPD)*

The amalgamation of nascent cognitive assessment, which rests on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT), with technology through synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) brought forth new context of teaching and learning (Heather, 2003; Oscoz, 2003, Oscoz, 2005, Birjandi & Ebadi, 2010). The present study aims at testing the applicability of SCMC video chat in identifying the mediational strategies offered by a mediator during his online video chat interactions with five L2 learners in the context of reading. Moreover, it seeks to unravel the effects of SCMC-based instruction on learners' ZPD (zone of proximal development). Sternberg and Grigorenko's (2002, p. 27) cake format employed to present both visual and textual SCMC-based mediations, with the consideration of hierarchical presentation of mediations based on Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), via online video chat. Five learners, among 20, were selected based on nonprobability sample design from Ponaki's English Language Institute in Gorgan, Golestan. As materials, Skype online software was employed for online video chat interaction, and 16 different reading comprehension passages were selected from Phillips (2001) to cover during eight online mediation sessions. The qualitative analysis of SCMC-based video chat protocols resulted in an inventory of SCMC-based mediational strategies consisting of different forms of implicit (e.g. confirming/rejecting response) and explicit (e.g. pictures from Google Image

online service) feedback. The quantitative comparison of the learners' performance on two conventional static reading test, pretest and posttest, attested the learners' cognitive modification at the level of ZAD (zone of actual development). On the implication side, based on the findings, L2 teachers are suggested to employ SCMC-based mediational strategies developed in this study to both track the learners' ZPD and assist them beyond their current level of ability during dialogic SCMC-based interaction.

Bio data:

Iman Bakhoda is an MA graduate of TEFL at Allameh Mohaddes Nouri University. He is interested in doing research on dynamic assessment and discourse analysis.

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Towards More Task-based ESP Courses; A Case of English for Business Purposes in Iran

Ayoub Dehghankar

Keywords: *TBLT, Needs Analysis, ESP, Course Design*

This study aimed at conducting a task-based needs analysis for Business courses in Iran with the primary purpose of improving learners' communicative skills. The study also intended to provide a realistic illustration of the significance of needs perceived by the ESP curriculum developers, teachers, as well as by the learners. To fulfill such ends, the attitudes of three groups of participants (N=95) including materials developers, university professors, and students majoring in Business and Management from three universities in Tehran, i.e. *Allameh Tabataba'i University*, *Tarbiat Modarres University*, and *Shahid Beheshti University*, were assessed towards the type of tasks in such courses. The participants were firstly asked to fill out an already validated questionnaire in the field (Huh, 2006) which was slightly modified and localized by the researcher. Then, in order to reassure the questionnaire-driven data, a series of semi-structured interviews was conducted. The results of the data analysis revealed a significant difference in the categorization of the tasks across stakeholders indicating different types of needs perceived by different groups of participants. Correspondingly, the findings indicated a sense of uniqueness in the nature of target tasks provided for ESP courses based on the educational settings. The results of this study might provide a theoretical basis for syllabus designers and materials developers to fill the existing gap among the ESP practitioners and provide more germane and practical ESP courses.

Bio data:

Ayoub Dehghan̄kar received his BA in English language and literature from Lorestan University in 2007. In 2008 he entered University of Tehran and graduated in 2010 with an MA degree in TEFL. He is currently continuing his studies at the PhD level at Allameh Tabataba'i University. His publications include researches on Psycho-sociolinguistics, TBLT, and Social Testing.

