Embracing Challenges

Proceedings of the 11th METU International ELT Convention

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Department of Basic English
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Only minor changes have been made to the format of the articles; otherwise, the articles presented here are "as is". The contents of the articles are the authors' responsibility.

Foreword

This collection includes a selection of papers presented at the 11th METU International ELT Convention: *Embracing Challenges*. During this convention, we have tried to identify and address challenges that emerge from the changing needs and growing demands of learners as members of academic, social or business communities in a globalized world. We hope this collection of papers may be of help to those interested in the field but who were unable to attend the sessions.

In the proceedings of the 11th METU International ELT Convention: *Embracing Challenges*, we have compiled a selection of papers and broadly grouped them under the following categories: learner motivation, learner autonomy, approaches and methodologies, educational technologies, and professional development.

Zeynep Akşit
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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the contributors of this collection for sharing their ideas, insights and research findings. We believe that their articles will surely contribute to the development of language teaching in Turkey.

Z.A., M.Ç.

Contents

Unveiling the Mystery: Investigating L2 Reading Motivation in an EFL Classroom

Petek Sirin and Aslı Lidice Göktürk Saglam

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Abstract

Research in L2 reading motivation has gained impetus and provided many insights into understanding the components of motivation and factors that affect L2 learners in terms of reading motivation. Although many studies can be found on L1 reading motivation, studies on L2 reading motivation seem to be relatively meager. Since action research encompasses a sequence of events and an approach to problem solving, the present study addressed to examine whether; (1) this sample of Turkish University students differ in terms of their intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation and (2) a change in methodology has an impact on the L2 reading motivation. Participants responded to a Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) and took part in focus group interviews. Results revealed that L2 reading motivation was affected by extrinsic factors mostly and the changes in methodology and the instructional elements had a crucial effect on intrinsic and mostly extrinsic motivation, reading amount and performance. Results foreshadowed insightful methodological changes.

1. Introduction

It is widely accepted motivation which is a multifaceted construct with different components is crucial for most fields of learning and in its simplest terms, 'motivation is some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things so as to achieve something' (Harmer, 2007:98). According to Guthrie and Wingfield, reading motivation is defined as 'the individual's personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes, and outcomes of reading' (2000:405).

The significance of reading motivation for reading achievement is undeniable and according to some researchers 'the field of reading motivation is an underexplored area' (Kim, 2010:863). Research in reading motivation has gained impetus and provided many insights into understanding this complex process involving many factors which interact with each other and its relation to reading comprehension. Wang and Guthrie (2004) proposed "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Reading Motivation Model". Intrinsic reading motivation which comes within the individual is related to valuing books as a source of excitement or enjoyment and being personally interested in the topic covered by the material. Extrinsic reading motivation, on the other hand, refers to obtaining external recognition, rewards or incentives such as good grades and attention from teachers or parents (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The factors which trigger extrinsic motivation may substantially differ in various age groups. Namely, while parents typically have the bedrock influence on younger children, school and peers influence older children primarily. This model hypothesized that intrinsic motivation consists of three constructs; curiosity (desire to read about a specific topic), involvement (readers' pleasure due to being involved in reading an interesting text) and preference for challenge (synthesizing complex ideas in a text). On the other side, extrinsic motivation is comprised of five constructs which are recognition (the pleasure in receiving a tangible form of recognition for success), grades (the desire to be favourably evaluated by the teacher), social reading (the process of sharing the meanings gained from reading with friends and family), competition (the desire to outperform others in reading) and compliance (reading because of a goal or external requirement) (Wang and Guthrie, 2004).

Two other important aspects of reading which play a role in L2 reading motivation are extensive reading and intensive reading. Extensive reading which refers to reading in quantity 'is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a liking for reading' (Richards and Schmidt, 2002:193). Intensive reading which requires reading in detail with specific learning aims is a way of increasing learners' knowledge of language features and their control of reading strategies (Nation, 2009). A good reading programme should allow room for both practices so as to increase the reading amount and motivation.

Although many studies can be found on L1 reading motivation, studies on L2 reading motivation seem to be relatively meager. In an attempt to understand L2 reading motivation of a small group of Turkish students by illuminating the factors lying behind it and applying necessary methodological changes accordingly, I conducted an action research in an EFL classroom. Considering 'action research is both a sequence of events and an approach to problem solving' (Coghlan and Brannick, 2005:4), the present study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. Do Turkish University students differ significantly in intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in L2 reading?
2. Does a change in methodology have an impact on the L2 reading motivation of this group?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Respondents of the study were 30 Turkish university L2 learners who were enrolled in the English language program at the Advanced Level. The average age of the participants was 19. Their language learning background prior to this course varies substantially and about a half has never studied English before. It was their second year in the prep programme. They have the same cultural background and Turkish is their mother tongue. The learners had been studying this level for eight weeks and had four lessons a day five days a week. It was a blended course in that class contact hours were combined with online activities and materials that were provided through Course Management System (CMS).

In terms of student profile they were an enthusiastic group of learners most of whom were observed to be keen on and actively participating in all activities. They were responsive to working in a variety of methodologies and activities, but mainly liked pair and group work. All of them were visual learners. Most of the students have problems with grammar and vocabulary. Learners have to complete these levels successfully in order to have a seat in the exemption exam. The students who successfully pass the exemption exam are admitted to their freshman year.

2.2 Data Collection Instruments

There were two instruments used in this research: a motivation for reading questionnaire (MRQ) and focus group meetings. The motivation questionnaire with 44 motivational items which cover the constituents of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (see appendix 1) was adapted from Wang and Guthrie's (1997) MRQ with 53 items: challenge (5 items), involvement (6 items), curiosity (6 items), grades (4 items), competition(6 items), social (7 items), compliance (5 items), recognition (5 items). Participants indicated on a 4-point Likert scale from 'a lot like me' to 'very different from me', the extent to which they would agree with the statements. During and after the intervention process based on the outcomes of the motivation questionnaire, three focus group meetings with a total number of six students for each meeting were organized in order to help the participants reflect on their motivation and reading performance and see whether there were any changes in their amount of reading. Focus group meetings were conducted in office hours and each lasted for about an hour.

Table 1

Constructs of the MRQ Questionnaire

Constructs	Questions defining this construct
Intrinsic Motivation	
challenge	2,5,7,13,16
involvement	6,11,17,23,25,27
curiosity	4,9,12,15,19,22
Extrinsic Motivation	
grades	3,30,41,44
competition	1,8,32,35,40,43
social	10,20,24,31,33,36,39
compliance	18,26,28,37,42
recognition	14,21,29,34,38

The motivation questionnaire was given to 30 students including 16 female (53,3%) and 14 male (46,7 %) students in both classes, but due to time constraints the focus group meetings were conducted with 18 students including 11 female (61,1 %) and 7 male (38,2 %) students. Before the research started, they had been briefed about data collection procedures and how the data would be used. Additionally, they were reassured that refusal to participate would not affect their grades.

As there two types of data, different data analysis procedures were required. Quantitative data obtained from questionnaire were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and qualitative data obtained from the focus group meetings were recorded, transcribed and coded for each category.

2.3 Procedure

Participants were given MRQ questionnaire to identify their motivation in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic constructs. Then, as a result of literature review intervention techniques were specified to cater for the observed problem of lack of motivation in L2 reading within this group. After exposing the learners to intervention focus group meeting were held to determine whether intervention led to a difference in their perception of L2 reading motivation.

2.3.1 Intervention.

'In effective classrooms, the teacher uses many motivational mechanisms and does so often, so that instruction seems to be overflowing with attempts to motivate students' (Pressley & Fingeret, 2007: 233, cited in Grabe, 2009). After reflecting on this comment and evaluating the results of the motivation questionnaire, necessary actions were taken and certain changes were employed in teaching methodology. As a consequence of literature review regarding L1 and L2 reading motivation, a framework guided the improvement of methodological practices to boost motivation. In addition to utilising suggestions that stemmed from various sources discussions with other EFL instructors guided the intervention attempts to increase L2 reading motivation of the students. Among these sources, Guthrie (2001) seemed to be the best in identifying ten instructional elements that formed the foundation for engagement and motivation in reading. These elements can be listed as conceptual orientation, real-world instruction, autonomy support, collaborative learning, praise and rewards, interesting texts, strategy instruction, evaluation, teacher involvement and cohesion. Considering the linguistic problems of the learners, a combination of some these strategies were screened against the linguistic needs of the learners and finally the miraculous touch of technology was added into this combination of intervention attempts.

2.3.1.1 Language Support.

Grabe stated 'one major L2 issue is students' more limited language knowledge in the L2 and the need for greater scaffolding with language support' (2009). Most of the respondents of this study had linguistic issues. Some of them directly stated that they did not understand complex sentences and the others confessed this when they were asked to paraphrase, summarize or translate certain parts of the texts in intensive reading. Therefore, reduced relative clauses and noun clauses were consolidated through controlled and semi controlled activities. Moreover, participles and inversions were introduced and practised through exercises. In order to consolidate the meaning and use of newly met structures, learners were additionally asked to perform two way translations using these grammatical structures with the target words of the week, which in turn fostered lexical knowledge. As for the issues with limited range of vocabulary, although pre- teaching vocabulary is a good way of dealing with this issue, learners may become too dependent on this practice. Keeping this in mind, vocabulary was analysed with the learners through student-centred activities such as choosing the target words and preparing mini power point presentations in groups or pairs to teach target words to their peers.

2.3.1.2 Strategy Instruction.

As Guthrie (2001) stated, strategy instruction includes the explicit teaching of behaviours which help learners find relevant knowledge from text. Students should have the required skills and strategies in order to get information out of written resources (Collins and Cheek, 1999). Reading comprehension and thus reading motivation can be empowered with explicit strategy training. This may involve coaching and scaffolding with clear explanations for why to use them and how to use them (Paris, Wasik and Turner, 1991). In line with this argument, learners were firstly asked to share the reading strategies they use with other learners in groups and after that they were explicitly taught to find main and supporting ideas, recognize text cohesion at word and sentence level, deduce the meanings of words and infer the purpose of the text. Each objective was introduced and practiced through reading exercises concentrating solely on the particular objective. After all of them were practiced in this way, learners were provided with mixed exercises.

2.3.1.3 Collaborative Learning.

Collaboration, which encourages the skills of cooperation and negotiation, is significant for ‘activating and maintaining learners’ intrinsic motivation’ (Guthrie, 2001). Additionally, it fosters learner autonomy in that it allows students to make their own decisions in group. Since the learners had positive group dynamics, it was easy to get almost all the tasks in groups and pairs. In order to increase the amount of extensive reading and intrinsic motivation, I started a forum activity called ‘Article Stop’ on CMS where learners were asked to share interesting articles they liked (see appendix 3) and comment on each other’s article. However, half of the class participated in the forum sharing their articles, but none of them made a comment, which directly highlighted the fact that they put their articles for the sake of fulfilling what they were told to do.

2.3.1.4 Using Interesting Texts.

According to Csikszentmihalyi “the chief impediments to learning are not cognitive. It’s not that students can’t learn; it is that they do not wish to. If educators invest a fraction of energy they now spend trying to transmit information in trying to stimulate the students' enjoyment of learning, we could achieve much better results stimulate the results” (1991:115). Reflecting on this argument, one of the chief responsibilities of a teacher is to provide students with interesting texts which, in other words, texts with’ important, new and valuable information’ (Wade, Waxon and Kelly, 1999). Students were provided with ample reading texts ranging from leaflets, advertisements, reviews, web pages, magazine and academic articles on familiar topics which were meaningful and interesting.

2.3.1.5 Use of Technology.

Computers are increasingly being used for instruction because they hold several advantages such as 'improving reading comprehension, facilitating grammar and vocabulary acquisition, reinforcing the benefits of strategy training and fostering student motivation toward reading' (Kim, 2002). In our school, all the students are provided with a notebook computer and CMS is used to foster learning. In order to augment extrinsic motivation, students were asked to complete the weekly reading materials on CMS. The course book itself had also online component and students were able to see their scores and monitor their improvement by receiving immediate feedback by using the companion web-page of their course book. As for fostering intrinsic motivation, learners were asked to read about news at home or abroad through the Internet and pick up one specific event related to business, health, science, education, sports, entertainment or art. Each learner was asked to learn about it in detail by either reading the online newspapers or news websites and orally reflect on it for five minutes at the beginning of the first lesson. This activity additionally fostered autonomy in that learners have the right to choose their own reading text depending on their interests. As Marrow (1996) advocates, the amount of reading and achievement increase if students are supported in choosing from a wide selection of texts.

2.3.1.6 Teacher Involvement.

Guthrie asserted that 'the involved teacher knows about the students' personal knowledge and interests, cares about each student's learning, and holds realistic, positive goals for students' effort and learning' (2001). Teachers have a dramatic effect on student affect. For instance, when students feel that the teacher has little or no interest in them, they are likely to lose their motivation. However, when the teacher is helpful and caring, they are likely to have a higher motivation and their self-esteem is likely to increase. Knowing the significance of student affect, teacher involvement was maximised by trying to assist the students by having a caring and helpful attitude and treating all of them equally.

2.3.1.7 Praise and Rewards.

Praise and rewards play a substantial part in student reading motivation, specifically when they are used effectively. Wlodkowski (1985) suggests a '3S-3P' approach to awarding praise that is sincere, specific, sufficient and properly given for praiseworthy efforts in a manner preferred by the learner. Over-complimenting students might result in counterproductive results in that they might become too dependent on praise and thus be unaware of what progress they are making. Monitoring learners' scores and progress through

CMS and the online component of the book, I sent group e-mails thanking the students who had shown progress with a star next to their names.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 MRQ

The mean scores of motivational constructs displayed significant differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational constructs. The mean value for intrinsic motivation was calculated as 46, 3 %. However, the mean value for extrinsic motivation was estimated as 69, 9 %. The constructs for intrinsic motivation were challenge, involvement and curiosity. Among these constructs, curiosity had the highest mean value (18, 6%), which implied the fact that some learners desired to read and learn something new. Challenge ranked the second with a mean value of 14, 5 %. This construct was expected to have the lowest value and the results displayed that some learners liked to be challenged at an increased level of difficulty. Involvement had the lowest mean value which was 13, 2% and this exhibited that having pleasure owing to being involved in reading was the least important factor for the participants. The constructs for extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, were grades, competition, social, compliance and recognition. Among these five constructs, competition was the strongest predictor for extrinsic motivation with a mean value of 17, 3 %, which signalled that most learners wanted to be the best in reading. Social ranked the second with a mean value of 14, 6 %, which implied that it was important to share the reading gaining with friends and family for some learners. Interestingly, compliance ranked the third with a mean value of 13, 6 %, which displayed that external goals and requirements are not as important as social factors. Recognition followed it with a mean value of 13, 1. Finally grades had the lowest mean value which was 11, 3 %, and this result showed that participants had the least concern for being favourably assessed by the teacher. This might be related to two main factors. Firstly, CPG (class participation grade) which is given by the teacher has only 5% effect on a student's overall course grade. Secondly, students only receive a Pass or a Fail when they finish the course, in other words their pass grades are not assigned in letters (A, B, C or F) or descriptors (Distinction or Merit). Briefly, the mean scores highlighted the fact that this small group of Turkish University students are much more extrinsically motivated than intrinsically in L2 reading.

Table 2

Frequency of MRQ Results

Constructs	**Mean**	**Constructs**	**Mean**
competition	17,30	grades	11,26
social	14,60	compliance	13,63
involvement	13,20	curiosity	18,56
challenge	14,53	Extrinsic total	69,86
recognition	13,07	Intrinsic total	46,30

The motivation questionnaire had interesting results foreshadowing significant methodological implications. As Grabe (2009) denotes, motivation is significantly affected by what happens regularly in the classroom. Having considered this contention, activities and tasks to increase both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation were devised.

3.2 Focus Group Meetings

Focus group meetings revealed interesting results. Firstly, participants were asked if they enjoyed reading more and 8 participants (44, 4%) said ‘Yes’, 5 participants (27, 8 %) said ‘No’ and the other 5 said (27,8 %) ‘It depends on the topic’, which showed that there was a remarkable increase in intrinsic motivation. When they were asked if they thought there was a change in their reading amount, all participants (100%) stated they did more reading. 8 participants (44, 4%) related this increase in their reading amount to understanding texts better, which showed that language support worked well for most learners and 10 participants (55, 6%) associated it with the coming exam, which denoted that extrinsic motivation for reading was much higher than before. Participants were then asked about the text types they read and 9 (50%)participants said ‘newspapers, articles and reading assignments on CMS’, 5(27,8%) participants said ‘reading texts on CMS and articles related to the themes in the course book’ and 4 (22,2%)participants said ‘ only reading assignments on CMS’. Except for those 4 participants, it can be concluded that participants made efforts to learn something new, which was another good signal for a rise in intrinsic motivation. However, it is significant to note that whether learners read extra materials just because they were asked to do that or because they really started to like reading newspapers or articles is a question mark and this should be further investigated. Next, they were asked if they thought reading was still difficult for them. 12 (66, 7%) participants said ‘No’, 4 (22, 2%) participants said ‘depends on the language and vocabulary’, the other 2 (11, 1%) said ‘depends on the topic’. This made it clear that some learners still needed support regarding language and interesting materials.

When they were asked if they thought there was a change in their reading performance, all participants (100%) said 'Yes', which highlighted that having learners reflect on their performance by writing short reports worked well and helped them monitor and thus become aware of their improvement. Correlating this result with 5 participants' statement ' I still don't enjoy reading' for the first question, we can assume that extrinsically motivated students may display high reading achievement without liking to read (Baker& Wigfield, 1999) and extrinsic motivation may foster their achievement despite their negative approach toward reading.

Finally, they were asked if they thought there was a change in their reading motivation 8 participants (44,4%) said 'Yes' and 5 of them stated 'I enjoy it more' and the other 3 related this increase to higher performance. 3 participants (16,7%) said 'No' , 2 participants(11,1%) said ' depends on the topic', 4 (22,2%) participants said 'depends on the scores I get' and 1 participant (5,6%) said 'depends on stress'. Except for those 3 participants who voiced a direct 'No' answer, most learners observed a change in their reading motivation either extrinsically or intrinsically.

In the light of these results, it can be advocated that the changes in methodology and the instructional elements which were used in combination had a crucial effect on intrinsic and mostly extrinsic motivation, reading amount and performance. Among the seven elements in intervention, three of them which are teacher involvement, language support and interesting texts were observed to have the utmost significance for this change in L2 reading motivation. Accordingly, teachers should have a good rapport with their students by listening to their concerns, understanding their needs, monitoring them closely and providing an adequate support since reading motivation is closely associated with the feeling of social support in the classroom. Secondly, teachers should help learners with grammar and vocabulary support so as to foster comprehension, which in fact requires a lot of time and practice. Last but not least, teachers should provide their learners with highly interesting texts which are personally relevant and suitable for their level inside and outside the classroom in order to promote both intensive and extensive reading.

4. Conclusion

There are possible limitations of this action research. To begin with, the participants and their friendly relationship with the researchers might have had an effect on their responses in focus group meetings and they might have generated responses which they assume researchers wanted to hear. Another issue concerns the timing of the action research. Since these learners were in the last module preparing to sit the Proficiency exam, their motivation towards every skill was mainly extrinsic. In this sense, expecting changes in intrinsic motivation in five weeks' time when there was a substantial exam pressure on learners is an additional concern. Last but not least, time constraints in data collection process were another setback. Although the motivation questionnaire was given to 30 students, the focus group meetings were conducted with 18 students owing to time limitations. Therefore, this research might have fallen short in reflecting the real percentages of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. It is significant to underline that this is a small scale piece of research and therefore for further evidence with regard to L2 reading motivation.

Notwithstanding these limitations, we believe that it was a fruitful study with noteworthy implications for teaching and promoting L2 reading, providing valuable insights into the multifaceted relationship between motivation and L2 reading. As language teachers we were assured of importance of encouraging students to be engaged in extensive L2 reading activities and fostering intrinsic motivation by providing interesting reading materials and by engraining the message that 'reading tasks are challenges to be mastered rather than obstacles to be avoided' (Kim, 2010:878).

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Biodata

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Appendix

Motivations for Reading Questionnaire

Directions**:**

We are interested in your reading. The statements tell how some students feel about reading. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want to know how you feel about reading. **For many of the statements you should think about the kinds of things you read in your class.** Decide which of the following describes your response best.

1 = *Very different from me*

2 = *A little different from me*

3 = *A little like me*

4 = *A lot like me*

To give your answer, circle ONE number on each line.

1.	I like being the best at reading in English.	1	2	3	4
2.	I like it when the questions in English books make me think.	1	2	3	4
3.	I like to read English to improve my grades	1	2	3	4
4.	If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read more about it.	1	2	3	4
5.	I like hard, challenging books in English.	1	2	3	4
6.	I enjoy a long, involved story or fiction books.	1	2	3	4
7.	If a book or material in English is interesting, I can read difficult material.	1	2	3	4
8.	I try to get more answers right than my friends.	1	2	3	4
9.	I have favourite subjects that I like to read about.	1	2	3	4
10.	I visit the library often with my family.	1	2	3	4
11.	I make picture in my mind when I read in English.	1	2	3	4
12.	I enjoy reading English books about people in different countries	1	2	3	4
13.	I usually learn difficult things by reading in English.	1	2	3	4
14.	I like having my parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading in English.	1	2	3	4
15.	I read to learn new information about topics that interest me.	1	2	3	4
16.	If the project is interesting, I can read difficult materials.	1	2	3	4
17.	I read stories about fantasy and science fiction in English.	1	2	3	4
18.	I read in English because I have to.	1	2	3	4
19.	I like to read about new things.	1	2	3	4
20.	I often like to help my brother or my sister in English reading.	1	2	3	4
21.	I like having the teachers say I read well in English.	1	2	3	4
22.	I read in English about my hobbies to learn more about them.	1	2	3	4
23.	I like mysteries.	1	2	3	4
24.	My friends and I like to trade reading materials (books, magazines...etc.) to read in English.	1	2	3	4
25.	I read a lot of adventure stories in English	1	2	3	4

26. I do as little schoolwork as possible in reading.	1 2 3 4
27. I feel like I make friend with people in good English books.	1 2 3 4
28. Finishing every reading assignment is very important to me.	1 2 3 4
29. I like having my friends sometimes tell me I am a good English reader.	1 2 3 4
30. Grades a are a good way to see how well I am doing in English reading	1 2 3 4
31. I like to help my friends with their schoolwork in reading.	1 2 3 4
32. I am willing to work hard to read in English better than my friends.	1 2 3 4
33. I sometimes read to my parents.	1 2 3 4
34. I like to get compliments for my reading in English.	1 2 3 4
35. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good English readers.	1 2 3 4
36. I talk to my friends about what I am reading.	1 2 3 4
37. I always try to finish my English reading on time.	1 2 3 4
38. I am happy when someone recognizes my reading in English.	1 2 3 4
39. I like to tell my family about what I am reading in English.	1 2 3 4
40. I like being the only one who knows an answer in something we read in English.	1 2 3 4
41. I look forward to finding out my reading grades.	1 2 3 4
42. I always do my English reading work exactly as the teacher wants it.	1 2 3 4
43. I like to finish my English reading before other students.	1 2 3 4
44. My parents ask me about my reading grades.	1 2 3 4

Motivation to Read: Its Nature and Classroom Conditions

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the factors constituting the reading motivation in Turkish and English. Further, the study aimed to analyze the relationship between L1 and L2 reading motivation and L2 reading achievement. Also, the language instructors' perceptions regarding student motivation to read were scrutinized to shed light on the classroom-specific components regarding the issue. The statistical analysis of the data revealed that both L1 and L2 reading motivation are multi-factorial constructs: six factors were identified for each aspect. Additionally, L1 reading motivation and behaviors made no significant contribution to L2 reading achievement. However, L2 reading motivation and behaviors were found to be significant contributors of L2 reading achievement. Finally, the interview data revealed that the teacher, the syllabus, the course book, students' interest levels and cultural elements students bring to class are all contributors of reading motivation.

Introduction

Literacy used to be viewed as a simple decoding process and as reading to find information in the text. Over the past fifty years or so, literacy has been explored from many perspectives including linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and sociolinguistics (Pearson & Stephens, 1994). Moreover, since it requires both more linguistic and cognitive processing than reading in the native language, reading in the target language is very challenging for language learners. To comprehend reading texts, language learners must not only understand the words, structure, and purpose, but have access to the background knowledge assumed. This demanding nature of reading in educational and professional settings in mind, Grabe (2009) puts it:

> Citizens of modern societies must be good readers to be successful. Reading skills do not guarantee success for anyone, but success is much harder to come by without being a skilled reader. The advent of computer and the Internet does

> nothing to change this fact about reading. If anything, electronic communication only increases the need for effective reading skills and the strategies as we cope with the large quantities of information made available to us (p. 5).

The literature reports interrelationships between first language reading ability, second language proficiency, and second language reading performance (Hudson, 2007). L2 reading development is not merely the result of L1 transfer. Nevertheless, L1 transfer has a crucial role to play. Students who are weak in L1 reading cannot be expected to transfer resources to L2 reading contexts (Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) analyzes the reading achievement of primary school students, concentrating on students in the fourth grade. In this study, Turkey's average was 449, which was significantly lower than the international average 500 (Akşit, 2007). Park (2008) made use of PIRLS findings and further analyzed the home literacy environments of the 25 participant countries. The results indicated that Turkey was in the lowest group in all three criteria, which were index of *early home literacy activities*, index of *parents' attitudes toward reading* and *number of books at home*.

Purpose of the Study

This study develops around three main purposes: definition, analysis and gaining insight. As this study is unique in its design within its context, the data gathered will also provide baseline data for future research. Firstly, this study aims at defining the nature of motivation to read in Turkish (L1) and in English (L2). To do this, factors that comprise the EFL students' motivation to read will be analyzed. Secondly, the relationship between the students' motivations to read together with their reading habits and their success in reading exams will be explored. Finally, this study aims at gaining an insight as to the educational value English teachers assign to reading motivation in their classroom dynamics, while also investigating whether teachers have a clear idea of creating motivating conditions in their lessons.

Literature Review

L1 and L2 Relationships

Readers with high L1 reading ability can transfer their L1 ability and facilitate their L2 reading comprehension at least to a certain extent, and this transfer does not necessarily guarantee overall text-level comprehension. So as to look at the issue form a larger point of view, Yamashita (2002a) argues:

> Readers tend to transfer and use their L1 strategies in the process of L2 reading. However, because of their weak L2 linguistic proficiency, these L1 strategies are not always fully successful in helping them construct an appropriate meaning representation for the product. ... Although the linguistic threshold hypothesis should still be given priority because of the strong influence of L2 linguistic proficiency on the transfer of L1 reading ability to L2 reading, we cannot fully explain the relationship of reading in two languages without integrating the linguistic interdependence hypothesis. We should bear in mind that the entire process of reading can be much more similar in L1 and L2 reading than the linguistic threshold hypothesis suggests (p. 277).

The linguistic threshold hypothesis directs us to infer that readers need help to get L2 linguistic abilities. While this is an important aspect of teaching, teachers should also be aware that L2 readers use their L1 reading strategies.

In another study conducted by Yamashita (2002b), evidence for the Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis was provided. Japanese university students who were in high, middle and low levels, determined according to their L1 reading ability and L2 language proficiency, took part in the study. Variance analysis was utilized to explore the effect of L1 reading ability and L2 language proficiency on reading performance. The total shared variance of the two predictor variables was 40 % and L2 proficiency was proved to be a much stronger predictor, offering support for the threshold hypothesis. On the other hand, the study did find that readers with L1 reading ability benefitted from L2 language proficiency. This suggests that the transfer of L1 reading ability happens despite low language proficiency, supporting the linguistic interdependence hypothesis.

The findings of the studies above suggest the existence of a language threshold. However, it is not possible to “determine it in absolute terms” (Grabe, 2009; p. 148). There is a real need for future study in this regard.

Reading Motivation

Reading Motivation and Its Relation to Reading Comprehension. Motivation researchers defined several constructs regarding motivation, and it has been argued that these constructs vary across different domains and that they should be studied in those domains. Eccless et al. (1993) suggests that beliefs, values and goals are motivation constructs and when they are considered in the domain of reading, they turn into the questions of *whether a person can be a good reader* and *whether s/he wants to be a good reader and why*.

Wang and Guthrie (2004) conducted a study to examine the extent that motivational processes facilitate reading comprehension and possible effect of culture on this relationship.

The researchers shaped their ideas with their study on reading motivation, examining how intrinsic and extrinsic motivations correlate with text comprehension. The results supported the theory of the correlations between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations with different relationships of text comprehension. With both groups, intrinsic motivation was positively related to text comprehension, in their words "intrinsic motivation is pivotal to successful reading" (p. 182). However, extrinsic motivation was negatively related. The reason why extrinsic motivation did not predict text comprehension was, according to the researchers, that these students may lack the intention or desire to understand the texts. On the other hand, intrinsic and extrinsic reasons together explained a larger proportion of variance in how much children read than either one alone. The expectation that text comprehension is dependent on culture was not supported by the results of the study, in that American and Chinese students showed similar structural motivation-reading comprehension relationships. This study supported teacher and parent involvement and encouragement with students reading, especially to help students attain both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

The study conducted by Mendi (2009) explored the relationships between students' reported use of reading strategies, motivation and reading proficiency performance. Another aim of the study was to investigate the effects of gender, language proficiency level and amount of outside reading on students' reported use of reading strategies, foreign language learning motivation and reading proficiency performance. Findings showed the students were not extensively involved in reading outside class although for most of them reading in English was important for language learning. This study showed that reported use of reading strategies did not significantly vary according to gender and language proficiency level; however, there was a positive effect of outside reading on the use of problem solving strategies. Moreover, female students and intermediate level students were found to be more motivated than male students and elementary level students. The students who spent much time on reading English outside class showed higher motivation levels than students who read less. Finally, the study revealed a positive relationship between reading strategy use and motivation, and between reading performance and motivation.

Method

In this study, in order to address research questions of qualitative and quantitative nature, data collection and analysis techniques from both methodologies were implemented; therefore, *mixed-method* approach was chosen as the methodology of this research. Mixed-method research is good to use if the aim is to build the research on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2005).

Setting and Participants of the Study

Populations and Settings. To make the way of participant selection clearer, a summary of the system applied in the institution the data collected at is necessary. At Atılım University, students are placed into three different courses at the beginning of the year according to their levels, namely C (elementary) B (Intermediate) and A (Upper-Intermediate) according to the scores they get in the *Placement Exam.* At the end of three-month-courses they pass to the next level if they get the required points from the mid-term examinations, weekly quizzes, reading examinations, writing papers and presentations

Questionnaire Population and Setting. The respondents for the questionnaire were foreign language students at Atılım University. Respondents were at two different instruction levels, namely pre-intermediate (N = 172) and upper-intermediate (N = 101). *Pre*-intermediate and *upper*-intermediate instruction levels were chosen in order to see the effect of proficiency level *better* in that pre-intermediate and intermediate level students, for example, would be *too close* to reveal this effect. The students are placed in these levels depending on their results in the *Placement Exam,* given by the institution at the beginning of the academic year.

Teacher interviewees. The academic advisors of the questionnaire respondents were interviewed. A total of 15 (24 % of the total instructors who teach main course) instructors were interviewed on a voluntary basis. Academic advisors were chosen considering the fact that the aim of the interviews was to understand the students' habits and behaviors in the classroom and their academic advisors were the instructors who taught them the most, in terms of class hours. In addition, they had access to the students' personal files that were filled in by the students at the beginning of the term and included information about the students' family, economic and educational background. Before the interviews, the interviewees were kindly asked to have a look at these files in order to have a general idea about the students' backgrounds.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, mainly two types of data collection instruments were used: a questionnaire (See Appendix 1) and face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

The Design and Development of the Questionnaire. *Reading Motivation in L1 and Reading Motivation in L2 Questionnaire* (Appendix 1) consisted of 66 items (33 items in L1 section and 33 items in L2 section). The questionnaire was adapted from Wang & Guthrie's *Motivations for Reading Questionnaire* (2004) and Yamashita's (2007) reading attitude questionnaire.

In the first part of the questionnaire, *demographic information* about the students was collected. This part included questions about the respondents' age, gender, faculty, and the high school they finished. The second part of the questionnaire, *Reading Motivation in L1*, was designed to explore the nature of the reading motivation in Turkish, as well as the habits of the respondents. In order to analyze the habits of the respondents, they were asked about *what* they like to read, *how often* they read, *how long* they read and *how many pages* they read. The third part of the questionnaire, *Reading Motivation in L2*, included the same items as the second part but with different wording. The same questions focusing on the habits of students were repeated here, again with different wording. In addition, the questionnaire was administrated in Turkish in order to limit the misunderstandings and increase the reliability. In the process of developing the questionnaire, *backtranslation* method was utilized: first, all of the items were translated into Turkish by two language instructors with an MA in ELT. Next, the Turkish version was backtranslated into English by two other language instructors with an MA and the differences were identified. The best translation versions for these differences were determined as a group.

Teacher Interviews. In this study, in addition to collecting quantitative data and getting statistical information about the respondents, gaining an insight from the teachers with regard to the classroom practices of the teachers was also one of the main goals. To this end, with the help of face-to-face interviews qualitative data was collected. The semi-structured face-to-face interviews used in this study were composed of predetermined, theory-driven themes. These themes included:

- personal factors affecting student motivation
- effect of student motivation to read on classroom practices
- effect of the reading syllabus on classroom practices
- macro factors that affect students' motivation to read in L1 and L2

Data Analysis

Factor Analysis – Quantitative Data. In order to ease the analysis of the questionnaire, factor analyses were conducted. Instead of explaining each item in the questionnaire, factors were extracted and they were utilized to comprehend what the questionnaire results meant. The total variance explained by the second part of the questionnaire (*Reading Motivation in L1*) was quite high (64.4 %). The percentages of the variance explained by the *factors* extracted in this section ranged from 6.3 % to 19.9 %. Similarly, the third part of the questionnaire (*Reading Motivation in L2*) explained 61.7 % of the variance. The factors identified in this section explained variances ranging from 6 % to 16.5 %. Thanks to the pilot study and the revisions made, all of the reliability coefficients were at acceptable levels (Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Factors	**L1 (overall: .937)**	**L2 (overall: .891)**
Reasons to read	.919	.888
Recognition	.907	.916
Value	.878	.869
Anxiety	.676	.762
Comfort	.654	.617
Information/Career	.765	.615

Analysis of the Qualitative Data. In order to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interviews, Attride-Stirling's (2001) *thematic networks* were utilized. In her words, thematic networks are "simply a way of organizing a thematic analysis of qualitative data. Thematic analyses seek to unearth the themes salient in a text at different levels, and thematic networks aim to facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes" (p. 387).

In thematic networks analysis, three concepts are used to conceptualize the qualitative data: (a) basic themes; (b) organizing themes; (c) global themes. First, *basic themes* are lowest-order premises evident in the text. Second, *organizing themes* are categories of basic themes grouped together to summarize more abstract principles. Third, *global themes* refer to super-ordinate themes summarizing the principal metaphors in the text as a whole. During the analysis process, first, as Attride-Stirling (2001) suggests, the transcribed interviews were coded considering the repeated topics or concepts. Then related codes were grouped. These groups were not repetitive but discrete. Then, these themes were arranged into basic themes. After this, an abstract analysis was started. The basic themes were put in a sequential order. Basic themes constituted organizing themes. Naturally, the number of the organizing themes was fewer than basic themes. Finally, organizing themes were put under the global themes.

Results

Reading Motivation in L1 and L2 – A Factor Analysis

A summary of the findings of the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire items can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Reading Motivation Factors – A Summary

Factor Extracted	Sample Item
Personal Reasons to Read	*I have **favorite subjects** that I like to read about in English/Turkish.*
Social Recognition	*I feel happy when **someone recognizes** my reading ability in English/Turkish.*
Anxiety	*I feel **anxious** if I don't know all the words when I read something in English/Turkish.*
Comfort	*I **don't mind** even if I cannot understand the content entirely when I read something in English/Turkish.*

Table 2 Continued

Factor Extracted	Sample Item
Value	*I can become more **sophisticated** if I read materials in English/Turkish.*
Information	*I can acquire broad **knowledge** if I read materials in English/Turkish.*

Contribution of L1 Reading Motivation to L2 Reading Achievement

In order to determine this contribution, multiple regression analyses were carried out. The period the students were exposed to the language accounted for 8.5 % of their reading achievement. After the addition of L1 reading motivation factors (*reasons*, *recognition*, *value*, *comfort*, *anxiety* and *information*), it was observed that none of L1 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, R^2 = .096, F (6, 265) = .508, *ns*.

Similar results were found in *two different proficiency levels:* none of L1 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, R^2 = .035, F (6, 164) = .337, *ns (pre-intermediate)*; none of L1 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, R^2 = .139, F (6, 93) = .496, *ns (upper-intermediate).*

Contribution of L2 Reading Motivation to L2 Reading Achievement

In order to determine this contribution, multiple regression analyses were carried out. It was observed that L2 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, $R^2 = .166$, $F(6, 265) = 4.291$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the exposure period *and* L2 reading motivation factors significantly predicted 16.6 % of the reading grade. Of this variance, the exposure period accounted for 8.5 % of the variance while L2 reading motivation factors significantly explained 8.1 %.

Pre-intermediate. It was observed that L2 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, $R^2 = .107$, $F(6, 164) = 2.577$, $p < .05$. 10.7 % of reading achievement of the pre-intermediate students was significantly predicted by L2 reading motivation factors *and* the exposure period. L2 reading motivation factors were found to explain 8.4 % of the variance while the exposure period was found to explain 2.3 %.

Upper-intermediate. It was observed that none of L2 reading motivation factors significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, $R^2 = .235$, $F(6, 93) = .2.492$, $p < .05$. This indicates that 23.5 % of the upper-intermediate level students' reading achievement was significantly predicted by L2 reading motivation factors *and* the exposure period. Of this variance, the exposure period accounted for 11.2 % of the variance, while L2 reading motivation factors significantly explained 12.3 %.

Reading Habits and Behaviors in L2

After the addition of L2 reading habits and behaviors **(*frequency, time, amount*)** it was observed that none of the independent variables significantly predicted L2 reading achievement, $R^2 = .124$, $F(3, 244) = 2.440$, *ns*. However, the effect of L2 reading habits and behaviors of the students reached a *marginally significant* level; $p = .065$. 2.6 % of the total variance (12.4 %) was *marginally significantly* explained by the L2 reading habits and behavior factors. Among the independent variables *time* spent reading in English significantly predicted L2 reading achievement.

Reading Text Preferences of the Students

A positive significant correlation was observed between the students' reading achievement and their online text preferences such as online newspapers, games, the Internet, E-mails, electronic references ($r = .17$, $p < .01$).

Language Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Motivation

In order to gain insight about the teachers' perceptions of reading motivation, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted. After the interviews were transcribed, they were coded, and then these codes were developed into *basic* themes. These basic themes were categorized into *organizing themes* and then finally into *global themes*. Two *global themes* were identified: (1) educational factors influence student motivation to read; (2) personal factors influence student motivation to read.

Educational Factors. Under this theme four organizing themes were identified: (a) institutional factors; (b) students' previous educational background and (c) environmental factors.

Institutional Factors. To begin with, most of the teachers interviewed complained about the *syllabus*. The basic criticism that came from the teachers was that there is no systematic reading syllabus but the course book's syllabus is *the* syllabus implemented. As for the reading syllabus, it is again the course book's reading programme. To this end, one of the teachers claimed:

> We do the same things as we did in the C course [elementary level]. We do nothing different in A course [upper-intermediate level]. We do not teach these kids how to analyze a text and how to synthesize the information in it, there is no standard reading program. In this sense, I find our curriculum inefficient (*Teacher 14*)[1].

What the teachers also mentioned was that, even though the *course book* constitutes the reading programme of the preparatory school, it is not good enough to prepare the students for academic reading. In this sense, the Preparatory School was claimed to lack the aim of preparing the students for their departments. Since academic reading requires the students to have higher-order skills such as inferencing or synthesizing, another criticism came from the teachers. As *Teacher 10* argued:

> The students should not do only True/False or multiple-choice exercises during the prep class. The most important thing for these kids is to understand what the teacher in their departments gives him and write what he understands from the text in the exams.

One final criticism about the syllabus was about the lack of extensive reading focus. It was claimed by some of the teachers that the students already lack extensive reading habits, and the teachers do not take any responsibility to help the students to form this habit.

Secondly, since the course book is *the* reading syllabus that the teachers implement, several criticisms were mentioned regarding the usefulness of the *course book*. Most of the teachers find the course book monotonous and easy considering the expectations and

[1] All of the interviews were held in Turkish. The quotations were translated into English by the researcher.

requirements of the exams and their future academic lives. The reason why it is monotonous comes from the fact that the same tasks are repeated even though the topics are interesting.

Another weakness of the course book is the fact that it is an international version, thus it is difficult to create situations in class to attract the students' attention. *Teacher 10* claims that if someone wants to do a good reading lesson, he or she has to leave the course book aside. He further argues that this is basically because of the washback effect of the exams. It was also argued that the course book does not teach vocabulary well:

> Before the readings, there are exercises like "look at the vocabulary, tick the words you know" so what? In addition, there are statements like "use your dictionary" or "ask your teacher". I do not think these prepare the students for the reading tasks (*Teacher 3*).

Another point made by most of the teachers was that vocabulary is important while doing the reading tasks because "if there is only one unknown word, the students cannot go on reading" (*Teacher 7*). As the course book does not give enough direction, it is the teacher's job to pre-teach the words in a different way.

Only two positive aspects of the course book were mentioned: "it is theme based and stories are based on the same characters so it is easy to remind the students what is going on" *Teacher 15* argued. Second, the reading texts are not too long, so most of the students do not have difficulty in following them.

The third institutional factor was *the exams*, both the mid-term exams and the proficiency. They were reported to have a tremendous effect on the teachers' teaching practices. However, this effect was believed to be a negative one: the students do not need to study for the mid-term because it is easy. It was also pointed out by most of the teachers that the exams are too grammar oriented and they are not consistent with the classroom tasks. Thus, the teachers find motivating the students to read really hard. On the other hand, interestingly, the teachers generally make use of exams to motivate the students to read:

> Very few students are motivated to read for any other reason but exams, most of them care about reading to pass their courses and their exams. Actually this means to threaten the students but it somehow works when I say every question in the proficiency exam is 1 point but reading questions are 2 points. However, teachers should be careful about this, when motivating and threatening the students (*Teacher 5*).

Regarding institutional factors, the fourth theme was *the teacher* and the role he or she plays in motivating the students. The most common point made about the role of the teacher was that they are responsible to motivate the students to read and do the related tasks, and they are free to do what they want; however, this causes inequalities among the classroom practices. One example was given by *Teacher 8*; he mentioned his application of another resource book and its success in preparing his students for the exams. *Teachers 6 and 10*; however, highlighted the point that the teachers need guidance on how to deal with reading:

> The problem is that providing the students with different reading texts is not enough to motivate them and to make them skillful readers, it is not that easy. This kind of guidance on how to do good reading lessons is not offered by the programme (*Teacher 10*).

The fifth and the final theme under institutional factors was the *classroom atmosphere*. In this respect, it was argued that there is a reciprocal relationship in that if the students are demotivated, the teacher and the other students become demotivated too. In such a situation, *Teacher 13* said she prevents the demotivated students from using negative statements.

Educational Background. Under this theme, students' university entrance grades were mentioned in that they are really low. This indicates, according to the teachers, that the students' cultural background is not good enough. *Teacher 13* also brings up the effect of education policies in Turkey:

> In Turkey, students' ability to answer questions without understanding the question thoroughly is tested in high stakes exams. Since students are expected to answer questions this way and to be successful, they are not used to expressing their opinions or write something on what they read. This affects their motivation to read.

Environmental Factors. Regarding the environmental factors, first, the teachers mentioned the *physical environment* of the classrooms. The classrooms lack the technological devices. The teachers tended to believe that they needed to have technological support in the classroom while doing reading lessons.

It was also mentioned that the weekly schedules the *institution* offers are too loaded and six classes every day are too much for the students. This causes the students to feel tired and fed up. Since the students are already demotivated and tired, they refuse to be involved in the reading lessons.

The students' reading motivations and habits are acquired before university years, mostly because of the *high schools they finish and their family* they came from, students lack regular reading habits and the habit of doing homework. However, it was repeatedly argued that better high schools, especially private high schools and Anatolian high schools, provide the students with better cultural backgrounds. In addition to the role of high schools, the family members play a crucial role in forming reading habits. Regarding the role of families, *Teacher 2* and *Teacher 4* attracted the attention to the regional differences in Turkey; the students who come from families from the east part of Turkey are reported to have serious difficulties in reading lessons.

Personal Factors. Under the global theme *personal factors* two organizing themes were identified: (a) personal characteristics and (b) personal needs of the students.

Personal Characteristics of the Students. To begin with, the students who have extensive reading habits that they formed in their families and high school years express high levels of motivation, not only to read but also to learn English.

The most commonly mentioned characteristic of the students was their *curiosity*. Curious students are better readers. Their curiosity comes from their interest in learning English. However, the teachers are concerned that the lessons they do not cultivate the curiosity of the students. Neither the course book nor the additional materials provided by the institution are interesting enough to involve the students in reading tasks done in class.

In addition to the course book and the materials' inefficiency in motivating the students, most of the students come with an *attitude* that reading is meaningless, there is no need to read but looking at the vocabulary in it is enough.

Similar to their negative attitude to reading in the classroom, the teachers reflected on their students' out of school habits in that outside the school they spend their time on the Internet, chatting with their friends rather than reading.

Personal Needs of the Students. The teachers argue that they have to spend extra time and effort to attract the attention of demotivated students who generally do not complete the tasks or openly state that they do not understand anyway. On the other hand, the motivated students are disciplined to do all of the tasks and they try to do them on time. After they finish their tasks, they seem more willing to participate and interact in the class.

Regarding the needs of the students, most of the teachers mentioned that long reading texts cause *anxiety*. Another cause of anxiety was the unknown vocabulary in a given text. The teachers tended to think that the students need strategies to deal with reading tasks, especially in lower levels. In addition, the teachers believe that the students need *higher order reading strategies* to evaluate and synthesize the information in a given text, especially considering their needs in their departments.

Another need mentioned was the use of *technology* in classrooms. To this end, *Teacher 3* suggests:

> …from time to time something from BBC webpage could be opened and projected on the wall. Students could have a discussion about it. This will definitely attract their attention. Or the students could be assigned a book then in the class the film of the book could be watched and they could be compared. These kids are technology kids; they are not interested in paper-based things any more.

As seen there are several factors affecting the students' motivation to read both in and outside the class from the teachers' point of view. The next section will focus on the students' point of view.

Discussion

Motivation for Reading is Multi-dimensional

In the current study, six different reading motivation factors were extracted from the questionnaire. This multidimensionality is in line with the previous studies (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Yamashita, 2007; Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Mori, 2002, Takase, 2007; Kim, 2010).

Contribution of L1 Reading Motivation to L2 Reading Achievement

The interpretation of the relationship between L1 reading motivation and L2 reading achievement requires the discussion that reading is *a language problem*. In the current study, L2 reading scores of the students were not predicted by the students' motivations to read in Turkish or the materials they read in Turkish. Then their reading achievement depends on something else, and naturally it should be their English proficiency levels. This result, partially though, was expected in that the exposure period, as an *indirect* indicator, accounted for the reading achievement in L2, although the effect size was small.

Contribution of L2 Reading Motivation to L2 Reading Achievement

Reading is a Language and a Reading Problem. L1 and L2 reading are, naturally, different from one another. The difference is based on the limited exposure to L2 print, most of which comes from classroom practices. However, when reading in L2, readers are supported by a range of supporting resources unique to the L2 reading situation such as cognates, dictionaries, grammar textbooks, word glosses. These resources used to support L2 reading are not commonly used in L1 settings. The fact that L1 and L2 reading are different is clear, but how the L2 reading resources affect L2 reading development is less clear.

When looked at the reading process from the *language problem* perspective, the role of grammar and vocabulary should be noted since reading enjoyment can come only when the reading is reasonably fluent and effortless. When students have difficulty in extracting print information, they become increasingly frustrated (Koda, 2004 as cited in Strauss, 2008).

On the other hand, in the pre-intermediate level, the factor *anxiety* was found to be a significant predictor. *Comfort* is the significant predictor in the upper-intermediate level. These factors were closely associated with the proficiency levels of the students, and this suggests grammar and vocabulary knowledge of the students. To exemplify, the pre-intermediate level students' reading performances were affected by the anxiety they feel about the unknown *vocabulary* or the *content* of the material they read.

The small effect size of the L2 reading motivation constructs could also be attributed to the phenomenon *reading is a reading comprehension problem*. According to Coady (1979 as cited in Perkins et al., 1989) reading is an interactive complex of abilities and knowledge, some of which has the linguistic nature. He goes on to argue that students' store of textually relevant background knowledge and attained reading comprehension proficiency in L1 plays a crucial role in L2 reading. Another point he makes is that students have poor reading habits in their first language so the teachers have to teach reading skills which *should have been* learned in L1 instruction.

Anxiety as a Factor in L2 Reading. The current study revealed that pre-intermediate students' anxiety levels are a significant predictor of their reading comprehension. Saito et al. (1999) suggested that reading in a foreign language is anxiety provoking. In addition, foreign language reading anxiety is distinguishable from general foreign language anxiety. To clarify the reasons for the anxiety caused, unfamiliar words or grammar, and cultural topics were identified as aspects that provoke anxiety. Consistent with this, the items loaded on the factor named as *anxiety*, suggested the same concepts: unfamiliar *content* and *vocabulary*.

The Contribution of the Amount of Reading to L2 Achievement. The contribution of *time* spent reading is significant for the upper-intermediate level students but *not* for pre-intermediate students. This indicates what the students learn during the period they are exposed to English could be transferred in higher proficiency level. This again suggests that *fluency* in reading is a prerequisite for this type of a transfer.

The Contribution of Text Type Preferred to L2 Reading Achievement. Regarding the relationship between students' *text preferences* and their reading achievement, it was observed that the preference for online texts such as online newspapers, texts on the Internet, computer games, e-mails, and electronic references significantly correlated with the reading grade.

Regarding the relationship between text type preferred and reading achievement, a small correlation was observed. This *small* correlation could be attributed to the fact that online reading is different from printed materials, and has yet to be researched thoroughly.

Reading something online is more like “navigating” (Topping, 1997). Birkerts (1994 as cited in Liu, 2005) notes that the younger generation growing up in the digital environment lacks the ability to read deeply and to sustain a prolonged engagement in reading. The *small* correlation found between students’ online reading materials could be attributed to the nature of hyper-reading in that it is plausible to expect that the students’ gains from the online materials take time to transfer to classroom practices and exams.

Classroom Conditions and their Role in Facilitating Reading Motivation

The teacher and student interviews revealed several *other* factors influencing student motivation to read such as the materials provided by the institution including the teacher, the course book, the physical environment of the classrooms, the personal characteristics students bring to the classroom.

The Teacher. As a part of the classroom practices, the teacher plays a crucial role. The analysis of the teacher interviews revealed that the teacher is the *only motivator* in the class. Students also mentioned that when they see their teacher deals with them in the class, they feel safe. Interestingly, this appreciation came from the pre-intermediate students. Quite possibly, this was because pre-intermediate students have difficulty in doing the reading tasks. The facilitative role of the teacher is in line with what Wentzel (1997) suggested in that students reported higher levels of motivation when they saw that the teacher cared about their progress. In a similar vein, Ryan & Deci (2000) suggested in classrooms students’ feeling of being respected and cared for by the teacher is vital for their eagerness to accept the classroom practices.

Research related to students’ comprehension skills prior to university suggests that many enter university with weak metacognitive skills related to reading comprehension (Özdemir, 2006). Similarly, Bintz (1997) reports that high school students have difficulty with tasks that required them to interpret what they had read. It was observed by the researcher that most of the teachers interviewed are very much aware of the need for motivating their students to read both outside the class and during the reading lessons. However, it was repeatedly argued by the teachers that they cannot receive positive responses from their students when they openly discuss the importance of reading in their future academic lives, or when they suggest books to read. The response from the students is generally negative in that the students claimed that *they do not have time to read*, or *simply there is no need to read* (*Teacher 2*).

One serious problem observed by the researcher was that the teachers were aware of the fact that the students needed to be motivated to read; however, they did not seem so willing to take responsibility to do this in that for the teachers, first of all, reading habits of the students were already formed and they could not do much to change the situation. Secondly, they pointed their fingers at the reading programme of the institution in that they are stuck with a book which is inherently not interesting and they do the reading lessons not to read but because they have to be done as a part of the course book or to teach a grammar point or some vocabulary. However, it was sensed by the researcher that the teachers generally do not take responsibility to make their reading lessons enjoyable: some of the teachers used statements like "*I cannot do it all the time* but when I take pictures to class, even the least interested student at the back may get involved in the lesson" (*Teacher 15*). Here it is plausible to think that reading lessons are seen as a lesson that could be neglected by at least some of the teachers, at least sometimes. Similar to this lack of enthusiasm, Bintz (1997) suggested that *few* of the teachers he studied believe that all teachers are ultimately teachers of reading. A parallel view come from Heathington and Alexander (1984) in that they suggest that teachers may not spend much time on attitudes because they focus attention on skills. Some teachers may think that skill development will increase reading attitudes automatically.

Contrary to the teachers' beliefs, Applegate & Applegate (2004) suggest that college level instruction could provide powerful experiences that can affect a student's perspectives on reading. In other words, preparatory school is *not late* to develop positive attitudes to reading.

Institutional Organization as a Factor Affecting Reading Motivation. The larger organizations play a vital role by influencing the conditions under which teachers operate (Barr & Dreeben, 1983 cited in Hoffman, 1996). In this regard, the term *instructional efficiency* which indicates the utilization of *resources* to achieve maximum student outcomes and these resources are *time*, *materials*, *personnel* and *money*.

When the *perceived* inefficiency of the reading programme of the preparatory school data collected from the teachers is considered, factors such as time spared for reading in the general curriculum, materials provided, and the physical environment of the classrooms emerged as major themes from the teacher interviews.

Reading Motivation is a Syllabus Thing. The basic criticism that came from the teachers was that there is *no systematic reading syllabus* determined according to the needs and expectations of the students.

Karahan (2007) suggests that students are exposed to heavy loaded programs in Turkey and this might be boring for the students. The situation in the institution in which the study was conducted was not so much different. However, the program focuses too much on grammar and vocabulary. This innately calls for the chicken egg dilemma in that the syllabus is in this way because the exam is grammar-oriented and vice versa. In such a situation, teachers reported that they feel the necessity to do the reading tasks quickly, and sometimes superficially.

The reading syllabus is based on the reading programme of the course book which is determined by the curriculum developer; however, to the best knowledge of the researcher, this selection was not based on a needs analysis. Harsh criticisms came from some of the teachers regarding this issue: it is the course book that causes problems in the first place since it is not suitable for a preparatory school that is supposed to prepare the students for their departments. It leaves both the teachers and the students on their own (*Teacher 5, Teacher 6, and Teacher 14*).

Reading Motivation is a Course Book Thing. To begin with the discussion here overlaps with the previous section due to the fact that the course book constitutes *the* reading syllabus. The effect of one single course book on the classroom practices was also pointed out by Bintz (1997). Very similar views to the views of the present study were reported in his study:

> Teachers believe that the use of a single textbook is driven by a "one size fits all mentality". The assumption is that one book can accommodate different personal interests and varied reading abilities. Teachers across the curriculum know firsthand that students bring with them into the classroom different histories of reading, and therefore different values about reading and the role it plays in their lives. They also know that a single textbook cannot and does not accommodate the students' wide range of reading abilities. A more powerful assumption is that varied reading materials can better accommodate varied reading abilities (Bintz, 1997).

In almost the same situation, the participant teachers indicated that they feel caught between the curricular demands and dealing with the students' demotivated behaviors in the class. The students, on the other hand, mentioned that the reading texts in the course book are all right in that they are not too long and they are easy. This view of the students could be attributed to the students' difficulty in dealing with higher-order analyses and work avoidance in that the teachers claimed to observe that due to the education system in Turkey, students cannot deal with long texts and cognitively demanding tasks.

Reading Motivation is a Classroom Thing. Two important aspects related to the physical environment of the classroom identified from the interviews were availability of alternative reading materials and the lack of technological devices available in the classrooms.

In McKool's (2007) study, avid readers suggested that it was important to be allowed to read what they wanted to read; in other words, choice over the materials to read should be provided. Likewise, Strauss (2008) suggested students respond positively to autonomy: having the freedom to choose motivates students to become engaged in their reading. However, to do this a library is needed which is not available in the immediate environment of the participant students.

Especially when the result of the current study showing that students' online text preferences' significantly affect their reading achievement is taken into account, the availability of technological devices in the classroom or in the close environment has a more important significance. It was suggested by one of the teachers that she feels the need to use technological devices in her classes; however, her classrooms are not equipped with the necessary devices. She also mentioned that her students are more interested in *soft* texts than pen-and-paper texts. A similar suggestion comes from Topping (1997) in that such texts can indeed extend the student's zone of proximal development. The students also lend themselves to repeated readings, and metacognitive instruction and comprehension monitoring can be arranged in parallel as the teacher sees fit.

A key point should be made here in that data of the current study did not discriminate between school reading and extensive reading at home or outside the classroom. Thus it has been speculated that the small correlation between students' transactional text selections and their reading grades could be attributed to the slow transfer of their gains from the online texts to their reading exams. The importance of the actual classroom practices was emphasized by Taylor et al. (1990); it is valuable for students to actually read during reading class. Considering these two points, use of technology in class and helping the students to transfer the information from navigation-like texts to the real life should be a part of the reading lessons. However, how this should be done calls for future research.

Interest as a Factor in Reading Motivation. The teacher interviews revealed that the perceived problem with reading motivation is very closely related to the students' *interest* levels. Most of the teachers pointed out that if the reading text students are required to read is interesting, students tend to do all of the tasks successfully. However, in an opposite situation, as Hidi & Harackiewicz (2000) pointed out, the absence of academic motivation and lack of interest is mostly reflected in students' neglect of their studies.

More specifically on the issue of interest, Hidi & Harackiewicz (2000) suggested that *situational interest*, which is positive but temporary affective response to an activity, may expand into *individual interest*, which refers to a personal disposition and permanent strong tendency to participate in activities to achieve certain goals. They go on to argue that "situational interest might provide an effective alternative for teachers who wish to optimize interest in their classrooms. Although individual interests have been shown to have a strong impact on learning, their utilization in educational settings may be problematic" (p. 156).

Regarding the situational interests of the participant students in the present study, the teacher interviews revealed some *text characteristics* such as length and ease of comprehension without many unknown words influence the situational interest that the students experience. In addition, when the teacher makes some modifications (most of the teachers claimed they do) such as creating contexts, using discussion activities before starting to read the text, the students seem to be more interested.

As Hidi (2001) and Hidi & Harackiewicz (2000) argued it is not always possible to utilize individual interest in the classrooms, so the role of situational interest becomes more important. A related concept extracted from the teacher interviews was the students' interest in certain topics, or the observation that students are more eager to read in the class when the topic is interesting to them.

Topic interest is the "interest triggered when a specific topic of theme is presented" (Hidi, 2001; p. 194). Ainley et al. (2002) explored the relationship among situational, individual and topic interest and found out that a strong existing *individual* interest contributes to *topic* interest. A weak or nonexistent individual interest will increase the likelihood that *situational* factors are dominant. Topic interest was found to influence persistence and in return persistence was associated with learning.

Regarding the role interest types mentioned plays in reading comprehension, and the fact that students' academic motivation decreases, Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) argued that in order to help academically unmotivated children, the multidimensional nature of motivational forces that impact on individuals' academic performance must be taken into account. More specifically, they argued that the polarization of more extrinsic motivational factors such as situational interest and the more intrinsic factors such as individual interest need to be reconsidered. In addition, they suggest that educators and researchers should recognize the potential benefits of externally triggered motivation such as situational interest.

Effect of Culture on Reading Motivation. The effect culture has on the relationship between the students' reading motivation and their reading achievement could be speculated in two ways: first as observed from the interviews, some students have political reactions to learn English or as a *mere* speculation, students may have negative attitudes towards English-speaking countries. Secondly, Wang & Guthrie (2004) and Unrau & Schlackman (2006) specifically explore the effect of culture on reading achievement. While Wang & Guthrie found no difference between U.S. and Chinese students in terms of the effect of reading motivation on reading achievement, suggesting that "there is social and educational commonality shared with the cultural contexts" (p.181). In contrast to Wang & Guthrie, Unrau and Schlackman (2006) found out that neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivation aspects had significant contribution to Hispanic students' reading achievement while they had for Asian students. This was attributed to the different orientations that these two cultures have towards school. Considering the fact that it has been spotted by international studies such as PIRLS, Turkey is in the groups with the lowest reading attitudes and habits, it could be easily speculated that it is plausible to expect that L1 reading motivation had no contribution to L2 reading achievement and there is a weak transfer from L1 reading motivation to L2.

Pedagogical Implications

As the results of the current study indicated, the curriculum and the reading syllabus do not include motivational components. At least, the motivational components of the course book, which constitutes the reading syllabus, are just the hidden assumptions. Since the teachers do not get support in this regard, curricular changes should be made to ease the burden on the teachers' shoulders and help them to uncover these assumptions.

Another result that calls for implementation in class is the use of *technology* in reading lessons. The current study revealed that students' interaction with online texts have a statistically significant effect on their reading grades. Considering this, some laboratory hours could be organized in which the students have the opportunity to read online, search on the Internet and report what they learned in written or spoken form.

Similarly, the study revealed that the more time the students spend reading, the better grades they get. In line with Taylor et al. (1990), more time should be spared for the students so that they are exposed to the language under the supervision of the teacher.

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Biodata

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Appendix 1

Reading Motivation in L1 and Reading Motivation in L2 Questionnaire

PART I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Name: ____ (for coding purposes only**.**)

2. Age: ☐ 19 and younger ☐ 20-23 ☐ 24-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40 and older

3. Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male

4. Faculty: ☐ Engineering ☐ Arts & Sciences ☐ Management

☐ Law ☐ Other, please specify ____________________

5. High school finished: ☐ Anatolian high school ☐ Science high school

☐ Teacher training high school ☐ Private high school ☐ State high School

☐ Vocational high school ☐ Foreign language intensive high school

☐ Other, please specify ______________________

6. How long have you been learning English? ☐ 1-2 years☐ 3-4 years ☐ 5 years and more

PART II. READING MOTIVATION IN L1[2]

All the items below refer to your reading materials in **Turkish** (books, textbooks, newspapers, magazines and on the Internet). Please circle the number which applies to you. Note that there are no right or wrong responses.

Items	**I strongly disagree**	**I disagree**	**I neither agree nor disagree**	**I agree**	**I strongly agree**
1. I can become more sophisticated if I read materials (books, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, the Internet etc) in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. I can get various types of information if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. Reading materials in **Turkish** is troublesome.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4. Reading materials in **Turkish** is useful for my future career	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5. I feel anxious if I don’t know all the words when I read something in **Turkish.**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6. I like to get compliments for my reading ability in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7. I can acquire vocabulary and knowledge about **Turkish** if I read materials in Turkish.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8. Reading **Turkish** materials is useful to get	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

[2] Adapted from Wang, J. H. & Guthrie, J. T. (2004) Modeling the Effects of Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Amount of Reading, and Past Reading Achievement on Text Comprehension between U.S. and Chinese students. *Reading Research Quarterly, 39*, (2) pp. 162-186 and Yamashita, J. (2007). The relationship of reading attitudes between L1 and L2: An investigation of adult EFL learners in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly, 41* (1), 81-105.

good grades in my courses.					
9. I can acquire broad knowledge if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10. I like having the teacher say I read well in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11. I feel relaxed if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12. When I read something in **Turkish**, sometimes feel anxious that I may not understand even if I read	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13. I like having my friends sometimes tell me I am good at reading in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14. I can develop reading ability if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15. I am happy when someone recognizes my reading ability in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
16. Reading **Turkish** materials is useful is express myself better in exams.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
17. Reading materials in **Turkish** is dull.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
18. I get to know about new ways of thinking if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
19. I can improve my sensitivity to the Turkish language if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
20. I feel tired if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
21. I like having my parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
22. I feel anxious when I'm not sure whether I understood the content of the **Turkish** material I am reading.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
23. I like to read in **Turkish** because I always feel happy when I read things that are of interest to me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
24. I feel refreshed and rested if I read materials in **Turkish.**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
25. If the teacher or a friend discusses something interesting I might read more about it from **Turkish** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
26. Reading materials in **Turkish** is useful to get a job.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
27. I have favourite subjects that I like to read about in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
28. I don't mind even if I cannot understand the content entirely when I read something in Turkish.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
29. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them from **Turkish** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
30. Reading materials in **Turkish** is enjoyable.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
31. I like to read about new things (different	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

cultures, traditions, sports etc) from **Turkish** materials.					
32. I get to know about different values if I read materials in **Turkish**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
33. I enjoy reading about different countries and learning about them (people, culture, food, traditions etc of those countries) from **Turkish** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

L1 Reading Habits

1. Please check which of the following types of reading selections you like to read in <u>TURKISH</u> (You can pick more than one):

1. ____________ Daily newspaper(s) (such as Milliyet, Hürriyet)
2. ____________ Online newspapers (such as www.milliyet.com.tr, www.haberturk.com.tr)
3. ____________ Weekly/Monthly magazines (such as *Newsweek Türkiye* or *Atlas*)
4. ____________ Comics (such as *Penguen*)
5. ____________ How-to books (such as auto repair manuals and cookbooks)
6. ____________ Reference books (such as an encyclopaedia or dictionary)
7. ____________ Electronic references such as wikipedia
8. ____________ Textbooks
9. ____________ Collections of short stories
10. ____________ Novels
11. ____________ Collections of essays (such as *Montaigne)*
12. ____________ Collections of poetry
13. ____________ Games
14. ____________ Classical works of literature
15. ____________ Internet (such as www.facebook.com)
16. ____________ email, text messages (sms)
17. ____________ song lyrics
18. ____________ other, please specify

____.

Check one:

2. I read Turkish materials ______________________________.

- ☐ once a month
- ☐ twice-three times a month
- ☐ once a week
- ☐ twice-three times a week
- ☐ everyday
- ☐ other, please specify ________________

3. Every time I read Turkish materials, I read for _________________________________.

- ☐ less than 15 minutes 1
- ☐ 15-30 minutes
- ☐ 30-45 minutes
- ☐ 45-60 minutes
- ☐ more than 60 minutes
- ☐ other, please specify ____________________

4. (Please consider your reading on the Internet. 200 words = 1 page)
Every time I read Turkish materials, I read ______________________________

- ☐ fewer than 5 pages
- ☐ 5-10 pages
- ☐ 10-30 pages
- ☐ 30-70 page
- ☐ more than 70 pages
- ☐ other, please specify _______________________

PART III. L2 READING MOTIVATION

All the items below refer to your reading materials in **English** (books, textbooks, newspapers, magazines and on the Internet).

Please circle the number which applies to you. Note that there are no right or wrong responses.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
1. I can become more sophisticated if I read materials (books, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, the Internet etc) in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. I can get various types of information if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. Reading materials in **English** is troublesome.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4. Reading materials in **English** is useful for my future career	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5. I feel anxious if I don't know all the words when I read something in **English.**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6. I like to get compliments for my reading ability in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7. I can acquire vocabulary and knowledge about **English** if I read materials in English.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8. Reading **English** materials is useful to get good grades in the quizzes and mid-term exams.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
9. I can acquire broad knowledge if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10. I like having the teacher say I read well in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11. I feel relaxed if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12. When I read something in **English**, sometimes feel anxious that I may not understand even if I read	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13. I like having my friends sometimes tell me I am good at reading in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14. I can develop reading ability if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15. I am happy when someone recognizes my reading ability in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
16. Reading **English** materials is useful is pass the Proficiency Exam.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
17. Reading materials in **English** is dull.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
18. I get to know about new ways of thinking if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

19. I can improve my sensitivity to the English language if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
20. I feel tired if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
21. I like having my parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
22. I feel anxious when I'm not sure whether I understood the content of the **English** material I am reading.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
23. I like to read in **English** because I always feel happy when I read things that are of interest to me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
24. I feel refreshed and rested if I read materials in **English.**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
25. If the teacher or a friend discusses something interesting I might read more about it from **English** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
26. Reading materials in **English** is useful to get a job.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
27. I have favourite subjects that I like to read about in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
28. I don't mind even if I cannot understand the content entirely when I read something in English.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
29. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them from **English** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
30. Reading materials in **English** is enjoyable.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
31. I like to read about new things (different cultures, traditions, sports etc) from **English** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
32. I get to know about different values if I read materials in **English**.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
33. I enjoy reading about different countries and learning about them (people, culture, food, traditions etc of those countries) from **English** materials.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

L2 Reading Habits

1. Please check which of the following types of reading selections you like to read in <u>ENGLISH</u> (You can pick more than one):

1. ____________ Daily newspaper(s) (such as Turkish Daily News)
2. ____________ Online newspapers (such as www.times.com , www.hurriyetdailynews.com)
3. ____________ Weekly/Monthly magazines (such as *Newsweek* or *National Geographic*)
4. ____________ Comics
5. ____________ How-to books (such as auto repair manuals and cookbooks)
6. ____________ Reference books (such as an encyclopaedia or dictionary)
7. ____________ Electronic references such as wikipedia
8. ____________ Textbooks
9. ____________ Collections of short stories
10. ____________ Novels
11. ____________ Collections of essays (such as *Montaigne)*
12. ____________ Collections of poetry
13. ____________ Games
14. ____________ Classical works of literature
15. ____________ Internet (such as www.facebook.com)
16. ____________ email, text messages (sms)
17. ____________ song lyrics
18. ____________ other, please specify ______________________________________.

Check one:

2. I read English materials ______________________________.

- once a month
- twice-three times a month
- once a week
- twice-three times a week
- everyday
- other, please specify ________________

3. Every time I read English materials, I read for _________________________________.

- less than 15 minutes 1
- 15-30 minutes
- 30-45 minutes
- 45-60 minutes
- more than 60 minutes
- other, please specify ______________

4. (Please consider your reading on the Internet. 200 words = 1 page))
Every time I read English materials, I read ______________________________

- fewer than 5 pages
- 5-10 pages
- 10-30 pages
- 30-70 page
- more than 70 pages
- other, please specify ___________________

Thank you for your time. Good luck with your studies.

Classroom Activities Compatible with the Principles of Brain Based Learning

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide hands-on English Language Learning classroom activities which reflect the ideas raising from the principles of Brain Based Learning. The activities are assumed to embrace the challenge of motivating students in the language classroom. These activities may help learners organize information, become aware of their learning difficulties and use their imagination and creativity.

Introduction

Brain Based learning, also called Brain Compatible Learning, is a holistic learning approach which is based on the structure, functions and processes of human brain (Doğanay, 2009). This approach stems from the results of studies conducted on "neuro-science," "neuro-linguistics" and "cognitive psychology." (Doğanay, 2009) The main philosophy of this approach is that learners should be provided with consistent learning opportunities that are related to common brain processes. (Doğanay, 2009) The studies conducted in the field consist of similar teaching-learning principles and applications in order to relate the types of learning opportunities to these common brain processes (Caine and Caine, 1994; Erlauer, 2003; Jensen, 1998). In this article, Caine and Caine's (1994) twelve principles of brain based learning discussed by Sonoma County Department of Education (2012) will be used to explain the issue.

The first principle states; "the brain is a parallel processor." (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) This means that in the learning process, thoughts, feelings and intuitions interact with each other and other forms of information. Therefore, the teacher has to orchestrate them to sustain utmost learning in the classroom. Actually, there should be a positive classroom atmosphere and the learners should be assisted in getting rid of negative feelings such as stress and fear. This can be achieved through enjoying and collaborative classroom activities (Erlauer, 2003).

According to the second principle, “learning engages the entire physiology.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) In fact, the physical health of the individual such as the amount of sleep, stress, hunger, thirst, physical exercise, fatigue influences the brain’s memory. Thus, learners should be allowed to do some physical exercise in the classroom. In short, the classroom activities should provide learners the chance to move in the classroom. Also, they should be allowed to eat and drink in the classroom (Erlauer, 2003; Jensen, 1998).

The third principle reveals “the search for meaning is innate.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) This means that as human beings, we are “naturally programmed” to learn. (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) The brain tends to register the familiar information and look for the new one. That’s why the learning environment should have “stability and familiarity.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) Again, the need for discovery and challenge must be met. This can be sustained through meaningful problem-solving activities which offer learners choices.

The forth principle presents “the search for meaning occurs through patterning." (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) In fact, patterning refers to the organization and categorization of information. According to this principle, the brain doesn’t react to meaningless, separate and disconnected pieces of information. The brain's natural capacity to integrate information can be stimulated by contextualizing teaching. This can be achieved by integrating the contents of the lesson with the contents of other courses as it is in ESP and EAP. Again, the use of concept-maps, concept-cartoons and brainstorming activities in the classroom will help the learner to organize and categorize information.

As for the fifth principle, it is claimed “Emotions are critical to patterning.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) As it is stated in the first principle, emotions cannot be separated from cognition. Actually, as we all know, feelings motivate us to learn and create. Another point that is important in terms of emotions is the fact that human beings are social creatures. In the learning process, we need to support and help each other. Hence, as teachers we should encourage the use of collaborative learning activities in our classrooms (Erlauer, 2003).

According to the sixth principle, “every brain simultaneously perceives and creates parts and wholes.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) This principle questions the classical left-brain right-brain theory and states that in real life, each individual uses both hemispheres while learning, depending on what is learned and how it is learned. Thus, as teachers rather than separating our learners as right-brained and left-brained and teaching accordingly, we should incorporate classroom activities that stimulate both hemispheres. Actually, we need to use “whole-brain strategies.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1)

The seventh principle states “learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception.”(Sonoma, 2012, p.1) If students never use the information they have gained outside the classroom, learning will naturally stop. Thus, the classroom activities should be related to the real life tasks and activities. Again, the learners should be encouraged to do research, observations and investigations outside the classroom.

The eighth principle claims “learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) In fact, most of the time individuals learn intuitively, in ways they do not understand. Through “active processing,” learners will have the chance to review what and how they have learned unconsciously and take the responsibility of their own learning (Sonoma, 2012, p.1).

According to the ninth principle, there are two types of memory: “spatial” and rote. (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) In the rote memory system, the information is memorized and this doesn’t mean that it is used in our lives. This memory has nothing to do with imagination and creativity. Therefore, the things memorized and learned by rote are forgotten easily. However, the spatial memory involves learning by experience, by using our imagination and creativity. As a result, as it is stated in the tenth principle “the brain understands and remembers best when facts and skills are embedded in natural spatial memory.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) For this reason, we have to help the learners to experience the information through real-life classroom tasks and we also assist them in making connections between various sorts of information by means of concept maps and concept cartoons.

According to the eleventh principle, “learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) If there is no feedback and there are fixed timelines on the activity, the students will most probably dislike learning. Thus, students should be allowed to learn at their own paces and they should be provided with continuous feedback. However, this shouldn’t be confused with challenge. Challenge can be sustained though tasks that encourage students to use their higher order thinking skills, imagination and creativity. Use of relaxation techniques in the classroom will also be beneficial in reducing the level of stress hormones in the body resulting from threat. The use of humor, enjoying activities and even music will all help to get rid of threat (Jensen, 1998).

The final principle reveals “each brain is unique.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) This principle considers different learning styles and unique ways of patterning. We should not only consider these differences while preparing our materials and activities but also help our learners understand how they learn and perceive the world.

To sum up, majority of these principles address the importance of brainstorming activities, problem-solving activities, cooperative learning activities, and concept maps and concept cartoons in making learning compatible with the processes of brain. Considering this, in this paper it is aimed to provide such hands on classroom activities that can be used in the language learning environment. The activities presented in this paper are taken from course books or resources that are used for the Instructional Principles and Methods courses offered at Faculties of Education of various Turkish Universities (Doğanay, 2009; Erginer, 2008). However, they are adapted for English Language Teaching (ELT) situation and they are related to the basic principles of Brain Based Learning.

Classroom Activities

Activity 1: Six Thinking Hats

This is a technique created by Edward de Bono for the business management world. However, it is also used in the learning environment in order to help students to look at an issue from many angles (Doğanay, 2009). Each "Thinking Hat" is a different style of thinking. The following figure summarizes what kind of thinking each hat represents through the questions that the individual wearing the hat should ask.

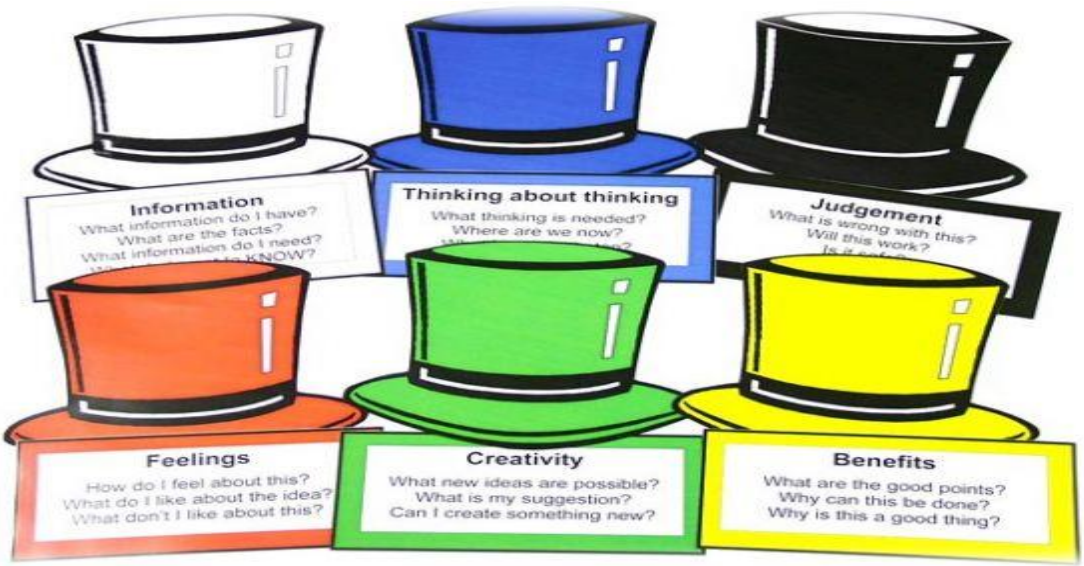


Figure 1: The questions that the individual wearing the hat should ask

Goals:

Learners will be able to;

1. get prepared for writing by brainstorming their ideas on a given topic.
2. organize their essays to write a unified and coherent essay
3. improve different styles of thinking

Theme: The advantages and disadvantages of being an English teacher at a Turkish University.

Procedures:

1- Divide the classroom into 6 groups. (Assuming that there are 24 students in the class, we will have 3 students in each group)

2-Provide each group a hat and describe them how they should approach the theme.

White Hat: Describe what you know about "being an English teacher" at a Turkish University e.g. what type of training is required to become an English teacher? What types of universities can an English teacher work at? What are the requirement procedures? Etc.

Red Hat: Describe your emotions/feelings towards teaching, especially teaching English to Turkish students at the university level.

Yellow Hat: Describe the advantages of being an English teacher at a Turkish University.

Black Hat: Describe the disadvantages of being an English teacher at a Turkish University.

Green Hat: Provide suggestions regarding (e.g. the improvement of working conditions, the future of teaching English etc.)

Blue Hat: Summarize what is discussed related to the advantages and disadvantages. Make predictions about the future of teaching English at Turkish Universities.

1. Rearrange the groups and ask each to write a well organized paragraph about the issues that they have discussed within their groups. A member from each group comes together and forms another group. Make sure that each new group will have members with different hats. When the new groups are arranged, ask them to write an essay about the topic, "the advantages and disadvantages of being an English teacher at a Turkish University."
2. Collect the paragraphs at the end of the activity. Give feedback to the groups and ask them to write their final drafts.
3. Post the essays on the bulletin board or on a cartoon on the wall of the classroom.

Activity 2: The Problem Solving House

Goals:

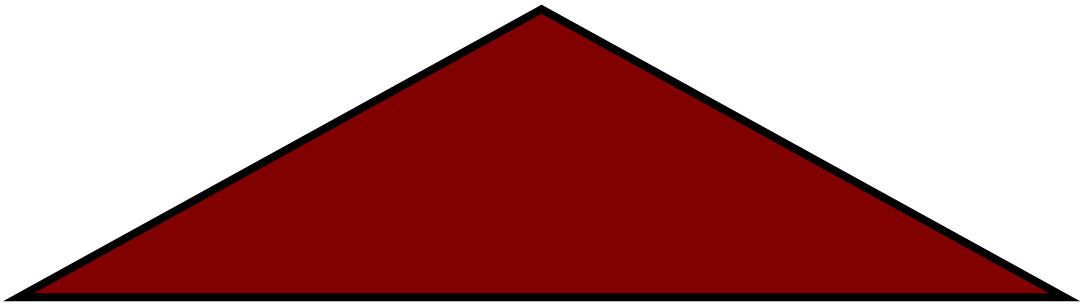
Students will be able to

1. improve their speaking skills through discussion
2. break the ice within the class during the first days of school year
3. express their opinions and feelings towards the topic
4. use their higher order thinking skills, imagination and creativity

Theme: The Challenges of Learning English

Procedures: You can do this as a whole class discussion activity or you can ask students to discuss each question in groups first and then turn it into a whole-class discussion.

1. Provide figure 2 as an illustration to the class and state that this house has six rooms and each room has a question to be answered. By answering these questions, they will try to find solutions to solve their problems in learning English.
2. Try to open the questions in each room one by one. Once the answers to the first question are taken, go to the second room and so on.



What are the challenges?	**Why do you have these challenges?**	**How can they help you?**
Which of them do you encounter the most?	**Who or What can help you to overcome these challenges?**	**What are you planning to do now?**

Figure 2: The questions in the rooms of Problem Solving House

Activity 3: Station

Goals:

Students will be able to

1. improve their grammatical and lexical knowledge
2. to have fun in the classroom

3. use their imagination and creativity

Theme: Global Warming

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into four stations. (Assuming that there are 20 students in the class, there will be 5 students in each station)

2. Provide each station with instructions about the task. Remember that each station will have a different task to accomplish.

* The first station can write a short poem on global warming. The necessary words can either be given or not. (E.g. Climate; Temperature; Penguins; Flood)

* The second station can create a cartoon on global warming. The cartoon can be provided and the students can be asked to fill in the speech bubble(s).

* The third group can write a joke by filling in a list about "the five best things about global warming.

* The forth group can prepare an advertisement with a slogan (a catch phrase).

1. When students finish the task in their station, they visit the other stations and complete the tasks provided there. (Each group will complete the tasks in each station)

2. Once the tasks in each station are finished, you can post what is produced on the walls of the classroom and/or school.

Conclusion

To conclude, all these three activities are believed to be compatible with the basic principles of Brain Based Learning. First of all, all necessitate learners to work together in groups and learn from each other as it is in cooperative learning, which is highly valued by Brain-based learning. All three also attends to different thinking and learning styles, as mentioned in the twelfth principle. Furthermore, while carrying out these activities, the learners need to move around the classroom by grouping, regrouping, visiting stations etc. Again by displaying the learners' products of the walls of the school and classroom, as it is suggested in the procedures of the activities, teachers will have the chance to sustain "peripheral" learning (Sonoma, 2012, p.1). In addition to these general characteristics, each activity has its own specific features attending to the general principles of Brain Based Learning.

The first activity, Six Thinking Hats, is a brainstorming activity which requires learners to organize and categorize their thoughts as it is described in the principle of "patterning." (Sonoma, 2012, p.1) Besides, during this activity by enabling learners to consider the topic from different angles and to use different thinking styles not only thoughts but also emotions are evoked in the patterning process.

The second activity, The Problem Solving House, is a problem solving activity attending to the real life problems of the students related to language learning. It also aims to make learners to be conscious of their problems and provide them practical ways to solve them. In other words, it encourages learners to take responsibility of their own learning as it is stated in the eighth principle about making “unconscious processes conscious.” (Sonoma, 2012, p.1). Again, by attending to the problems of learners, teachers will have the chance to create empathy within the classroom at the first day of the school. This will eventually lead to appositive classroom atmosphere, which is highly considered in most of the principles of Brain Based Learning.

The third activity, Station, requires learners to use their imagination and creativity by activating their “spatial memory” as it is explained in the ninth and tenth principle (Sonoma, 2012, p.1). By writing poems, jokes and slogans, learners will also have the chance to reduce threat and increase challenge in the classroom. In brief, they will have the chance to learn through such an enjoying and fun activity as it is emphasized in the eleventh principle. Considering all these important issues, all three activities are highly recommended to be used in the language classroom. The teachers may do the necessary changes taking into account the age and language level of their students and the themes that they want to cover.

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Biodata

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Motivation and Blogging in the EFL Writing Classroom

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Abstract

Many EFL Instructors across Turkey struggle with the issue of motivation in their writing classes. Blogs are increasingly viewed as a solution to this challenge because they offer a collaborative, relevant, and supportive medium for students to interact with each other, and their instructor. This study explores the motivating qualities of blogs in the EFL writing classroom at a private, English-medium Turkish university. Data gathered through surveys, interviews, and student blogs support current literature indicating that blogs do have a motivating effect in the EFL writing classroom. The authors utilize Bruning and Horn's (2000) "Motivation-Enhancing Conditions" model to frame their discussion.

Introduction

Many EFL Instructors across Turkey struggle with the issue of motivation in their writing classes. This complex issue of student motivation toward writing in a second (or first) language has long vexed instructors. A substantial body of research has emerged in order to make sense of this multi-faceted phenomenon; Dörnyei (2003) has provided us with a comprehensive theoretical overview. While there is general consensus that student motivation is, in part, intrinsically derived, there is a good deal of support for the notion that the instructor plays a critical role in motivation toward writing (e.g. Bruning & Horn, 2000; Dörnyei, 2003; Lo & Hyland, 2007; Pinkman, 2005).

The notion of facilitating instructor-inspired motivation has, in recent years, drawn much attention to the use of technology in the EFL writing classroom. Specifically, to the use of blogs. Early conversations regarding blogs were oriented toward their introduction as a practical application in the language classroom. They were considered appealing because of their authentic, interesting and communicative nature (Pinkman, 2005), they provided students with "a context that is controlled by them" (Ducate & Lomicka, 2005), and they served as an "ideal tool for non-techie faculty to construct and manage their own website" (Wu, 2008).

While blogs have garnered broad acceptance in the language classroom, there remains fertile ground for exploring their actual benefits for language learners and instructors. One specific question being asked is whether instructor-facilitated blogging serves as a motivational tool for writing (Blackstone, et al., 2007; Trajtemberg & Yiakoumetti, 2011). Blogging in the EFL classroom, it has been posited, provides opportunities for students to "engage at a more meaningful level with the language" while also allowing students "social interaction and self-expression" (Lo & Hyland, 2007). Likewise, blogs are perceived as opening the door to increased collaboration among students in a "meaningful space" that encourages peer-to-peer critical interaction (Blackstone et al., 2007). It is this "autonomy and empowerment" that serve as "key elements in fostering learners' confidence and desire to write" (Trajtemberg & Yiakoumetti, 2011).