Integrating Multimedia into EFL Classroom for Fostering the Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge and Reading Comprehension Performance

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Keywords: *Multimedia, reading comprehension performance, vocabulary knowledge, EFL classroom*

With the rapid progress achieved in the last few decades in multimedia technologies, it is now possible to integrate multimedia into teaching and learning in the classroom. Since EFL learners in Iran are not exposed authentically to English language, they lack adequate vocabulary knowledge and as a result they are unable to read a text and comprehend it effectively. The present study investigated the effect of multimedia on enhancing the EFL students' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension performance. To this end, 30 female learners, studying at the intermediate level of a language institute in Karaj, were randomly picked and participated in this study. Pre-test and post-test for both reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge were administered. In order to check whether the use of multimedia influenced the learners' performance in reading comprehension and vocabulary tests, two paired samples t-test were run and the results indicated that there is a significant difference between the learners' performance on the pre-test and post-test of both reading comprehension and vocabulary tests. Moreover, the strength of the differences between the means calculated by Cohen's effect size formula supported the fact that the effect of multimedia is practically high. Accordingly, the findings suggest that the use of multimedia, as materials to be used in the classroom, is highly effective in developing the students' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. The

application of CALL materials in the form of interactive multimedia interface reveals that technology plays a significant role in enhancing the learners' knowledge of lexicons and ability to better comprehend the texts.

Bio data:

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The Effect of Textual and Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers in EFL Iranian Classes on Reading Comprehension

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Keywords: *Metadiscourse markers, reading comprehension, textual reading, interpersonal reading*

Metadiscourse is a term used in philosophy to indicate a discussion about a discussion, it is supposed to be a simple discussion about a given topic. According to Crismore (et al. p.4) metadiscourse markers are introduced as "Linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given". The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers on the comprehension of English texts in Iranian language classes. This study also tries to find the effect of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse knowledge of learners on their reading comprehension. Do authentic materials including textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers effect on reading comprehension of EFL learners? Participants of this study were students of 2 intermediate classes. The participants were chosen randomly and were assigned into two control and experimental groups, we used pre-test and post-test for both and then we measured their reading comprehension through a proficiency test. The results of this study showed that metadiscourse markers can have a positive effect on comprehension. Also it was found that the more the learners become aware of those markers, the more their comprehension will be improved. Textual and

interpersonal metadiscourse markers can be used as helpful materials in EFL classes both to motivate learners and improve their ability in reading.

Bio data:

Saman Ebadî is an assistant professor of applied linguistics at Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran. His areas of interest are CALL, dynamic assessment, qualitative research methodologies, and ESP. He has published and presented papers in international conferences and journals.

Shadi Heidari is an MA student of applied linguistics at Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran. Her areas of interest include language assessment, discourse analysis and syllabus design.

Processibility Revisited: Portfolio, Corrective Feedback, and EFL Students' Writing Performance

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Keywords: *process-oriented writing, L2 writing, portfolio, corrective feedback*

This paper aimed at describing a study reporting on the effect of using portfolio writing to provide corrective feedback (CF) on EFL students' writing performance. A total of 34 intermediate EFL students with age range of 17 to 26 year-of-age participated in this study. While in the experimental group (N=16) the syllabus tried to revisit processability in providing CF through portfolio, in the control group (N=18) the traditional paper-and-pen type of CF was practiced to correct students' writing assignments. In this study a pretest/post-test design was run to measure the effect size. Moreover, to obtain the students' overall performance and their performance in different writing components including content, organization, and language, a six-point analytic rating scale was used. The results of this study revealed that providing CF through portfolio writing had a constructive effects on students overall writing performance ($p=.03$) and on different writing components such as content ($p=.02$), organization ($p=.02$), and language ($p=.01$). The findings concluded with shedding light on the importance of revisiting process-oriented syllabus in providing corrective feedback on students' writing that bear some implications for L2 teachers teaching L2 writing.

Bio data:

Fateme Husseini is currently doing her MA in TEFL at Kashan University. She has publications in "Teaching English with Technology" (SCOPUS) and "Iranian EFL Journal" and "English Language Teaching". Her fields of interest are including psychology of education, teaching and assessing second language writing, CALL, and teaching listening.