It is within this context of the blog as a useful tool for EFL writing instructors to motivate their students that we are conducting this study. In order to do so, we are turning to a framework developed by Bruning and Horn (2000), in which they define four distinct "clusters" that identify "motivation-enhancing conditions" that are under the control of the instructor and subsequently help students to "enter, persist, and succeed in this ill-defined problem space we call writing."

The first cluster identified by Bruning and Horn is the "nurturing of functional beliefs about the nature of writing and its outcomes." The instructor's role in this cluster is to ensure that students are aware of the possibilities and potentials of writing, as well as a "realistic appraisal of the difficulties and challenges of writing." Their second cluster "fosters student engagement through authentic goals and contexts." To this end, students are given tasks that they perceive as practical and relevant.

The third cluster involves establishing "a supportive context to develop requisite writing skills." This, they identify as providing adequate task framing, feedback, and practice opportunities. The fourth set of conditions emphasizes the creation of a "positive emotional environment, where ideas and feelings can be expressed safely."

There is alignment between Bruning & Horn's framework and the literature on the motivational qualities of blogs. Specifically, parallels can be drawn between those conditions described in clusters two, three, and four, and the apparent motivating qualities in blogs. In cluster-two, the focus is on practical and relevant tasks as motivators, and cluster-three emphasizes the "supportive context" for developing writing skills. By comparison, blogs generate "teacher and peer support" resulting in a "real environment for social interaction and meaningful learning" (Trajtemberg & Yiakoumetti, 2011).

Likewise, blogs offer "accessibility beyond the limits of the traditional classroom" (Blackstone et al., 2007), implying that the task is not artificially constrained by the time and space of the typical learning environment. Finally, cluster-four suggests that instructors establish a "positive emotional environment" in which free expression is permitted. In parallel, Trajtemberg and Yiakoumetti justify the use of blogs in their language classrooms because they make students "feel sufficiently comfortable to express themselves in written English"(2011). Discussion of our research project utilizes Bruning and Horn's model to frame the results of our study on the motivational effects of blogs in the EFL writing class.

Methodology

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect that blogs in the EFL writing classroom have on student motivation. In order to assess this effect, qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were employed.

The research question of the present study is:

In what way does the use of blogs in the EFL writing classroom increase student motivation toward writing?

Setting

The present study was conducted in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) preparatory program at a private, English-medium university in Istanbul, Turkey during the second term in 2012.

Participants

Seventeen (17) students participated in the present study. The participants were studying in the EFL preparatory program. As English is the medium of instruction at the university, all students are required to successfully complete the preparatory program in order to pursue academic studies. The age range of the students was between 18 and 22. The English language level of the participants was “intermediate” as determined by the proficiency test administered by the university.

Research Paradigm

A multi-method approach was used in the present study in order to strengthen the reliability of the results with a comprehensive multidimensional perspective view (Foster, 1997). Data to explore the research question was collected through quantitative and qualitative means. Data triangulation was achieved as the data serving the same research question was gathered by means of qualitative and quantitative methods (Denzin, 1978).

Sampling

Stratified sampling was utilized in the present study. Students were grouped according to averages on the proficiency exam. Pre and post focus groups were comprised of students with differing writing averages, thus creating sub-populations that mirrored the larger class profile.

Data Collection

In order to assess the effect that blogs in the EFL writing classroom have on student motivation, the following methods were employed to gather data: a) pre and post questionnaires, b) pre and post semi-structured focus group interviews, and c) student blogs.

Procedure

The Pilot Study

This action research project is an outgrowth of a 7-week pilot study that was conducted in an upper-level EFL writing course in the preparatory program at the same university in which this study took place. The goal of the pilot was to introduce students to blogs and blogging, and determine whether this would impact student motivation in the writing class. The tasks in this upper-level course are more academic and less communicative in design; blogging assignments were related to the academic content discussed in the course.

At the completion of the course, students were surveyed for their impressions of the blogging experience. While students reported increased comfort levels with the technology and the concept of blogging, it was not as apparent that the activity increased motivation levels, particularly regarding academic writing. Of the 14 students in the class who took the survey, eight reported having read a blog previously; only two had written a blog post prior to the class. When asked if they understood why the blog was used, 12 answered “Yes”, while two chose the response, "I am not sure why we use it." In an indirect measure of motivation, 12 found blogging "very useful" or "useful" and two indicated that they were "not sure" about blogging's usefulness.

One of the outcomes of the pilot study was the observation that exposure to blogging earlier in the EFL program would be useful in order to help students develop a comfort level with it as a language learning tool. This observation has informed the current study regarding blogging and motivation in the writing class.

The Study

In order to assess the effect that blogs in the EFL writing classroom have on student motivation, the following methods were employed to gather data: a) pre and post questionnaires, b) pre and post semi-structured focus group interviews, and c) student blogs.

At the beginning of the 7-week term, an 11-item questionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale was administered to the students in order to gauge their motivation toward writing (see Appendix). In addition, the researchers conducted a semi-structured focus group interview with the participants in order to learn their feelings and motivation levels toward writing, as well as their personal experiences with blogs and blogging. The focus group interview was semi-structured, allowing for negotiation and expansion of the interviewee's responses (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989).

Following the questionnaire and focus groups, participants were provided with a list of writing topics. They were then asked to choose the ten most appealing topics from the list. They were also given the option to suggest topics that did not appear on the list. Responses were collated, and based on a frequency count, a final list of weekly blogging topics was determined.

Participants were then instructed in how to create their own blogs, how to upload media (e.g. photos and videos) and how to post comments to others' blogs. Each week, for five weeks, the instructor took the students to the writing lab where they would write that week's post. At the end of each session, the writing instructor, who was also one of the researchers, wrote comments on each blog. The comments were only content related; i.e. nothing concerning grammar or style. During this period, the students were also encouraged to follow their classmates' blogs.

Following the fifth week of writing, post focus-group interview was conducted in order to learn student perceptions on blogging, writing class, and their motivation toward writing. Similarly, the 11-item questionnaire was re-administered to also determine if there were any changes in perceptions toward writing.

Data Analysis

Pre and post questionnaire results were analyzed by using SPSS, version 17.0. The pre and post questionnaire results within the group were analyzed by means of a Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test; a non-parametric alternative for a paired sample t-test. Nonparametric analysis was preferred due to the small size of the population. In terms of reliability, the questionnaire had a Cronbach alpha value of .81.

The data obtained from pre and post interviews were analyzed by means of pattern coding. Following transcription of the interviews, the findings were narrowed down and core concepts were extracted. Once coding had taken place, necessary information about the codes were found and listed accordingly.

Results

The preliminary focus group was intended to gather student perceptions toward: a) writing in general, b) the possible factors that would motivate students in writing, and c) their familiarity with and impressions of blogs and blog writing. The discussions revealed that students realized a relationship between improved writing skills and improved English language overall. They stated that writing helps them to generate ideas and to express themselves. They also pointed out that writing is a way to show their competence in other aspects of the language particularly in grammar, vocabulary, reading, and speaking. In addition, they believe that writing will help them in their academic coursework, and in their future careers.

Regarding motivation, students articulated a desire to write about familiar topics; i.e. those that they perceive as non-academic. They indicated a lack of interest toward academic writing because “academic topics are superficial and irrelevant to our life,” in addition to a lack of background knowledge on academic topics. Rather than writing well-structured academic essays, students expressed greater interest in “free writing.” Students also stated that in using the internet and computers, they feel more motivated toward writing; indeed, in the discussion, they requested “more computerized writing in computer labs.” Finally, they all perceived blog writing as a potentially enjoyable activity; with the exception of one student, all reported no prior experience with writing blogs. They view blog writing as more personal and free, thereby making it an easier exercise. The end result being, as they stated, that blog writing will make them feel more confident in writing with “more psychological comfort.”

The aim of the pre-blogging questionnaire was to quantify student perceptions regarding writing, blogs, and blog writing. Twelve students in the course completed the questionnaire. Seven of the students reported that they “often enjoy” writing lessons. Eight students reported “almost always” feeling confident about writing, whereas four of the students indicated that they “sometimes have concerns about being successful in writing.” Seven of the respondents “only sometimes find writing lessons interesting and attend the lessons enthusiastically.” Regarding technology, ten of the students indicated a preference for writing on paper to the computer. In terms of motivation, ten students reported feeling more engaged in writing if the writing topics are interesting; whereas eight of the respondents “are not willing to write if they are not graded by the teacher.” In contrast, six of the students felt that having their writing viewed, or commented on, by the teacher and peers would not be motivating. Looking forward, seven students believe that writing lessons are “beneficial for their academic studies at university and future career.”

The end-of-term focus group aimed to determine whether a change had occurred in student impressions of writing and blogging. Regarding the blogging experience, Students felt that blogs gave them the opportunity for self-reflection by offering them a chance to see what they have achieved in English so far.

Perhaps the most common expressions shared by the students were feelings of “freedom” and “independent,” in relation to the use of more natural, colloquial language. In addition, “not being graded” and “not needing to monitor our mistakes” made us feel “free” and “comfortable.” Comments about technology included, “Computerized writing was time-saving and practical,” and the admission that, “we will need to write on computer in our future life in our future education and business life anyway, so writing on computer was very beneficial.” We can surmise that the students had a positive experience because most reported that they intended to continue blogging after the course had been completed.

In terms of the writing experience, students stated that they felt more self-confident and productive in writing, essentially because the instructor was not monitoring their blogs for language or organization, nor was it being graded or corrected. They found the lessons more “enjoyable and sincere,” as blogs have given them a chance for self-expression. Overall, the students reported that they were more engaged and motivated in writing as they had a chance to write about more “current and personal” and “relevant” topics, which interest them more.

When asked specifically about the influence of the blogging on their academic writing, the students noted that they generally associate academic writing with time-limited assignments, thereby establishing a negative perception of this skill area. Some students did see value in blogging in relation to developing academic writing ability. They reported that the blogging experience had been helpful in improving their academic writing as they monitored their language more and wrote more carefully by trying to correct their grammar and vocabulary mistakes, knowing that blogs were open to everyone.

At the end of the five-week period of blogging, the twelve respondents from the first survey were asked to respond to the same eleven items that they had been asked at the beginning of the term. In summary, ten of the twelve responded that they “almost always” find writing lessons enjoyable and that they “feel confident” about success in writing; nine of the students “almost always find writing lessons interesting and attend the lessons enthusiastically.” Eleven of the students reported feeling more engaged when the topics are “interesting.” In contrast to the general feeling expressed by students in the focus groups that they enjoyed the freedom from grading that blogging provided, six of the survey respondents indicated that they were not willing to write if no grading was involved. While eight of the students indicated that they “can’t cope with the grammar and vocabulary problems they face in writing lessons on their own without the teacher’s or their peers’ help,” seven of the students did indicate that comments from peers or the instructor “may not enhance their interest in writing lessons.”

Discussion

When comparing the results of the pre and post questionnaires and the focus groups, a number of noteworthy contrasts emerged. There were slight increases in the number of students who were interested in writing, particularly if the instructor and peers made comments on their postings. A significant increase emerged in the number who felt confident in writing. Before the blogging experience, most students believed that they needed the teacher and their peers to cope with vocabulary and grammar problems. However, after the blogging experience, there was a slight increase in the number of students who believe that they can cope with such problems on their own.

To provide a practical context for our discussion, we turn to a model developed Bruning and Horn (2000), in which they identify four distinct "clusters" of instructor-influenced "motivation-enhancing conditions.”

The first cluster identified by Bruning and Horn is the "nurturing of functional beliefs about the nature of writing and its outcomes." The instructor's role in this cluster is to ensure that students are aware of the possibilities and challenges of writing. For the purposes of our discussion, we will not attempt to draw a parallel between this cluster and the writing of blogs.

Their second cluster "fosters student engagement through authentic goals and contexts." To this end, students are given tasks that they perceive as practical and relevant. Students in the EFL writing course in this study, reported through the follow-up questionnaire and focus groups that they were more engaged and motivated in writing as they had a chance to write about more “current and personal” and “relevant” topics, which interest them more. Some of the students also indicated that they “almost always find writing lessons interesting and attend the lessons enthusiastically.” From individual blog posts, students also supported this notion with comments such as, “In addition, I keep writing after school. Creating something helps people feel more productive.”

The third cluster involves establishing "a supportive context to develop requisite writing skills." The authors define this as providing adequate task framing, feedback, and practice opportunities. Student perceptions of the blogging experience in this regard tended to be positive. Many stated that they appreciated the context for its freedom from grading and lack of focus on language correction, evidenced by one student's blog post: "Teacher do not grade us about blog. Therefore, we do not have scores concern and we can write better things than lessons. In this way, we develop ourselves about writing lessons." Likewise, the students commented on the opportunity for self-reflection, leading to their own writing improvement. While some did indicate that they felt inhibited by instructor and peer feedback on the blogs, most were in favor of the constructive comments that they were receiving. As a final point for this cluster, most students reported positive impressions regarding the use of technology in improving writing, stating that "Computerized writing was time-saving and practical," and the admission that, "we will need to write on computer in our future life in our future education and business life anyway, so writing on computer was very beneficial."

The fourth set of conditions emphasizes the creation of a "positive emotional environment, where ideas and feelings can be expressed safely." Students provided the most comments that would fall into this category. They consistently remarked that "not being graded" and "not needing to monitor our mistakes" made us feel "free" and "comfortable." One student wrote on their blog, "I like these lessons because we are more free than other lessons. I look forward to writing blogs all week." Another student also wrote, "In my opinion, blog lessons very beneficial for us. I always feel like a free girl in these lessons. I did not think about my language mistakes." Many students also mentioned that while they recognized that the blog was a public space, it was the prerogative of the writer to accept or respond to peer feedback. This notion was summed up by one student who wrote on their blog, "You completely are alone in there. If you do not want to be alone in there. You can accept other people's comments."

While the overall study itself was rather short, we believe that it offered positive evidence to support the notion that blogging in the EFL classroom can enhance motivation toward writing. It appears that assignments that are non-academic, non-graded and without correction by the instructor generated the lowest stress levels among the students. Students did seem to embrace the open nature of blogging, and allowing the instructor and other students to read and comment on their own blogs. There were some who appreciated the blogging specifically because the assignments were non-academic. This would be a notion worth exploring as writing ability improves; if topics are content-related, and if the students have adequate background knowledge, will such blogging be more compelling? Finally, for instructors considering the use of blogging in the writing classroom, we believe that it would be beneficial to use a model such as Bruning and Horn's to help create the conditions that may maximize student motivation toward writing.

Limitations

The present study is not without its limitations. The first limitation comes from the small size of the group. The study was conducted in only one writing class, and therefore should be considered a case study. Some students missed classes during this period. In the end, five students were eliminated from the study, and the number of the participant students dropped to 12. The second limitation is regarding the length of the course. The blogging component of the course lasted for only five weeks. Certainly, more time is necessary to explore the long-term effects of blogging on motivation.

Implications for Further Research

Another study to investigate the effect of blogging on writing motivation may be conducted within a larger group of students. Another study with more blogging sessions may be conducted and long term effects could be investigated. A similar study on blogging could be conducted to investigate the effects of blogging on academic writing in the future.

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Biodata

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Appendix

Pre and Post questionnaires – administered in Turkish (Turkish version below)

MOTİVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The items in this "Motivation Questionnaire" aim to find out your opinions about the writing lesson.	**Always**	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**never**
1. I find writing lessons enjoyable.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. I believe that I can be successful in writing lessons.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. I find the writing topics interesting, so I feel engaged in the lessons.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. I am enthusiastic to write even if there is no assignment or an exam.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. I find writing lessons interesting and I am enthusiastic to attend writing lessons.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. I use the grammar and vocabulary I learn in writing lessons in other language skills.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
7. I believe that writing lessons are essential for my education and business career.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
8. I can cope with the language and vocabulary problems I face in writing lessons on my own without the teacher's or my peers' help.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
9. I feel more motivated to write if what I write is read by the teacher or my peers.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
10. I find writing lessons more interesting if the teacher or my peers make comments on what I write.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
11. I prefer writing on computer to writing on paper.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

MOTİVASYON ANKETİ

Motivasyon anketindeki sorular writing dersi hakkındaki genel düşüncelerinizi öğrenmek amacıyla verilmiştir.

	Her zaman	**Genelde**	**Bazen**	**Nadiren**	**Asla**
1.Writing derslerini eğlenceli buluyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Writing derslerinde başarılı olabileceğimi düşünüyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Derslerdeki yazdığımız konular ilgimi çekiyor, bu yüzden kendimi derse dahil olarak hissedebiliyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Öğretmenim ödev ya da not vermese bile, yazmak isterim.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. Writing derslerini ilgi çekici buluyorum ve istekli bir biçimde derslere devam ediyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Derslerde öğrendiğim gramer ve kelime bilgilerini başka alanlarda da kullanabiliyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
7. Writing dersinin okulum ve iş hayatım için gerekli olduğunu düşünüyorum.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
8. Derslerde karşılaştığım kelime veya gramer konusundaki zorlukları tek başıma – öğretmenimden ya da arkadaşlarımdan yardım almadan – çözebilirim.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
9. Yazdıklarım arkadaşlarım ya da öğretmenlerim tarafından okunsa, bu beni writing dersine karşı daha çok motive eder.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
10. Arkadaşlarım ya da öğretmenlerim yazdıklarıma yorum yazsalar writing dersleri daha çok ilgimi çeker.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
11. Bilgisayar ortamında yazmayı elle yazmaya tercih ederim.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

A Minority within a Minority: Challenges and Implications for New Francophone Immigrants Learning English

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Abstract

Learning English as second or foreign language within an English dominant environment should yield effective and positive results relatively quickly. Research has shown that living within the dominant language is a factor to an enhanced intrinsic motivation (Brown 2007). However, when learners fail to identify with the dominant language environment, not much may be gained. This semester-long study investigates implications and challenges facing a group of Francophone students learning English in a large University in Western Canada. These students are pursuing a bilingual degree within the French Campus of the University of Alberta. Learning English in this environment is further complicated since in the study, we realized that these students are in a minority context trying to learn English, within a larger French minority context, dominated by an English-only urban environment. During this study, we requested a survey from the students; in addition, we administered a placement test at the beginning of the semester and an achievement test at the end of semester. These two tests served as pre-test and post-tests to measure student progress. We also conducted oral interviews at the end of the semester, where we sought individual input on challenges and issues. A series of quantitative and qualitative analyses showed that, aside from the objectives of the course that were met, students' proficiency did not progress as one would assume in an English environment. There is a reticence on the part of these students to integrate into the English-speaking group. They are also holding on to their identities in terms of social interaction outside of the classroom: they remain together speaking French, rather than taking the chance to learn English, which they perceive as foreign to them. This study revealed that the political linguistic realities of Canada are at the heart of this minority context.

Introduction

Linguistic minorities and language rights are central to Canadian politics, law, culture and society. A series of legal acts address the bilingual nature of Canada. In 1969, The Official Language Act was passed by Canadian parliament, to ensure that both French and English are the official languages of Canada in matters pertaining to government and parliament. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982 and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1985, amended later in 1988, solidify the presence of both French and English in education, in legal proceedings, and in communication at both the provincial and federal level.

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act, essentially, establishes the belief that multiculturalism reflects the cultural diversity of Canadian society and "acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" ("Multiculturalism Policy of Canada" 3.1.a). The Multiculturalism Act, its implementation, and the overall notion of multiculturalism continue to be debated. Kymlicka and Bantling (2010), for instance, survey the disappointment with multicultural policies and the replacement of these policies with "integration" policies in Europe. However, in Canada, multiculturalism continues to be supported. Kymlicka and Bantling provide an overview of the complex Canadian multiculturalism policies from a theoretical and practical point of view, concluding that Canadian experience differs from that of Europe and that Canada is not facing "deep new divisions, pervasive radicalism or an illiberal challenge to its core democratic culture" (Kymlicka and Bantling, 2010, p.52). Similarly, Kymlicka (2008) argues for an analysis of Canadian multiculturalism policy, but not through a European lens.

Despite the celebrated respect and support to different cultures in Canada, immigrants perceive the need to learn at least one of the official languages in order to successfully participate in the labor market and receive the necessary information. Critics demonstrate that the knowledge of English and/or French is crucial for successful integration for new immigrants (Kymlicka and Bantling, 2010, Tamang, 2009). In response to this need, the federal government supports programs teaching immigrants English or French (Tamang, 2009)[3].

[3] Tamang also observes that in Alberta, since 1971 "allophone" languages can be included in the public school system, thus there are schools that offer bilingual education (such as Ukrainian-English, German-English, Chinese-English, etc.) in communities requiring that.

Based on legal texts, it would seem that the two official languages are blossoming within an egalitarian bilingualism. However, the reality in provinces is completely different. While French is dominant in Quebec, French is in a minority context in the rest of Canada, with the exception of New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual province. English dominates the rest of Canada. French-speaking Canadians and newly arrived immigrants who seek employment and/or want to increase their employment prospects must learn to speak English. However, when they find themselves in such a situation, identity issues as well as attachment of the first language and reticence towards learning English settle in.

In this article, we explore these issues within an academic environment. We are studying the language gains that students learning English make living in this minority-majority dichotomous environment. We seek to answer the following research questions:

- Living within an English speaking province, would the language competence gains in learning English be significantly higher than in taking English classes alone?
- What impact does the fact that students live in a minority French environment have on their English language learning progress?
- How do students' identity and linguistic background impact their attitudes and perceptions towards learning English?

Literature review

It is generally acknowledged that language is a significant factor in identity formation. Linguistic differences define nations, as well as ethnicities within nations. Language has been repeatedly used for political purposes, most frequently, with the purpose of replacing one identity with another, usually a more politically powerful one. Examples of such use of language abide in history, as they characterize the colonization of African nations, South America, India, Australia, or, more recently, the language politics of the former Soviet Union, where aggressive bilingualism was used. On the personal level, language allows individuals to verbalize and express their personal identities. Norton (1997), for example, demonstrates how speakers of any language repeatedly reconstruct their identities and their relations to the world through the active use of language. On a more social level, because language is linked to cultural values and norms of behavior (Dastgoshadeh and Jalilzadeh, 2011**)**, its use is an important apparatus in ethnic identity formation. More specifically, as demonstrated by other researchers (Kalbach and Kalbach, 1999a, 1999b), the use of one's mother tongue is the most important factor in retaining ethnic identity. Pigott and Kalbach (2005), Isajiw (1999, 1990), and Dreidger (1989) demonstrate that ethnic language retention is crucial in ethnic identity retention. From such an assumption, the learning of a language other than the mother tongue would be considered a threat to ethnic identity formation. Traditionally, it is perceived that learning an “international” language, such as English, disrupts the formation of ethnic identity and results in the formation of new identity, that of the adopted culture (in this case, it would be North American culture). However, some scholars believe that the relationship between mother tongue/ethnic identity and learnt language/non-ethnic culture does not have to be negative. For instance, Dastogashadeh and Jalilzadeh (2011) argue that international language learning could result “in the formation of an intercultural personality.” Similarly, while being aware of the discourses of colonialism and discriminatory labeling, Canagarajah (1999) and Pennycook (2001) question the notion of English linguistic imperialism**.**

Amidst the ongoing debate about the colonial nature of English learning, English language teachers are also concerned not only about postcolonial notions within English, but also about the very terms used to identify English language learners. For instance, Messekher (2011) argues that labels used to identify students who are learning English may lead to a feeling of students’ segregation and minoritazition. This is particularly true for students at this campus particular, where students who do not have the necessary number of credits in high-school English or English language examinations, are labeled as students with a “deficiency.” Generally, learning English does serve a positive purpose in the identity formation of a multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual global citizen. In Canada, the learning of English (a majority language) amongst French speakers (who are a minority either because they are of French background or because they are of the postcolonial African background) is more problematic for identity formation of such students.

Canada is not a uniquely bilingual country, and it is not the only country that pays specific attention (through census and cultural policies) to ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of its constituents (Prevost and Beaut, 2001). Arguably, Canadian multicultural policy, although strongly debated until now, exemplifies an attitude of coexisting ethnicities and cultures, and postulates a possibility of the above mentioned inter-cultural identity. On the one hand, for the French minority in Canada, English is a dominant language that threatens their identity formation. Thus, there is a strong movement to retain the French language in order maintain the French identity. On the other hand, from the point of view of immigrants, both French (although mostly in the province of Quebec) and English are the languages that threaten ethnic identities (First Nations and immigrant).

In Second language acquisition research, motivation is viewed as an essential component in learning a language. In general, motivation is divided into three categories.

From the behaviorist point of view, motivation is linked to the anticipation of a reward, to a desire to receive positive reinforcement and to external and individual forces. From the cognitive point of view, motivation is driven by basic human needs, such as exploring; it is linked to the degree of effort expended. The constructivist point of view sees motivation as linked to social context, to the community and to the social status; in this respect, it provides a sense of group security (Brown 2007). In the language learning process, motivation in all its forms is an important "affective variable," as Brown (2007) puts it. For Saville-Troike (2006), motivation plays an important role in determining "the level of effort which learners expend at various stages in their L2 development, and is often a key to ultimate level of proficiency."

Clearly, motivation is essential in building self-esteem and for encouraging continuous language learning outside of the classroom. Interestingly, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are intertwined for the students in this study. For Deci (1995) "intrinsically motivated behaviors are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination;" while for Brown (2007) "extrinsic motivation is fueled by the anticipation of a reward from outside beyond the self." While they are French-dominant speakers, students are learning English mainly for work purposes: English will give them an edge for better jobs. These students live in an English dominant environment, and one would assume that they would want to communicate and understand their new linguistic environment, but one must also wonder about the truth of this and its impact on their linguistic identities. Some immigrant students feel disappointed that they have been accepted to Canada partially based on their expertise of one of the official languages, but once they get here, they learn that that particular language knowledge does not ensure their ability to participate in the labor market in most of Canada, and consequently have to another language.

Dörnyei (2001) and Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) classify students' motivation into an instrumental and an integrative categories. During the language learning process, students start taking responsibility for their language learning experience depending on "whether a learner's context or orientation is (1) academic or career related (instrumental), or (2) socially or culturally oriented (integrative)" (Brown 2007). The students' linguistic identity plays a major part in the progress they make, regardless of their motivation, be it instrumental or extrinsic. For many students, Canada is a land of opportunity and promise. Moving to a new country, immigrants need to upgrade their skills or training. However, certain Francophone students are in for a linguistic surprise. Several people immigrate to Canada with the belief that they will be able to find work and that their French-language skills should be suitable for a bilingual country. However, upon arriving in Canada, these immigrants realize the difficulty of finding work throughout much of Canada without a good knowledge of English. In other words, a Francophone immigrant student needs to not only upgrade his or her skills to suit Canadian standards, but he or she must also add another language. Simply put, students must learn English. They **have** to learn English even though they first assume that they are living in a bilingual country, and thus the progress they make is hindered by this negative attitude towards imposing the other official language onto them.

Context of the Study

Taking place in a francophone campus of a large University in Western Canada, the context of the study is very unique, since the students pursue their studies in French, yet they have to master English as well, for their official degrees are bilingual. Although French is the language of instruction, the campus is located within an English dominant environment. Consequently, the students are in a francophone linguistic minority context. French is exclusively used among academic and non-academic staff as the language of teaching, of work and of communication. Hence, the language acquisition dimension becomes an important aspect of any content course, whether in English or in French.

While French is dominant within this minority context; ironically, English which is dominant outside the campus, is actually in a minority setting within this campus. Hence, this study targets a special group of students: Francophone students who need to improve their English language competence. The English as a Second-language courses at this campus are divided into three main levels (Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced proficiency) with the overarching goal to provide students with the mandatory pre-university level English language pre-requisites. The content is diverse and covers a wide range of topics and skills.

This study continued for one full semester. Twenty-two students were taking the English courses that were spread over four levels. All 22 students agreed to participate in this study. Students were divided into three main "linguistic" groups (Table 1 below).

Table 1

Breakdown of Participants by Language and Mother Tongue

	Canadian	Immigrants	International students	
Number of students	5	11	5	
First language	French	French	French	Other
			2	3

The participants come from diverse linguistic, socio political and demographic backgrounds. The majority of the students taking the English courses are immigrants coming from Africa, but there are a few coming from former French colonies in the Caribbean. About a quarter comes from Quebec. The remaining 25% is made of international students, coming from France or other non-French speaking countries. In this study, three students were learning both French and English as foreign languages. The diversity within this group makes it such that their social and linguistic identities play a major role in the language learning process.

Methodology

At the beginning of the study, students were informed of the study and consent forms were collected. Along with those forms, the students were given questionnaires about their academic and linguistic background, as well as the use of English and French in social instances and in work contexts. In the questionnaires, there was a section that targeted their perceptions and their attitudes towards learning and using both English and French.

Upon being admitted to the program, students took the English placement test. This test is used in this study as a pre-test and serves as a point of reference regarding competence progress.

Description of the English Placement Test (EPT). The EPT is an in-house test, developed by the testing team at this university, and it targets the objectives of the English program on the campus. The placement test is divided into two sections: written and oral.

The written part contains three sections: grammar, reading and writing. The grammar part consists of multiple choice items which assess the understanding of simple and complex grammatical structures, in order to determine students' level of grammatical knowledge. The second section is a reading comprehension task: after reading a text, students answer a series of closed and open-ended questions about their comprehension of the text. The last section is the writing one, and it is divided into three parts. The first task is a combined reading and writing task. Upon reading a text, students are required to produce a short written text relying mostly on relevant information from the text. The second writing task is a short paragraph assignment with the purpose of assessing students' ability to organize a formal academic paragraph. The last part is an argumentative essay where students are required to take a stand on a controversial question. The purpose of this task is to evaluate students' ability to use language, grammar, vocabulary in context, to organize and present ideas in a formal academic essay, and to evaluate the higher-level thinking skills.

The oral part of the EPT is a one-on-one interview/discussion that follows these stages: warm up, description of a visual aid, follow up and winding down. For the more advanced students, the follow up would include an argumentative discussion. The oral part provides the team with the students' oral communication skills, their fluency in using English, and their ability to use correct structures and appropriate vocabulary when speaking.

Table 2, below, shows all possible correlations among the two parts of the EPT. All of these correlations show statistical significance at the 0.01, and 0.05 alpha levels.

Table 2

Correlation among the Different Part of the EPT

		PTGrammar	PTRead	PTWrite1	PTWrite2
PTGrammar	Pearson Correlation	1	.528*	.561**	.664**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.012	.007	.001
	N	22	22	22	22
PTRead	Pearson Correlation	.528*	1	.876**	.877**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012		.000	.000
	N	22	22	22	22
PTWrite1	Pearson Correlation	.561**	.876**	1	.876**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000		.000
	N	22	22	22	22
PTWrite2	Pearson Correlation	.664**	.877**	.876**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	
	N	22	22	22	22
PTWrite3	Pearson Correlation	.720**	.808**	.867**	.864**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000
	N	17	17	17	17
PTOral	Pearson Correlation	.517*	.771**	.758**	.856**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.000	.000	.000
	N	22	22	22	22

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Description of the Course Achievement Test . While the EPT has been used as a Pre-test, the achievement test results were used as a post-test, to answer the research questions that we raised at the beginning.

The achievement test differs from the EPT in the design and the objective since it serves different purpose. The achievement test directly assesses what has been covered in the specific course and is administered at the end of the semester. It consists of three parts: grammar, reading, and writing. The grammar section targets the learning outcomes of a student's specific level. The number of items in the grammar part differs in each level. The reading part consists of one reading task with four sections that evaluate specific vocabulary acquired in a particular level, as well as student's capacity to comprehend written English and synthesize knowledge of a text that mirrors what they have been studying in the class. The writing part differs from level to level, but in general students are required to produce formal paragraphs and formal essays. At the basic level, students write only paragraphs, whereas at the intermediate and higher levels, they write a paragraph and an essay. At the advanced level, students write analytical essays which demonstrate higher degree of reading comprehension.

Results

According to the EPT results, participants were placed in the course appropriate to their levels. At the end of the semester, all participants in all the levels sat for the final achievement test. The achievement tests differ from one level to the other and contain varying information and tasks that were deemed appropriate to the level by the teaching team. For the purpose of this study, the goal was to find out if the objectives of the course were met and if the outside factors play a positive role in enhancing students' English language competence. Since not all tests contain the same information, we focused on comparing tasks that were similar to the EPT, such as the grammar section and the first writing task (that consists of an academic paragraph). Given this restriction, two statistical tests were performed on 8 participants. Even though the sample is smaller than in the EPT, for validity purposes, we could only focus on these 8 subjects, since the achievement test for these participants contained the same parts as the EPT.

First, we ran a t-test for comparing the means in each section between the ETP and the Achievement test. Table 3 below summarizes the findings of this first statistical test

Table 3

Paired Samples Statistics—Repeated Measures between EPT and ACT

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	PTGrammar	69.13	8	20.897	7.388
	ATGrammar	80.25	8	8.464	2.993
Pair 2	PTRead	58.50	8	29.462	10.416
	ATRead	79.63	8	6.523	2.306
Pair 3	PTWrite1	49.63	8	32.689	11.557
	ATWrite1	54.88	8	27.560	9.744
Pair 4	PTWrite2	52.63	8	26.344	9.314
	ATWrite2	61.50	8	16.116	5.698
Pair 5	PTWrite3	54.38	8	27.831	9.840
	ATWrite3	67.13	8	13.336	4.715

From the large differences in the means and the standard deviations between the EPT and the Achievement Test (ACT), it is clear that students' English did improve: for instance, the mean in the grammar section was 69% in the EPT and it went up to 80.25% in the ACT, with a σ of 20.90 for the EPT and 8.47 for the ACT. So, clearly students' results improved after one semester. However, while we can safely state that the objectives of the class were met, the differences in the results were not statistically significant, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Paired Samples Test – continued

		Paired Differences			Paired Differences 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	PTGrammar - ATGrammar	-11.125	19.379	6.852	-27.326	5.076	-1.624	7	.148
Pair 2	PTRead - ATRead	-21.125	28.089	9.931	-44.608	2.358	-2.127	7	.071
Pair 3	PTWrite1 - ATWrite1	-5.250	43.866	15.509	-41.923	31.423	-.339	7	.745
Pair 4	PTWrite2 - ATWrite2	-8.875	21.250	7.513	-26.640	8.890	-1.181	7	.276
Pair 5	PTWrite3 - ATWrite3	-12.750	26.980	9.539	-35.306	9.806	-1.337	7	.223

In addition to the t-test, we did correlations between the two tests to check if the same pattern in the EPT fits the ACT (table 5 below). With the exception of one pair--the first writing task--where students' performance in the two tests showed a weak correlation, results show that there were moderate correlations among students in the other parts of the tests.

Table 5

Paired samples correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	8	.375	.360
Pair 2	8	.316	.445
Pair 3	8	-.053	.900
Pair 4	8	.591	.123
Pair 5	8	.302	.467

However, the correlation among the students in the same pairs was not statistically significant. Several factors need to be considered here: the sample size might have an effect in this correlation, but we could only use 8 participants in the ACT, since these tests are parallel to the EPT. The other 14 students had only one part in the ACT, which was the classical essay, and hence were removed from the data analysis.

Discussion and conclusion

This is the first study on this group of students, and in this exploratory research project, the results support our initial hypotheses. While the placement test is effective in identifying students' competence and helping administrators' place them in the appropriate level, the achievement test serves to assess what has been covered in class during the semester.

Although students did meet the objective of the courses, according the results of the achievement test, our initial results support that they did not gain significantly more from living within the English dominant context. They are learning English within a French microcosm, and outside of the classroom, their interactions in English are very limited. Students in this group do not seem to want to immerse themselves in the English language, socially. There is a sense of attachment to French as the language of their identity. In short, they are reticent to learn English, as it is perceived as the language of work, or necessity, and not a language for social interactions.

From the students' questionnaires, two general trends come out. First, for the francophone students, mainly those coming from Quebec, there is a "have to learn" stigma. Students are resistant to immerse themselves in English. Most of them limit their use of English to the classroom and in necessary communication, such as when they are off campus to do some shopping. This is understandable, since all their other content courses are in French. These students perceive English as a "class, or a course" they are taking, and need to get credit for it: English is not a language to live in and/or with.

Second, amongst students who are immigrants to Canada, a sense of unfairness emerges from responses. These individuals have to demonstrate their ability to speak one of the official languages during the immigration process. They also have misconceptions about coming to a bilingual country. The reality is that if these individuals choose to live outside of Quebec in Canada, they need to learn English; hence, they judge that it is unfair that they have to re-qualify themselves.

Regardless of these two trends among participants, extrinsic motivation emerges as the main driver for these students taking English courses. Even though they will work mostly in French as teachers, learning English will be an asset to having a financial plus and to getting a job. The feeling of being in minority context is thus heightened.

As stated above, this is an exploratory research, and this study is the first among many. We plan to replicate the study with parallel forms of the achievements and placements tests that would allow us to gather more data and ensure that the group sizes will not be a factor in the results. We also plan to conduct various qualitative and case studies, where we investigate the students' interactions in English and in French socially and in work places. We aim to find out how they live linguistically in this challenging and complex minority vs. majority environment. We would also like to seek input from potential employers, university administrators, and other federal and provincial government agencies about the support, needs and perception regarding the English competence and linguistic identity issues of this cohort of students.

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Bakery Products as Metaphors: Peace Building through Language Teaching

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Abstract

In this study, I analyze the uses of different Turkish Sephardic, Armenian, Greek, and Bahá'í bakery products and fruits or vegetables used with them that appear as metaphors in different anecdotes. These anecdotes reveal the transnational identity of various cultural groups living in Turkey. Consequently, the metaphorical meanings of the symbolic salty and sweet bakery products will be observed within the framework of the expansive education theory of Sigal Ben-Porath, suggesting that the minorities 'exit' from their own local homes and 'enter' the multicultural world via the universal moral teachings transmitted through the names of the bakery products employed in various anecdotes in which various people belonging to different religious and cultural backgrounds interact. As these anecdotes were translated into English, they can be used for teaching English and building peace at the same time. The cognitive mechanisms involved in English language learning and accepting others are discussed within the framework of the expansive education theory in this study.

Theoretical Framework

Sigal Ben-Porath (2006) suggests that peace should be built by referring to a new education method based on her expansive education theory in her book entitled *Citizenship under Fire: Democratic Education in Times of Conflict*. She (2006) implies the following: "When a democracy enters a period of war or overt security threats, its citizens' lives are affected in many ways. Their feelings about their country can be transformed; public and political distinctions between "us" and "them" shift; citizens' expectations from the government can be revised in light of what they perceive as their most urgent interests" (p. 9).

Moreover, Ben-Porath (2006) defends that the freedom of expression should not be restricted; such restrictions related to the freedom of speech and expression may cause the construction of a closed society rather than an open and democratic one; such a closed society where minorities and immigrants cannot express their rights may consist of the nationalist defenders of "belligerent citizenship" (p. 9). However, everybody can avoid "belligerent citizenship" by identifying themselves as citizens of a country without expressing a militaristic and ultranationalist attitude, thus via "an expanded and inclusive patriotism" (Ben-Porath, 2006, p. 91). Thus, as Ben-Porath (2006) suggests, the curricula used at schools should address two notions: 1) "acknowledgment" and 2) "forgiveness" (p. 93). Ben-Porath's (2006) expansive education model underlines that one must attempt to learn about the others and respect their ways of living and traditions (p. 94).

Minorities in Turkey

In Turkey, various religious groups have tried to co-exist in peace regardless of some minor clashes. Today we should include the tales, the anecdotes, and the songs of such minority groups within the curricula of different classes at different schools. As long as the students will learn about the others, they will learn to respect them. There are Jews, Armenians, and Greeks living in Turkey for centuries; any ultra-nationalist behavior against them or by them should be acknowledged and all the parties must forgive the mistakes that occurred in the past. Thus, in Turkey, English language courses should involve anecdotes narrated by the minority groups in Turkey for raising world citizens. As examples to the anecdotes narrated by minorities, we can talk about Nasrettin Hodja, for instance. As he is an international figure that appears in different anecdotes narrated around the globe, I preferred to refer to some anecdotes depicting him in this study. Nasreddin Hodja was born in Hortu, a village close to the city of Afyon in 1208; he moved to Aksehir in 1237, and he had been a Muslim judge until he had passed away in 1284 (Sansal, 1996 - 2011, para. 1). Alongside Hodja anecdotes, some other anecdotes that depict foods that have different universal symbolic meanings should be analyzed, such as bakery products and the ingredients used in cooking them.

Furthermore, as Ben-Porath (2006) underscores the importance of forgiveness as a "next step after the acknowledgment of past wrongs" (p. 104) and citizens of the same country should accept themselves as having the same "citizenship as shared fate," peace should be achieved (p. 120). At this point, we should begin to talk about different minority groups in Turkey.

Turkish Jews

Sephardic Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492 were accepted by the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Bayazid II. The Alhambra decree was issued on March 31, 1492 by Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon (Lipman, 2011). These Spanish Jews settled in different cities within the borders of the Ottoman Empire where Romaniot Jews, who were originally from Byzantium, were living (Besalel, 1999, p. 151). Additionally, Rozen (2002) mentions that several Ashkenazim whose ancestors were born in Europe should have arrived in the Ottoman Empire before the Sephardim (p. 49). Also, Karaites are present in some former Ottoman cities that currently belong to contemporary Turkey. However, they reject the rabbinical law, since they do not confirm the *Talmud* that involves oral ideas about Judaism, and they refer only to the *Torah* (Green, 1984, p. 170). Students should be taught about their existence in Turkey through some of their anecdotes. Below are two anecdotes belonging to the Sephardim.

Irresistible Pastries

> Joha's mother sent him to buy three pastries.
>
> Joha went to the patisserie, bought three pastries, and on the way home, felt inclined to taste them.
>
> He tasted one and said, "Mmmm! These pastries are really good!"
>
> He said, "I will eat another one!" And he ate the second as well. Only one pastry was left. When he came home, his mother said: "Joha, did you buy the pastries?"
>
> "Yes, Mama!" Joha said and showed her the one remaining pastry.
>
> "Where are the others?" his mother said.
>
> "I ate them!" "How did you eat them?" "Like this!" said Joha, as he took the third pastry and ate it.
>
> NARRATED BY HADAR ARZI – 1999 (from Koen-Sarano, 2003, p. 235).

Djoha, or Joha is the Judeo-Spanish name given to a Turkish character called Hodja Nasrettin, an Ottoman 'imam' (a religious person working in a mosque). Although some Judeo-Spanish and Turkish anecdotes narrating Djoha and Hodja Nasrettin (Nasrettin Hodja) are similar, others are not. In the Judeo-Spanish anecdotes, Djoha can be an old or a young person who is clever, wise, or ludicrous. He is a child who eats a lot in the Sephardic anecdote above. Most children around the globe like eating pastries; as children read the anecdote, they will notice that all the children like pastries regardless of their religious backgrounds. In the next anecdote, the children will learn about different feasts celebrated all around the globe.

Baklava Pastry for Purim

> Joha was poor, and he had a rich upstairs neighbor. Very frequently he saw them bringing trays with fried chicken, tarts, and pastries, up to the neighbor… When Purim was near, Joha saw that they were bringing a tray of Turkish pastry, baklava, up to his neighbor.
>
> He said to his wife: "We must taste that baklava. You'll see. I am going to do something, and we will taste it!"

And so, what did the two of them decide? They decided that on the day of Purim, they would stage a very big quarrel between themselves. The neighbors, on hearing that Joha was beating his wife, would come to separate them, and so he would manage to find the way to go upstairs. And so it was. They began to quarrel, and she shouted "Help!"

The neighbors came down and said: "Joha, what is this? Are you beating your wife?! No, no, no! Come, come upstairs to us for a little while!" And they made him come upstairs to them. On the table was the enormous tray of baklava.

The neighbors said to Joha: "Sit down, Joha, sit down and eat!" He sat down and began to eat the baklava from one side and then finished the section in front of him. He wanted to eat from the other side as well, but was embarrassed. So what did he do?

He said: "You know? When my wife makes me angry… When she doesn't do what I want, I take her… thus… by the ear, and I throw her out!" And he took the tray, turned it rapidly to the side that was still full, and began to eat very rapidly from that side as well.

The neighbors, seeing that there would soon be nothing left for them, said: "Look, Joha, we will give you a piece of baklava for your wife. Go, take it to her, and Purim Sameach! A happy Purim!" Joha took the plate with the *mishloah manot* [the Purim gift of sweetmeats], went down to his wife, and said: "Do you see how successful our quarrel was?"

NARRATED BY MATILDA KOEN-SARANO – 1995 (from Koen-Sarano 2003, pp. 248-249)

If children read this anecdote, they will learn about the feast of Purim; however, if the instructor depicts them the dangers of over-eating, they will also learn about the dangers of obesity. Purim is a Jewish feast celebrated in memory of the liberation of the Jews from the cruelty of Haman. Baklavas are eaten by Sephardim: "*pur*" means the lot: as Queen Vashti, the wife of King Ahasuerus does not accept to pass through the male guests during a party, he organizes a beauty pageant in order to choose another woman as the queen; Esther is chosen; however, she does not explain that she is Jewish; her cousin, Mordechai refuses "to bow down to him"; for this reason, Haman decides to murder all the Jews (as depicted in the book of *Esther 3:13*); Esther intervenes, but before that, she fasts together with the other Jews for three days; she demands the king and Haman to attend a banquet; as Mordechai uncovers a strategy to get rid of the king, the king orders Haman to honor him by making him go around the city on his own horse (Rabbi Simmons, 2012). Some Jews fast before the feast of Purim. During the feast of Purim, walnut pastries, desserts called "the ears of Haman," and *Purim* sweets are eaten (Koronyo and Ovadya, 2004, p.111); as baklavas are sweet, and this sweetness implies joy, they can be consumed for celebrating the feast of Purim.

Turkish Armenians

Most Turkish Armenians live in Istanbul. Most are followers of the Armenian Apostolic faith, whereas some are Catholics, and others are Evangelicals (Armenians in Turkey, 2012, para. 1). An anecdote belonging to Armenians is given below.

Khodja Counts the Days

> Thirty days before Easter, the Turks fast for twelve hours, and are finally allowed to eat at six P.M. Khodja put one bean per day in a pitcher after that so he could count the thirty days and know when Easter was. His little daughter saw him do this, and put a handful of beans in the jar to copy her father. Khodja counted them later, and when a friend asked how many days it was until Easter, Khodja counted the 120 beans. Then he thought that was too many, so he took one-half of them and said, “Sixty.” His friend replied, “How is that? There are only thirty days altogether!” Khodja replied, “Oh, I didn't tell the truth. If I did, it would be 120 days instead of sixty.” (from Vartanian-Kirwan, 1943 pp. 28-29).

Also this anecdote is about gluttony; the Armenian Khodja waits for the Easter celebrations in order to eat pastry and have fun. Such an anecdote will teach the children to respect Christianity and to avoid eating too much. Regarding the feast of Easter, eggs are painted and chocolates in the shape of eggs are distributed. Christian children look forward to celebrating this feast. Moreover, this feast emphasizes the importance of love just like the feasts of other religions. Here is some information about it:

> Christians believe, according to Scripture, that Jesus came back to life, or was raised from the dead, three days after his death on the cross. As part of the Easter season, the death of Jesus Christ by crucifixion is commemorated on Good Friday, always the Friday just before Easter. Through his death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus paid the penalty for sin, thus purchasing for all who believe in him, eternal life in Christ Jesus (Fairchild, 2012).

Turkish Greeks

Turkish Greeks are the **“**Greek-speaking Eastern Orthodox Christians who mostly live in Istanbul, including its district Princes’ Islands, as well as on the two islands of the western entrance to the Dardanelles, Imbros, and Tenedos”; most of them are the descendants of the Greeks allowed to stay and live within the borders of Turkey successive to the population exchanges between the Greek Turks and Turkish Greeks in 1923 (Greeks in Turkey, 2012, para. 1). Turkish Greeks changed the name of Nasrettin Hodja into “Malastradi in the Pontos, Nastradi or Stradi along the western coast of Asia Minor and in Constantinople. His stories were exchanged at times for sheer entertainment, or they were told as the appropriate situation came up”; the following anecdotes were chosen among those narrated by the Greeks in Boston between 1934 and 1937 (Lee, 1946, p. 188).

The Hodjas Builds a Bakery

> Once Nastradi Hodjas wanted to build a bakery. And one would tell him to build it facing this way, another would tell him to build it facing that way, another would tell him to build it facing the other way. And he, to please all of them, built it on a wagon (from Lee, 1946, p. 193).

This anecdote tells that Hodja preferred to build a bakery on a wagon for pleasing everybody: the main idea of the passage is the fact that one must try to be politically correct in different situations. This should be taught universally, and every child should be taught about political correctness in different situations. Below is another Greek anecdote.

> Figs and Quinces
>
> Once Nastradi Hodjas was on his way to visit the Cadi. And he took him a basket of figs as a gift. Well, the Cadi was a difficult man, it seems, and he did not like figs. So, he made Nastradi Hodjas sit on a chair, and he took the figs and began to throw them one by one at the head of poor Nastradi Hodjas. So every time that the Cadi threw a fig at him, Nastradi Hodjas would say, "Praise be to God." And the Cadi was surprised and he said to him when he was through, "Tell me, please, why were you saying, 'Praise be to God'?" And he said, "I praise God, because I listened to my wife and did not bring quinces as I had wanted to do, but brought figs instead" (from Lee, 1946, p. 189).

Figs and quinces symbolize fertility and prosperity in the Turkish culture; Cadi is the chief imam; the anecdotes remind that every negative event or punishment may have a positive side; one must thank God all the time, since a bad situation might have been a worse one. Language learners reading this anecdote will conceive the common elements present in different cultures living on the same land.

Bahá'ís

Bahá'ís have been present in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey since the exile of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the religion; some other Bahá'ís arrived to Istanbul around 1910 for this reason (Bahá'u'lláh, 2012). Bahá'í positivism leads to the formation of a moral character. Here is an anecdotal experiment example to how the Bahá'ís emphasize the importance of positive thinking: if a person takes two jars, fills them with rice, labels them, and writes words depreciating the qualities of the rice on the label of one of the jars, and words appreciating the qualities of the rice on the label of the other jar, and stores both jars in a dark and dry cupboard, s/he will see that the appreciated rice remains still fresh, whereas the depreciated rice smells: this metaphorical example was given by some Bahá'ís during one of their child educator training sessions. Such a behavior will persuade the children to be nice and kind enough to avoid insulting and hurting their friends by employing slang words, bullying them, or by calling them names. Thus, moral teachings of the language teachers should be oriented to convince the students not to use drugs, not to consume too much food, not to discriminate people, and not to commit crime in accordance with their creed, gender, or social status. English language instructors should try to choose the right anecdotes belonging to different cultures existing within the borders of their country or somewhere else in the world in order to make the children believe in the power and importance of the concept of unity in diversity. Therefore, the consequent Bahá'í song is one of the most popular elements to include in the English language teaching curricula:

World Citizens
Chorus:
"Glory not in this that you love your country",
Glory in this that you love mankind.
We're the fruits of only one tree
And the leaves of just one branch.
World Citizens! World Citizens!
Unity, the world cries for unity.
Its rays are dawning like the sun.
Soon the world will be one.
Chorus
In unity that's how the world must be,
All its people live as one.
Like fragrant flowers in the sun.
Chorus (from Child Education Committee of Greater Houston, 2005, p. 24).

Conclusion

As Ben-Porath (2006) suggests, the importance of unity should be taught in classes. In English language teaching classes, anecdotes belonging to different cultural groups living in the students' homeland should be chosen. These anecdotes should imply that one must acknowledge another about her / his mistakes so that the other tolerates and forgives her / him. The aim of the use of such a method in English language classrooms is twofold: on the one hand, the children learn to respect differences and ask for forgiveness; on the other hand, they learn a foreign language via an emphasis on diversity.

Consequently, "for the purposes of both multicultural education and expansive education, the study of local cultures and histories serves the aims of recognition" (Ben-Porath, 2006, p. 102). "Acknowledgment" leads to "reverse patriotism" that consists of the inclusion of minorities within the society as members of only one country; however, the controversial "belligerent patriotism" depends on the exclusion of some minority groups that causes various societal divides (Ben-Porath, 2006, p. 100). Besides, "monocultural education" is similar to "belligerent civic education" that emphasizes that the students should become extremely nationalist, ignoring other minority cultural groups living in the same country for just being the citizens of the same country (Ben-Porath, 2006, p. 101). Consequently, children will 'exit' from their cultural norms and 'enter' a world of diversity by learning English as a foreign language within the framework posited by Ben-Porath (2010), since children will identify themselves as world citizens. Furthermore, freedom of speech is achieved in a society where constructive dialogues exist.

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Metadiscourse Use of two Prolific Researchers in ESP: John Swales and Ken Hyland

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Abstract

This study sets out to embrace the challenges about projecting ourselves in academic writing, namely the metadiscourse use in writing (see Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990; Hyland, 1998; Kopple, 1985). Metadiscourse here refers to the *reflective triangle* (Adel, 2006) through which writers project themselves to guide readers through the text explicitly (i.e., in other words, we shall see). Metadiscourse includes the text/code, the writer and the reader. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, this study compares how two distinguished authors in English for Specific Purposes, John Swales and Ken Hyland, leave their fingerprints throughout the text. Specifically, the 'I, we, you' units and impersonal metadiscourse as metatext were investigated. For the comparability of the topics, the texts were chosen from the same genre: single-authored book chapters regarding genre analysis, comprising approximately 29,457 words. The metadiscourse taxonomy adopted here follows Adel (2006). The findings suggest that the percentage of all metadiscourse in John Swales' writing (1.06%) is similar to Ken Hyland's (1.15%). There were also some striking differences. Interestingly, John Swales tends to use *I* and *we* as personal metadiscursive units, whereas Ken Hyland prefers to use *you*. As for phorics, a part of impersonal metadiscourse, John Swales tends to use pointers (e.g., following), whereas Ken Hyland tends to use action verbs (e.g., show). Pedagogical implications of the study are provided in the conclusion.

Keywords: academic writing; metadiscourse; reflexive model; English for specific purposes

1. Introduction

The fuzzy term metadiscourse has been discussed considerably in the literature and is broadly defined as 'discourse about discourse'. Using one's writing to build and maintain a strong interaction with the reader of the text requires careful attention to the words and phrases an author uses. Kopple (1985) notes that when we write, we usually write at two levels. The first level contains propositional content that provides information concerning the subject of the text; the second level is metadiscourse that helps readers read, organise, understand and interpret the texts. Metadiscourse here is defined as the *authors' conventional unique fingerprints* that guide readers through the text explicitly. In line with the significance of metadiscourse, there has been growing research that casts light on the linguistic aspects related to written and spoken discourse. Researchers focus on two primary models of metadiscourse with some modifications: (1) interactive metadiscourse (see Crismore, Markkanen & Steffensen, 1993; Hyland, 2004), which has been heavily influenced by Halliday (1994) and (2) reflexive metadiscourse (see Adel, 2006), based on Jakobson's (1998) system in which reflexivity is the central concern. Empirical investigations into an author's use of language as a rhetorical act of interacting with readers suggest that using metadiscourse is useful to facilitate the comprehension of the intended meaning in the texts and can be a valuable resource for academic writing (e.g., Adel, 2006; Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990, Dahl, 2004; Gillaerts & Van de Velte, 2010; Hyland, 1998, Mauranen, 1993; Kopple, 1985).

I suggest that conscientious authors project themselves throughout their texts with linguistic signals (e.g., we have seen, you, following and discuss) as fingerprints to provide an effective scaffold for their readers. John Swales and Ken Hyland, two eminent academics in Applied Linguistics, are prominent for their innovative studies and they both have had a profound effect on the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The terms *Swalesian genre model/move* and *analysis/approach/rhetoric* have been used by many researchers. This is testament to the promising sustainability of Swales' studies and innovations. In his study regarding Swales' distinctive style of prose in his writing, Hyland (2008) built a large corpus comprising 340,000 words based on 14 single-authored papers and most of the chapters from Swales' books to show the main characteristics of his style. He used frequency, keyword and concordance analyses and suggested that "Swales' frequent use of the first person is perhaps the most striking feature of the keywords list, with both *I* and *my* occurring in the top ten" (p. 146). Surprisingly, however, considering their contributions to ESP, less has been written and discussed regarding John Swales' and Ken Hyland's appropriate use of metadiscourse with respect to finding their fingerprints. In my view, research into two experts' use of metadiscourse could be a valuable contribution to the literature because the sample sentences analysed may provide practical implications to foster both the appropriate use of metadiscourse and smooth writing, especially among learners and novice academics. Accordingly, in this study, which has a comparative focus, I aim to investigate how these two distinguished authors, whose work has inspired a number of researchers, employ metadiscourse to guide readers through the text. In the present context, I will restrict my discussion to personal metadiscourse specifically, the 'I, we, you' units and impersonal metadiscourse as metatext. The second category, writer-reader interaction, will not be discussed here. Specifically, the following three research questions will be addressed based on two corpora that comprise book chapters by John Swales and Ken Hyland:

1. Which metadiscoursal expressions are used as metatext?
2. What is the overall frequency of personal metadiscourse, such as '*I, we* and *you*'?
3. What is the overall frequency of impersonal metadiscourse?

2. Definition of metadiscourse and reflexive model

Metadiscourse here refers to the *reflective triangle*, including the text/code, the writer and the reader, and includes two basic categories in which metadiscoursal expressions can be labelled: metatext or writer-reader interaction (see Adel, 2006). Metatext *guides* the reader through the text or *comments* on the use of language in the text (e.g., 'in this chapter'), whereas writer-reader interaction occurs with metadiscourse that the current writer starts to interact with the reader(s) to maintain a dialogue regarding the text.

The metadiscourse taxonomy adopted here follows Adel (2006) because of its focus on reflexivity. Reflexivity in language is particularly significant in this taxonomy. Personal metadiscourse highlights the reflexivity of writers and readers, which has not been sufficiently emphasised before in the interactive model (though it is also a criterion). The criteria for reflexive metadiscourse based on comprehensive empirical research cover "explicitness, world of discourse, current discourse, and- for personal types of metadiscourse- speaker-writer *qua* speaker-writer and audience *qua* audience" (Adel, 2010, p. 75). These criteria will be discussed in detail with sample analyses and concordance from the corpora throughout the study.

2.1. Personal metadiscourse: Metadiscursive I, we and you

Personal metadiscourse in this study is confined to the pronouns (e.g., I, we and you) that make a direct reference to the writer and/or reader of the text and includes explicit reference to the discourse participants. Following Adel (2006), two types of data were excluded in analyses on personal metadiscourse:

1. Uses of *I* and *we* are not metadiscourse when the writers express their opinions and personal experiences (c.f., Hyland & Tse, 2004).
2. Metadiscourse must refer to the current text and writer/reader and sometimes, additionally, the writer must perform the action within the world of discourse.

Hence, quotations from other sources and words related to the world outside of the current discourse were regarded as discourse external phenomena (c.f., Crismore, 1989). This distinction is one of the most important differences between the interactive model and reflexive models. It is notable that there is no criterion about discourse external phenomena in the interactive model.

2.1.1. First person singular 'I'. For *I-units* to qualify as metadiscourse, there are two prerequisites: *I* must be the writer of the *current* text, and the action *I* does must be within the world of the discourse.

(1) The lessons from the folklorists for a genre-based approach to academic English are, I believe, several (Swales).

In the first example above, the writer of the current text is present; however, *I believe* refers to the writer's belief *not within the world of discourse*, so *I believe* is a text-external phenomenon. Examples of this kind of *I* have been disregarded.

(2) As a result, I shall use the acronym *L2* to refer to all multilingual writers of English and ESL as shorthand for all contexts where they are learning English (Hyland).

In contrast, in the second example, *I* is an example of metadiscourse because it points to the writer of the current text and represents the writer who performs an action within the world of discourse.

2.1.2. First person plural 'we'

In this taxonomy, metadiscursive *we* is the inclusive authorial *we*, and it is notable that first person plural *we* is more complex than singular *I*.

(3) For many people, it is an intuitively attractive concept that helps to organize the common-sense labels we use to categorize texts and the situations in which they occur (Hyland).

Examples of this kind of *we* were left out because *we* is not within the world of metadiscourse, and the writer leaves some freedom to the readers to decide for himself/herself if the description fits.

(4) **…**as we shall see in Part III, there may be very good reasons for not coming to quick conclusions about its predominantly referential nature (Swales).

In example 4, *we* refers to both the writer and reader in the current text, hence it is metadiscourse. The writer is trying to guide the reader by integrating the reader and himself/herself.

2.1.3. Second person 'you'

For the potential referent of *y*ou, Wales' (1996) description was used: *You* as an indefinite (generic) or with a definite (reference) use. Adel (2006) suggests that generic uses of *you* should not be metadiscourse (c.f., Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad & Finegan, 1999). Therefore, only the pronoun *you* that refers to the current writer is considered metadiscourse.

(5) List the written genres that you use regularly in different social settings (Hyland).

(6) 'Oh, we are smart today', 'Come here often, do you?' reflect particular circumstances that are likely to be of rapidly diminishing importance as the conversation proceeds (Swales).

Example 5 is metadiscourse because *you* here is intended to make reference to the current reader. However, *you* in example 6 is not metadiscourse because the writer is referring to some other participant.

2.2. Impersonal Metadiscourse

Impersonal metadiscourse refers to impersonal expressions that display reflexivity and includes four functional subcategories.

2.2.1. References to the text/code

References to the text/code are "references to the text itself at various levels, as well as references to the words and expression used in the text" (Adel, 2006, p. 108).

(7) This section opened with the promise that it would produce an adequate characterization of genre (Swales).

2.2.2. Phorics

Phorics are defined as "road signs of a text, pointing to and emphasizing different parts" (Adel, 2006, p. 101) to help the readers follow the text smoothly.

(8) Select a written genre from the list above… (Hyland).

2.2.3. Discourse labels

Discourse labels refer to discourse acts that scaffold readers for the interpretation of various moves (Adel, 2006).

(9) In reports of various kinds, such as those describing scientific work, events rather than agents predominate (Swales).

2.2.4. Code glosses

Code glosses help readers grasp the appropriate meanings of elements in texts (Kopple, 1985) and are used mainly to define and explain a word or phrase when the author thinks that the reader needs a definition or explanation.

> (10) First, it means that teaching materials are based on the ways language is actually used in particular writing contexts rather than on our general impressions of what happens (Hyland).

3. Corpora and procedures

The method employed in this study is comparative and corpus-based. Following Bhatia (1993), three criteria were considered to select the most appropriate type and size of corpora. First, John Swales and Ken Hyland have common research interests, including discourse analysis, genre analysis, academic writing and corpus linguistics. For the comparability of the topics, I chose texts from the same genre, namely as single-authored book chapters that John Swales (1990) and Ken Hyland (2004) have written on genre analysis with the similar rhetorical purpose of introducing and promoting genre: Chapter 1 (The concept of genre) from John Swales' (1990) book and Chapter 1 (Why genre?) and Chapter 2 (Perspectives on genre) from Ken Hyland (2004). I first examined the content words that "reflect the key themes of an individual's work and serve as motifs for their contribution to the field" (Hyland, 2010, p. 166). The most frequent content words in John Swales' writing are *genre, discourse, communicative, language, members, community, purposes and rhetorical* and in Ken Hyland's, *genre, writing, text, students, teachers, contexts, social and language*. These lists of words provide information regarding the overall voice of the genre addressed in the two corpora. Second, based on their communicative purposes, the texts in the corpora were distinguishable from other genres (e.g., book chapters versus research articles). Third, to ensure corpora of sufficient size, a large sample was analysed. The corpora comprised approximately 29,457 words (see Table 1). The texts were scanned and saved as a word document and the parts that were not scanned were written on the computer.

Table 1

Number of Words in the Corpora

Swales' corpus	14,553 words
Hyland's corpus	14,904 words
Total	29,457 words

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. First, Antconc (2008) was used to generate a word list of the most frequent single words and to run concordances. Next, the texts in the corpora were examined and word frequency lists were created. Microlevel analysis was conducted manually. The analysis focuses on small linguistic-functional categories (c.f., Bunton, 1990; Crismore et al., 1993) to reveal the frequency of personal and impersonal metadiscourse. The texts were analysed twice for intra-rater reliability. 326 tokens of metadiscourse were found across the corpora. There were 18 differences in coding the metadiscourse between two analyses. The differences mainly involved *phorics* and *references to the text/code* (i.e., section and chapter). In my first analysis, I categorised them as *reference to the text*. However, in my second analysis, I realised that there are two communicative purposes: *phorics*, guiding the reader, and *references to the text/code*. I thus changed my coding. Example 11 was coded as *phorics* and example 12 below was coded as *references to the text/code.*

(11) We will return to these techniques <u>in Chapter 5</u>,

(12) …the three approaches to genre discussed <u>in this chapter</u> (Hyland).

Another difficulty was regarding the two phrases -in other words and in more precise terms-. Adel (2006) suggests that a reformulation is a reference to the text. However, in my second analysis, I hesitated in referring to reformulations as code glosses or reference to the text because the example words Adel suggests for code glosses (e.g., ‘namely’) seemed to be similar to the phrases that caused me uncertainty. Therefore, these phrases were categorised as code glosses that are different from those of Adel. Considering such modifications, the intra-reliability rate was 94.5.

3.1. List of search items used across corpora

The wordlist in Table 2 below shows the metadiscourse expressions used as metatext in the corpora (listed in alphabetic order).

Table 2

List of Metadiscoursal Patterns across Corpora

Category	Examples of metadiscourse units
References to the text/code	*book/this book, chapter, section*
Phoric markers	*above, again, already, beginning, below, chapter, discuss, earlier, end, fifth, figure, fourth, finally, first, following, here, introduction, last, next, now, previous, repeat, see, second, so far, start, show, third, over to*
Discourse labels	*answer, as follows, as it were, call, conclusion, emphasis, for example, for instance, in more precise terms, in other words, preceding, purpose, question, return to, say, seen, set out, such as, sum, summary, summarize*
Code glosses	*briefly, in more precise terms, in other words, mean*

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Personal metadiscourse

When we examine the frequencies of personal pronouns across corpora with a computer analysis, we see that personal pronouns have high frequencies. However, when the texts are analysed manually to find metadiscursive units, the results show that the pronouns mostly refer to *the writer/reader in the world*. The frequency list of personal pronouns as metadiscursive units was also examined. The findings showed that Swales has a tendency to use self-referential *I* more frequently (see Table 3).

Table 3

Frequency of I, We and You in Metadiscursive Units

	Hyland		Swales	
Pronoun	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
I	1	0,67	6	4,12
You	31	20,80	0	0
We	6	4,02	14	9,62
Total	38	25,49	20	13,74

There is a striking difference with regard to the frequency of the personal pronoun *you*, which is the most frequent metadiscourse pronoun for Ken Hyland, in contrast with John Swales. Ken Hyland tends to use *you* while giving instructions to ESP practitioners concerning classroom tasks for students and when asking their opinions with various questions. In addition, the findings show that the most frequent use in the Swales corpus is 'we have …seen', which is in line with Hyland's (2008) findings. Hyland suggests that "there is a strong tendency for regular highlighting and summarising of the argument in John's writing" (p. 157) and one of the overwhelming preference is through 'we have seen'.

(13) We have already seen that they vary according to complexity of rhetorical purpose (Swales).

The frequent use of 'as we have … seen' in Swales' corpus may also be an indication of his attempt to *remind* and *integrate* the reader into the action he is performing as a writer. However, a different prediction comes from Hyland (2008), who suggests that "[this usage] illustrates…John's *metadiscoursal concern* for framing his discussion with readers in mind" (p. 157, emphasis added).

4.2. Impersonal metadiscourse

4.2.1 References to the text/code

Table 4 shows the raw and normalised frequencies of all of the terms that were chosen as references to the text/code. Both John Swales and Ken Hyland have seven tokens of this category. It is evident that Ken Hyland's preference is using *chapter,* whereas Swales uses *section* and *book* to refer to the text. Although their metadiscourse choices are different, the total frequency is very similar (4.69% in the Hyland corpus and 4.81% in Swales' according to f/10,000).

Table 4

Distribution of References to the Text/Code

References to the text/code	Hyland		Swales	
	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
1. section	0	0	3	2.06
2. book/this book	1	0.67	4	2.75
3. chapter	6	4.02	0	0
Total	7	4.69	7	4.81

4.2.2. Phorics

Surprisingly, the most frequent *phorics* marker Ken Hyland uses is actions (*discuss* and *show*), whereas John Swales uses pointers (*following* and *here*) to help readers follow the discourse (see Table 5).

Table 5

Distribution of Phorics Markers

Phorics	Hyland		Swales	
	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
1. following	3	2.01	8	5.5
2. here	1	0.67	7	4.8
3. discuss	9	6.03	2	1.37
4. show	5	3.35	1	0.69
Total	18	12.06	18	11.67

4.2.3. Discourse labels

Table 6 shows the three highest frequency words used as discourse labels. It is evident that both Ken Hyland and John Swales use discourse labels mainly to provide examples to the readers (e.g., *for instance, such as* and *for example*). Writers may also attempt to clarify and exemplify the contexts they provide with examples. Although the use of *such as* has similar frequencies, John Swales has a tendency to use *for instance*, and Hyland prefers *for example* when providing examples. This can be seen simply as their preferences in word choices because the meanings and functions of the two discourse labels are the same.

Table 6

Distribution of Discourse Labels

Discourse labels	Hyland		Swales	
	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
1. for instance	2	1.34	18	12.35
2. such as	21	14.09	19	13.05
3. for example	15	10.06	8	5.5
Total	38	25.49	45	30.9

4.2.4. Code glosses

The analysis shows that *mean* has the highest frequency among code glosses in both corpora (see Table 7). In contrast with John Swales, Ken Hyland uses more reformulations, such as *in other words/in more precise terms*. The explanation for this may be his effort to explain the idea again but in a different and simpler way to reach the readers.

Table 7

Distribution of Code Glosses

Code glosses	Hyland		Swales	
	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
1. briefly	0	0	1	0.69
2. in other words	7	4.70	0	0
3. in more precise terms	1	0.67	0	0
4. mean	8	5.37	3	2.06
Total	16	10.74	4	2.75

Interestingly, the overall results show that both John Swales and Ken Hyland used 134 impersonal metadiscourse patterns. However, due to the difference in word count in each corpus, the frequencies are slightly different as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Overall Frequency in Impersonal Metadiscourse

	Hyland		Swales	
	n	f/10,000	n	f/10,000
Total	134	89.83	134	92.06

In sum, John Swales used 154 metadiscourse patterns, and Ken Hyland used 172. There are 326 metadiscourse tokens, comprising including personal and impersonal metadiscourse. The percentage of all metadiscourse in Swales' corpus (1.06%) is similar to Hyland's (1.15%) corpus.

5. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

In this qualitative corpus-based study, I have investigated two prolific researchers' use of metadiscourse to shed light on similarities and differences of the use of metadiscourse. Metadiscourse here is understood as the fingerprints of the authors, which they use to interact with readers. The study of academic discourse has provided valuable insights into understanding Swales' and Hyland's writing, which may contribute to the literature in Applied Linguistics. The frequency of metadiscourse was the same in the two corpora. I tentatively suggest that these esteemed writers use reflective language with their own signatures and styles. It is worth noting that this study has several important limitations. Sampling of the data was confined to a few chapters from one book of each writer. Therefore, readers must be careful in making generalisations. Larger corpora would provide new insights into the findings with more conclusive analysis. Second, inter-rater reliability would have been useful in confirming the reliability of the findings.

The findings of the study may have several significant implications for those learning ESL/EFL and novice academics. To write clearly, researchers and students can familiarise themselves with effective recurrent patterns of metadiscourse. Awareness about the kinds of metadiscourse could help students "understand the concept of tone and help them control their own tone better" (Kopple, 1985, p. 90). Moreover, it is well-known that, unfortunately, there is a dearth of material that reflects the authentic language specific to the discipline. Based on these sample analyses, practitioners and publishers could design authentic teaching materials to teach metadiscourse correctly for academic and professional purposes.

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Strategies for Progressive Improvement of Reading Skills

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Abstract

Reading is an active skill involving a variety of strategies and techniques, enabling the students to reach a thorough understanding and assimilation of a text. The presenters will offer a detailed guidance to establish the purpose of a reading text, activate and build background knowledge, and address unfamiliar vocabulary.

What is Reading Comprehension?

Reading comprehension is the progression of building meaning from text. The main objective of all reading instruction is to help a reader comprehend a text. The process of comprehension entails deciphering the writer's words and then using background knowledge to build a fairly accurate understanding of the writer's message. (Lenski & Lewis, 2008)
The aptitude of understanding what one reads is essential to successful school learning as it is an integral part of the school curriculum. Proficient readers use specific cognitive strategies such: rereading, paraphrasing, and predicting; they adopt these strategies to help them in comprehending different texts. The means used by such proficient readers to understand a text can be examined and employed as a foundation for teaching reading comprehension. (Vosslamber, 2007)

What is a Strategy?

A strategy is a plan for doing something; different things require different tasks. Reading is a process, which requires strategy; therefore, reading is strategic. The reader must be flexible and adjust the way he or she reads to the type or the text being read and the purpose of reading. For example, reading a multiple-choice test, one reads carefully focusing on specific details than when one reads a murder mystery for fun. Good readers are able to change and adjust their reading their purpose.

A reading strategy is an activity used to help students enhance their reading abilities. Once the teacher has identified the problems and the challenges that individual students, as well as classes, are confronting, it is time to determine what methods of instruction will allow the students to become competent readers. In other words, what will the teacher do in the classroom to meet the needs of all levels of readers? (Lancheros, 2006)

Why Use Strategies?

- Reading becomes more meaningful
- The use of strategies assists struggling readers to become proficient
- Reading becomes more enjoyable
- Proficient readers naturally employ strategies
  (Lancheros, 2006)

When Are Strategies Used?

- Anticipating outcomes in a reading text
- Summarizing information
- Questioning material being read
- Recognizing main ideas and significant details
- Monitoring their reading
- Looking for context clues
- Rereading to verify understanding
- Self-correcting (Lancheros, 2006)

What are the thinking strategies that all proficient readers use as they read?

- **Determining What is Important –** Recognizing themes, identifying important details, and decreasing attentiveness on subsidiary ideas
- **Drawing Inferences -** Combining background knowledge and contextual clues to reach conclusions and reach facts that are not explicitly stated.
- **Using Prior Knowledge -** Building on prior knowledge and previous experiences to facilitate understanding of the text
- **Asking Questions –** Thinking about the text before, during, and after reading
- **Monitoring Comprehension and Meaning -** Using an inner voice to reflect on the text and its sense

- **Creating Mental Images -** Employing all senses to develop visual images in the mind that boost the reading experience (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007)

Students' main problem areas in comprehension

- Misunderstanding the plain sense of the text.
- Making wrong inferences.
- Reading more into a text than is actually there whether the information is stated or implied.
- Making assumptions usually based on personal opinion.
- Misinterpreting the tone of the text.
- Failing to understand figurative usage.
- Failing to distinguish between general ideas (author's point/thesis) and its supporting details.
- Failing to see the force of modifying words.
- Failing to perceive key words and expressions providing contextual cohesion.
- Failing to identify and understand logical relationships between sentences marked by use of logical connectors/discourse markers. (Aslam, 1992)

Good readers monitor their reading. They know when their reading is not making sense, and they use different reading strategies to correct this problem. This is an important part of the reading process that must be taught, since, unfortunately, most students lack comprehension monitoring Teacher's main goal should be teaching students to understand, not testing if they have understood. In order to overcome these problems, several exercises can be used.

Activating Background Knowledge

Since it is necessary for any good reader to make connections with the content of the text and any previous knowledge he may possess - known as schema – it is the teacher's responsibility to offer students the proper guidance to achieve this aim. This will enable them to form an initial idea of the subject and will render comprehension of the material easier and faster.

According to Keene and Zimmerman (1997), students make three kinds of connections:

1. Text to self: attempting to find connections between the reader and the text.

2. Text to world: attempting to find connections between their world and the text.

3. Text to text: attempting to find connections between texts read previously and the current text.

1. Text to self. The teacher starts by choosing texts related to the students' actual lives – including newspaper or magazine articles, books, poems or even songs. Students should be taught how to establish connections between their readings and their lives. Titles and key words should be emphasized, enabling students to develop an initial idea of the text. Relating it to prior experience may also be of use.

2. Text to world. Students try to form connections between the text and the outside world. This will not be difficult if the text is well-chosen.

3. Text to text. Students find similarities or differences between their different readings.

Reading Techniques

1. Sensitizing
   a. Inference: through context – through word formation.
   b. Understanding relations within the sentence.
   c. Linking sentences and ideas: reference – link words.
2. Improving reading speed
3. From skimming to scanning
   a. Predicting
   b. Previewing
   c. Anticipation
   d. Skimming
   e. Scanning

Understanding of Content

1. Aim and function: of the text – within the text
2. Organization of the text:
   a. Main idea and supporting detail.
   b. Organization and chronological sequence.

Reading to Remember

Reading to remember, or reading to learn, is very different from casual reading for relaxation or pleasure. It is a process that takes concentration and activity on the part of the reader. Students who are successful at active reading have developed those qualities for success:

1. They develop expectations about the material they are going to read by:

- surveying sections they will read (skimming)
  a. Skim the whole text - looking over the entire text quickly to get the basic idea.
  b. Skim the title, subtitles, boldface and italics, and illustrations or pictures.
  c. Notice division of section, key words and illustrations.
  d. Skim the passage, prediction of content, background information main idea, author's purpose.
  e. Be active. Develop a purpose for reading.
- consciously thinking about what they already know about the topic they will read
- developing questions they expect the text to answer
- knowing they will need to read the assigned material more than once

2. They read actively by:

- relating new information to information they already know
- looking for main points and support
- recognizing the author's patterns of organization and development
- marking the text (underlining or making notes in the margin)

3. They reinforce their knowledge by:

- taking notes
- keeping vocabulary lists
- summarizing what they have read
- anticipating and being able to answer questions
- discussing what they have learnt whenever and with whoever they can

A closer look at reading strategies and activities

General reading strategies.

1. Locate key words in the first paragraph.
2. Locate sentences/thesis statement that states a probable main idea.
3. Locate key words in each sentence.
4. Locate information relating to ideas presented previously.
5. Locate examples and illustration.
6. Locate details providing more specific information.
7. Locate concluding sentences.

8. Locate words that indicate a change in the kind of information.
9. Locate sentence providing information about a new aspect of this topic.

Specific steps to follow in the reading process.

- ***Predicting.*** This includes finding information concerning titles and subtitles, headlines, or format of the text, as well as grammatical, logical and cultural clues.
  Show students pictures, maps, diagrams, or graphs and their captions related to the topic in the text and ask questions, eliciting ideas and generating discussions.
  Provide a passage with no punctuation and ask the students to punctuate it. They will have to notice words and ideas connecting sentences and those signaling new paragraphs.
  Students can be given unfinished passages and asked to provide an ending.
  Students may be shown a film which the teacher stops from time to time, asking the students to predict the continuation of the story.
- ***Previewing.*** This includes examining the table of contents, preface, chapter and paragraph headings, as well as the language used (vocabulary, grammar, tone, etc.) and illustrations.
  Students may be required to answer questions concerning the material/content of the work through table of contents, or headings. Key words may also be indicative of the content.
- ***Anticipating.*** This includes understanding the content and, possibly, relating it to culture and previous experience by asking the students to look for answers to specific questions.
  Students may be required to answer questions about what they know or what they do not know, what interests them about the topic, what they expect to learn from it…etc.
  In pairs, students try to combine a set of given words (by the teacher) into a story. They reorder the words according to their story.
  Students change partners and listen to each other's story, asking any questions for clarification.
  Students read the text (chosen by the teacher and containing all the words) and reorder these words according to the passage.
  Give the class a text with blank spaces after the conjunctions and link-words and ask the class to imagine what the text might be.

- ***Skimming***. This includes improving comprehension speed and recognizing thesis statements and topic sentences.
  Students underline the thesis statement, topic sentences and key words in the text.
  Students read first and last paragraphs in a text.
  Students are given a text where some paragraphs or sentences are missing. They read the whole passage and supply the missing sentences so as to get a coherent text.
- ***Scanning.*** This involves quick reading of the passage to find specific information.
  Look for key words.
  If the question involves names or dates, look for capital letters or numbers.
  Be focused and look for the specific information.

Understanding and organization of content.

Students are given a paragraph/passage with a few odd sentences that do not suit the content. They are asked to find the irrelevant sentences so as to have a whole, coherent passage.

Students are given a passage where the paragraphs are not in the proper order. They are required to find the correct sequence so as to form a logical, coherent passage.

Students should find transitional/linking words leading to understanding of the sequence of the ideas.

Using vocabulary to understand the reading passage.

Students are given a passage with missing words which they are required to provide.

To infer the meaning of unfamiliar words in a text, students are given a paragraph containing a few imaginary/meaningless words, and are required to guess/invent their meaning from the context.

Students use affixes - prefixes and suffixes - to understand vocabulary.

Post-reading activities have the following objectives

1. Identify the topic of the reading.
2. Have a general idea of the content.
3. Understand the main ideas.
4. Establish the relationship between them.
5. Understand the supporting details.
6. Recognize the information that the text implies.
7. Recognize the structure and organization of the information.
8. Assess the value of the information.
9. Recognize language use, such as irony or satire.

10. Recognize the writer’s tone.

Questions to be asked after reading the text.

"What is the meaning of what I have read?"

"Why did the author end the paragraph in this way?

"What was the author's purpose in writing this?"

Questions evaluating students’ understanding of the text.

a. Yes/ no questions.
b. *Wh*-questions (*Who, what, which, when, where*, ...).
c. How/ why questions.
d. Multiple choice questions.
e. True/ false questions.
f. Cloze tests.
g. Completion tasks.
h. Short answer or open-ended questions.
i. Summarizing the passage.

“The problem facing a comprehender is analogous to the problem that a detective faces when trying to solve a crime. In both cases there is a set of clues.**”**

David E. Rumelhart, "Understanding Reading Comprehension"

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Biodata

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Enjoyable Listening with Creative Techniques

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Abstract

In recent years, many studies have been devoted to foster listening comprehension skills in the realm of creative methodology. As a result of these studies, a great variety of techniques have been developed not only to teach effectively but also to negate anxiety. However, it is a great concern for teachers to dip into all materials and pick up the best ones for classroom use. In line with this perspective, a pile of creative methods ranging from songs, videos to dictation and read-aloud for listening skill will be contended in a blended way at the disposal for the attendees in this workshop.

Introduction

In foreign language learning when we think of language proficiency, we first think of four primary skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening may be regarded as a receptive skill; however receptive skills may help productive skills develop. When learners start to produce something, the teaching becomes more communicative and this gives learners a chance to integrate all skills. As an extremely important skill, listening has been recognized as a multidimensional construct that consists of complex (a) cognitive processes, such as attending to, understanding, receiving and interpreting content and relational messages (Imhof, 2010); (b) affective processes, such as being motivated to attend to those messages (Weaver, 1972); and (c) behavioral processes, such as responding with verbal and nonverbal feedback (Weger and et al., 2010). On the other hand, it has all been agreed that simply teaching the cognitive processes of listening cannot make a learner competent in listening. There is a need to develop an awareness of affective processes underlying learners' own learning and equip them with a wide range of effective learning strategies so that they are able to take responsibility for that learning (Nunan, 2002) because native speakers automatically acquire these skills while foreign language learners need to learn instructions. Since the aim of learning a language is to speak and language is viewed as a type of behavior (Nation and Newton, 2009), learners are expected to involve in this behavioral process lastly.

With this realization, it is understood that there is a need for providing authentic input to facilitate foreign language learning. Comprehensible input containing *i + 1*, structures a bit beyond the acquirers' current level and a low or weak affective filter to allow the input in are necessary conditions to acquire a language as Krashen (1982) indicated. In River and Temperley's (1991) study, adults devote 45% of their energies to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading, and 9% to writing of all the time spent in communicative activities so listening comprehension might be considered as an important skill which students should learn to function successfully in real-life situations (Ur, 1996). In real-life situations, meanings are shaped by context and they are constructed through interpreting meaning rather than receiving it intact (Lynch and Mendelsohn, 2002). Meaning-focused listening conventionally stresses a top-down approach to listening comprehension. Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002), however, indicate that there are lots of studies which have shown how bottom-up process is important for processing in second language learning. When these two types of processing come together, listening can be seen as a variety of sub-skills.

Today, listening is an important skill which deserves special treatment and teaching methodology with its own characteristics (Flowerdew and Miller, 2005). Materials should be able to achieve impact through novelty, variety, attractive presentation, appealing content and achievable challenge (Tomlinson, 2011). Since practice with creative techniques is crucial element of teaching listening, this workshop aims to introduce the attendees to some creative techniques and provide them with the opportunity of practicing these techniques which combine traditional face-to-face methods with more modern computer-mediated activities. The procedure of the workshop will be presented in the steps below.

Procedure

In this workshop, first I will draw the attendees' attention to the importance of songs in teaching listening. Also, my aim will be to inform them on key elements on the use of songs. Music and songs contain many benefits which assist learners in learning process. Anton (1990) believes that music is one of the most effective memory aids available because it helps learners recall grammatical structures. In the first song, it will be aimed to teach a grammar point. Each learner tries to hear the past form of a certain verb and raises colored papers when they hear the word written in their colored papers. In a U-designed classroom, all the students might find chance to see all past versions when they are raised. This activity may be followed with different follow-up activities to clarify the grammar subject. Also, there are online resources offering countless songs for educational purposes. Lyricstraining.com is one of these online resources. It will be demonstrated how to use website and create some while-listening tasks for in-class activities.

In the second part of the workshop, some Web 2.0 tools will be introduced to raise awareness about the use of educational technologies in classroom so that teachers keep up with the young generation. Millennial students described as *digital natives* by Prensky (2001) have the potential to establish authentic real-time experiences by sharing their works using a variety of compelling media formats and receiving immediate feedback (Warlick, 2005). Some different Web 2.0 tools will be presented for the use of attendees such as *Voicethread*, *Toondoo*. Kılıçkaya (2010) mentions about *Voicethread* as a unique tool that it provides to comment such as using webcam, voice and text. To be able to use these tools, attendees just need to sign up to benefit all the advantages.

As one of the activities in the workshop, a listening game will be presented for English as Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers. In the context of a game, learners can acquire vocabulary skill without pressure (Kohl, 1981). For this reason, attendees will listen to a recording I recorded about economy news and they will invest in some economic instruments such as gold, euro and stocks. This will bring up a new idea for ESP teachers to integrate their classes. This language game might even become a weekly or monthly activity in faculties of business and economics.

Finally, all the attendees will be expected to participate in the activities presented in the workshop. The activities will be presented with their theoretical background and in-class practice.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this workshop is that the attendees might design these kinds of activities in their teaching contexts considering their needs. One of the biggest advantages of these activities is that they engage students in learning and encourage achievement. With this small practice with activities, attendees will be able to use them to increase motivation and involve learners in their classes. At the end of the workshop, attendees will walk away with many more suggested tools, activities, games and ideas.