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The Impact of Reflective Conferencing on Iranian EFL Teacher's Teaching and Students' Learning of Grammatical Structures

Leila Keshavarz Ghasemi, Masood Siyyari

Keywords: *Reflective, Conferencing, Grammatical Structures*

Nowadays reflection has been a salient concept for many researchers but little empirical studies have been carried out in Iranian EFL context to determine the effect of reflective conferencing on teacher's teaching and students' learning of grammatical structures. The objective of the study was to explore whether reflective conferencing has any effect on the teacher's teaching and learners' learning of grammatical structures. To do so, sixty students participated in this study. The data collection was conducted through (1) administering Oxford Placement Test (Allan,1992) as pre-test, and a Likert-scale questionnaire to assess the students' opinions about the extent to which their teacher followed teaching grammar strategies and what they need and prefer in learning grammatical rules, (2) interviewing with students,(3) giving treatment to participants in experimental group, (4) administrating a questionnaire to check teacher's teaching in congruency with students' needs , expectations and also her performances in previous semester, (5) and conducting Oxford Placement Test as a post-test. Data from questionnaires on respondents' opinions and ideas were presented to the reflective teacher to have teaching practices based on the students' needs and preferences. The analysis of the data showed that reflection on teacher's performances provided opportunities for the teacher to engage in deeper thinking about teaching strategies. The results revealed that reflective conferencing has positive effects on increasing

learning outcomes and provided opportunity for teacher to modify and revise teaching performances to achieve higher-quality teaching and learning.

Bio data:

Leila Keshavarz Ghasemi graduated from Islamic Azad University with a Master's degree in English Language Teaching. She taught as an EFL instructor in most language schools in Tehran for 8 years and as a University Lecturer at Applied Science Center of Iran Insurance for 2 years. She is interested in language research, learners' and teachers' beliefs, and writing skill.

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Living with ‘the language of Hafez’: A sociolinguistic glimpse of Iranians’ view of their great poet

Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini, Leila Zohali, Fateme Zabihi, Nasrin Sanajoo

Keywords: *Language of Hafez, Sociolinguistics*

Hafez is known as probably the greatest poet in the eyes of nearly every Iranian and is also one of the greatest literary figures on earth. Surprisingly however, in school education and the media of our country, there is hardly considerable depiction of Hafez and his masterpieces. Concerned with this issue, this study attempts to investigate how familiar Iranians are with the language and the worldview of their great poet. More specifically, the research problem we addressed focused on peoples’ familiarity with and knowledge of the language and worldview of Hafez in different parts of the country. Two data collection instruments were applied to gather related information. The main instrument was an interview for an in-depth probing of respondents’ general, factual, and literary information about Hafez. A questionnaire, addressing similar questions, was also used to widen the scope of the study in terms of the diversity of participants. Overall, 120 participants (60 interviewees and 60 questionnaire respondents) from Shiraz, Bojnourd, and Ardebil participated in this research. Qualitative exploration of the data reveals that almost every participant knows Hafez in terms of general information. They also somehow know the factual information about him. However, from a sociolinguistic perspective, what remains noticeably less-known and considered to most participants is the particular worldview of Hafez reflected in his peculiar language. This is, ironically, the most important characteristic feature that creates the unique person that he is known to be. On this basis, we

discuss considerations in education and media to promote deeper public understanding and awareness regarding their great poet's language and view of the world.

Bio data:

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A case study of applying Corpus to improve Academic Writing Skill and Decrease Writing Apprehension

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Keywords: Corpus use; Writing apprehension; English Academic writing

This paper reports on a quantitative study to find the answers to two questions. First the possible improvements in students' writing process associated with corpus use during an EAP writing course and second, the effect of corpus use on decreasing their writing apprehension. The research is based on a case study with two Archeology Ph.D candidates, who are currently attending a private EAP Writing course once a week. To find the answer to the research questions, the students were taught to independently use corpora in order to become more confident and skillful in their EAP writing. After the first introduction session, they were asked to bring their laptops to consult the corpus during the class and also for their homework. The concordancer used is the Corpus of Contemporary American (COCA), easily accessible and giving access to several corpora. Each week, their writing performances are examined with an IELTS rubric prepared by Cambridge English Language Assessment in order to evaluate their writing progresses. To check their level of writing apprehension, a 20-scale writing apprehension questionnaire designed by Daly & Miller (1975) will be completed twice, at the first session and after twelve sessions of class. The data of this questionnaire will be analyzed by SPSS and additionally, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient test will be run to investigate the relationship between anxiety level and writing scores. We hope that applying corpus during writing process gives the

students a sense of independence and self-confidence which will result in decreasing their writing apprehension and also affect their writing performances.