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Biodata

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Pronunciation for Prestige and Confidence

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Abstract

Current needs analyses sometimes fail to determine the significance of pronunciation for professional and academic students of English. Improved pronunciation training leads to greater confidence in the practical use of English. It also increases the prestige of the user and enhances competence in the performance of actual tasks such as making presentations and negotiations. A major contention of such training is that speaking with a standard English accent is not a requirement for the effective delivery of prestigious speech.

Introduction

This article is based on insights I have gained through a process of action research over the last three years working with mixed nationality classes in the United Kingdom, with full consideration given to students' ultimate objectives and real-world needs. It is not an academic paper in so far as the observations I have made are based on commercial and practical considerations. The conclusions drawn are my own and provide the basis for a new course in pronunciation training which we are implementing in my school.

It is not the intention of this article to devalue the significance of any single skill area. However, it is important to address the reasons why pronunciation is often neglected by students in their own self-evaluation and by teachers delivering English language courses. Following from this, it is an intention of this article to put forward the case for effective pronunciation development and to emphasise the significance of this skill in real-world contexts and in its relationship to other skill areas. The procedures involved in placing greater emphasis on pronunciation skills are to be considered as 'work in progress' and are, of course, tailored to the requirements of individual students. There are, however, some clear features of pronunciation training which are generally beneficial if it is assumed that effective, high-quality communication in English is one of the goals of taking a course in the language. I hope to be able to convey the overall significance of pronunciation work for intelligibility, prestige and effect, and confidence across the skill range.

Needs analysis

The basis for the approach taken in this article to the teaching of pronunciation stems from a series of needs analyses taken with students arriving for courses in the United Kingdom. It is an argument that a clear and structured needs analysis procedure (with informed consideration regarding the typical outcomes of the learning process) is essential for the productive interaction between students and educators. The students on whom I have based my work come from many countries and have various professional, academic and social motivations for learning English. Sometimes they come for only a week or two and sometimes for much longer. A feature they all have in common is that English is not their native language. On arrival all the students are given a diagnostic test in order to determine their level and they are interviewed in order to assess their fluency and to gain an understanding of their needs and wants.

In some cases a more detailed needs analysis is made. As with most standard needs analyses, the students are asked to specify which areas of language and which skills they would like to concentrate on in the course of their studies. The options are: reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. They are asked to grade the items on a scale from one to five with one being of minimal importance. A representative sample selected vocabulary as the main priority with speaking and grammar in second and third place. The choices represent a commonplace understanding of the priorities for language development, priorities which are often supported by the demands of English language examination systems, corporate sponsors and academic institutions. The information gained from the needs analysis is used to help tailor a course of study and provides a starting point for interaction with the teachers.

Naturally, as the courses proceed and as the students settle in to the routines of living and studying in the United Kingdom, new priorities and objectives come to light. In a few cases the initial choices made from the needs analysis pertain, but in most cases there are changes of awareness, leading to a reassessment of needs. Invariably, this involves a greater appreciation of the significance of pronunciation. At the outset, this usually involves a desire to be intelligible to native speakers and to non-native speakers (the other students in the same learning environment). Basic intelligibility is essential for the practical aspects of day-to-day life (transactions in shops and banks, making accommodation arrangements, dealing with local transport, etc.) but it also important socially, allowing students to make friends with their peers and to enjoy the cultural and recreational activities available.

When this challenge of intelligibility has been met, new requirements often emerge, usually relating to the students' professional and academic ambitions. At this point, intelligibility is rarely enough. The need to communicate effectively in a range of speech acts becomes apparent. Lexical range, grammatical accuracy and competence in all skill areas are still important, but the value of effective pronunciation has usually risen in the students' estimation.

Factors leading to the devaluation of pronunciation in English language classrooms

These are best summarised in the form of a list.

1. The initial location of pronunciation training in the student's own range of priorities. When embarking on the steep English language learning curve, all aspects of the language are regarded as a challenge. Although the ability to speak in English is almost always regarded as important, the precise sound of the language produced is often secondary to the content elements of the speech act. The study of grammar and vocabulary are often seen as being more significant in an effort to make essential progress from a beginner to an elementary level.
2. The valuation given to pronunciation in earlier learning environments. Most of the students who travel to an English-speaking country to improve their English have some study background of the target language. Real beginners are quite rare on courses in the United Kingdom. There has been a traditional emphasis on grammar and quantifiable writing skills in most school systems. The reasons for this are various but the main one is that writing and grammar are easier to test than spoken and/or pronunciation skills.
3. The perceived difficulty in phonetic enhancement. Grammar and vocabulary can be developed using sub-skills which have a role to play across most standard curriculum subjects. They can be improved through memorisation and analysis and are predominantly thought of as intellectual attainments. Although improved pronunciation uses the same set of sub-skills, it is also a physical process. Activating the articulator muscles necessary for better pronunciation is often physically tiring and involves a very different approach to study or training.

4. Anxiety on the part of non-native (and sometimes native) teachers. Many teachers, particularly those who are not working in an immersive English language environment, have low confidence in their own pronunciation skills and in their effectiveness in transmitting those skills to their students. Grammar, and to a lesser extent vocabulary, are often seen as an easier option and are prioritised in the classroom.
5. The priority given to the quantification of language assessment. Academic establishments and educational systems traditionally have to provide students with the qualifications deemed necessary for success and professional achievement. As pronunciation and speaking skills are difficult to test, most systems emphasise writing and grammatical accuracy. This attitude towards measurable results is then carried on by corporate sponsors although the ability to speak well is an actual real-world priority.
6. Doubts concerning pronunciation models. Although in recent years there have been many attempts to address this issue, the fact remains that there is still a hierarchy of pronunciation models. At the top are the standard models of native pronunciation, followed by innumerable attitudes toward native and non-native, inner and outer circle accents. A contention is that effectively accent is not a major factor in improved pronunciation.

Case study: Cristina (Spanish)

In order to appreciate the relevance of effective pronunciation to a student's academic and professional needs, I will describe one student's specific circumstances, her pronunciation problems and the measures taken to help her achieve her goals through pronunciation training.

Cristina is a graduate of Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in the History of Art. She is currently studying for a PhD in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage at the University of Oxford. She came to the United Kingdom to improve her language skills with the intention of studying for a Master's degree. Her initial priority was to improve her English writing skills. More recently she has had to give spoken presentations and negotiate oral assessments of her ongoing research.

Cristina has achieved a lot in her time in the United Kingdom but she still has problems with aspects of pronunciation. The overall characteristics of her speech were a) a very rapid delivery that would become faster when she was nervous, creating difficulty for the listener and often resulting in a greater occurrence of phonological and grammatical errors; b) a lot of mother-tongue interference around individual phonemes and word stress creating a 'fuzzy' effect; c) very little variation in tone and a flat delivery. In order to prepare her for an oral assessment, we followed a number of diagnostic and remedial steps. Below is a sample of the spoken text we negotiated as being representative of the material she was due to deliver. It was useful as it contains many of the key, topic-related lexical items relevant to her research:

> Environmental factors may damage or alter stone if archaeological sites are left exposed after excavation. Shelters are intended to cover archaeological sites and modify environmental conditions to retard deterioration. However, some shelters negatively affect the remains they were meant to preserve.

Selected phonemic considerations in this speech sample include:

1. Confusion and articulation difficulty with the voiceless palato-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ and the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ especially when these occur more than once in sequence as in ***s****ome* ***sh****elters*
2. Articulation difficulty with the palato-alveolar affricate /ʤ/ as in *dama****ge*** and *archaeolo****gi****cal*
3. Articulation difficulty and confusion among close, mid and open vowels particularly over extended speech acts, for instance, *c****o****ver, cond****itio****ns, d****e****terioration, pres****er****ve*
4. Some minimal difficulty with consonant clusters *e****nv****ironmental, e****xp****osed, e****xc****avation*
5. Recurrence of ambiguity in the contrast between short unstressed vowels /ə/ and /ɪ/ and their longer, stressed counterparts

As there was no intention of modifying the features of Cristina's pronunciation which mark her native accent, we focussed only on key, topic-related lexis (e.g. environmental, shelters, archaeological, etc.) practising the phonetic features of each word and the word-stress. We rehearsed a sequence of minimal pair exercises and formulated sentence-long drills which integrated the key words and the sounds that were causing some problems of intelligibility.

As we were conscious of real-world time limits, we gave more emphasis to the intonation of her speech, the features of the tone unit, the role of variable sentence stress, and the value of pauses in order to achieve the results required from her assessment. Cristina was able to assimilate these adjustments to her typical delivery quite quickly. She recorded her own speech act prior to her assessment. The characteristics integrated into her speech can be transcribed as follows. The words in boldface are those Cristina chose to stress in order to put across her point (significantly, they are mostly dynamic verbs and adverbs). The forward slash marks indicate where pauses were made of different durations. The key tonal features she integrated at this stage of her preparation were a series of rising tones around the key words and the dynamic verbs. The contrast between the rises within the tone units and the falls before certain pauses helped to increase her intelligibility and provide a rhythm that had previously been lacking in her speech.

> Environmental factors **/** may **damage /** or **alter** stone **/** if archaeological sites are left exposed **/** after excavation. **//** Shelters **/** are **intended /** to cover archaeological sites **/** and modify **/** environmental conditions **/** to **retard** deterioration. **// However**, **/ some** shelters **/ negatively** affect the remains **/** they were **meant /** to preserve.

As Cristina's case was not a product of detached research but an attempt to address an actual and ongoing problem, it is perhaps worth mentioning that her assessment received very positive feedback and she has progressed to the next stage of her studies.

Pronunciation training

On the basis of the data collected from the sample range of students, a developed course of pronunciation training would incorporate or integrate the following features:

Modelling

This is perhaps the most controversial aspect of pronunciation training as it involves discarding certain assumptions about the English language that have been deeply entrenched for centuries. The recent discussion about English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has emphasised the futility and undesirability of imposing an accent model on a student. As one's accent can be considered a part of one's identity, it follows that the student's accent should remain intact provided there is fundamental intelligibility. A course of pronunciation development which places too much emphasis on phonological models of 'prestige' accent types might have detrimental effects. An alternative is for the student to find their own model, perhaps a well-known public speaker in their mother tongue. It is a contention that prestigious pronunciation can be achieved by focussing on other aspects of pronunciation: intonation, stress, timing, projection and even body language.

Articulation

A student on a short course who is under pressure to achieve a meaningful result should focus on certain areas of pronunciation: word stress, stress timing, intonation. Too much emphasis on phonemes will not produce any startling results in a short space of time. For students on longer courses or for those who have very clear objectives (a job interview or a presentation, for instance) phonemic emphasis is very important. The first step, however, would be locating the key words relevant to the objective and ensuring that the student has a good grasp of their articulation and use within sentences and across the desired speech act. This phono-lexical emphasis can be enhanced by various articulation exercises which gradually activate or build up the muscles necessary to manage English phonetics. In addition to typical exercises in minimal pairs there are many articulation techniques employed by drama and elocution coaches. These are systems designed for native speakers of English but they have great relevance for non-native speakers as well.

Intonation

This is a big area and although attempts have been made to chart the intonation system, there is still much room for debate as to what constitutes the essence of a coherent and practical course designed around intonation. There are a few basic ideas that can help most students achieve not only better pronunciation but also enhanced listening skills and a greater awareness of the practical connections of culture, psychology and language. Once again, the exact features of intonation introduced to the student do not need to mimic standard models of English. It might be said that effective native speakers very often employ intonation features which are at variance with the perceived standard and that is what makes them effective. What is required is that students plan their own speech acts carefully and practise producing an intonation style that suits the task in hand.

Timing and stress

On the surface, this is a complex and complicated dimension of the English language. It is, however, the single area that can be most rapidly instilled and can be one of the most effective aspects of pronunciation in terms of building confidence and achieving a level of language prestige. Word stress would ideally be integrated with vocabulary teaching while awareness of stress-timing and the stress features of tone groups go well with grammar instruction. Most importantly, students should feel free to experiment with sentence stress, timing and pauses in order to build up their own repertoire of effective speech acts.

Discourse

Students need language to perform well in various discourse areas, very possibly more than one. As educators we should be clear which genres we need to work within and provide for the needs of that genre. We should also be able to synthesise certain key features of multiple discourse types. For example, an academic, a business person or a journalist all need to be able to persuade, to speak well and influentially, and to listen attentively to sometimes disparate input.

Spoken grammar

In the course of reviewing individual student's problems with pronunciation, it becomes apparent that these are often closely tied in with uncertainty regarding fundamental aspects of the English grammar and syntactic systems. There are innumerable examples of the correlations between pronunciation and grammar. Most essentially the significant links between tone units and grammatical structures such as noun and verb phrases should be easily apparent to anyone working within English language education systems. I have found that by raising a student's awareness of the tonal and stress features of English, an effect is created whereby their grammatical accuracy also improves.

Conclusion: Prestige and Confidence

Effective spoken language skills in any given language are essential for real-world achievement. The speech act might be a negotiation, a lecture, a presentation, an interview or even a flirtation, but the effectiveness of the oral delivery remains a constant and natural feature. There are many problems involved in mastering another language, but these are demonstrably manageable problems which can result in success and prestige for the individuals who are prepared to rise to the challenge. The overall argument of this article is that prestige and consequent success are within the range of most students of English if they are given the best instruction and on the condition that they are prepared to engage in the procedure. It has not been my intention to dismiss the importance of grammatical or lexical training but rather to support an initiative that would integrate these aspects of language education with a better understanding of the real-world significance of good pronunciation training. What has emerged from my own observations is that the features of pronunciation that often have the greatest effect in real-world interactions are those once emphasised by the now unfashionable skills of oratory (and by extension rhetoric.) The most significant insight I have gained, however, regards confidence. Although all skills are subject to the backwash of negative experience, the one that can be most damaging to a language student's development is criticism of the speech act. I would suggest a new approach to course design that encourages spoken confidence in the English language, rising above the standard communicative model in order to prepare students for more demanding and more rewarding opportunities in life.

Further Reading

The titles mentioned in this list are resources used in the process of designing a course in English pronunciation. They are not the basis of either this article or the course but they contain useful information and techniques for teachers and students.

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Biodata

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Methods of Teaching Presentation in English to Non-Linguistic Students

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Abstract

Our project is committed to supporting higher educational establishments to raise standards so that all young people receive an education that broadens their knowledge and experience and allows them to succeed. The purpose of the research is to create the effective methods of teaching presentation in English to students of non-linguistic specialties at universities. We formulate principles of this education.

Our research project is devoted to developing effective methods of teaching presentation in English to students of non-linguistic specialties.

Students' research work gains importance and become one of the main components of training future specialists at the present stage of the development of science and higher education. It is English that has become the language of science and technology and is used by scientists throughout the world to communicate.

Our scientific research is based on the effective methods of managing scientific activities of students and the following matters:

- developing skills to work with professionally-oriented texts on early English language learning at the higher educational institution;
- the role of student presentation on the English language in the formation of the research capacity of the future scientist;
- the development of students' skills to work with the English language text on the specialty as a part of the scientific work at the higher educational institution.

As for the students, preparing themselves and having a presentation means having opportunity:

- to become familiar with the first hand information about scientific projects;
- to become informed about achievements in different researches;
- to promote their own scientific researches,
- to gain connections, build networks with institutions important to their scientific research work,
- to bring new active students into scientific research work,
- to gain new life experiences,
- to train their presentation skills,
- to gain new friendship and a lot of other reasons, professional and personal.

Our project is committed to supporting higher educational establishments to raise standards so that all young people receive an education that broadens their knowledge and experience and allows them to succeed.

Ability to represent ideas, concepts and strategies to multinational audience using English as the language of international communication gains importance and become one of the main components of training future specialists at the present stage of the science development.

The survey shows that the problem of education on the presentation in English is actual to be investigated.

Much attention is given to form high internal procedural incentives to improve the learning process. This motivation is achieved by organizing the process that provides personal expression of students by means of the English language. The primary means of such organization are implementing communicative games and projects.

We consider that special principles of education on presentations in English are following: gradual change from modeling the text presentation with the sample to independent preparing the presentation without the sample, simulation of presentation conditions as close as possible to reality, critical self assessment and mutual assessment, gradual removal of support, authenticity of presentation sample and also providing technical means and software for the realization of the preparation.

We are sure that the Ukrainian – Turkish collaboration can be useful for the educational systems of both countries. We can discuss our work according to the following programme (Table 1).

Table 1

A detailed programme of project "Formation of students' readiness for the presentation by means of the English language at higher educational establishments"

Term	Scientific research	The course at the University
1 month	The first stage is the **theoretical study** of presentation (presentation by means of the English language, students' readiness for the presentation). It includes work in libraries, discussions with the scientific advisers and other scientific experts.	1. Studying **Curriculum** at the non-linguistic departments of Turkish and Ukrainian universities. 2. Detailed studying the course description of "Oral expression and public speaking"
2 months	The second stage is to **EXAMINE STUDENTS' RESEARCH WORK BY MEANS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE** at Turkish and Ukrainian higher educational establishments. The main aim is to **retrace its peculiarities**.	1. Detailed studying textbooks on "Oral expression and public speaking" at the library. 2. Detailed studying publications on "Oral expression and public speaking" at the library. 3. Material preparation on the course of "Oral expression and public speaking".
1 month	The third stage is to **CREATE A QUESTIONNAIRE** according to the purpose of the research and the most discussible moments arisen during the previous stages. The next step at this stage is the **INTERVIEWS** with chosen representatives and their **ANALYSIS**.	Consultation, discussion and correction of the course "Oral expression and public speaking".
1 month	The fourth stage is to combine all of the results from the previous stages of the current research and to construct the **COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS**.	**EXECUTION** Reading the course of "Oral expression and public speaking"
1 month	At the last stage, on the basis of previous studies and the results that will be received during the current research, the **COMPLEX OF DIRECTIONS** will be composed.	1. **ASSESSMENT** and **EVALUATION** of practical skills for effective communication; fundamental stages of speech preparation; extended presentations as an outcome of extensive reading and research; oral and written language skills in job-related situations such as interviewing, socializing, telephoning, presenting information, holding meetings, CV and application writing 2. **ANALYSIS** and **CONCLUSION**

As a result it is through our project that higher educational establishments can get the best instructions and guidelines, leading to improvements to the whole system and better outcomes for students who are able to be effective in higher-education, science, business and other fields of human activities.

Biodata

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Why isn't Group Work Inspiring Your Students?

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Abstract

When we put students into groups, we sometimes find that the tasks work well, while at other times they fail to live up to their full potential. Does the problem lie within the design of the task, does it depend on the physical environment of the classroom, is it a result of the individuals in the particular group or is it something about the formation of the group itself? This presentation examined the elements included in a good group task, the theoretical background behind the stages in the formation of groups and what lessons we can learn from the literature in terms of why groups may not function effectively in classroom tasks. The literature will then be compared to responses gathered from action research conducted on what learners feel about participating in cooperative group tasks and why they think such tasks are effective or not.

Introduction

Consider the following two quotes and think about your own experiences in the use of '*group work*' (which will also be referred to interchangeably with '*cooperative learning*' for the duration of this paper). First is a quote from learner, Greg Bernhardt, a physics student (2006):

'The closest I ever came to failing a course was actually my high school physics class. Every day we did group work, so obviously nothing ever got done.'

(http://www.physicsforums.com/showthread.php?t=118616)

The following quote comes from the perspective of an educator, Richard M. Felder, Department of Chemical Engineering, North Carolina State University (1994):

> *The proven benefits of cooperative learning notwithstanding, instructors who attempt it frequently encounter resistance and sometimes open hostility from the students. Bright students complain about begin held back by their slower teammates, weaker or less assertive students complain about being discounted or ignored in group sessions, and resentments*

> *build when some team members fail to pull their weight. Instructors with sufficient patience generally find ways to deal with these problems, but others become discouraged and revert to the traditional teacher-centered instructional paradigm, which is a loss both for them and for their students*.
> (http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Cooprep ort.html)

The **f**irst thing you might say is, '*well, these are both related to the teaching and learning of science, which must surely be different to the way students interact when learning a language*.' I hope you can get past that and look at what is actually being said, both from the learner and the educator. For me, the subject matter isn't that important; what is important is the notion of ineffective group interaction and the reasons for it.

Did anything said in those quotes above strike a chord with you? Some of them are immediately familiar. Indeed, some of them go through my mind every time I set up a group task in my classroom.

So, do cooperative group tasks have to fail on least at some level? Well, personal experience has shown that some students like to work in groups while others do not. Some will adopt a leadership role while others will have little to no involvement, regardless of the people they are working with or the encouragement given by the teacher. Nevertheless, I feel that there are more fundamental reasons why group work is not always as effective as we'd like and these are to do with what we allow to happen, or rather don't allow to happen.

Traditionally in ELT we have examined 1) the task, 2) the people in the group and 3) the physical environment. In my presentation I aimed to show the audience that there is one additional factor. We will consider the first three, before examining the fourth and how it relates to classroom research conducted in 2011-2012.

The Task

The task itself is, naturally, of paramount importance. Cooperative learning should involve students working in teams to accomplish a common goal, under conditions that include the following elements (Siltala (2010) (Brown & Ciuffetelli Parker (2009):

Positive interdependence

Team members are obliged to rely on one another to achieve the goal. If any team members fail to do their part, everyone suffers consequences.

Individual accountability

All students in a group are held accountable for doing their share of the work and for mastery of all of the material to be learned.

Face-to-face promotive interaction

Although some of the group work may be portioned out and done individually, some must be done interactively, with group members providing one another with feedback, challenging one another's conclusions and reasoning, and perhaps most importantly, teaching and encouraging one another.

Appropriate use of collaborative skills

Students are encouraged and helped to develop and practice trust-building, leadership, decision-making, communication, and conflict management skills.

Group processing

Team members set group goals, periodically assess what they are doing well as a team, and identify changes they will make to function more effectively in the future.

For many teachers, it would be interesting to examine how many of these actually happen when we set up cooperative learning situations in class. I suggested that the audience should not feel bad if they don't see all of them happening. Even though I've been giving this matter some thought, I doubt that all of the group work that goes on in my classes includes all of these elements. In fact, getting to the point that we as a profession recognize each of these factors has been a long and arduous journey, as Jacobs and Ball (1996) suggest:

> In some ELT coursebooks, group activities appear to have been created merely by putting the words 'in groups' or 'in pairs' in front of what were formerly individual activities, without making any changes to encourage learners to co-operate with one another.

This quote comes from 1996, the result of a detailed investigation into how the course books of that 'generation' were dealing with group work. Jacobs and Ball suggested at that point that the advent of communicative language teaching and TBL were having a positive influence on how group tasks were being implemented in books. We can probably see that this change has occurred and group work, in terms of the task, is catered for more effectively these days as a result of such advances in methodological pedagogy.

The learner

Not only do we need to think about getting the task right, we also need to ensure that we have taken the learner into consideration. For example, Reid (1987) advocates developing a 'culture-sensitive pedagogy'. Group work, Reid notes, is particularly desirable in certain cultures. Flowerdew (1998) reiterates, noting that '*group work is a useful methodological tool for Chinese learners*':

- It exploits the cultural value of co-operation, which would seem to foster a style conducive to learning;
- It can be used to counterbalance the concepts of 'face' and self-effacement, which could be considered as aspects which impair the learning process.

Although this exemplifies how group work is affected by one particular culture, we can easily imagine how such considerations might have an effect in our contexts, too.

In addition to cultural factors, we also have to accept that in a group that is given free reign over its own destiny unchecked, certain personalities will more than likely dominate the processes that take place. Given that we often put learners in groups for the purpose of promoting spoken communication, we must consider that certain personalities thrive in groups while others fare less well. As Underhill (1987) notes, in groups there is '*danger that a [group task that uses a] discussion/conversation technique will reward extrovert and talkative personalities rather than those who are less forthcoming.'*

The physical environment

What does your classroom look like? How does the furniture lend itself to doing group work? These may seem like simple questions, but they can often lead to problems if you don't, or can't, rearrange for group tasks. Kelley (2012) advocates the '*independent-nation-state*' seating model (see Figure 1).

Through use of this seating arrangement, the teacher is making it clear to students that they want them to operate independently from the rest of the class, forcibly separating them into small clusters, so that their desks are pushed together and individual teams are able to face one another easily.

Group formation

Now, if you're thinking, '*how can all this happen in what is more than likely a one-off activity that may only last a few minutes*' you're asking a pertinent question. If you think that getting all of these things to happen is the key to successful group work, I've got some bad news. Not only should cooperative learning include each of these elements, you have to remember that well functioning groups don't just happen. It takes time for a group to develop to a point where it can be effective and where all members feel connected to it. Again, you might be wondering how a group can develop when the learners are only working together for a very short period of time. This is pretty much my point: why are we placing restrictions on how well a group can work together?

My interest in this was piqued by a brief exchange with one of my students at the end of a lesson in which we had ‘done’ some group work. This is what my student, Hazal, said:

> *We really like working in groups in your classes because you give us a chance to grow as a group. You don’t force us to work with people we don’t like and we can easily establish how our group will work.*

This interested me because it didn’t really seem to fit into what the literature was saying about cooperative learning.

The theories on group formation date back almost fifty years. Bruce Tuckman (1965) identified four stages that characterize the development of groups. Understanding these stages can help determine what is happening with a group and how to supervise what is occurring. These four group development stages are known as forming, storming, norming, and performing, as described below.

Forming.

At this stage the group comes together and members begin to develop their relationship with one another and learn what is expected of them. This is the stage when team building begins and trust starts to develop. Group members will start establishing limits on acceptable behavior through experimentation. Other members’ reactions will determine if a behavior will be repeated. This is also the time when the tasks of the group and the members will be decided.

Storming.

During this stage of group development, interpersonal conflicts arise and differences of opinion about the group and its goals will surface. If the group is unable to clearly state its purposes and goals or if it cannot agree on shared goals, the group may collapse at this point. It is important to work through the conflict at this time and to establish clear goals. It is necessary for there to be discussion so everyone feels heard and can come to an agreement on the direction the group is to move in.

Norming.

After the group has resolved its conflicts, it can now establish patterns of how to get its work done. Expectations of each other are clearly laid down and accepted by all members of the group. Formal and informal procedures are established in delegating tasks, responding to questions, and in the process by which the group functions. Members of the group come to understand how the group as a whole operates.

Performing.

During this final stage of development, issues related to roles, expectations, and norms are no longer of major importance. The group is now focused on its task, working intentionally and effectively to accomplish its goals. The group will find that it can celebrate its accomplishments and that members will be learning new skills and sharing roles.

After a group enters the performing stage, it is unrealistic to expect it to remain there permanently. When new members join or some people leave, there will be a new process of forming, storming, and norming engaged as everyone learns about one another. External events may lead to conflicts within the group. To remain healthy, groups will go through all of these processes in a continuous loop.

When conflicts arise in a group, this should not be silenced nor ignored. Allowing the conflict to come out into the open enables people to discuss it. If the conflict is kept under the surface, members will not be able to build trusting relationships and this could harm the group's effectiveness. If handled properly, the group will come out of the conflict with a stronger sense of cohesiveness then before.

A fifth stage.

In 1977, Tuckman, along with Mary Ann Jensen, added a fifth stage, *adjourning*, that involves completing the task and breaking up the team.

Method

Quantitative research was conducted with my two classes from the first semester of the 2011-12 academic year. The students' ideas were elicited through ethnographic research methods. During the sixteen week period, I allowed my students a large degree of self determination in deciding how group tasks should proceed and observed their responses during classes.

Students were interviewed towards the end of the semester, in groups of three. The interviews followed an unstructured format, in which the students were invited to give their thoughts on the group work that had occurred in our classes and how it compared with previous experiences of group work in their education. Their responses were transcribed and have been grouped according to how they relate to Tuckman's stages of group formation.

Results

Tuckman's stages of group formation served as the basis for categorizing the student's responses. Selected comments have chosen to exemplify the themes that surfaced during the interviews.

In terms of ***forming*** students indicated that the way they are initially put together can effectively negate any possibility of a successful task before it has even begun:

- ‘We don’t feel confident speaking with some people. If I don’t talk with them normally why would I talk with them in a group?’
- ‘Sometimes we spread around class because we know the teacher will make groups and we know where to sit so we can be in a group together.’
- ‘Some students dominate and some hide and do nothing. It isn’t like a group really.’

In terms of ***storming***:

- ‘We like to work with people who are our friends.’
- ‘When the teacher puts us in a group, I am mostly unhappy. Some people in class I don’t feel happy working with. If I am in a group with these people, I cannot work.’

In terms of ***norming***:

- ‘I prefer working alone. We can never distribute roles in a group.’
- ‘If we are in a group with friends, we can easily say, ‘OK, I’ll do this and you can do that.’
- ‘Sometimes you say to us we can work with the people we want to work with and this is effective. We can immediately divide the work and begin.’
- ‘One time you gave us papers with different job descriptions and this was good. We could choose a job and stay with it in the group. Also, I knew responsibilities of others at this time.’
- ‘I cannot work effectively in a group. We spend most time doing unimportant things, like ‘who is first to speak’ and other things like this. I always want to work alone and be efficient.’

In terms of ***performing***:

- ‘There is no motivation for us to perform: we know the group work will end and we will just return to our seat in the class.’
- ‘Sometimes teacher moves us to join another group. This kills me, because I feel so uncomfortable. I need to really start again from nothing.’

In terms of ***adjourning***:

- 'Sometimes we just wait for time to pass. Why? Because we can give an answer to the teacher easily at the end without working and we know the teacher will move on to a new activity anyway.'

While some of these comments overlap and can be placed in more than one of the stages, it is interesting to note that the students identified aspects of group work in class that related to each of the stages.

Discussion

Recognizing the different stages of group development is just a start. There are different skills and techniques needed to guide a group through the stages. Here are some questions that will help me teachers generate some thoughts on managing this.

Forming

As teachers we need to look at how groups come together and how we can make sure that everyone connected to the group is involved. Additionally, we should ask ourselves how we can create an environment that fosters trust and builds commitment to the group. Another consideration is about who should choose the members of the group and what our involvement should be in group formation.

Storming

One thing teachers must facilitate is ensuring that group members are open to other people's ideas and allow differences of opinion to be discussed. Furthermore, we should consider how we might keep everyone focused on the purpose of the group and identify the cause(s) of conflict. Another consideration is that of how we might identify and examine biases that may be blocking progress or preventing another member to be treated fairly. Finally, we need to discover if anyone finds themselves in a group with people they would never dream of working with in any other situation.

Norming

In terms of norming, we have to think of ways in which we may encourage group members to engage in collaboration and teamwork.

Performing

As far as performing is concerned, we need to look at ways that we as teachers and the learners themselves can celebrate accomplishments, as well as making sure that we – and they - encourage and empower members to learn.

Adjourning

To enable effective adjourning, we may perhaps need to look at how we can sustain group involvement beyond the short-term task. Furthermore, we might want to consider using the same groups for subsequent cooperative learning situations, rather than abandoning the formed groups as soon as they have started working well.

Current practices

Here are ideas being used by myself, as well as research being conducted by others.

In my classroom.

I don't see any problem in allowing my learners to have input in the choice of their group members, nor do I ever insist on a 'magic number' of group members, although the literature strongly indicates that 3 or four members work best. Bearing in mind that I am with my classes for approximately four months – I know not all teachers are in a similar situation – I allow a couple of weeks of *feeling the way* in which the learners try out different groups to see who they work well with.

Once I see that a particular group is working well I encourage those people to work together regularly if not necessarily all the time. Any potential benefit from working with a fresh group is usually offset by having to go through the stages of formation from the start. Consequently, allowing groups to repeatedly work together enables them to get to a point where they are able to norm and perform quite quickly.

I make sure that the cooperative learning situation doesn't just end with an adjournment that hasn't resulted in completion of something worthwhile. An adjourning group will either end with a recognizable finished product, such as a poster or a presentation, or they will be aware that they will come together again to continue work in a subsequent lesson.

Ideas from current research.

Turner (2012) is doing some exciting work with *restricted Facebook groups* to enhance and speed up the process of group formation, and has written about this on her blog. Turner suggests that, by facilitating an online environment in which learners are able to form and storm, group work in class can become more effective.

Seburn (2012) has also been conducting research into collaborative learning in academic environments, suggesting the adoption of what he terms 'Academic Reading Circles'. The basis of his work is that clearly defining roles within the group and creating interdependency from the off will enable group activities to work more effectively and speed up the group formation process.

Conclusion

Fostering group formation is no easy task and yet is one that may increase the effectiveness of collaborative learning in our classes. The traditional view that allowing close friends to work together in groups may negate their ability to effectively complete the task in question overlooks the fact that students cannot collaborate fully if they have not gone through the stages of group formation. Contemporary research indicates that utilizing social media may enable individuals in a class to bond quickly online and use these connections to work collaboratively in class. Other research advocates the use of clearly defined roles for group members to sidestep the problems associated with forming and norming. Each of these processes highlights the importance of making allowances for groups needing to follow a process of coming together to work collaboratively.

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Figures

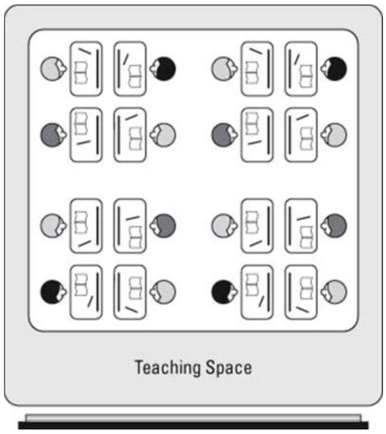

Figure- 1. The independent nation state model

Biodata

Adam J. Simpson has been living and teaching in Istanbul for more than a decade. His interests include corpus linguistics and the development of flexibility in lesson planning.

The Effects of Brain Based Language Teaching on Writing Performance

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Abstract

The present research entitled "The Effects of Brain Based Language Teaching on Writing Performance" aims to identify the needs of the EFL students about TOEFL IBT exam strategies and to investigate the effects of Brain Based Learning Theory on their performances of Integrated Writing section of the exam. It is believed that the findings of the study will illuminate the field of language teaching since Brain Based Learning Theory and its implications are a new way and method for teaching language meaningfully. However, in the field of language teaching, exam skills development courses are usually considered strategy development or practice based courses which are far from meaningful learning. This study presents a combination of both ways. Therefore, it is also aimed that this research will contribute to the field by indicating that strategy training courses can also be carried out meaningfully so that both students and educators can benefit from the study. The study was carried out in two different sophomore classes of a private university in Ankara. While choosing the groups of participants, the factors that the two classes are at the same level of proficiency and have the same background knowledge on the topic to be taught were taken into consideration. Being an experimental study, this study comprises two groups of Turkish EFL students who are being trained for TOEFL IBT exam skills and strategies. At the first place, both groups of students were given a needs assessment questionnaire to find out about their needs, expectations on the system and purposes for learning language. Then, based on the needs of the students, two lesson plans were developed on the Integrated Writing Task of TOEFL IBT. Both of the groups were exposed to a pre-test about the Integrated Writing skills of the TOEFL IBT test in order to make sure about their background knowledge on the topic. Then, the first group, which is the experimental group, was taught the essential skills of the Integrated Writing Task through the practices of Brain Based Learning Theory. The other group, which is the control group, took no special instruction of Brain Based Theory and learned the same skills in traditional method. Then, both of the groups were tested on the same skills they had been taught and the results will be analyzed. The necessary data for the analysis were collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods, such as classroom observation reports as well as pre-test, post-test results and t-test analysis.

1.Introduction

Language is the basic tool by which individuals shape their thoughts and transmit them to the others. Among the functions of this tool are analyzing, logical thinking, solving problems and planning (Fromkin & Rodman, 1998).

For centuries, people have been searching for the ability of expressing themselves in a multilingual way. In this way, many students in the traditional language teaching classes of today learn a foreign language sufficient to express themselves. However, very few of them achieve fluency in the language and even less could become bilingual. Therefore, research in the fields of language acquisition and learning has been going on steadily and researchers have been working on *language*, which is a quite complex concept.

Such searches for effective language learning as well as the recent developments in the field of language have pushed researchers and educators to the relationship between brain and language out of which is born the theory of "Brain Based Language Teaching."

Brain Based Learning Theory actually stands on the idea of making teaching and learning processes parallel to how the brain naturally learns best (Dhority, 1998). This idea structures the principles of Brain Based Learning Theory and brain-compatible classrooms. Based on these brain compatible principles foreign language learning is finding a powerful new identity, which gives birth to the principles of brain compatible language acquisition. Some of the key premises that distinguish brain-compatible learning are:

- Each brain is unique.
- High stress and threat impair learning.
- Learning is influenced by specific developmental stages.
- The brain can grow new connections at any age.
- Emotions are critical to learning.
- Information is gained and stored in multiple memory pathways.
- Learning occurs through the mind-body connection.
- The brain develops better in social environments.
- Much learning is subconscious.
- The brain thrives on meaning. (Dhority, 1998)

1.1. Purpose

As the principles of brain-compatible learning indicate, human brain learns best in a stress-free environment and in a subconscious and meaningful way. Therefore, the role of teachers in a language classroom is to provide these conditions for their students for effective learning to take place. However, in exam-oriented skill development courses, most of the instruction is conscious and meaning can be less important than the strategy. Also, since the final outcome is tested by an exam, the students are engaged with stress and cannot get the joy of learning a language.

This study aims to find a solution, consistent with the needs of the students, for this problem by creating a brain-compatible environment even for exam skill development and strategy training courses. It is believed that brain-compatible activities will provide the learners not only with a stress-free and joyful environment for learning, but also it will increase their performance on exam-oriented skills and strategies.

The study is concerned with the combining the principles of brain-compatible language classrooms with exam-oriented language classes. This process is to be started with identifying the needs and purposes of the students about the system and the curriculum in which they are being educated. Therefore, the research questions which are to be analyzed in this paper will be:

- What are needs, purposes and expectations of the college sophomore class EFL students about their training for TOEFL IBT?
- "How does the Brain-Based Learning Theory influence the performance of EFL learners on TOEFL IBT Integrated Writing skills?"

The process of this study, data collection and analysis are carried out in order to prove the following hypothesis:

"Learners of English as a foreign language whose TOEFL IBT Integrated Writing skills were improved with respect to the principles of Brain Based Learning Theory have better performances and higher test results than the learners who were taught with respect to the traditional methods."

1.2. Significance for the Study

It is crucial to research on the proposed subject since it is related to the achievement level of learners of English and it seeks ways of increasing that level continuously. The achievement level increases only when the learned material is internalized through meaning (Blakemore & Frith, 2005). Today, the focus of language teaching is on communicative methods, which is directed to the meaning and function of the items. At this point, the importance of human brain in education and Brain Based Learning Theory comes into view as it provides “meaning” during learning and enhances the performance of the learners on the learned material. However, not all of the language classes are directed to teach language, but some of them are skill-development classes. Such skill development courses could be exam oriented or skill oriented. In such skill development classes, meaning could be neglected as strategy training gains more importance. From this point of view, the importance of this study is that it deals with the strategies to combine TOEFL IBT courses, which are exam oriented skill development courses with Brain Based Learning Theory, which focuses on context and meaning. Thus, this study is significant since it has implications and practices for the educators.

1.3. Rationale for the Study

There is a need in schools for information about the brain. Teachers are eager to collect the benefits of neuroscience for their students. In neuroscience laboratories, considerable progress is being made in understanding the neurocognitive development and reinforcing essential skills taught by educators, such as numerics and literacy. However, this progress is, unfortunately, highly theoretical. At this point, Goswami (2006) suggests that the current gap between neuroscience and education is being filled by programs claiming to be based on brain science. Hall (2002) argues that neuroscience has implications for psychology, just as psychology has for education and he states that it was possible to bridge the gap between neuroscience and cognitive science, and between cognitive science and education. Therefore, educationalists are becoming increasingly aware of the advances in understanding that neuroscience is making, and are looking for insights it can offer to improve their practice in the classroom.

Acquiring a foreign language through the brain compatible language learning principles has been attracting attention in the field of ELT as it is believed to achieve meaningful and permanent learning. For example, Caine & Caine (1990) claims that educators who become aware of recent research on how the brain learns will gain exciting ideas about the conditions and environments which optimize learning. They further claim that the objective of Brain Based Learning is to move from memorizing information to meaningful learning. Therefore, the role of the language teacher in an exam oriented class is to provide opportunities for the learners to learn meaningfully rather than memorization, which is aimed at this study. One way of accomplishing this is to enable learners to get as much involved in the teaching and learning process as possible. Recent approaches to this idea suggest that engaging the students in “learning by doing” activities is able to accomplish this student involvement. However, Roberts (2002) refers to “learning by doing” exercises as not effective as considered and he believes that it is essential to broaden and deepen educational pedagogy beyond mere “learning by doing.” Brain compatible approach and its potential linkages is one powerful attempt to move out of this idea and to accomplish more. According to Roberts (2002), evidence and theories from the brain compatible approach support human brain’s tendency towards meaning making and synthesis. The brain enables the creation of enriched environments for learners, facilitated by novelty, challenge, social interaction, feedback, emotions, relaxation, choice and participation. As a result, in order to fill the gap between the traditional language teaching or skill development methodology and permanent, meaningful learning, brain compatible principles need to be employed in the teaching process.

2.Literature Review

2.1. How the Brain Learns

Several models exist to explain brain learning and behavior. The ideal method explained by Sousa (2001) is referred as *The Information Processing Model*. This way is the core of teaching according to the Brain Based Learning Theory.

2.1.1. Information Processing Model

According to this model, the learning in the brain starts with information from the environment. Our senses accept incoming information, or stimuli, for processing. They are first sent to the two temporary memories. They are working memory and short term memory. After processed here, the information is directed to the long-term memory. However, the process is not so simple. In order to transfer information from temporary memories to the long term memory, brain needs to get meaning out of the stimuli so that it makes sense to it. Once the information has gone in to the long-term memory, that information is meant to be learned. When needed, that information can be recalled in future. This recalling process is called *retention* and is different from *learning* (Sousa, 2001) (See Figure. 1).

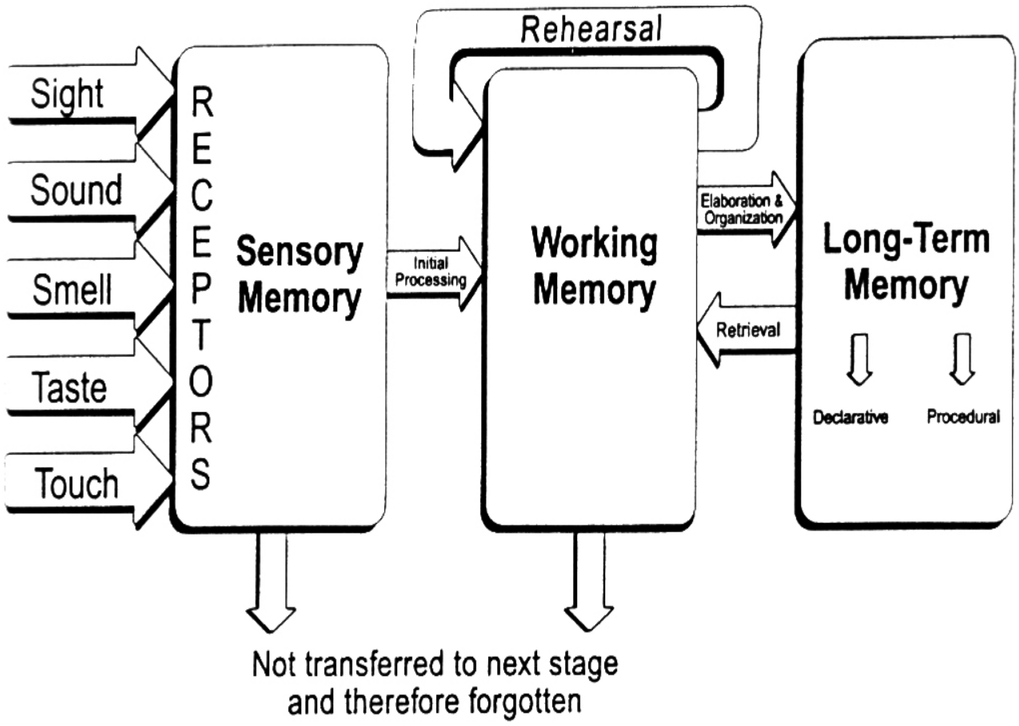

Figure 1. Information Processing Model (Sousa, 2001)

The pathway of the knowledge and stimuli follow in the brain is the basic pathway which is claimed to be followed for a *brain based* learning to take place.

In this study, it is hypothesized that brain compatible approach will improve the performances of the Turkish EFL students on an exam-oriented skill development course. So, at this point, it is necessary to support this claim with some studies carried out in related topics and fields of study. Most of the literature indicates the close relation between human brain and language and they point to some researches indicating the influence of the elements and principles of brain-compatible language classrooms. For example, Mills, et.al. (2004) researched the role of infants' brain in learning words and found that some differences between the vocabulary comprehension levels of infants exist and these differences result from lateralization and different hemispheric specialization. That is, the left or right brain dominance influences the speed and time of learning words among infants. Therefore, the conclusion could be drawn that by addressing different brain dominant learners in a foreign language the teachers can get achievement out of their classes.

There are additional studies which search for the existing pathways in the brain helping language learning. For example, Lacerda and Nehme (2001) found that infants have a capacity to perceive phonetics of languages in general. This is encoded in their brain. As a result of their study, it has been shown that infants have sensitivity towards the phonetic contrasts in both native and non-native languages. This well established pathway shows that individuals have a tendency to learn languages thanks to the mechanisms in the brain. Now that this tendency is explored, it is seen that brain helps learning language faster in class as well since non-native languages are taught in class.

Similarly, Halsband (2006) reported that the representation of language in the brains of bilingual and multilingual individuals differ from that of the monolinguals. Therefore, it could be stated that language learning is encoded in the human brain. Not only does the brain influence language learning but it is also influenced by the input of different language exposures.

Getting maximum benefit from the brain is possible by helping the brain form more neural connections (Sousa, 2001). On this point, Koizumi (2003) found that in learning and education, we form neural connections as we get stimuli from the environment. Controlling the kinds and ways of these stimuli and adding appropriate stimuli to the existing ones will help to get more connections, which means, more meaning. As stated before, for brain meaning is the mere way for learning and retention. Here, controlling stimuli and adding new ones refer to the enrichment activities that will help brain learn. Therefore, it is possible to develop the brain during learning and education. This suggests an endless resource for the teachers to build on during their lessons.

The relationship between brain and language is explicit and, therefore, it is undoubtedly possible to mention a brain-based learning model. It is based on shaping the instruction in the way brain naturally learns best, which was described by the Information Processing Model. However, there are some principles and items which need to be included in this process. Those principles make the learning and retention processes more straightforward and the learned material permanent. In addition, they are the basic elements which should be taken into consideration while designing brain compatible lesson plans and they should certainly take part in brain compatible language classes. Here, in this paper, these postulations will be referred to as the basic principles of the Brain Based Learning Theory.

2.2. Brain Based Learning Theory

Brain Based Learning Theory is an approach which focuses on learning styles based on the natural principles of the working system of the brain itself and issues like meaning, attention, and memory. The purpose of this theory is to find out the method which is closest to the brain's natural way of learning which is biologically pre-determined. Therefore, such a method would be the most beneficial learning method (Jensen, 1998). While some of the theories developed so far are built on by adding to the previous theories, some others are developed by stating contradictory ideas to the ones presented in previous theories. In this context, Brain Based Learning Theory has just gained prominence in the fields of learning, education and especially foreign language teaching (Jensen, 1998). Therefore, it can be argued that including this theory in education will contribute to the quality of education.

The basic principles of Brain-Based Learning Theory in terms of language acquisition and learning could be expressed as follows (Dhority, 1998):

1. Language learning is related to the whole brain. Human brain is composed of two hemispheres which work collaboratively. Although the two hemispheres have anatomical and functional differences, the brain is a one whole system. Therefore, the influence of the education will improve as long as it alerts all the areas of the brain and makes the brain work in a multi-dimensional way. Teachers can achieve this by departing from their traditional roles and enrich their lessons with various activities.
2. The brain continuously searches for meaning. All new input is processed in search of meaning. Educators must contribute to this process by presenting relevant, coherent and meaningful lessons. Pieces of irrelevant information slow down the learning process.
3. Brain learns best by challenge and feedback.
4. The class environments which have high stress and threat negatively influence the brain and slow down the learning process. The reason for this is that when under danger or stress the brain changes its priorities and starts the processes related to security and survival. In those cases learning is hindered. That is why a safe and secure atmosphere must be created in class.
5. Learning and emotions cannot be separated from each other. Positive emotions encourage the motivation and enthusiasm for learning. However, if these emotions are ignored, the lessons will be less beneficial.
6. Body and brain are directly related. Humans learn by their mind, emotions and body as well. Therefore, physiological issues like nutrition, exercise and stress must be paid attention and included in the education when necessary.
7. Human beings are social. Therefore, human brain is influenced by the process of socializing. Language is the most basic necessity to achieve socializing. Thus, techniques which will enable the students to communicate with each

other and to socialize, such as drama, role play, group activities or brainstorming must be employed in order to enhance learning.

8. All the brains are unique. The reason for this is not only about genetics but also environmental. As the effects of this people learn in different ways and remember information with the help of different techniques. As a result, teachers must include a variety of activities in class so that students with different learning styles can benefit from the classes (Dhority, 1998).

Now that such factors help brain to learn more easily and more permanently, this can be applied in the field of education. Using such factors in class activities would make the learned material more permanent (Caine & Caine, 1990). One of the aims in education and instruction is to enhance learners' retention. Therefore, when the instruction is given through the principles in which the brain learns, the information will be meaningful to learners and the ultimate aim will be achieved. As Becktold (2001) argues, the information is learned best and recalled whenever it is needed only if it addresses the ways in which the brain learns. In order to achieve that, teachers must try to make the information meaningful for the learners through repetition and rehearsal, frequency, intensity of the learned material, transfer, practice, relevance, etc; or they must make the information address various senses of the learners. There are factors that help brain for learning and retention, such as repetition and rehearsal, frequency, intensity of the learned material, transfer, practice, relevance and so on. Also, the stimuli must address as many different senses as possible for permanent location of it. When done so, the information could be directed to long term memory more easily and successfully (Blakemore & Frith, 2005). This can be accomplished with the help of related activities, which could be called brain based activities. There could be many of them. These different activities are essential for the enrichment of the brain. For example, one way of providing that enrichment is using music in class. According to Jausovec, Jausovec and Gerlic (2006), music makes foreign language learning process, retention of terminology faster and enhances creative activity since it has an effect on brain activity. In addition, some other examples might be considered, such as practice and rehearsal, activities for different learning styles, like visual, auditory, bodily-kinesthetic learners, or activities for different lateralization of the brain; or different intelligence types, like verbal intelligence, mathematical-logical intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence, and so on. When it comes to the application of them, the creativity of the teacher gets on the stage at this step. (Sousa, 2001)

Meritt (1996) refers this variety of activities as the *symphony of the brain*. She states,

> The learning system is much more complex and involves multiple relations and connections. The information is stored in the brain in such a way that it is part of a large relational network. It is possible to access it through many different paths… If we provide the stimuli to engage this multiple network, we create the possibility of new routes to information.” (p.161).

In the literature, it is also possible to find some studies carried out on the role of brain and brain based language learning principles involvement in the language teaching process. Such studies clearly show the effectiveness of the Brain Based Learning Theory. For example, Wagmeister and Shifrin (2000) describe a school using technology and brain-based instruction to help students who have difficulties in learning to read, write and spell. They state that recent advances in neuroscience and technology can shed light on how schools can meet diverse student learning needs. In their article, they describe a school helping students with such learning differences as dyslexia, disgraphia and dyscalculia through brain based learning principles. During the last few years the school began to study the concept of neuroplasticity- how the brain reorganizes itself throughout the lifetime and started to use more technology in the classroom. The result is an atmosphere where the children thrive. The teachers at the school states that combining the latest neurological research into the school’s curriculum to serve the learning styles of the children with learning differences revitalized teaching and learning at their school. The brain based program created a safe, nurturing environment where children expand their knowledge, find patterns and make connections.

Another study was about the social aspect of brain based learning theory. Kuhl (2007) advances the hypothesis that the earliest phases of language acquisition – the developmental transition from an initial universal state of language processing to one that is language-specific – requires social interaction. Relating human language learning to a broader set of neurobiological cases of communicative development, she argues that the social brain supports the computational mechanisms involved in human language learning.

As stated in the related studies, this study is also believed to find out new ways and fields for further studies since it aims to implement all the elements of brain-compatible language classes in a language exam oriented skill development course.

3.The Study

3.1. Background to the Study

The study was carried out at a private college in Ankara. The university prepares sophomore students for the TOEFL IBT exam and the students are expected to get 100 out of 120 so that they can pass the course with an AA. Therefore, the classes aim to practice skills and strategies for different question types necessary for this exam.

The classes are held to practice four skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. Before the study, a needs assessment survey has been administered for the students and the results indicated that most of the students feel the need for improvement in the *integrated writing* section of the exam since it is an unfamiliar field for the students being different from essay writing. Therefore, a brain-compatible lesson plan is developed in order to improve the course content and skills of the students and to achieve a better learning environment.

The Integrated Writing section of the TOEFL IBT exam is composed of a reading passage on any subject and a listening passage on a different aspect of the same subject as the reading passage. The students are asked to read and listen to the passages and write a three-paragraph (150-225 words) writing which indicates the relationship between the ideas.

The classes are conduced upon a preset curriculum and Longman TOEFL IBT Preparation Book is followed as the course book. To teach integrated writing skills, we teach the skills of reading the passage and selecting the main idea and the main points, listening and note-taking skills, writing strategies, paper content and order of ideas. Then, we make the students write a sample in class and collect them. They usually get their papers back with the feedback the following week.

The study was carried out to suggest ways of improving this way of holding the classes.

3.2. Procedure

The study was meant to be designed as an experimental study. To carry out the study, two sophomore classes were selected. One class was assigned as the experimental group and the other was the control group. First, both of the groups were given a needs assessment survey in order to identify their needs, purposes for learning English and their expectations from the department. Then, both of the groups took instruction on the same skill, which is the Integrated Writing Section of the TOEFL IBT Test. The Integrated Writing Task had not been covered in the previous levels of the TOEFL IBT Strategy Development courses of the department. Therefore, the students were assumed to be uninformed about the topic before the treatment. However, in order to prove that the students do not know the necessary strategies and organization, the students were exposed to a pre-test before the treatment. Although the subject of the instruction was same for both groups, the methods which were used in classes to teach the subject were different. The experimental group was instructed consistently with Brain Based Learning Theory whereas the control group did not take any instruction in consistence with the techniques and principles of the theory. The subject was taught to the control group in traditional teaching methods, such as explaining the strategy and organization.

The brain compatible instruction that the experimental group received was applicable because integration through meaning is a kind of process that the human brain is naturally engaged in. Therefore, the Integrated Writing section of the TOEFL IBT exam was compatible with the implications of this study. During the study, the students were asked to read a text of a certain point and take notes of the important points. Then, they were asked to listen to a short lecture on a different aspect of the same topic and take notes of the important points. Then, using their notes, the students were supposed to write a text of 150-220 words, integrating the two texts by indicating the opposing points in an organized way.

To have the students achieve this purpose, the researcher first aimed to make it a language class, rather than an exam skills practice class. The students were also reminded of this purpose in order to remove anxiety levels caused by the stressful connotations of 'exams', which would impair learning, according to the Brain Based Learning Theory principles. Therefore, at the first step, some pre-reading stages were applied for the reading text. As part of the study, the students had been taught how to take notes on reading texts, deciding which part is important. Before they start reading, some discussion was held regarding the topic in order to activate the content schemata. The students were asked background questions that would guide them towards the context for meaningful learning to take place. Then, the students are asked to read the firsts sentence, which is the topic sentence of the text and write at least five questions whose answers they expect to find in the text and read the text to look for answers to those questions. For the long term benefits of such a study, the students had been instructed how to do this quickly, as a mental process, during the exam. As they read the text, they take notes on the answers for writing. After the while reading stage, the students are asked to compare their notes with those of their partners so that they can check comprehension and get engaged in some social study, which is known to foster learning, according to the principles of the Brain Based Learning Theory. In order for them to get ready for the listening part, they are asked to reflect on the major ideas of the reading text and think what to expect to hear in the listening part. Guessing, as a strategy here, ought to be employed because the ideas in the listening text are in contrast with those in reading. Therefore, the readiness levels of the students will increase and this will definitely contribute to the increase in comprehension levels. This part also functions as the pre-listening stage. Then, the students were asked to listen to the lecture and compare their guesses with the speaker's statements, taking notes on the points that differ from those in reading. This was an instruction for long term use as well because this helps students make the most of the text meaningfully as well as contributing to their exam achievement. It also helps develop analysis and synthesis tasks, which are considered high level tasks, providing a challenge to motivate students. At the post listening stage, the students were asked to compare their notes with those of their partners. To make the task compatible with the real exam settings, the students, individually, were asked to bring the ideas from reading and listening together and make an outline of the writing. Then, the students were asked to write their paragraph individually, paying attention to the organization rules they had been instructed before.

The difficulties regarding the lexis and structure were not dealt with much considering the fact that students will not have that chance during the actual exam and the instruction has to be compatible with the actual task. However, strategies like 'guessing the words from the context' or 'reading past unknown structures to make the general sense of the text' had been taught as general exam skills. Each task employed in this study were those kinds that students would be able to use in the actual exam as well, except for the social tasks, but they were instructed to do it on their own during the exam and not to skip those as checking work is an essential step in the process.

At the end of the training, the knowledge and the achievement level of the students on the developed skill was tested to see which group had higher scores. The necessary data for the analysis were collected through observation reports. The class teachers were asked to observe the performances of their students and the efficacy of the class during the instructions and write detailed reports on the level and performance of their students. In addition, pre-test, post-test results and t-test analysis were also employed for data analysis.

3.3. Participants

41 Turkish EFL students (21 in the experimental group and 20 in the control group) took part in this study. They are in the second year of their undergraduate education and they are taking English as a must course. The two sophomore classes were meant to be equal in their level of English and background in order for standardization to be provided. For this reason, the division of the university was used while selecting the participants. The university forms class lists based on the students' former achievement levels. Therefore, from these class

lists, two same level and same grade classes were selected and the students of these classes became the participants of the study.

3.4. Instruments

Three instruments were used in this study. The first one is the needs assessment survey developed by the researcher. This survey aims to learn about the needs, expectations and purposes of the students so that the lesson plan which was to be developed could be consistent with the needs of the students. The needs assessment is carried out over a questionnaire which includes 4 open-ended questions and 30 rating scale items. The open-ended questions aim to find out the students' purposes for learning English, the role of English in their life, the extent to which the Departmental English courses serve for their purposes and if not what needs to be done for the sake of improvement. When it comes to the rating-scale items, they intend to learn the opinions of the students about the Departmental English courses they have been taking, the content of the lessons, the way that the lessons are carried out, the extent to which they could use the knowledge they gain in these courses to their lives and the consistency of the courses with their aims.

The other instrument was the journals which the teachers were asked to write about the performances of their students and the atmosphere of the classes during the lessons.

The last instrument was the post-test in this study was a sample integrated writing task consisted of one reading, one listening passages and the question about them.

4.Data Analysis

4.1. Needs Assessment Survey

The analysis of the needs assessment survey indicates that the students' aims for learning English are orderly as follows:

1. Job and employment related purposes
2. Academic purposes
3. Globalization related purposes
4. School and exam related reasons
5. Enjoyment

This order suggests that most of the students are learning English for communication since English is getting more and more common in the world which helps many people from different nations communicate and they do not want to be excluded. Also, the next high number group of students believes that they need English because they think they will need it in future while trying to get a job and some of them plan to have an M.A. degree in Turkey or abroad and they know they need a high grade in an international English exam for this. In addition, there are few students who state that the one and only purpose of their learning English is just to pass the exams at the school and pass the courses that they have to. Also, there are only two students who stated that they learn English because they enjoy writing, speaking and reading in English as well as listening to English songs and this give them a kind of self satisfaction.

When it comes to the role of English in their lives, a great number of students stated that the role of English is communication. Also, they suggest that English also serves for their needs such as internet and access to knowledge since most of the articles and academic materials they need are in English.

Such questions measure the level of needs of the students. However, for the questions which test the consistency of the Departmental English courses with the purposes of the students, the result is a bit disappointing. It has been stated that most of the students need to learn English because of communication purposes and wish to success in the employment and post-graduate academic processes. These students indicate that they are pleased with the content of the lessons which prepare them for the TOEFL test which is important for their academic purposes. In this way, most of the students think that although the courses and the course content might serve for their purposes, they do not meet their expectations since they fail to equip the students with the necessary knowledge or practice for communicative use. However, they actually aim that they want to learn and use the language in realistic contexts during this exam preparation process as well. Therefore they think that the expectations and the content of the lessons are not appropriate to real life. Their suggestions to make it appropriate are usually to aim the lessons to teach language as well as practicing skills and strategies, to use different sources with various activities and ways of fun.

4.2. Observation Reports (Journals)

The teacher of the experimental group writes in the observation report that the lesson was full of positive attitudes it was a totally warm and caring learning environment. Classroom management was not a problem since all of the students were participating in the lesson. Also, the work the students produced was really good and successful.

However, the teacher of the control group wrote that it was a difficult class since the students were inattentive and noisy during the lesson. Therefore, they had difficulty in classroom management. Moreover, the students in the control group were written to get difficulty in understanding the task and producing creatively written work.

4.3. Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

The pre-test was carried out to check the knownness level of the task by the students. However, since the students were not engaged in any Integrated Writing Activity in none of the previous levels or classes, the pre-test scores were between 10 and 20 out of 100. The arithmetic mean of the pre-test among the Experimental Group students was about 9 out of 100 and it was about 8 out of 100 among the Control Group students. Therefore, the results of the pre-test indicated that the subject was known by neither of the groups before the treatment. The students were not aware of the organization rules and patterns but they just tried to produce essay-like written work on the given passages which was totally incorrect according to the requirements of Integrated Writing Task.

As the post-test of the treatment, both of the groups were given a sample TOEFL IBT Integrated Writing Task. The task consisted of one reading passage and one listening passage in the same subject. Both groups were given 20 minutes to write about those passages. It was required to use the skills and strategies taught in the lesson, such as note taking while reading and listening, selecting the main ideas and important points of the passages, analyzing the passages and synthesizing the similar and different points between the passages. Then, the students were asked to write a passage combining the skills and strategies.

As the results of the post test show, the experimental group significantly scored higher than the control group. The arithmetic mean of the post-test among the control group students was 50,48 out of 100 while it is 71,19 out of 100 among the experimental group students.

Also, the post-test scores of the groups were checked via t-test analysis to see the difference between the scores of the groups.

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Final	Experiment	21	71,19	14,702	3,208
	Control	21	50,48	15,322	3,344

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Final	Equal variances assumed	,000	,996	4,470	40	,000	20,714	4,634	11,349	30,080
	Equal variances not assumed			4,470	39,932	,000	20,714	4,634	11,348	30,080

It is indicated in the table that the Sig.(2-tailed) value is ,000. The values less than ,05 shows a significant difference between the sores. Therefore, as the data analysis shows, there is a significant difference between the scores of the Experimental and Control Groups.

4.4. Interpretation of the Results

As is was proved by the observation reports of the classroom instructors, the classroom atmosphere and learning environment of the experimental group were much more effective and there was more student involvement in the process. The students learned better and permanent learning was provided. The analysis of the post-test scores also confirmed this as the students in the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group. All this information shows the effectiveness of Brain Based Learning Theory in language classrooms although it is an exam-oriented skill development class.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to increase the level of performance of Turkish EFL students in TOEFL IBT skill development courses. As the results of the study indicate, this situation is provided and the students performed better thanks to the principles of the Brain Based Learning Theory.

At the end of the research, both of the research questions were answered. The first one was about the needs of the students and he study enabled us to identify those needs and design lesson plans in line with those needs and purposes of the students. The second question was whether brain based learning theory increase the level of performance of the students. This question was also answered as positive and brain based learning theory was found to increase the level of achievement in skill-development courses.

When the elements in the lesson plan were considered, the relationship between this study and the previous studies can be clearly identified. For example, in the brain-compatible lesson, music was a powerful helper to initiate the class and to activate the students' brains during the thinking process. Therefore, the aforementioned research by Jausovec, Jausovec and Gerlic (2006) were also confirmed and supported. Furthermore, in the lesson plan, movement took part as an inseparable part of the learning process and the students were asked to move not only in the classroom but also out of the classroom during the break time and they were repeating what they have learned while moving. Thus, the idea of Dhority (1998) that learning occurs through the mind-body connection was also confirmed. In addition, brain's tendency to make meaning out of the learned material was considered in the lesson plan and students were engaged in activities and tasks which will enable them to get the meaning first. As a result of this, Blakemore & Frith's (2005) statement that the achievement level increases only when the learned material is internalized through meaning was supported as well. Another point which was significant for the study is the principle of feedback. Considering that brain needs multiple-source feedback to learn best, the lesson plan included feedback for the students not only from their peers, but also from their teachers and also from electronic sources, like computers and the internet. The increased level of success as a result of this, proves the ideas of Dhority (1998) and Jensen (1998) about the importance of feedback. As the final conclusion, this study empowers the findings of Koizumi (2003) that we form new connections between the neurons as we get stimuli from the environment and other studies indicating the relationship between brain and language were supported.

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Biodata

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An Authentic Approach to Creating a Unique Language Learning Environment

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Abstract

This paper is a combination of theory and application and a collection of real life practices of a military academy –a higher education institution. In order to meet the needs of learners (Ls) and the institution, an authentic approach has been adopted (since 2007): firstly, the needs of both the Ls and the institution have been identified; secondly, a program has been developed; then the syllabi have been designed accordingly; and lastly and most importantly, authentic materials have been developed. As an indispensible part of this program, authentic assessment tools and methods have also been developed and applied. Following two years of application of the newly developed program and its components like materials and testing tools, a quantitative research was conducted in order to see the effects of the program and in order to carry out necessary modifications thereby. The findings showed that incorporating the Ls needs and preferences into the syllabus and curriculum is really effective in meeting the challenges of the new era we are in: The Post Methods Era. However, it was not only the needs and preferences of the Ls, it was also the real life needs of the institution and profession that determined the language learning and teaching environment. Now, five years have passed since the program was commenced. Another hybrid research (both qualitative and quantitative) has been conducted in order to identify the long-lasting effects of the aforementioned language development program.

Key Words: authentic approach, needs analysis, learner preferences, curriculum development, educational environment

Introduction & Related Literature

In his ground-breaking book entitled "The Practice of English Language Teaching (4th Ed.)", Harmer (2007b) mentions 'the changing world of the classroom' (pp. 175-199). Similarly, Brown (2007) puts forward the details of 'The Post-method Era' (pp. 40-61). On the same pattern, Kirpatrick (2007) wrote a book entitled "World Englishes" implying the fact that English has become the language of the world with some variations giving rise to changes in the understanding of teaching and learning domains of the language in question. The use of technology in the field has greatly changed compared to a decade ago for instance (Dudeney and Hockly, 2007). In sum, the nature of English Language Teaching has obviously changed over the years.

Today there are zillions of ideas on teaching English. The thing is making informed choices in order to create to the point solutions to your context (Brown, 2000; Hedge, 2000; Lindsay and Knight, 2006).

All of these make Nunan right in his claim that "for much of history, language teaching has been obsessed with a search for the 'right' method (Nunan, 1995, p. 228)" verifying Richards (1978) in his claim that "it was felt that somewhere or other there was a method which would work without for all learners in all contexts, and that once such a method had been found the language teaching 'problem' would be solved once for all (cited in Nunan, 1995, p. 228)."

We are experiencing a period called 'Post-method Era' referring to the fact that there is no one best method to fit all (Nunan, 1995; Nunan, 1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Richards, 2001). Similarly, the challenges of the present day are numerous in terms of foreign/second language (FL/SL) teaching and learning (Harmer, 2007a; 2007b). In addition to learner variables put forward by Yorio in 1976 (cited in Brown, 2000, p. 273), in order to meet those challenges and in order to cater for the variables of post-method era, an authentic approach has been adopted in the Turkish Air Force Academy (TurAFA) since 2007 (for the classification of learner variables by Yorio cited in Brown, see Appendix A).

In order to meet the challenges of the new era, an environment has been set up for the learners to promote learner autonomy so that they can hold the responsibility of learning a foreign language rather than solely depending on the 'supplied'. Based on Pehlivan's needs analysis in the format of MA thesis (2003), a content-based English Language teaching program has been developed. Within this program, eight different syllabi have been designed and authentic course materials have been developed accordingly. Moreover, authentic assessment tools and methods (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996) have also been adopted and applied. For many, 'authentic material' means texts not prepared in order to be used in classroom instruction, i.e. for a text to be authentic it should be naturally produced or uttered. Actually authenticity is a multidimensional concept having numerous facets. Gilmore (2007) states at least eight possible inter-related meanings emerge from the literature. Authenticity is related to:

> (i) the language produced by native speakers for native speakers in a particular language community (Porter&Roberts, 1981; Little, Devitt & Singleton 1989),
> (ii) the language produced by a real speaker/writer for a real audience, conveying a real message (Morrow, 1977; Porter and Roberts, 1981; Swaffar, 1985; Nunan, 1988/9; Benson & Voller, 1997),
> (iii) the qualities bestowed on a text by the receiver, in that it is not seen as something inherent in a text itself, but is imparted on it by the reader/listener (Widdowson, 1978/9; Breen, 1985),
> (iv) the interaction between students and teachers and is a 'personal process of engagement' (Van Lier 1996, p. 128),
> (v) the types of task chosen (Breen, 1985; Bachman, 1991; van Lier, 1996; Benson and Voller, 1997; Lewkowicz, 2000; Guariento & Morley, 2001),
> (vi) the social situation of the classroom (Breen, 1985; Arnold, 1991; Lee, 1995; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Rost, 2002),
> (vii) assessment (Bachman, 1991; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Lewkowicz, 2000),
> (viii) culture, and the ability to behave or think like a target language group in order to be recognized and validated by them (Kramsch, 1998). (p. 98)

For Shomoosi (2007), authenticity is a relative concept materialized within each context with the interaction of its participants; therefore, it is subject to pragmatic variation which cannot be defined in isolation and that its characteristics lie in the context. Tatsuki (2006) states that authenticity itself is a social construct and it entails the co-operation of users, situations, and the texts as shown in the Figure 1 below.

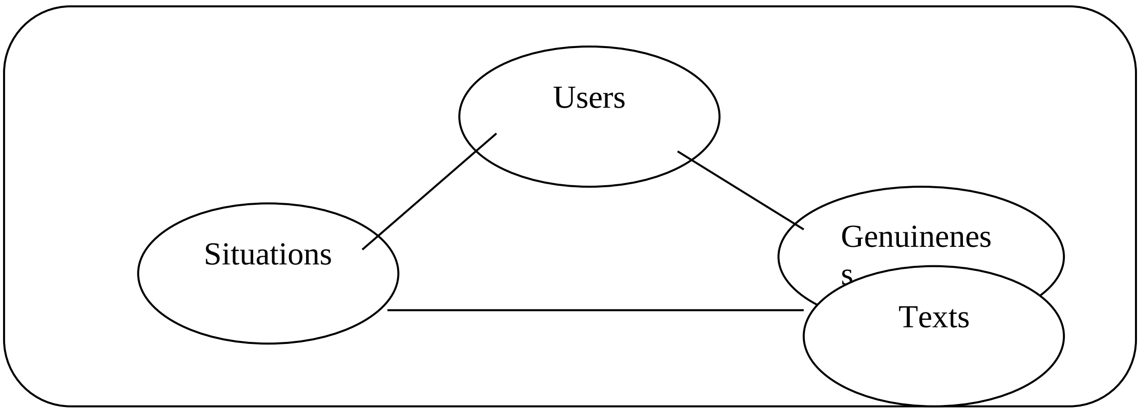

Figure 1. Interaction of Users, Situations, and Texts in authenticity (Tatsuki, 2006).

When we say authentic materials we refer to the authenticity of the context in which materials were produced for the real communication purposes rather than classroom materials which sometimes included using authentic texts as well.

Going back to issues pertaining to meeting the challenges in our unique context, two systematic checks were carried out in the meantime. The first one of the checks was done two years after the program had been completed and the other was conducted five years later the program had been in use. Accordingly, authentic materials and measures have also been taken like incorporating learner contribution and preferences into the curriculum in the format of structured projects and administrative measures. *English through Songs, English through Movies,* and *English through Newspaper Articles* were semi-structured projects to incorporate learner contribution and preference; creating an on-line support domain called 'ebabil', supplying the learners with a video room and a lot of readers were some of the administrative measures.

Context

Turkish Air Force Academy (TurAFA) is a four-year military academy where the students are both academically educated on five major engineering and administrative departments, i.e. aerospace, electronics, industrial, computer, and administrative sciences and at the same time trained to be fighter pilots for the Turkish Air Force. Although the medium of instruction is not English in the academy, it is given special attention and quite an important amount of time is allotted to English classes in the curriculum.

English Language Teaching System at TurAFA

At TurAFA, English is taught at all levels as there is heterogeneity in the proficiency levels of the students at the time of the acceptance to the school. There are some students having studied English for some years and reached a certain level of proficiency in English before TurAFA and thus starting their English courses at the advanced level, while there are some with no or insufficient previous experience of English and taking beginner level English courses.

The new syllabus has been in use since the beginning of the academic year 2007 and it aims to create an opportunity for the students to learn and/or practice English while increasing their content awareness in the subject matters which will constitute crucial parts of their career. The students of TurAFA will have pre-arranged career fields with clear-cut definitions after graduation, which helped the designers of the syllabus while deciding on the content of the new system. All of the students need to learn and/or improve the language of English in four skills and they are getting educated and trained for almost the same career areas in which they will have to use English. CBI views the target language largely as the vehicle through which subject matter content is learned rather than as the immediate object of study (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989, p. 5). Therefore, the compatibility of the main principle of CBI encouraged the designers in their effort to both form their own syllabus and produce their own materials within this English language environment of TurAFA.

The syllabus mainly consists of three stages. First, a series of General English course books written especially for adult learners are used. The series includes five different books starting from an introductory level and ending with an advanced level. All the books of the series contain thematically-based, four-skill-integrated units with critical thinking skills. Second, after studying the last book of the series, all the students start studying the authentic books prepared by the Foreign Languages Department of TurAFA according to the principles of CBI. However, only the advanced and 'super' (referring to the upper advanced) course students can have the opportunity to study the whole six books as the beginner and intermediate level students spend more time in the program improving their proficiency to reach the prerequisite advanced level necessary for these books. Each semester all junior and senior students take at least two engineering courses in English. Those engineering courses are all delivered by the subject matter teachers. The details of the program are shown in Table 1 below.

The students taught in this program are evaluated by means of four-skill achievement tests. In addition, all the students are to keep a course portfolio including their authentic assignments. It is also officially taken into consideration during the assessment of the students.

Table 1

*The Content-Based English Language Teaching Program of TurAFA**

GRD	SMS TR	WKLY HRS	LEVEL: BEG	INT	ADV	UPPER ADV	
1	1	25	Introductory & Basic / Low Intermediate	Basic / Low Intermediate & Intermediate	High Intermediate & Advanced	Thematic Materials	
	2	7	Intermediate	High Intermediate	Advanced	Thematic Materials	
2	1	4	Intermediate	High Intermediate	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	
	2	4	High Intermediate	Advanced	NATO	NATO	
3	1	3	High Intermediate	Advanced	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	At least **2** engineering courses are taught in English by content teachers.
	2	3	Advanced	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Academic English with Engineering Texts (EAP)	Academic English with Engineering Texts (EAP)	
4	1	3	Advanced	NATO	Military Topics (MilTop)	Military Topics (MilTop)	
	2	3	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	Air Forces of the Allied Countries (AFACs)	Air Forces of the Allied Countries (AFACs)	

* The color codes

1st Stage: General English Course Books
2nd Stage: Authentic Course Books prepared by TurAFA
3rd Stage: Teaching of at least two engineering courses in English by content teachers.

Program Checks/Revisions

Since its beginning in 2007, the program has been revised two times according to the feedback systematically collected from both the learners and the teachers. However, general layout of the program did not change much.

The first systematic check and revision was carried out when the advanced and upper advanced level students finished studying the second book of the series (NATO), they had already finished the first half of the program, and had some opinions about the first stage of the program, the General English book series, and the second stage, two of the authentic books (Table 1 above). At the same time, there was the last group of students having educated with the TurAFA's old English teaching system. They were about to graduate from the school. Therefore, a students' attitude questionnaire with a five-level Likert scale was prepared and applied to these students. Advanced and upper advanced level sophomores (124 students) getting educated in the new content-based program were selected as the experimental group, while advanced and super level seniors (101 students) were kept as the control group of the study. The questionnaire was aimed to evaluate whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between these two groups of students. The results of the study were presented in METU 7th International Post-Graduate Conference in 2009 by Pehlivan and Ülgü (2009).

The results of the students' attitude questionnaire to evaluate the recently founded Content-Based English Language Teaching Program of TurAFA after two years of education presented enough evidence for the effectiveness of the new system from the learners' point of view. SPSS statistical analysis program was used to evaluate the answers. The coefficient of reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the data of the questionnaire is 0.914.

The experimental group responded more positively than the control group on the items 6-15 (content), 11-25 (reading), 18-22 (listening), 13-20 (writing), 8-26 (speaking), 16-29 (grammar), 7-14 (technologies facilities of the series), 10-19 (native speaker), 17-32 (teaching style), 23-31 (course hours), 28 (exams). This result justified that the new content-based program increases their subject matter knowledge related to their future career. The books TurAF and NATO helped them gain insight in their prospective jobs while practicing English in four skills, which is compatible with the most important notion of content-based language teaching: teaching a language through content and thus creating an opportunity for the learners to learn both the content and language (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989. P. 5; Işık, 1999, p. 1). The carefully selected series for General English and the two originally produced content-area books studied for two years enabled them to feel that they developed their proficiency in four skills and grammar. The students felt sure that up to that they had been satisfied with the technological support of the course books, native speakers, teaching styles of their teachers. It is also derived that they favored learning or practicing a foreign language by means of an intensive education. They thought the results of the language exams were parallel to their performance in their real life, which is one of the major objectives of content-based language teaching (Grabe and Stoller, 1997, pp. 5-21).

Both the experimental and the control groups responded the items positively almost at the same level on the items 9-12-21-27 (physical environment) and 30 (exams). The students in both groups were all in accordance with the idea that the physical conditions of the learning environment were sufficiently equipped with technological aids and there was no need for a specially designed language laboratory or another sort of learning environment. They also considered it beneficial to be tested on international proficiency exams like TOEFL and IELTS.

The second revision was carried out the following year making a change in the order of the books followed (for the revised program, see Appendix B).

The third revision was conducted the following year in the form of teacher reflections on the current program. The teachers identified that for the pure beginners, an introductory course-material was needed. Then accordingly, relevant change was made incorporating a new course material into the program (for the final revised program, see Appendix C).

Similar results were drawn from the second systematic check, which was conducted in 2012, in the form of learner attitude questionnaire. This was a questionnaire aiming at identifying weak and strong points of the details of the materials and other factors of the current program in order to make tiny changes rather than making drastic changes. Upon the analysis, it was identified in general terms that learners are happy with the frame and content of the program; however, they are in need of more interesting and attention grasping in-class techniques. Accordingly, before the beginning of the next year, necessary changes will have been made leaving the general layout of the program untouched.

Solutions to the Challenges Caused by Learner Variables and the Context

a. *Materials Development Based on CBI Principles*

The major topics of each of the six books were decided unanimously by the designers of the program, the teachers of English at the Academy, and the subject matter experts, the Turkish Air Force officers from different branches. Following, the sub-topics were also chosen in the same way. The books are as follows: Turkish Air Force (TurAF), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA), Academic English with Engineering Texts (AEET), Air Forces of the Allied Countries (AFACs), and Aviation English for Cadets (AEC).

b. ***ETS (2009)***

Since learner preference is of great importance for the second language classroom (Stern, 1980; Saito, 1994; Widdowson, 2003), another thing done in the meantime was developing supplementary course material through learner contribution. In order to support the current program's General English (GE) part, a pack called English through Songs (ETS) has been developed under the supervision and guidance of an instructor. The rationale behind this was the persistent desire of the learners to listen to songs and their willingness to carry out such a project for the sake of contributing to their institution.

c. ETM (2010)

Similarly, in order to support GE part of the program, another project has been conducted with young colleagues called English through Movies (ETM) which was composed of movies selected by the learners.

d. ***ETNA (2011-2012)***

Recently, in order to supplement reading, writing, and watching/listening, another supplementary book called English through Newspaper Articles (ETNA) has been developed aiming at catering for the in-class needs, which have been identified through observation and interviews, of the learners.

e. ***EBABIL***

There is an electronic domain for the learners full of supplementary materials on reading, writing, listening, watching, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary development to do extensive study. This domain also contains films in English.

f. ***Video Room***

Since comprehensible and rich input is of great importance in L2 learning and acquisition (Krashen, 1977), a video room was booked for the learners in the format of self-access room.

g. ***Readers***

Within the scope of the program, it was realized in time that, reading contributed to the proficiency and fluency of the learners in the academy a lot and the learners like to read much; therefore, in 2009 around a thousand readers were purchased and placed at the library for student use. Statistically speaking, there was an influx in terms of demand to read those books. Moreover, the learners were checked and given scores out of their reading and watching activities (for their extensive studies in general).

Conclusion

As Nunan (1995, p. 228) and Brown (cited in Nunan, p. 228) pointed out years ago, ‘there is no one best method to fit all and will never be…’ Bearing this in mind, the needs of the learners and the needs of the context are increasing day by day and getting more and more complicated (Krashen, 2006; Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2007b). Therefore, materials designed for teaching English Language may fall short in catering the needs thoroughly. In order to avoid this and in order to fulfill the learner needs, incorporating learner preferences into the curriculum seems serving the purpose for effective and efficient English language teaching and learning programs.

In the TurAFA, in order to meet the challenges of the new era creating an environment addressing the real needs of the target population, a new program incorporating learner, teacher and context preferences has been put into action.

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Appendix A *(Classification of Learner Variables)*

Table 2

Classification of Learner Variables (Yorio, 1976, cited in Brown, 2000, p. 273)

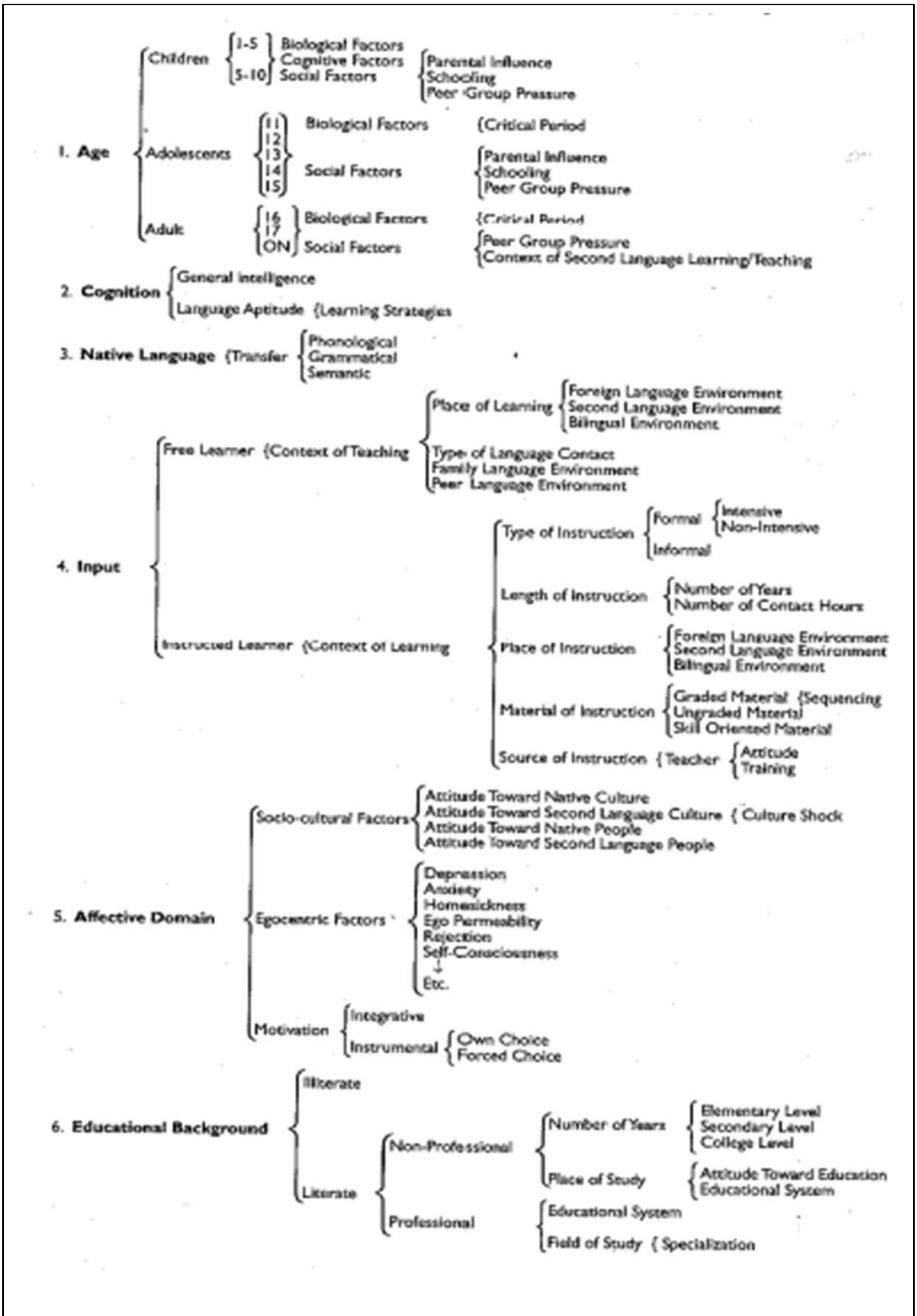

Table 3

TurAFA Revised English Language Teaching Program

YEAR	SEM	C/H	LEVEL				
			BEGINNER	INT	ADVANCED	UPPER ADVANCED	
1	1	25	Introductory & Basic / Low Intermediate	Basic / Low Intermediate & Intermediate	High Intermediate & Advanced	Thematic Materials	
	2	7	Intermediate	High Intermediate	Advanced	Thematic Materials	
2	1	4	Intermediate	High Intermediate	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	
	2	4	High Intermediate	Advanced	NATO	NATO	
3	1	3	High Intermediate	Advanced	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	At least two major area (faculty) lessons are given in English.
	2	3	Advanced	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Academic English with Engineering Texts (AEET)	Academic English with Engineering Texts (AEET)	
4	1	3	Advanced	NATO	Air Forces of the Allied Countries (AFACs)	Air Forces of the Allied Countries (AFACs)	
	2	3	Turkish Air Force (TurAF)	Current Issues in Turkish Foreign Affairs (CITFA)	Aviation English for Cadets (AEC)	Aviation English for Cadets (AEC)	

* Color code

1st Phase:: General English course books.
2nd Phase: Authentic CBI books.
3rd Phase: At least two major lessons given in English by the department instructors.