Bio data:

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Evaluation of ESP Textbook for Economics Majors Reading Section

Zohreh Nafissi, Afsaneh Nameni

Keywords: *ESP textbooks, Reading, Reading activities, Reading proficiency, Skimming, Scanning.*

The purpose of this study is to evaluate “*English for the Students of Economics*” textbook published by *Samt* reading sections, i.e. of the passages and activities, in respect to: i. Authenticity and suitability of the passages and activities, ii. Their variety, quality and design iii. Reading proficiency and techniques, i.e. skimming and scanning. Mixed method has been applied to conduct this research. The research instrument consisted of two researcher-made questionnaire and the participants consisted of 30 BA students in economics and 10 ESP instructors, who were selected through convenience sampling method. Data was collected through two five-point Likert scale questionnaires, one consisting of 14 items and the other one 11 items. Descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation were calculated for each item. Findings indicated that the textbook was: i. Average at authenticity and suitability ii. Weak at variety, quality and design of passages and activities iii. Very weak at equipping learners with reading techniques, i.e. skimming and scanning. So, the textbook need to be reassessed and modified in respect to the three criteria. Finally, substitute exercises were designed to boost skimming and scanning techniques.

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The role of reflective reading in promoting Iranian EFL learners' motivation for reading in reading classes

Zohreh Nafissi, Fatemeh Shahhoseini

Keywords: *reflective reading, reading motivation, reading classes*

During the last decade increasing attention has been paid to the role of developing reflective pedagogy in education. It is also obvious that motivation is a key characteristic of a learner that affects the process of learning significantly. Based on the literature of reading motivation, little studies have yet looked into the hypothesis that reflective reading enhances learners' reading motivation in reading classes. Bearing on the point that reflective reading results in learners' own viewpoints about the text, unique interpretation, evaluation, and in consequence self-regulation, the objective of this study was to explore the role of EFL learners' reflective reading in promoting their reading motivation. The participants were 60 BA students in 2 reading classes, from 2 different public universities, 30 from Alzahra University that was the experimental group in which learners reflect on their readings, evaluate them, propose their viewpoints about them and engage with the text. The control group was 30 learners from a reading class of Golestan University that just read text and memorized words and structures. At the beginning and end of the semester, both groups completed Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) developed by Wigfield & Guthrie, (1997) as the pretest and posttest. The particular analysis used in this study was paired sample t-test. The results of a statistical analysis suggest that reflecting on what has been read in a reading class had a significant role in promoting reading motivation of learners. The design of this research is correlational experimental.

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*After graduating from Golestan University of Gorgan in English literature, **Fatemeh Shahhosseini** studied English Language Teaching at Alzahra University. She was interested in Critical pedagogy in general and reading classes in relation to this concept seemed interesting to her. Before this, she has worked on two articles related to Emotional Intelligence.*

Online mode of peer feedback as a complement for paper-and-pencil mode on improving Iranian EFL learners' writings

Mahmoud Qaracholloo

Key Words: *Peer Feedback, General Peer Feedback, Paper-and-Pencil Peer Feedback, Online Peer Feedback, Writing Aspect.*