Appendix C *(Current Program)*

For the current program, some changes have taken place in the program after assessing the feedback from the students and the teachers. These are:

1. A new *"pre-intermediate"* course was assigned between the beginner and intermediate students.

2. The course books to be studied in the beginner and pre-intermediate courses were re-arranged by integrating Top Notch Fundamentals and Top Notch 1 to the general English part and omitting the advanced-level course books.

3. An authentic thematic supplementary book called *"English through Newspaper Articles (ETNA)"* was produced for the super course freshmen and it replaced the *"thematic materials"* in the program.

Rethinking the Approach to Language Teaching

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Educational reform is more likely to occur when nations undergo radical political and social transformations (La Belle and Ward, 1990). The transition to Market Economy has brought about change in all spheres of life in Kazakhstan including education. The changes become especially evident in the language literacy area. For the past several years in Kazakhstan proficiency in languages (mostly English, Kazakh, Russian and German) has become profoundly important for employment and career advancement. These requirements created the need for educational institutions to transform language instructions: "We can't do much to improve learning unless we're prepared to do what's necessary to improve teaching" (Forster, D'Andrea, 2009, p.23).

This paper follows the changes in language teaching practices of the KIMEP (Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research) Language Center instructors trained in a traditional grammar-translation method. The main classroom "tool" was a textbook with a lot of grammar, vocabulary and translation exercises. The tasks mostly were to fill in the omitted words or substitute one word for another. Readymade topics about the family, the country, the native town, the university, the library, etc. were to be learnt by heart. As the focus was on mechanics and not on ideas, critical thinking skills were not required. Language competence was checked by multiple choice tests. Classes were teacher centered; students' individual needs were not taken into consideration. At the end of a course students were able to recite from memory texts on certain topics, translate sentences from one language into another, answer questions on a given text, but they were not able to speak, to express their own ideas. Learners got substantial theoretical knowledge about the language but they had no practice in using the language. Having studied the language for about ten years (six-seven years at school and two-three years at the university), the learners could not communicate in the language.

Despite its apparent weaknesses this method was fulfilling the need of learners in the system. Few soviet people had to interact with native speakers but most of academics read special literature in their field of work. Recent social transformations created the need for different skills.

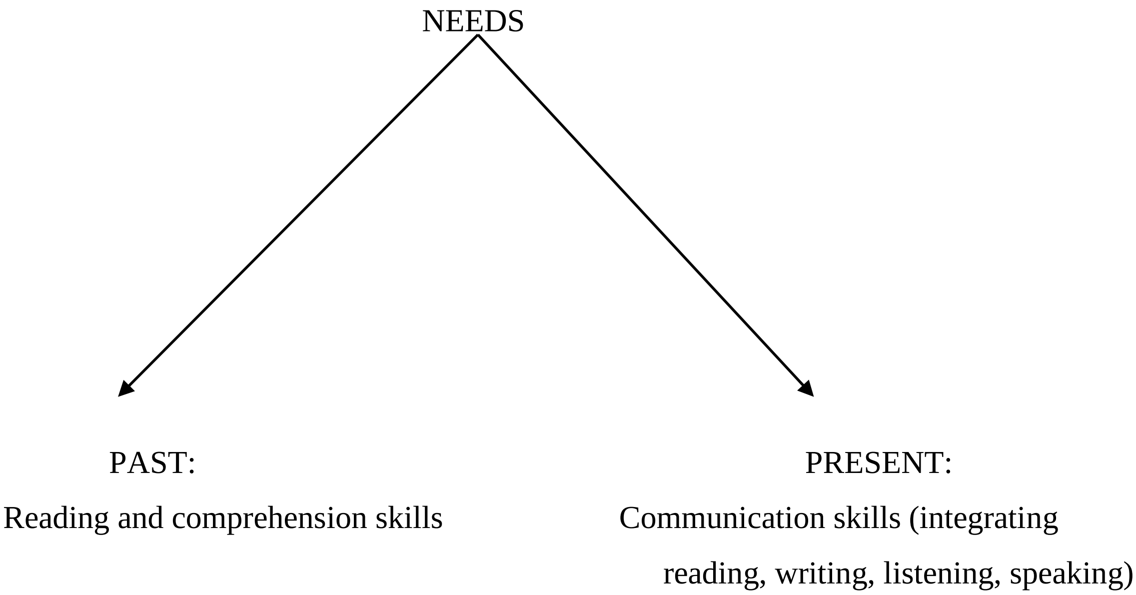

Figure1. Past and present needs for language learning

However being taught and trained in the old system, the instructors were accustomed to using traditional methods of teaching in their practical work.

Data collection and analysis

This research aims to find out whether teachers' practices meet the new educational needs. The paper is based on classroom observations conducted from the fall semester of 2009-2010 till the spring semester of 2011-2012 academic years. As a Language Center Deputy Director, I made 37 class observations in 34 teachers' classes. The observations were made in writing according the Language Center peer observation form. The observations were followed by a survey and interviews.

Results

Analysis of early classroom observations revealed the use of old traditional methods of teaching:

- Instructors controlled the whole process of learning (gave the list of topics for discussion, defined the sources to be used, etc.);

- No/little group work or pair work was used;
- Textbook grammar exercises were assigned for home tasks and checked in the classroom;
- The focus was on rules, not on language use and fluency;
- Emphasis was put on learning vocabulary;
- Language acquisition was checked by multiple choice tests;
- No tasks were given for self-study;
- Assignments did not involve any critical thinking; and
- The final product was more important than the process of learning new skills.

In order to initiate change in teaching practices a number of workshops and teacher development seminars and conferences on an integrated skills approach to language teaching were arranged at the department. They were conducted by the KIMEP University Language Center faculty as well as invited guest speakers. Instructors were given the opportunity to take part in conferences for language teachers both inside and outside Kazakhstan. They gave follow-up presentations on the conference outcomes. A new Master in TESOL program was established at KIMEP University in 2007. Teachers were also allowed to take a sabbatical year and apply for MA in TESOL program in other countries. All instructors were encouraged to upgrade their qualifications; they got teaching load reductions and considerable financial support for studying in MA in TESOL program.

Creating a learning community and scholarly environment was highly conducive to improve teaching. Analysis of the next year classroom observations showed considerable changes in teaching practices. To follow the results of the long-term teacher development activities a survey of Language Center instructors was conducted in the spring semester of 2011-2012 academic year. More than 30 teachers took part in the survey. It showed considerable positive changes in teaching practices. The instructors reflected on the changes that had taken place in their approach to teaching. They compared themselves as teachers 5 years before with how they teach at present. The survey and post observation interviews suggested a shift in instructors' beliefs about their own teaching practices. Teachers reported adapting more student-centered and communicative approach (see also Burkhalter & Shegebayev, 2010).

The survey shows that instructors at the KIMEP Language Center are aware of the necessity of radical changes to be introduced in the teaching process. To get an idea of the changes they see in their practice, here are some quotations from the survey answers which were collected in March 2012:

> Nowadays I understand better the ways learning takes place and the ways to influence it. Today the most enjoyable part of any class for me is when students share their reasoning. I use elements of task-based approach which makes the assignment meaningful for students and gives them freedom in terms of what topic to choose, what resources to use, how to approach the task, etc. And I do not any more depend on a textbook to teach a course. I can compile materials on my own, taking into account students' needs, course objectives and content challenges.
>
> My teaching was wholly based on a textbook. Depth of knowledge is more important for me now. Students' personal interests and needs are taken into consideration. They themselves choose topics and articles to read. The learning process is built to motivate students to find answers and solutions for the problems.
>
> I conduct needs analysis at the beginning of the course and try to integrate students' interests into my teaching. I pay much attention to the self-study work.

In the interviews the instructors stated that their current teaching practices are based on the following principles:

- Facilitate rather than control students' work.
- Stop underestimating students' abilities. They love challenges, they can do a lot.
- Let students work more autonomously. Provide training in how they can learn best. Encourage and advance their individual learning.
- Let students work in groups and allot enough time for them to find the answers for the given tasks, through interaction, e.g. asking and answering each other's questions in order to identify what they do not fully understand. Let them share the feedback from the joint work.

To sum up, the results of the study revealed changes in teachers' classroom performance after Language Center introduced all-round teacher and research development activities.

Concluding discussion

To summarize, the surveys and interviews show the shift towards more student-centered methodologies. However the most important change, in my opinion, is the change in faculty's teaching philosophy. Language teachers seem to become more confident in their teaching, more open to adopt changes. Teachers have also acquired a sense of belonging to a wider community. As evidence of that they conduct departmental workshops to demonstrate particularly effective classroom activities. Thus we managed to create an environment where teachers understand and accept the needs to constantly rethink their language teaching approaches.

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Biodata

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself as a teacher.
2. How does teaching in KIMEP differ from other institutions?
3. I'd like to know about your teaching approach some 5 years ago.
4. What is your teaching approach today? Has your teaching approach changed? If so, how? If not, why not?
5. What challenges do you see in teaching today's students?
6. What is your favorite course to teach? Why?

Iranian and Turkish EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Autonomy in Curriculum Development

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Abstract

The study aimed at examining Iranian (N= 230) and Turkish (N=156) high school EFL teachers' opinions about teacher autonomy over (a) choice of appropriate teaching methods, strategies and techniques to meet student needs, (b) evaluation of the implementation of the established curriculum (c) teacher involvement in decision making processes and (d) using personal initiative to solve work problems. An 11-item questionnaire was used (α= 0.754). The results revealed that there were slight differences between Iranian and Turkish teachers' autonomy perceptions. They also indicated there were significant differences among teachers in considering their gender, age and academic level, while no significant relationship was found for their marital status.
Keywords: Teacher autonomy; Curriculum development and evaluation; Pedagogy; Decision making; Problem solving; EFL teachers; Iran; Turkey

1. Introduction

Teacher autonomy has generally been defined as the degree to which a teacher has the desire to make curriculum decisions using his/her personal initiative and intellectual engagement. For the first time, Little (1995:176) defined the term as the "teachers' capacity to engage in self-directed teaching." After that, scholars defined teacher autonomy from different aspects. For instance, Aoki (2000:19) suggests that teacher autonomy involves "the capacity, freedom, and/or responsibility to make choices concerning one's own teaching". Smith (2000:89) also argues that teacher autonomy refers to "the ability to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others." Furthermore, Benson (2000:111) argues that teacher autonomy can be seen as "a right to freedom from control and/or an ability to exercise this right".

Teacher professional autonomy, as a multidimensional concept, has changed considerably over the years and continues to evolve. As Frase and Sorenson (1992) argue, teacher autonomy is viewed very differently: one teacher may view autonomy as a means to gain substantial freedom from interference or supervision; another may view it as the freedom to develop collegial relationships and accomplish tasks that extend beyond the classroom; and even some others may perceive it as a means for principals to avoid their duties. Although the concept was viewed as a unitary concept in the past, it is recently decomposed into six distinct subcomponents: *autonomy over curriculum*, *pedagogy*, *assessment*, *professional development*, *student discipline*, and *classroom environment* (LaCoe, 2008). These six subcomponents of teacher autonomy provide a solid framework to understand the complex nature of teacher autonomy. The concept, however, concerns itself with:

- involving teachers in decision making processes;
- providing opportunities for peer collaboration, discussion and debate of real school problems;
- providing optimal level of support and allowing for teacher voice;
- encouraging flexibility in strategies for obtaining goals;
- encouraging teacher responsibility and choice about such things as how to learn, what to learn, where to learn, when a learning experience will be considered to be complete and how learning will be assessed;
- perceiving freedom from externally imposed agendas;
- having ability in managing knowledge, skills, and attitudes in teaching.

Studies also reveal that teacher autonomy is crucial to educational effectiveness and empowers individuals within the system to adapt teaching to the changing needs of the students and the community. For instance, Pearson and Hall (1993) found that the degree of autonomy perceived by new teachers is an indicator of job satisfaction and a positive reaction to teaching, and teachers who had higher autonomy scores expressed a willingness to enter teaching again if faced with that decision. Moreover, Ingersoll and Alsalam (1997:7) argued that increasing of teacher autonomy positively correlates with making better decisions about educational issues because top-down decision-making often fails when it lacks the support of those who are responsible for the implementation of them. Finally, perceptions of autonomy have been found to be related to various factors such as tension, frustration, anxiety, and job stress among teachers (Pearson and Hall, 1993; Natale, 1993; Davis and Wilson, 2000; Dinham and Scott, 2000; Webb, 2002; Pearson and Moomaw, 2006; Bustingorry, 2008).

While the potential role of teacher autonomy in language learning/teaching processes is enormous, it has been argued that Turkey has a centralized educational system (Öztürk, 2011; Uygun, 2008; Akşit, 2007). Yıldırım (2003) analyzes the attitudes and practices of Turkish teachers with regard to their teaching programs and identifies that teachers excessively rely on the curriculum and textbooks in their teaching activities because they are asked to meet fully the predetermined curriculum requirements, which means that they have little autonomy in determining the content of the teaching activities. He further adds that centralized tendencies are vividly observed in many fields such as curriculum development, choice of instructional materials, teacher employment, in-service training programs etc. Moreover, Vorkink (2006) claims that "compared with Europe and most of the world, Turkey's public schools have the least autonomy over resources, staff deployment (at the school), textbook selection, allocation of instructional time, and selection of programs offered" (Vorkink, 2006:17).

If this is the case with Turkish educational system, there will be no much difference with the educational system of Iran, where teachers have no flexibility to regulate the content of the programs in accordance with the student needs and classroom circumstances. Therefore, the general purpose of the study is to see whether there are similarities or differences between Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers' sense of autonomy over their teaching activities in their classrooms: (a) choice of appropriate teaching methods, strategies and techniques to meet student needs, (b) evaluation of the implementation of the established curriculum (c) teacher involvement in decision making processes and (d) using personal initiative to solve work problems. It is perhaps worth mentioning that our conceptualization in this regard is that of 'agency' concept developed by Paris (1993) who characterizes the relationship of teachers to curriculum by arguing that "teacher agency in curriculum matters involves initiating the creation or critique of curriculum, an awareness of alternatives to established curriculum practices, the autonomy to make informed choices, an investment of self, and on-going interaction with others" (Paris, 1993: 16). To highlight her concept, Paris (1993) contrasts it to commonly held conceptions of 'teachers as consumers of curriculum' and 'technical implementers of ideas and products of experts'. She further adds that teachers who conceptualize themselves as agents involve in curriculum *development, implementation* and *evaluation* activities. It is, however, believed that taking into account Iranian and Turkish high school teachers' views on curriculum processes, which are context-dependent, will shed more light on the role of teacher autonomy in EFL settings. Hence, the paper aims at finding answers to the following research questions:

1. In what areas (i.e. pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving) do Iranian and Turkish high school EFL teachers' autonomy perceptions differ?
2. Is there difference between male and female teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy?
3. Does 'age' play any role in teacher autonomy?
4. Is there any relationship between teacher autonomy perceptions of EFL teachers and their 'marital status'?
5. Is there any relationship between teacher autonomy and the 'academic level' of EFL teachers?

2. Methodology

The participants were 386 high school teachers teaching English as foreign language in state schools of Iran (N=230) and Turkey (N= 156) during 2011-2012 academic year. There were 176 males (45.6 %) and 210 females (54.4 %) teachers in the study (See Table 1). The data for the study were collected from North West provinces of Iran (East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Erdebil, Zenjan, Kazvin, and Tehran) and four city regions of Ankara (Mamak, Çankaya, Altındağ, and Balgat) in Turkey. An 11-item questionnaire was used to measure teacher autonomy in subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (4 items), decision making (4 items), and problem solving (3 items), each of which uses a six-point Likert scale ranging from 'disagree very much' (1) to 'agree very much' (6). The internal consistency reliability coefficient, as determined by the Cronbach's alpha value, for all items of the questionnaire was 0.745, which indicates an acceptable reliability index for the measure (See Table 2). SPSS version 17.0 for Windows was used to obtain descriptive statistics in frequencies, percentages, mean rank scores, Mann-Whitney Test, and Kruskal-Wallis Test for determining potential relationships among variables.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the categorical variables in frequency and percentage.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1. Nationality	Iranian	230	59.6
	Turkish	156	40.4
2. Gender	Male	176	45.6
	Female	210	54.4
3. Age	25 and below	14	3.6
	26 to 30	44	11.4
	31 to 35	66	17.1
	36 to 40	115	29.8
	41 to 45	107	27.7
	46 and above	40	10.4
4. Marital status	Single	62	16.1
	Married	304	78.8
	Divorced	20	5.2
5. Academic level	Bachelor's Degree (B.A)	256	66.3
	Master's Degree (M.A.)	130	33.7
Total	-	386	100.0

Table 2 shows the reliability of the teacher autonomy scale and subscales.

Table 2

Reliability of the Teacher Autonomy Scale

Components	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean of Inter-Item Correlations	N of Items	N
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	.397	.140	4	386
2. Decision making	.606	.608	4	386
3. Problem solving	.437	.208	3	386
Teacher autonomy scale	**.745**	**.209**	**11**	**386**

3. Results

The results were offered based on the categorical variables included in the study, where the three subcomponents of teacher autonomy (i.e., pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving) were our dependent variables and nationality, gender, age, marital status, and academic level were independent ones.

3.1. Nationality

The results, as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, were statistically significant between Iranian (N= 230) and Turkish (N= 156) EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy in subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (U= 12713.00; P-value= 0.00, $P< 0.05$), decision making (U= 12246.500; P-value= 0.00, $P< 0.05$), and problem solving (U= 14207.500; P-value= 0.00, $P< 0.05$) because the P-value of each was less than 0.05. See Table 3.

Examination of the Mean Rank (Mrk) and Median (Mdn) scores of the subscales of teacher autonomy also revealed that high scores were received by Turkish teachers in all the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Iranian ►Mrk= 170.77; Mdn= 12.00 and Turkish► Mrk = 227.01; Mdn= 14.00), decision making (Iranian► Mrk= 168.75; Mdn= 13.00 and Turkish ►Mrk = 230.00; Mdn= 15.00), and problem solving (Iranian► Mrk = 177.27; Mdn= 10.00 and Turkish► Mrk= 217.43; Mdn= 11.00). The lowest score of mean rank was ascribed to decision-making (Mrk= 168.75) in the case of Iran, while to problem solving (Mrk= 217.43) in the case of Turkey. See Table 3.

Analysis of reliability effect test, according to Cohen (1988), showed a slight significant difference for Iranian and Turkish groups in the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Z= -4.877; r= 0.248, $r< 0.3$), decision making (Z= -5.309; r= 0.270, $r< 0.3$), and problem solving (Z= -3.489; r= 0.177, $r< 0.3$). Cohen's (1988) reliability effect indexes for small, moderate, and strong relationships are r=0.1, 0.30, and 0.50 respectively. See Table 3.

Table 3

Nationality and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Nationality	N	Mean Rank	Median	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	r (= Z/N square root)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Iranian	230	170.77	12.0000				
	Turkish	156	227.01	14.0000				
	Total	386		13.0000	12713.000	-4.877	0.000	0.248
2. Decision making	Iranian	230	168.75	13.0000				
	Turkish	156	230.00	15.0000				
	Total	386		13.0000	12246.500	-5.309	0.000	0.270
3. Problem solving	Iranian	230	177.27	10.0000				
	Turkish	156	217.43	11.0000				
	Total	386		11.0000	14207.500	-3.489	0.000	0.177

After adding the participants' negative ('disagree very much', 'disagree moderately', and 'disagree slightly') and positive ('agree very much', 'agree moderately', and 'agree slightly') choices together, the results of percentage analyses also confirmed that the positively-intended scores of Turkish subjects were greater than that of Iranian ones in all items of the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Iran/Turkey► items: 1=26.5/30.8%; 2=51.7/71.2%; 3=31.7/62.8%; 4=21.7/26.3%), decision making (Iran/Turkey► items: 5=43.0/60.9%; 6=21.7/39.7%; 7=47.0/62.8%; 8=50.9/62.8%), and problem solving (Iran/Turkey► items: 9=53.9/64.7%; 10=60.0/67.9%; 11=28.3/39.7%), which means that Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy is greater than that of Iranian ones in the three subcomponents. See Table 4 in Appendix I.

3.2. Gender

There were statistically significant differences, as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, between Male (N= 176) and Female (N= 210) EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy in subscales of decision making (U= 14552.000; P-value= 0.00, $P< 0.05$), and problem solving (U= 16042.500; P-value= 0.025, $P< 0.05$) because in both cases the observed P-values were less than 0.05. However, no significant difference was observed between the groups in subscale of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (U= 16368.000; P-value= 0.052, $P> 0.05$) because its P-value was more than 0.05. See Table 5.

Moreover, the results of Mean Rank (Mrk) and Median (Mdn) analyses for the groups showed that female teachers received higher scores in all the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Male▶ Mr=181.50; Mdn=13.00 and Female▶ Mrk=203.56; Mdn=13.00), decision making (Male▶ Mrk=171.18; Mdn=13.00 and Female▶ Mrk = 212.20; Mdn= 14.00), and problem solving (Male ▶Mrk =179.65; Mdn=10.00 and Female▶ Mr=205.11; Mdn=11.00). The lowest score of mean rank was observed in the subscale of decision-making (Mrk=171.18) in male group, whereas in the subscale of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Mrk=203.56) in female group. See Table 5.

Cohen's (1988) reliability effect test (see section 3.1) revealed a slight significant difference for male and female groups in subcomponents of decision making (Z= -3.609; r= 0.183, r< 0.3), and problem solving (Z= -2.245; r= 0.114, r< 0.3). See Table 5.

Table 5

Gender and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Median	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	r (= Z/N root square)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Male Female Total	176 210 386	181.50 203.56	13.0000 13.0000 13.0000	16368.00	-1.942	.052	-
2. Decision making	Male Female Total	176 210 386	171.18 212.20	13.0000 14.0000 13.0000	14552.00	-3.609	0.000	0.183
3. Problem solving	Male Female Total	176 210 386	179.65 205.11	10.0000 11.0000 11.0000	16042.500	-2.245	.025	0.114

The analysis of percentage for the male and female groups also revealed that the positively-intended scores of female subjects were greater than that of male ones in the items of the two subcomponents of decision making (Male/Female▶ items: 5=37.5/61%; 6=23.3/33.8%; 7=47.7/58.1%; 8=53.4/57.6%) and problem solving (Male/Female▶ items: 9=56.8/59.5%; 10=58.0/67.6%; 11=31.8/33.8). See Table 6 in Appendix II.

3.3. Age

The results of analyses for age groups of '25 and below' (N=14), '26 to 30' (N=44), '31 to 35' (N=66), '36 to 40' (N=115), '41 to 45' (N=107), and '46 and above' (N=40), as determined by Kruskal-Wallis Test, were statistically significant in subcomponent of decision making [x^2 (5, 386) =11.850; P-value = 0.037; P< 0.05] because its P-value was less than

0.05. However, there were statistically no significant difference between the age groups and the subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation [x^2 (5, 386) =7.110; P-value = 0.213; P> 0.05] and problem solving [x^2 (5, 386) =7.516; P-value = 0.185; P> 0.05] because the P-value of each was more than 0.05. See Table 7.

Additionally, the results of Mean Ranks (Mrk) and Median (Mdn) analyses showed that highest scores were received by the age group of '46 and above' in the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (46 and above ►Mrk=229.14; Mdn= 14.00) and problem solving (46 and above ►Mrk=218.11; Mdn= 11.00), while by the age group of '26 to 30' in decision making subscale (26 to 30 ► Mrk = 226.23; Mdn= 15.00). The lowest scores of mean rank were observed for the age group of '25 and below' in the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (25 and below ►Mrk=177.18; Mdn=13.00) and problem solving (25 and below ► Mrk=127.96; Mdn=9.00), whereas it was ascribed to the age group of '36 to 40' in the subscale of decision-making (36 to 40 ►Mrk=171.92; Mdn=13.00). See Table 7.

Table 7

Age and Teacher Autonomy

Components	**Ranks**				**Kruskal-Wallis Test**		
	Age	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Median**	**Chi-Square**	**df**	**Sig.**
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	25 and below	14	177.18	13.00			
	26 to 30	44	188.11	13.00			
	31 to 35	66	195.69	13.00			
	36 to 40	115	178.04	13.00			
	41 to 45	107	199.79	13.00			
	46 and above	40	229.14	14.00			
	Total	386		13.00	7.110	5	0.213
2. Decision making	25 and below	14	178.04	13.00			
	26 to 30	44	226.23	15.00			
	31 to 35	66	193.83	14.00			
	36 to 40	115	171.92	13.00			
	41 to 45	107	192.87	13.00			
	46 and above	40	226.11	14.50			
	Total	386		13.00	11.850	5	0.037
3. Problem solving	25 and below	14	127.96	9.00			
	26 to 30	44	204.39	11.00			
	31 to 35	66	191.14	10.00			
	36 to 40	115	188.93	11.00			
	41 to 45	107	194.77	11.00			
	46 and above	40	218.11	11.00			
	Total	386		11.00	7.516	5	0.185

Figure 1 also shows diagrammatically the results of analyses for the six-age groups in the subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving. As shown in the figure, the subcomponent of decision making, which was the only significant subcomponent, had more slope in its curve than the other two subcomponents (i.e., pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and problem solving) between the middle-age groups (i.e., '31 to 35' and '36 to 40') on one hand and the young-age (i.e., '25 and below' and '26 to 30') and old-age (i.e., '41 to 45' and '46 and above') groups on the other hand. Moreover, a close scrutiny of the figure revealed that the middle-age groups also had a more slope curve in comparison with the other groups in the non-significant subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and problem solving. See Figure 1 in Appendix III.

3.4. Marital status

There were statistically no significant differences between the participants' marital status of single (N=62), married (N=304), and divorced (N=20) and the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation [X^2 (2, 386)= 2.094; P-value= 0.351, P> 0.05], decision making [X^2 (2, 386)= 0.263; P-value= 0.877, P> 0.05], and problem solving [X^2 (2, 386)= 0.971; P-value= 0.615, P> 0.05], as determined by Kruskal-Wallis Test, because the P-value of each was more than 0.05. See Table 8.

Although marital status variable was not statistically significant with any subcomponents of teacher autonomy, a close scrutiny of Mean Rank (Mrk) scores for the groups revealed that high scores were received by the divorced group in all the three subcomponents, while low scores were received by the married participants in the subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Single ► Mrk=198.56; Married ►Mrk=190.33; Divorced► Mrk=226.08) and decision making (Single ► Mrk= 195.86; Married ► Mrk=192.29; Divorced► Mrk=204.60), and by the single participants in subcomponent of problem solving (Single ►Mrk=181.52; Married ► Mrk= 195.27; Divorced► Mrk=203.78). This means that the married group in comparison with the other two groups does not perceive much autonomy in the pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and decision making subcomponents, and the single group in subcomponent of problem solving, whereas the divorced group's autonomy perceptions in all of the subcomponents are greater than that of the other two groups. See Table 8.

Table 8

Marital Status and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Kruskal-Wallis Test		
	Nationality	N	Mean Rank	Median	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Single	62	198.56	13.0000		2	
	Married	304	190.33	13.0000			
	Divorced	20	226.08	14.0000	2.094		0.351
	Total	386		13.0000			
2. Decision making	Single	62	195.86	14.0000			
	Married	304	192.29	13.0000		2	
	Divorced	20	204.60	13.0000	0.263		0.877
	Total	386		13.0000			
3. Problem solving	Single	62	181.52	10.0000			
	Married	304	195.27	11.0000		2	
	Divorced	20	203.78	10.5000	0.971		0.615
	Total	386		11.0000			

3.5. Academic level

The results of analyses for academic levels of Bachelor's Degree (N= 256) and Master's Degree (N= 130), as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, were statistically significant in subcomponent of decision making (U= 13512.500; P-value= 0.002, P< 0.05), but they were not statistically significant in subcomponent of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (U= 15323.000; P-value= 0.202, P> 0.05) and problem solving (U= 14725.500; P-value= 0.063, P> 0.05). See Table 9.

Examination of the Mean Rank (Mrk) and Median (Mdn) scores also showed high scores for B.A. degree holders in all the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (B.A.► Mrk = 198.64; Mdn= 13.00 and M.A.► Mrk=183.37; Mdn= 12.00), decision making (B.A.► Mrk= 205.72; Mdn= 14.00 and M.A. ► Mr = 169.44; Mdn= 12.00), and problem solving (B.A.► Mrk = 200.98; Mdn= 11.00 and M.A.► Mr = 178.77; Mdn= 10.00). The lowest score of mean rank was ascribed to pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Mrk= 198.64) in the case of B.A. degree holders, while to decision making (Mrk= 169.44) in the case of M.A. degree holders. See Table 9.

Reliability effect test revealed a slight significant difference for B.A. and M.A. degree holders in the subcomponent of decision making (Z= -3.028; r= 0.154, r < 0.3). See Table 9.

Table 9

Academic Level and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Academic level	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Median**	**U**	**Z**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**r** (= Z/N square root)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Bachelor's Degree	256	198.64	13.0000				
	Master's Degree	130	183.37	12.0000				
	Total	386		13.0000	15323.000	-1.276	0.202	-
2. Decision making	Bachelor's Degree	256	205.72	14.0000				
	Master's Degree	130	169.44	12.0000				
	Total	386		13.0000	13512.500	-3.028	0.002	0.154
3. Problem solving	Bachelor's Degree	256	200.98	11.0000				
	Master's Degree	130	178.77	10.0000				
	Total	386		11.0000	14725.500	-1.858	0.063	-

The results of percentage analyses also revealed that the positively-intended scores of B.A. holders were greater than that of M.A. ones in the items of decision making subcomponent (B.A. / M.A► items: 5=55.9/39.2%; 6=30.5/26.2%; 7=55.9/48.5%; 8=59.4/48.5%), which means that B.A. holders perceive that they are involved in decision making processes better than M.A. holders. See Table 10 in Appendix IV.

4. Discussion

The above findings are discussed here to find answers to the five research questions which were the objectives of this study. Before that, it may be useful to mention that the analysis of Friedman Test for determining the potential involvement of each subscale in overall scale processes revealed a significant difference [X^2 (2, 386) = 182.168; P-value= 0.00, P< 0.05] for the three subcomponents of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation (Mrk=2.17), decision making (Mrk=2.36), and problem solving (Mrk=1.47) in the teacher autonomy processes of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. This means that these subcomponents did not measure and predict the overall autonomy perceptions of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers equally, where decision making component was a strong significant predictor of teacher autonomy because its mean rank value was greater than that of the others and problem solving was a weak significant one because its mean rank value was less than that of the others. See Table 11.

Table 11

Involvement of Each Subcomponent in Overall Teacher Autonomy

Components	Mean Rank	Friedman Test			
		N	X^2	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	2.17				
2. Decision making	2.36				
3. Problem solving	1.47				
Overall Teacher Autonomy		386	182.2	2	0.00

The findings regarding the degree of difference between Iranian and Turkish teachers' autonomy perceptions in reference to the three dimensions of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving revealed a high mean rank and median for Turkish teachers (Iranian ► Average Mrk= 172.263; Average Mdn= 11.66 and Turkish ► Average Mrk= 224.813; Average Mdn= 13.33). This implies that Turkish teachers feel more autonomy than Iranian ones in (a) choosing appropriate teaching methods, strategies and techniques to meet student needs, (b) benefiting a flexible curriculum, (c) being involved in decision making processes, and (d) using personal initiative to solve their work problems. Therefore, it can be argued that Turkey has a less centralized curriculum in teaching English as a foreign language than Iran though it has been argued that Turkish educational system is more centralized and restricted (Yıldırım, 2003, Vorkink, 2006, Akşit, 2007; Uygun, 2008; Öztürk, 2011). However, it is speculated that either Iranian teachers are not aware of their autonomy in these areas or that they really are not given enough opportunity to apply appropriate teaching methodology to meet student needs, to get rid of the excessive reliance on the curriculum in their teaching activities, to participate in various forms of school decision-making activities, and to use personal initiative to solve their work problems.

Moreover, the findings were statistically significant between male and female groups in the subscales of decision making and problem solving, but not in the subscale of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, where the mean rank of female group was greater than that of the male one in the significant subscales. This means that females think they are involved in decision making processes more than males and can also handle work problems better than males by using their initiative, while both groups think equally about the flexibility or inflexibility of the curriculum with which they work. This may be attributed to the nature of women who take matters superficially and cannot bring all possible causes of a problem together to analyze and understand it deeply.

With regard to age variable, the findings also demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences between the groups in the subscale of decision making, however, no significant differences were found between them in the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and problem solving. A close scrutiny of mean rank scores revealed that the middle-age groups (i.e., ‘31 to 35’ and ‘36 to 40’) had a small mean rank in comparison with the young-age (i.e., ‘25 and below’ and ‘26 to 30’) and old-age (i.e., ‘41 to 45’ and ‘46 and above’) groups in the significant subscale (i.e., decision making), that is, the middle-age groups perceive they are not participated enough in decision-making processes. This age group even had small mean ranks in the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and problem solving too, which were not statistically significant. That is, the middle-age groups also perceive they cannot benefit a flexible curriculum and cannot better use their initiative to solve work problems in comparison with the young-age and old-age groups. This may be attributed to the experience of middle-age groups in understanding the potential problems involved in these areas, to the ability and experience of old-age groups in proper handling the problems or their unwillingness to involve themselves in them anyway, and to the inexperience of young-age groups in understanding the potential problems in these areas or handling these problems properly.

As mentioned above (see part 3.4), the findings regarding the marital status were not significant between the single, married, and divorced groups in the three subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving, which meant that material status did not play enough role in teacher autonomy processes here. However, a close examination of the mean rank scores for the groups revealed that low scores were received by the married participants in the subscales of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and decision making, while by the single participants in the subscale of problem solving. This means that the married participants in comparison with the others perceive they cannot benefit a flexible curriculum and are not enough involved in decision making processes, and single participants perceive they cannot better use their initiative to solve work problems. This can be attributed to the seriousness of married participants in understanding the difficulties involved in these processes, while in the case of single participants it may be attributed to their lack of enough knowledge about the contents and their inexperience in handling work problems properly.

Finally, findings for the academic levels of Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree were statistically significant in subcomponent of decision making, but not in the subcomponent of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation and problem solving. The mean rank and median scores of B.A. degree holders in the significant subscale, even in insignificant ones, were greater than that of the M.A. degree holders. That is, the M.A. holders perceive they cannot benefit a flexible curriculum, are not involved enough in decision making processes, and cannot better use their initiative to solve work problems in comparison with the B.A. holders. This can be attributed to their knowledge and experience in understanding the potential problems involved in these areas, that is, the higher the academic level, the less perception of autonomy.

5. Conclusion and implication

The aim of this study was to find Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers' opinions about (a) choice of appropriate teaching methods, strategies and techniques to meet student needs, (b) teacher involvement in decision making processes and (c) using personal initiative in solving problems to see whether the curriculum offered by the educational ministries of Iran and Turkey leave any place for teacher autonomy. The results revealed that there was slight difference between Iranian and Turkish teachers' perception on their curriculum though it can be argued that Turkey has a less centralized and more flexible curriculum in teaching English as a foreign language than Iran; males are not involved enough in decision making processes and they cannot solve their problems enough by using their initiative; the middle-age groups perceive less autonomy than the young-age and old-age groups; marital status was not a significant variable in teacher autonomy; and the M.A. holders perceived less autonomy than the B.A. holders. However, these findings may especially be beneficial to policy makers and curriculum designers, if they want to develop their curriculum, to let teachers adapt curriculum materials to their interests, skills and knowledge as well as what they believe to be their students' needs simply because teachers never accept much control and influence over their teaching activities, i.e., teaching typically happens in isolated classrooms behind closed doors.

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Appendices

Appendix I. Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of teacher autonomy scale for Iranian and Turkish teachers.

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage of Teacher Autonomy. Scale for Iranian and Turkish Teachers.

Subscales	**Items**	**Disagree any way**				**Agree any way**			
		Iranian		**Turkish**		**Iranian**		**Turkish**	
		F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	1. My performance at work is limited by the established curriculum.*	61	26.5	48	30.8	169	73.5	108	69.2
	2. I am free to choose appropriate teaching methods and strategies to meet student needs. **	111	48.3	45	28.8	119	51.7	111	71.2
	3. I am not allowed to fit the content to students' interests and needs.*	73	31.7	98	62.8	157	68.3	58	37.2
	4. The current educational rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.*	50	21.7	41	26.3	180	78.3	115	73.7
Decision making	5. I feel my administration allows for teacher voice and provides considerable support. **	131	57.0	61	39.1	99	43.0	95	60.9
	6. I feel I have no influence over instructional decisions made by my administration.*	50	21.7	62	39.7	180	78.3	94	60.3
	7. I feel free to make decisions regarding my professional practice and act on them. **	122	53.0	58	37.2	108	47.0	98	62.8
	8. I feel I have influence on what goes on in my work. **	113	49.1	58	37.2	117	50.9	98	62.8
Solving problems	9. I have considerable freedom to use my personal initiative or judgment in solving work problems. **	106	46.1	55	35.3	124	53.9	101	64.7
	10. I feel I have control over how to solve my work problems. **	92	40.0	50	32.1	138	60.0	106	67.9
	11. My opinion is not asked in my administration when a problem comes up in my work. *	65	28.3	62	39.7	165	71.7	94	60.3
Total	11	230	100	156	100	230	100	156	100

Appendix II. Table 6 shows the frequency and percentage of teacher autonomy scale for male and female teachers.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage of Teacher Autonomy Scale for Male and Female Teachers

Subscales	Items	Disagree any way				Agree any way			
		Male		Female		Male		Female	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	1. My performance at work is limited by the established curriculum.*	52	29.5	57	27.1	124	70.5	153	72.9
	2. I am free to choose appropriate teaching methods and strategies to meet student needs. **	84	47.7	72	34.3	92	52.3	138	65.7
	3. I am not allowed to fit the content to students' interests and needs.*	65	36.9	106	50.5	111	63.1	104	49.5
	4. The current educational rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.*	39	22.2	52	24.8	137	77.8	158	75.2
Decision making	5. I feel my administration allows for teacher voice and provides considerable support. **	110	62.5	82	39.0	66	37.5	128	61.0
	6. I feel I have no influence over instructional decisions made by my administration.*	41	23.3	71	33.8	135	76.7	139	66.2
	7. I feel free to make decisions regarding my professional practice and act on them. **	92	52.3	88	41.9	84	47.7	122	58.1
	8. I feel I have influence on what goes on in my work. **	82	46.6	89	42.4	94	53.4	121	57.6
Solving problems	9. I have considerable freedom to use my personal initiative or judgment in solving work problems. **	76	43.2	85	40.5	100	56.8	125	59.5
	10. I feel I have control over how to solve my work problems. **	74	42.0	68	32.4	102	58.0	142	67.6
	11. My opinion is not asked in my administration when a problem comes up in my work. *	56	31.8	71	33.8	120	68.2	139	66.2
Total	11	176	100	210	100	176	100	210	100

Appendix III. Figure 1 shows the association between age groups and the three subscales of teacher autonomy

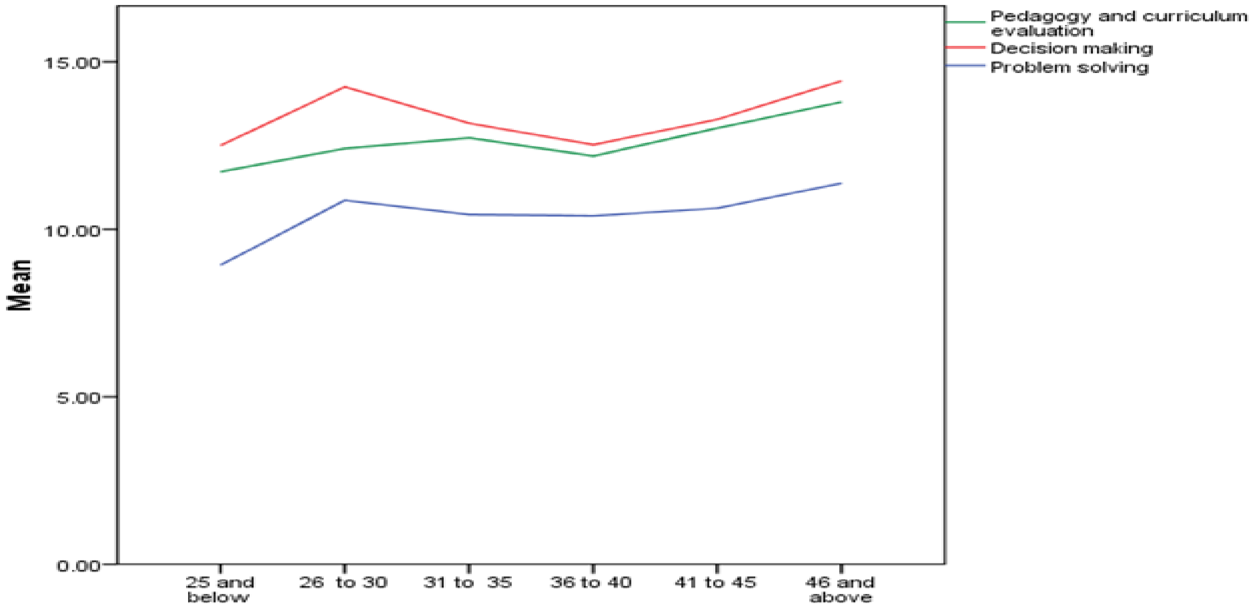

Figure 1.The Association between Age Groups and Teacher Autonomy

Appendix IV. Table 10 shows the frequency and percentage of teacher autonomy scale for academic levels

Table 10

Frequency and Percentage of Teacher Autonomy Scale for Academic Levels

Subscales	**Items**	**Disagree any way**				**Agree any way**			
		B.A.		M.A.		B.A.		M.A.	
		F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	1. My performance at work is limited by the established curriculum.*	72	28.1	37	28.5	184	71.9	93	71.5
	2. I am free to choose appropriate teaching methods and strategies to meet student needs. **	100	39.1	56	43.1	156	60.9	74	56.9
	3. I am not allowed to fit the content to students' interests and needs.*	124	48.4	47	36.2	132	51.6	83	63.8
	4. The current educational rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.*	60	23.4	31	23.8	196	76.6	99	76.2
Decision making	5. I feel my administration allows for teacher voice and provides considerable support. **	113	44.1	79	60.8	143	55.9	51	39.2
	6. I feel I have no influence over instructional decisions made by my administration.*	78	30.5	34	26.2	178	69.5	96	73.8
	7. I feel free to make decisions regarding my professional practice and act on them. **	113	44.1	67	51.5	143	55.9	63	48.5
	8. I feel I have influence on what goes on in my work. **	104	40.6	67	51.5	152	59.4	63	48.5
Solving problems	9. I have considerable freedom to use my personal initiative or judgment in solving work problems. **	109	42.6	52	40.0	147	57.4	78	60.0
	10. I feel I have control over how to solve my work problems. **	96	37.5	46	35.4	160	62.5	84	64.6
	11. My opinion is not asked in my administration when a problem comes up in my work. *	93	36.3	34	26.2	163	63.7	96	73.8
Total	11	256	100	130	100	256	100	130	100

A Comparison of Computer Assisted Speaking Assessment and Face-To-Face Speaking Assessment

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Computer technology has long been applied to language testing as a time and cost efficient way to conveniently assess the proficiency of large numbers of students. Nonetheless, little research has been conducted to compare computer assisted and face-to-face (direct) formats to find whether the two modes yield similar results in oral assessment and whether one is advantageous over the other. Even less investigated were the possible outcomes of administration of computer-assisted speaking tests on a local basis, as achievement tests. Researched in this study are the relationships between test scores obtained in two different test modes at two different proficiency levels, the students' perceptions of the test modes, and their anxiety levels with regard to speaking in a foreign language, speaking tests, and using computers. A total of 66 learners of English at tertiary level and four instructors of English participated in the study conducted at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages. The quantitative and qualitative data analyses revealed that the two test modes give very different rankings to the students, and the students' perceptions of the test modes are not strongly related to their performance in the speaking tests. The relationship between different types of anxiety and test scores are only weakly related to the test scores, and the degree of the relationships vary depending on the proficiency level.