Peer feedback, which has its roots in interactionist theories of learning, has been considered effective in different instructional environments for different instructional purposes. Moreover, the rapid growth in computer technology has opened an alternative approach to peer feedback investigation. In spite of a growing body of research, the quality and credibility of online and paper-and-pencil modes of peer feedback is not clear. In response to this shortcoming, with a focus on writing aspects, this paper aimed at investigating the quality and credibility of online and paper-and-pencil modes of peer feedbacks. To do so, a group of English language and literature students were assigned to 4 online and 3 paper-and-pencil subgroups. During 3 months, the participants 1) wrote 10 paragraphs of different kinds, 2) provided feedback on their subgroup members' paragraphs, 3) received feedback from their own subgroup members, and 4) revised their own paragraphs according to the received feedbacks. Using Jacobs *et al's* (1981) analytical scoring scale, two raters segmented feedbacks into the comments for each paragraphs in terms of five aspects of writing including *mechanics, language use, vocabulary, organization, and content*. They also rated the first and the final versions of the paragraphs written by each participant in terms of the same five aspects of writing. The findings of the study indicated significant differences in the frequency of comment types within and between groups. The results of the paired-samples t-test also indicated that both online and

paper-and-pencil modes of peer feedback generally had significant influences on the total writing scores. However, each one of the feedback type could only improve some aspects of the writings. The online mode could better improve *organization* and *content* of the paragraphs, but the traditional paper-and-pencil was better for *mechanics*, *language use*, and *vocabulary*. The conclusion of the study was that each feedback mode had some points of advantage which could act in complement with the other mode.

Bio data:

Mahmoud Qaracholloo is a PhD candidate at Allameh Tabataba'i University.

Processing Information in Expository Passages Using Text Structure Strategies: An Accelerator to Effective Reading Comprehension

Soheila Rabani, Masoumeh Akhondi, Faramarz Aziz Malayeri

Key Words: information processing, text structure strategies, expository reading texts

The present study was designed to explore the impact of information processing training through text structure strategies on Iranian EFL learners' comprehension of expository passages. To do this, a sample of 60 Iranian EFL learners was selected based on their performance on the Nelson English Language Test. Next, they were randomly assigned into two groups: a control and an experimental group. Reading instructions were presented in two methods; one through the use of information processing strategies which were designed based on special focus on text structures; the other through the use of the traditional techniques of reading comprehension instructions. The results of the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that the use of information processing strategies through text structures was an effective strategy to help EFL learners to enhance their reading comprehension. It was found that information processing strategies could improve Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension of expository texts more than the traditional techniques of reading comprehension such as background knowledge activation. This finding proved the superiority of information processing training to the traditional techniques of reading comprehension.

Bio data:

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Impact of team working and mentorship as learning strategies on enhancing vocabulary long-term and short-term memory retention.

Mahsan Shapoori

Key Words: *team working, mentorship, learning strategies, vocabulary retention.*

Understanding and recalling new vocabulary items is of students' main concerns. Learning strategies are used by students to help them understand better. Team working and mentorship are learning strategies which can be used to reduce the barriers to learning. This study reports an action research project which compared teaching vocabulary (Oxford Word Skills) by the teacher and presenting a defined unit of Oxford Word Skills vocabulary by the groups of students (mentorship). In addition, it investigated the impacts of these ways on short-term and long-term memory retention. To this aim, a total group of 12 *Safir* English language learners was selected. One unit was taught by the teacher and to see its effects on learning a task was taken. For next lesson all students were asked to preview a defined unit of Oxford. They were divided into 3 groups of 4 students. One group was chosen to be responsible not only for their own learning but also for the others, in a partnership and mentorship situation. Afterwards, a post-task was taken to compare the results (in short-memory). A need analysis was also taken to see the impacts of this practice on learner's attitude towards it. After one week a delayed post-test was taken to check their long-term memory retention as well. The research results indicated that the learners in their cooperative and mentorship situation performed a significantly higher percentage in learning and recalling new vocabulary in comparison with the ordinary way. The students had a positive approach to this new way as well.

Bio data:

Mahsan Shapoori is an MA TEFL student with 5 years' teaching experience in Safir Language Institute.

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