Methodology

Setting

The research was conducted at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages, in charge of giving compulsory or optional extensive English language education for university students before they start their bachelor's education. The one-year-long program consists of three proficiency levels: elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate. During two semesters, students are required to take achievement tests and at the end of the year they are asked to take an exit exam to demonstrate that they have completed the program successfully. Unlike grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening and writing skills which have been taught and evaluated for a long time, the academic year 2010-2011 was the first time speaking courses were integrated into the curriculum. Therefore, no tests were allocated to evaluate oral proficiency prior to the present study.

Participants

Four instructors, and a total of 66 students - four groups from two proficiency levels, pre-intermediate and intermediate - participated in the study in the beginning. Of all participants, two students were left out from score comparison analysis because they received a grade of "0" in one of the tests since they failed the questions properly. However, their answers for the questionnaires were included in the study as they were answered independently from the tests. As a result, there were two groups of intermediate students with 19 students in each, and two groups of pre-intermediate students with 13 in one group and 13+2 in the other group. For the rating process, the students' own class instructor and an instructor who does not give any courses to the participants functioned as raters (see Table 1).

Instruments

Two types of data collection instruments, speaking tests and questionnaires, were used in the study. Some of the instruments were adapted from relevant literature while the others were created by the researcher.

Table 1

Distribution of the Participants According to Levels and Groups

Level	Group	Number of Students	Instructor	Raters
Pre-intermediate	I	13+2	A	A-C
Pre-intermediate	II	13	A	A-C
Intermediate	I	19	B	B-D
Intermediate	II	19	B	B-D
Total		66	2	

Speaking tests: Computer Assisted Speaking Assessment (CASA) and Face-to-Face Speaking Assessment (FTFsa)

Eight speaking tests -four FTFsas and four CASAs- were developed in order to evaluate students' progress with regard to oral competency. The course contents at both levels were taken into consideration while preparing the questions to ensure face and content validity. The researcher was inspired by the questions in previous studies (Clark, 1986; Stansfield, 1988, 1990, 1992) while preparing some of the questions. The tests had parts devoted to introducing oneself, commenting on a given situation, picture/graph description, topical discourse, situational discourse, simulated conversation, detailed description and discussion questions. To be precise, the questions mainly assessed specific aspects of spoken language introduced in the speaking classes which included giving a short presentation about a familiar topic, asking for advice, making recommendations, talking about one's personality, job and company profile, making requests and justifying them, talking about possibilities in a given situation, explaining a familiar concept, discussing an idea. In the FTFsa, the questions were read aloud or acted out by the interlocutors. The FTFsa started with a warm-up question asking about personal information and continued with questions which were presented in a thematic order so as to ensure coherence and enhance authenticity. In the CASA, the instructions on how to respond to the questions and the questions were presented mainly in written format and the visual aids or listening materials were conveyed through the video screen embedded in each page. The responses were also recorded by clicking on the buttons on this video screen (see Figure 1).

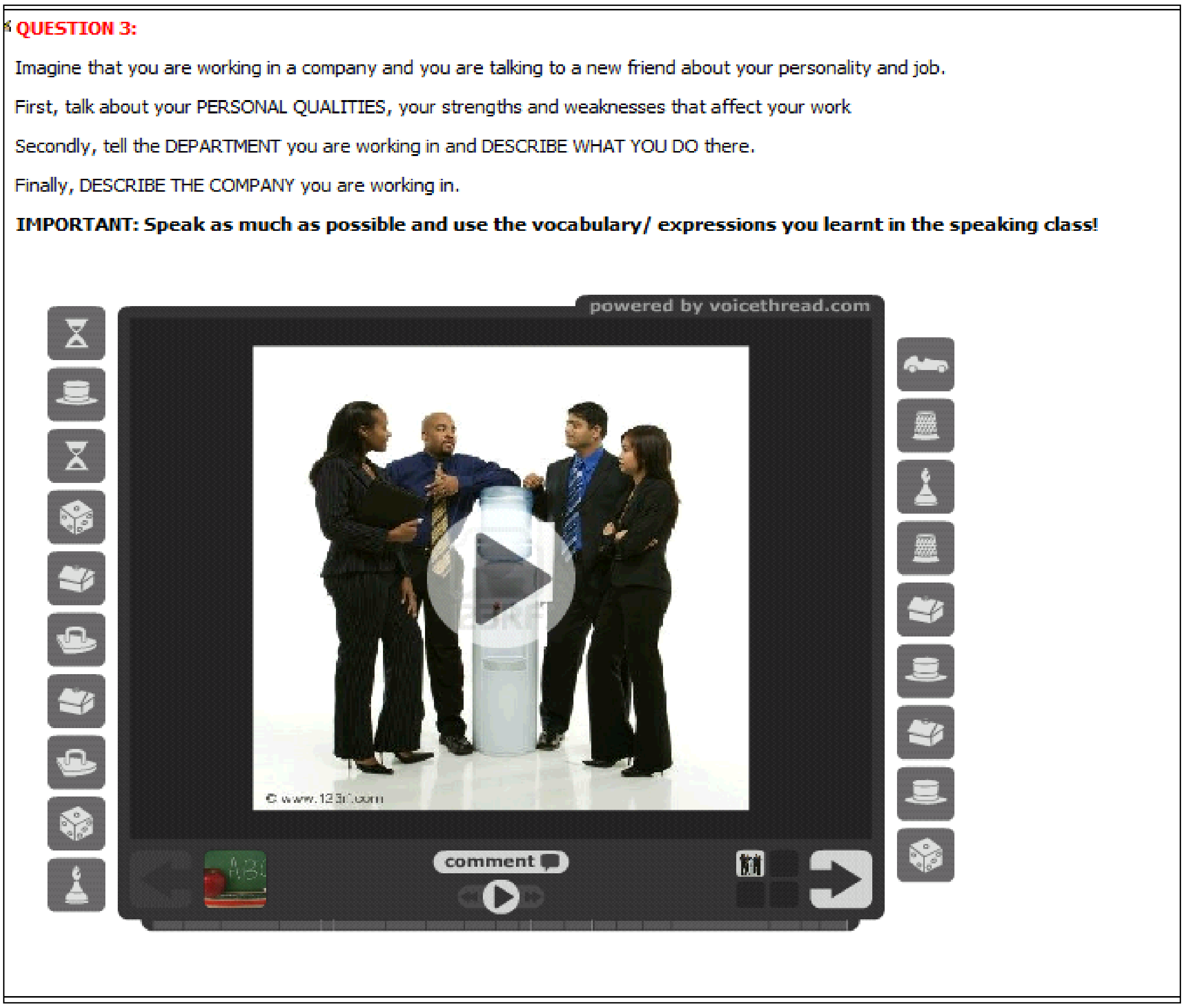

Figure 1. Sample CASA question.

As for the software used to create the CASA, a free learning management system (LMS), Moodle 1.9 from http://moodle.org/, and a commercial website, http://voicethread.com/ were chosen due to their availability, feasibility and convenience. Both software products were used to present test questions, record student responses for the CASAs, and store them. Students were enrolled in the systems and recorded versions of the questions asked in the face-to-face test were uploaded to VoiceThread, links of which were then embedded under the relevant titles in Moodle. The Moodle pages consisted of instructions written in L2, and a media player screen where the test takers saw relevant pictures, listened to the recordings, and recorded their answers using the buttons on it. There was a one-month interval between the first and second speaking tests each participant took. The tests were conducted in a counter-balanced order to diminish the order effect (see Table 2).

Table 2

Counter Balanced Design of the Study

	Pre- intermediate		Intermediate	
	Group I	**Group II**	**Group I**	**Group II**
Test I	FTFsa	CASA	CASA	FTFsa
Test II	CASA	FTFsa	FTFsa	CASA

Note. Group = the order the participants took the test

The scores on the speaking tests were given according to a five-section rating rubric consisting of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and coherence/discourse sections. The raters were also provided with a list of expected answers to increase the objectivity and reliability of the scoring (see Appendix A).

Questionnaires: Perceptions, Speaking and Speaking Test Anxiety, Computer Attitudes.

The questionnaires consisted of statements where the participants were expected to give scores on a five or six point Likert scale as well as open-ended questions at the end. Figure 2 shows the sequence the questionnaires are administered in two groups taking different tests at the same time.

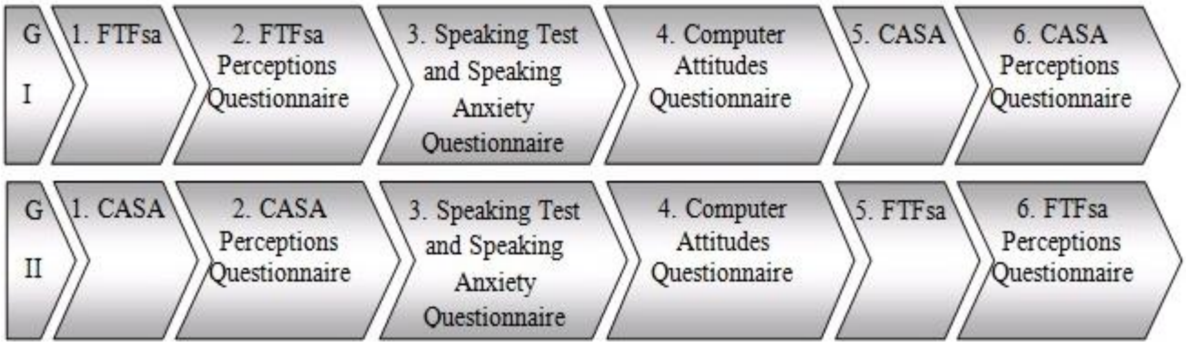

Figure 2. Sequence of questionnaires

CASA and FTFsa Perceptions Questionnaires

In order to collect information about the participants' perceptions of the two test modes, two separate questionnaires were prepared for each test mode (see Appendix B). The questionnaires were partly adapted from Kenyon and Malabonga (2001) but most questions were generated by the researcher. Both questionnaires comprised 29 questions answered on a six-level Likert scale and contained three open-ended questions.

Speaking Test and Speaking Anxiety Questionnaires

The Test Influence Inventory (TII) by Fujii (1993) and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz (1986) were adapted and combined to explore the levels of speaking test and anxiety and speaking anxiety. Based on a five-point Likert scale, the speaking test anxiety subscale was composed of 23 items and the speaking anxiety questionnaire had 25 items, followed by an open-ended question.

Computer Attitudes Questionnaire

In addition to the questions created by the researcher, the Computer Attitude Scale (CAS) by Loyd and Gressard (1984), the Computer Attitude Measure (CAM) by Kay (1993), and Computer Familiarity Questionnaire (Kirsch et al., 1998) contributed to the preparation of a 30 item inventory, the Computer Attitudes Inventory (CAI) used in the present study. Based on a five-point Likert scale, the items in the questionnaire focused on perceived self efficacy in using computers, computer anxiety and attitudes towards the internet.

Data Analysis Procedures

After scores from all speaking tests gathered, they were put into an excel sheet and an average of the scores from the two raters for each student was determined as the score showing their performance in the speaking test in question. The Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 was utilized to do the quantitative data analysis. The responses to the perceptions questionnaires were analyzed descriptively by looking at the frequency distribution of responses, while the comparisons of various variables were done via non-parametric correlations, Wilcoxon Signed rank test and Three way mixed ANOVA. The last parts of the perceptions questionnaires containing three open-ended questions were analyzed with qualitative analysis techniques.

Results and Discussion

Comparison of scores

The average scores obtained in the two modes were compare using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests and Kendall’s tau tests. The results revealed that the type of the test has almost no influence on the average scores the groups of test takers obtained. Based on the weak correlations between FTFsa and CASA scores, it is possible to say that the FTFsa and the CASA scores give very different rankings to the students, especially at pre-intermediate level, and certainly could not be used in place of each other (see Table 3). On the other hand, the results of three-way mixed ANOVA showed that interaction of various factors affected the average scores. According to this, the two levels were affected differently by test mode: The results indicated that the pre-intermediate students did better on the FTFsa whereas the intermediate students did better on the CASA. Moreover, the pre-intermediate group which took the CASA first did better on the FTFsa than on the CASA and the pre-intermediate group which took the FTFsa first did better on the CASA than on the FTFsa. This shows that there is a *practice effect* at pre-intermediate, but not at intermediate level, and the pre-intermediate test takers improved their speaking practice within the period between the administration of the two tests (Figures 3,4, and 5).

Table 3

Comparison of Test Scores in the CASA and the FTFsa

Level	**G**	**N**	**Mdn**		**IQR**		**Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test**			**Kendall's Tau**	
			C	**F**	**C**	**F**	**T**	**Sig.**	**r**	**τ**	**Sig.**
Overall	A	32	75	79	17.5	29.5	208	.43	-.1	.10	.43
	B	32	77	75	11	19.5	210	.45	-.09	.32*	.01
Pre-int.	A	13	76	92	22	16	0	.002	-.6	.35	.11
	B	13	76	66	11	21	24	.13	-.3	.13	.53
Int.	A	19	74	66	18	22	58	.13	-.2	.06	.69
	B	19	78	80	10	22	76.5	.69	-.06	.36*	.03

Note. G= Group; N= number of participants; C= CASA; F = FTFsa; τ = Kendall's tau correlation coefficient for the FTFsa and CASA scores; r=Effect size; Sig = significance (two-tailed)

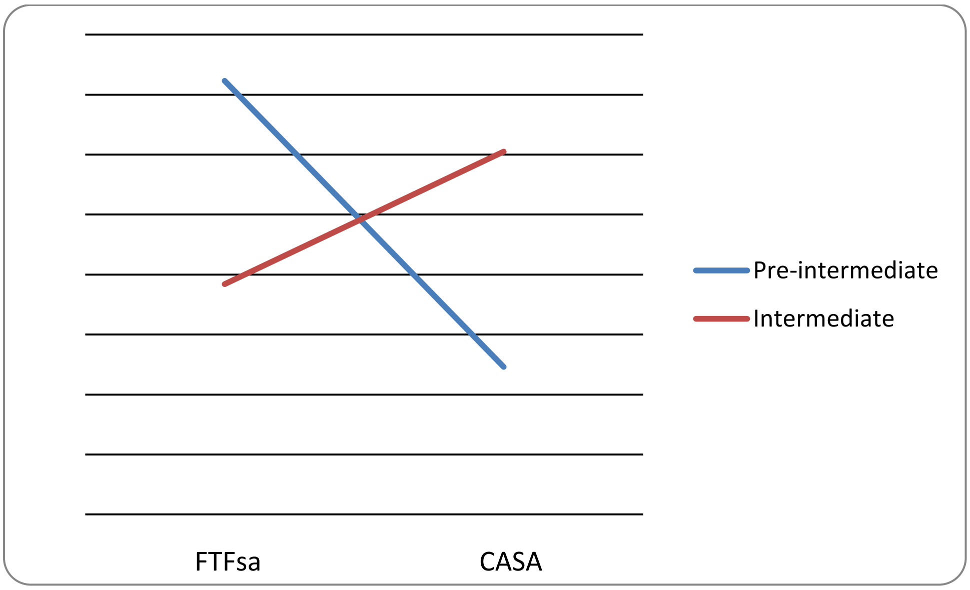

Figure 3. The interaction between level and test mode

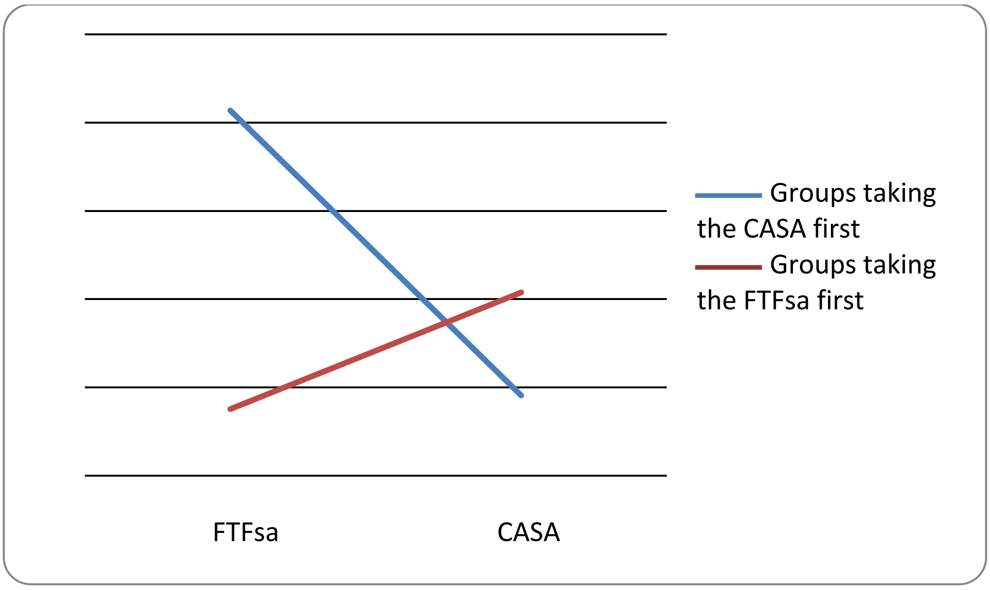

Figure 4. The interaction between group, test mode, and level (pre-intermediate)

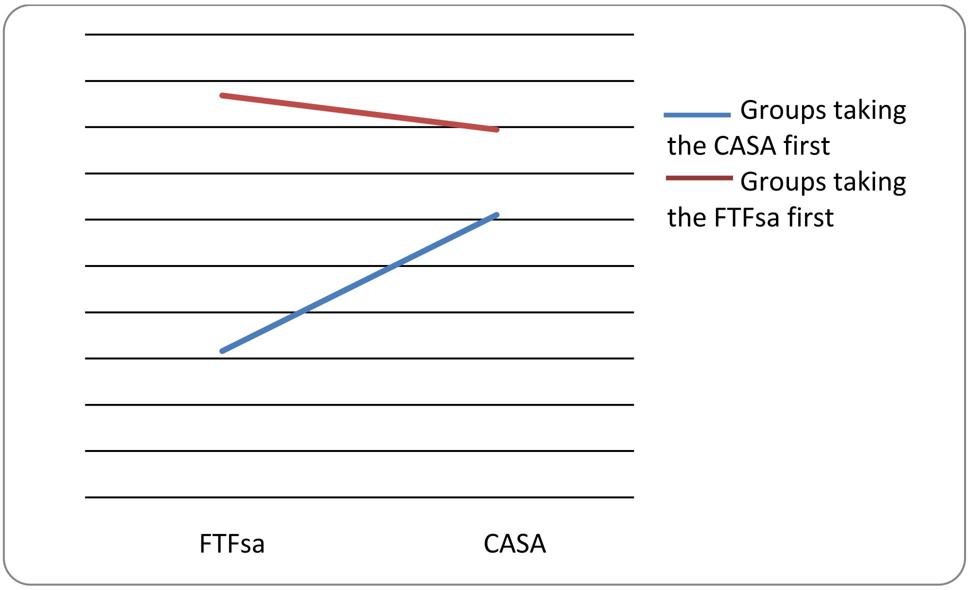

Figure 5. The interaction between group, test mode, and level (intermediate)

Perceptions

Calculated using descriptive statistics, the averages of the percentages of responses given to all questions in the anxiety subscales included in the perceptions scales showed that 26.9% of all participants agreed that they were anxious in the FTFsa. An even higher number of participants (46.8%) reported being anxious in the CASA. Almost half of the test takers seem to have felt afraid of making mistakes in the CASA though fewer felt the same in the FTFsa. This may have resulted from interlocutor interference in the FTFsa given that interlocutors typically try to relieve test takers during the interviews. The responses given to the open ended questions also confirm the possibility of this tendency. The quantitative and qualitative analysis also showed that the test takers tended to value the existence of a live interlocutor listening to them as interlocutors relieved them, reduced their stress, and listened and paid attention to them as they were talking. The test takers found the lack of an on-site test giver and lack of interaction irritating. A considerable number of pre-intermediate test takers (35.7%) were found to be annoyed by the fact that they were unable to ask for clarification in the CASA. Nevertheless, there were, though not many, test takers thinking that some interlocutor behaviours in the FTFsa might have triggered the tenseness at the intermediate level.

As for the perceived difficulty of the tests, the test takers at both levels found the CASA difficult while fewer participants thought the same for the FTFsa although both tests were identical in terms of content, style and the number of questions. In addition, more participants thought that FTFsa was more comprehensive than the CASA in terms of question types and quality.

Overall, the test takers considered the FTFsa to be a more functional tool or good choice for testing speaking ability gained through the speaking classes. As for different levels, most pre-intermediate level participants thought both the CASA and the FTFsa assessed what was taught in the speaking classes effectively. Most participants also believed that neither of the tests enabled them to fully demonstrate their speaking ability, yet they believed that both test modes helped them see their strengths and weaknesses in speaking. More participants found the FTFsa to be real-life-like. More students at the pre-intermediate level than intermediate disliked the CASA in terms of flexibly answering the questions. The intermediate level participants might have performed more comfortably in the CASA due to their higher level of proficiency. The responses to the open-ended questions showed that the comments on visuals were all related to the CASA at both levels. The participants liked the visual materials illustrated on the screen. More tests takers indicated that they were able to organize their thoughts well in the FTFsa. Other problems related to CASA were the technical problems experienced during the test and the unfamiliarity of the test.

The Relationship between Speaking Anxiety and Speaking Test Anxiety, Test Mode-Related Perceptions and Test Scores

It was found that there is no relationship between the scores gained and the anxiety levels of the test takers at the pre-intermediate level. On the other hand, at intermediate level, the FTFsa scores were found not to be related to anxiety levels, unlike the CASA scores (see Table 4)

Table 4

The Relationships between Speaking/Speaking Test Anxiety and Perceptions and Test Scores in Two Different Modes

Level		N	Speaking Test Anxiety		Speaking Anxiety	
			τ	Sig.	τ	Sig.
Overall	FTFsa score	64	-.14	.10	-.09	.28
	CASA score	64	-.12	.16	-.05	.50
	FTFsa Perceptions	64	-.25**	.004	-.26**	.002
	CASA Perceptions	64	-.20*	.02	-.25**	.003
Pre-intermediate	FTFsa score	26	-.01	.92	-.04	.77
	CASA score	26	.05	.70	.22	.12
	FTFsa Perceptions	26	-.09	.49	-.18	.19
	CASA Perceptions	26	-.25	.07	-.30*	.03
Intermediate	FTFsa score	38	-.21	.06	-.16	.15
	CASA score	38	-.22	,057	-.22*	.04
	FTFsa Perceptions	38	-.36**	.001	-.40**	.00
	CASA Perceptions	38	-.13	.23	-.25*	.02

Note. N= number of participants; τ = Kendall's tau correlation coefficient; *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed).

The Relationship between Computer Attitudes, Test-Mode-Related Perceptions and Test Scores

The results of the analyses showed that the FTFsa or the CASA scores and the test takers' attitudes towards computers were not significantly correlated, which indicates that a test taker who feels positively towards computers would not necessarily obtain high scores from the CASA or a test taker feeling negatively towards computers would not necessarily get a lower score than those who feel positively towards computers (Table 5).

Table 5

The Relationship between Computer Attitudes, Perceptions and Test Scores

Level			FTFsa score	CASA score	FTFsa Perceptions	CASA Perceptions
Overall	Computer Attitudes	τ	.02	.09	-.08	-.12
		Sig.	.74	.28	.34	.13
		N	64	64	64	64
Pre-int.	Computer Attitudes	τ	.01	.24	-.19	-.26
		Sig.	.94	.08*	.16	.06*
		N	26	26	26	26
Int.	Computer Attitudes	τ	.03	.006	-.06	-.08
		Sig.	.77	.96	.58	.43
		N	38	38	38	38

Note. N= number of participants; τ = Kendall's tau correlation coefficient; Sig. = (two tailed); *= Correlation is marginally significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed).

There was a marginally significant correlation (o = -.26, *p*= .060) between the CASA perceptions and the computer attitudes. This suggests that there may be a negative relationship between the way the test takers perceive the CASA and how they feel about using computers, though not a strong one (Table 5).

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Biodata

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APPENDIX A: Expected Answers for the Second Intermediate CASA and FTFsa Test Questions

1. TRAVEL AGENT

Student imagines that s/he works at a travel agency.

1. You offer some VACATION PACKAGES to your customers. SCAN the brochures QUICKLY to see them.
2. Listen to the person speaking. She is looking for an IDEAL VACATION. Choose a SUITABLE VACATION for her.

   The examinee should choose the most **appropriate** vacation pack. **If not**, after s/he describes it, you can say that it is not the vacation you want and ask for another one. At the end of the scripts you have, there is the name of vacation the examinee **must** offer.
3. **Tell her the DETAILS and why she should prefer it. Describe the FEATURES OF PLACES, make RECOMMENDATIONS, use STRONG ADJECTIVES just like you learnt in the speaking class.**

   Features:

   It's a good place to go if….

   It's handy for…

   It's popular for…

   It's famous for…

   You can find/see…. There

   Recommendations:

   You **really ought to..**

   You **should definitely**

   The place **is well worth**…

   You **certainly mustn't**…

   You **have to…**

   Strong adjectives:

   Furious, huge, starving, fantastic, terrible, fascinating, tiny, terrified, exhausted (**NOT**! Tired, bad, interesting, angry, big, scared, hungry, good, small)

2. TALKING ABOUT PERSONALITY, JOB, COMPANY

Imagine that you are WORKING IN A COMPANY and you are talking to a new friend about your PERSONALITY AND JOB.

1. First, talk about your PERSONAL QUALITIES, your strengths and weaknesses that affect your work

Creative, reliable, methodical, flexible, well-organized, confident, determined, analytical, sociable, efficient

A good listener, good with computers, good at solving problems, can overcome challenges, can work under pressure, able to meet deadlines, good at communicating with people, a good decision maker

2. Secondly, tell the DEPARTMENT you are working in and DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DO there.

I work in the (sales department)

I'm in charge of …

My job involves…

I'm responsible for…

My main responsibility is to..

I'm interested in…

I'm mainly concerned with…

3. Finally, DESCRIBE THE COMPANY you are working in.

The company was founded/established in ..

It's based in..

The main activities of the company are..

It produces/supplies/exports/ manufactures…

It's one of the leading/ at the forefront of…

It has an annual turnover of…

It's headed by…

It's organized into three divisions.. / made up of three departments

3. MAKING A REQUEST AND JUSTYFYING IT

Student should MAKE THREE REQUESTS and JUSTIFY her /his REASONS using the ideas given below

Help finish writing this report
Clean my desk
Get print outs of reports
Lend me a stapler
Put the files into folders
Interpret/ explain the table for me
Need a new printer

Requests:
Would you mind… ing?
Could you possibly…?
Can I ask you to..?
I'd appreciate if you could…
I wonder if you could…?
I'd be grateful if you could..

For justification:
I **could really do with** a hand…
It would help a lot if…..
I'm in danger of..
I **may not finish… if I don't get help**

APPENDIX B: CASA Perceptions Questionnaire

To the attention of the participants,

Composed of two sections, this questionnaire has been prepared to gather information about the foreign language learners' attitudes towards the computer assisted speaking tests. The information obtained from the questionnaire will be used to support a research study conducted at MA TEFL program at Bilkent University. There are no correct or wrong answers in this questionnaire. Please mark the option that best reflects you and respond to all questions, this is rather important for the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The responses you give to the questions will be kept strictly confidential.

I would like to remind that your responses are quite valuable to the study and I thank you in advance for your time and effort.

Ebru Öztekin
Graduate student
MA TEFL, Bilkent University

Informed consent form:

I understood the content and purpose of the questionnaire. I agree to complete the questionnaire and to let the researcher use my responses in the scientific study on condition that my information is kept confidential.

Participant name/ surname: ________________

Class: : ________________

Gender/ Age : ________________

Date :________________

Signature:

This questionnaire is composed of three pages and two sections.
The options in the questionnaire are as below:

Strongly agree
Agree
Partly agree
Partly disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Please go to the next page to start answering the questions

FIRST SECTION:

Please mark the option that best describes you for each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Partly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The speaking test was very difficult.						
2. I felt rather tense and anxious before the speaking test.						
3. I felt tense and anxious during the speaking test.						
4. I felt tense and anxious after the speaking test.						
5. The speaking test effectively tested what was taught in speaking classes or in the speaking sections of other classes.						
6. I felt very relaxed before the speaking test.						
7. I was very afraid of making mistakes during the speaking test.						
8. The speaking test will increase my attendance to speaking classes.						
9. The fact that I responded to a computer did not represent a real-life speaking experience I can have.						
10. It was irritating that I couldn't ask for clarification from the test giver.						
11. The amount of instructions given during the speaking test was too						

12. I could flexibly respond to the questions asked in the speaking test.					
13. I don't think that I can get a good mark from the speaking test.					
14. It relieved me to see that no one was listening to me during the speaking test.					
15. The speaking test helped me fully reflect my speaking ability.					
16. The speaking test will increase my attendance to the classes where speaking is practiced.					
17. The speaking test was a good tool for me to show my speaking ability.					
18. The fact that our speaking will be tested motivates me in terms of speaking English.					
19. The speaking test helped to decrease my fears about speaking English.					
20. The speaking test was comprehensive enough.					
21. There was no interaction during the speaking test.					
22. I would like to have my speaking tests in computerized format from now on.					
23. I think I can get a good mark from the speaking test.					
24. Adequate time was given to answer each question in the speaking test.					
25. The visual support materials helped me answer the questions.					
26. I could easily organize my thoughts in the speaking test.					
27. I think the speaking test is not a fair one.					

28. There were adequate amount and variety of questions in the speaking test to test my speaking ability.						
29. The speaking test allowed me to show my strong and weak points in speaking English.						

SECOND SECTION:

Please answer all questions shortly.

What irritated you the most in the test?

____

____.

What did you best like about the test?

____

____.

Is there anything you want to add?

____

____.

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thanks again for your participation ☺

Contact information for your questions and suggestions:

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Free Online Corpora for Collocation Teaching

A. Suzan Öniz

Freelance

This was an interactive demonstration aiming to share with the audience brief background information about collocations, their types and the advantages of learning vocabulary with their collocations. The main part of the presentation dealt with some of the free online corpora and ideas as to how to use these to create vocabulary activities.

Background

What are collocations?

Lewis (2000), who is well-known for his Lexical Syllabus, where teaching is based around vocabulary learning and vocabulary acquisition, defines collocation as the way in which words co-occur in natural text in statistically significant ways. He goes on to say that the collocating words need to occur together statistically frequently in 'natural texts.'

Researchers use a variety of terms to describe the relationship between collocations. Lewis for instance mentions "word partnerships"; Jimmie Hill talks about "prefabricated chunks." These terms all describe the close non-random bond between certain words as well as their almost predetermined co-occurrence.

Types of collocations

Hill (1998) and Conzett (2000) mention three types of collocations: strong, weak, and medium-strong collocations. In strong collocations, one word is decisive about the other collocates as opposed to weak collocations where collocates vary greatly. Examples of strong collocations include 'ulterior motive', vent your anger', harbor a grudge' (Hill, 1998).

The interesting thing about strong collocations is that synonyms do not work as can be seen in the examples below:

Call off a match/a meeting/a wedding/an engagement = OK

Call off my/the class = Sound awkward

This butter is rancid (*sour, *rotten, *stale).

This cream is sour (*rancid, *rotten, *stale).

They took (*made) a walk.

They made (*took) an attempt.

They had (*made, *took) a talk.

Weak collocations include ‘long journey’, ‘good idea,’ where these adjectives can collocate with a large number of nouns with the same applying to the nouns. These types of collocations, however, are less problematic for learners when compared to strong collocations according to Hill, because they generally work across languages and only present a problem if they cannot be translated.

Medium-strength collocations, according to Hill , are the most problematic to teach or learn because students often know all the individual words in them but need help with their collocations.

Here are some examples of lexes that can form numerous collocates or partnerships: ‘conversation’, ‘break off’, ‘monopolize’, ‘have’, ‘hold’, ‘in’, ‘listen to’, ‘lead’, ‘overhear’

The advantages of learning the collocations

Collocations are important for language learners, one reason being that most students aim to enrich their total knowledge of vocabulary. However, learners’ treasury of words is far from full when compared to a native speaker’s knowledge of words. Native speakers’ lexicons consist of thousands of items, many of which are multi-word items. To be more specific, an average educated native speaker’s knowledge covers approximately 20,000 word families (Goulden et al, 1990, cited in Nation and Waring, 1997; Zechmeister et al, 1995, cited in Nation, 2001). This is an impossible target for language learners. Yet making vocabulary learning more efficient is not.

When learning words with collocations as opposed to isolated items, language learners enrich their word treasury. As a result, they become fluent and quick in the production of language because they have “ready-made language immediately available” (Hill, 2000), or in Sinclair’s (1987) terms they can produce “preconstructed phrases”. Another major advantage of learning strings of collocating terms is that grammar mistakes can be avoided (Hill, 2000) because when students learn lexes with their collocations, they are increasing their chances of producing grammatically accurate language because their sentences will consist of several prefabricated chunks (Lewis, 1997).

Some Free Online Corpora

AWE: The British Academic Written English Collection

Bhttp://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/research/collect/bawe/

The BAWE corpus contains 2761 pieces of proficient assessed student writing, ranging in length from about 500 words to about 5000 words. Holdings are fairly evenly distributed across four broad disciplinary areas (Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Life Sciences and Physical Sciences) and across four levels of study (undergraduate and taught masters level). Thirty-five disciplines are represented. Free of charge to non-commercial researchers who agree to the conditions of use and who register with the Oxford Text Archive

BASE Plus: British Academic Spoken English

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/research/collect/base

The BASE Corpus consists of 160 lectures and 40 seminars recorded in a variety of departments (video-recorded at the University of Warwick and audio-recorded at the University of Reading). It contains 1,644,942 tokens in total (lectures and seminars). Holdings are distributed across four broad disciplinary groups, each represented by 40 lectures and 10 seminars.

MICASE (Michigan Corpus of American Spoken English)

http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/micase/

There are currently 152 transcripts (totaling 1,848,364 words) available at this site. MICASE is a corpus of spoken English is a unique collection of a large number of speech events recorded at a large American research university, and has been a source of study for researchers in a wide variety of fields since the late 1990s. MICASE has produced myriad interesting findings in areas such as Discourse Analysis, Syntax, Semantics, and EAP Teaching.

Explanations for researchers: http://micase.elicorpora.info/researchers

Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE)

http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/index.php

The Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English comprises one million words of English as a Lingua Franca interactions, equalling approximately 120 hours of transcribed speech, and covers the following speech event types: Interviews, press conferences, service encounters, seminar discussions, working group discussions, workshop discussions, meetings, panels, question-answer sessions, conversations. **David Lee's Tiny Corpora**

http://tiny.cc/corpora

These annotated links (c. 1,000 of them) are meant mainly for linguists and language teachers who work with corpora, not computational linguists/NLP (natural language processing) people, so although the language-engineering-type links here are fairly extensive, they are not exhaustive (for such info, you'll have to look elsewhere).

Sites that list online corpora:

- http://courses.washington.edu/englhtml/engl560/corplingresources.htm
- Corpora4Learning: http://www.corpora4learning.net/resources/materials.html
- http://www.palgrave.com/language/corbett/resources/corpora.html

Additional corpora

- BNC: http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/
- SCOTS: http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk
- ELISA: http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/elisa/html/elisa_index.html
- IViE Corpus (English Intonation in the British Isles) http://www.phon.ox.ac.uk/IViE/
- Speech Accent Archive: http://accent.gmu.edu/
- Compleat Lexical Tutor (access to Brown and BNC sampler among others): http://www.lextutor.ca/
- Brigham Young University Corpus: http://corpus.byu.edu/

Ideas for activities that are based on collocations taken from corpora

Traditional matching: Break up the collocations to create this activity. Since it is an in-class activity, to make students think, include items that match with more than one item and invite students to find these. Students generally work with one-to-one matches so multiple matching items may serve as a perk.

Traditional fill-in-the-blanks: Remove one part of the collocation and put in a blank. You may list the missing items or to make the activity more challenging by withhold the missing collocates. Providing some or all of the missing items after learners have started working may also be an alternative way.

Fill-in-the-blanks with the same word: Select a vocabulary item that has several meanings. Copy suitable sentences from one of the corpora, blanking the word you have selected for this activity. Ask students which word can go in all the blanks, whether it has the same meaning in each blank and if the meaning differs, whether their collocations relate only to that meaning. This may be an intermediate level activity.

Matching pictures with collocations: If the target vocabulary lends itself to this, select one or two pictures (from Clip Art or other sources) for each of the collocations. List the pictures and ask students to write the collocations beneath them. You may withhold the collocations for the first few minutes of the activity and then give students the list to make it a little challenging. During the teaching term, as learners' language proficiency improves, the vocabulary that you need to work with becomes more abstract so try out ways to find pictures that symbolize the concept of the lexical item. You may, for instance, show a result or cause of the concept. Alternatively, you may give one picture to each pair of students and ask them to look through their vocabulary notebooks and see how many items they can relate to this picture then asking pairs to exchange pictures.

The fly swatter activity: Divide the collocations in two, making a list of the first part and keeping this list for use during the activity. In class, write the second parts of the collocations all over the blackboard or better yet, write these in big letters on separate pieces of paper at home and attach them to the board when you want students to do this activity. The second method of writing the words on pieces of paper makes it easier to keep track of which group got more answers right. When you are ready to start, ask students to face the board and stand in two rows with the first ones in each row holding a fly swatter. Read out the first part of a collocation and the student who swats the correct ending on the board gets the paper with the word on it (or you note down the group that got it right for later reference). If two students hit the same correct word, the one with the fly swatter directly on the word wins and gets the paper with the word. Both students move to the end of the line. If they cannot get the right answer, do not tell them. You can reuse this item later. Both students move to the end of the line. Either when time is up or when all the words have been taken, count up the points and announce the winner and have a small group reward ready. Alternatively: Ask the winners to say out loud the collocating words for the words that they got right before you reward them.

Pairing activity: Divide each collocation in two, writing each half on a separate slip of paper. Distribute these randomly and ask students to find their partners by asking each other: "Do you have a matching ending/beginning? I have ….." Alternatively: Find pictures that show the collocations, cut them in two, ask students to study their pictures carefully for 1 minute, concentrating on what may be missing and then place the picture face down on their desk and move around asking questions such as "Do you have half of a tall tree/ half of a left arm with a blue sweater/one white shoe?" When all students have found their correct partners, they sit together and try to come up with the collocation that the teacher was thinking of when picking this picture. Then, two pairs get together to hear what the others decided. You may need to time this activity because pairs may go into discussions and it may take up too much of your time.

Final suggestion: Pick one of these activities and explain to students exactly how it works and what you want them to do. Get pairs or small groups to actually write the activity as homework using a free online corpus. Ask them to produce a detailed key. Collect these, check them for accuracy and give them out to different students another day as an in-class recycling activity.

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Biodata

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Investigating Students' Perceptions on the Use of Moodle

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Introduction

In recent years developments in technology have started to affect almost every part of our daily lives, and in education they have started to profoundly affect teaching and learning. As a result, e-learning (or Internet-based learning) has emerged as one of the fastest growing trends in today's education (Palmer et al., 2001). It is now widely accepted that e-learning can be integrated into face-to-face classroom instruction in order to add variety to teaching and improve student motivation: this is what is called blended learning. This paper investigates students' perceptions of use of Moodle in language learning. It reports the findings from a small study, using a mixed-method approach, of a group of 18 Turkish undergraduate students of English. During the period of 8 weeks, students used a class-specific Moodle page as part of their English language course, and data was collected using questionnaires and interviews to find out the extent to which they found the use of Moodle interesting and motivating.

Literature Review

Blended learning (BL) is generally defined as the combination of two teaching approaches: traditional face-to-face and online. The term covers the use of technology by integrating the use of computers and the internet into the teaching process. By applying BL, value can be added to the teaching process and thus courses can be enriched. There are some common terms used in the context of e-learning, such as:

- Course Management System (CMS), Learning Management System (LMS) in the US,
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Managed Learning Environment (MLE) in the UK.

Some of the e-learning platforms include commercial ones, such as Web CT and Blackboard (blackboard.com), whereas some others are open-source software, such as Moodle (Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, moodle.org) and Atutor (atutor.ca). Martin-

Blas and Serrano-Fernandez (2009) explain that all these applications have common features but some are more flexible and complete (as cited in Kamarulzaman et al., 2010).

Moodle is one of the most commonly used e-learning platforms with currently over 50 million users and 1 million teachers in over 200 countries worldwide (moodle.org/stats). It is a global development project designed to support social framework of education (moodle.org 2010), and is free software allowing modifications to be done by users, which allows them flexibility and scalability. It was created by Dougiamas from an idea that an educator should create CMS not an engineer (Cole & Foster, 2008). It is compatible with many operating systems, such as Windows, Linux etc, and has a lot of functions which enhance the learning process. Teachers can design the page in the way they want, provide written samples to encourage students to give peer feedback on Wiki, improve students' communication skills on Social Forums, assign homework by setting date and preventing late submissions and so forth.

Some research has been carried out in recent years to support the use of Moodle. Kamarulzaman, Madun. & Ghani (2010) aimed at understanding the factors that influence the use of Moodle based on users' own experience, while Hölbl & Welzer. (2010) investigated the students' communication and feedback habits when using Moodle. However, there has been relatively little research on how Moodle is actually used and how it can improve student learning. Such research would be valuable in terms of encouraging and guiding teachers to use it more effectively.

The Study

I am currently teaching in the English preparatory programme of a private university in Turkey. Instructional technology is encouraged and Moodle has been used since 2007. As one of the responsible people for computerized learning in the programme, I have realized that Moodle is not used effectively enough to encourage students to work outside the class and to encourage teachers to integrate technology into their teaching process. Starting from this point, I decided to do research on students' perceptions of the use of Moodle by designing a class specific Moodle page according to the certain number of students' needs. The aims of my study were as follows:

- How do students perceive the use of Moodle in their language learning?
- Do students perceive Moodle tasks as useful? If so, in what ways?
- To what extent do the students perceive Moodle tasks as useful?

Data collection

The participants were 18 elementary-level students, from whom I collected the following data:

- Initial questionnaire to all 18 students;
- Initial interview with 3 students;
- Final questionnaire to all 18 students;
- Final interview with 3 students.

At the beginning of the course, in order to get general information about the students' background in terms of their tendency to use a computer in their language learning, the students were given a questionnaire including questions about how often and why they use the internet and computers, what Moodle is and what their expectations are from the use of Moodle in their course. To get further information about the items in the questionnaire, three of the students were subsequently interviewed. Analyzing all the data together gave me a general profile of the class. Towards the end of the course, having experienced all the activities on Moodle, students were given another questionnaire to get their perceptions on the activities used on Moodle, whether they liked them and to what extent their expectations of Moodle were met. To get detailed information about the items in the questionnaire, three students (different ones from those involved in the first interview) were interviewed.

How I used Moodle

My aim in the course was to integrate Moodle into students' learning as much as I could. Therefore, I designed an 8-weeek course which used blended learning in the form of Moodle as a learning platform. As part of the course students were expected to use Moodle every day to do extra tasks, assignments and class integrated tasks. I designed a Moodle 'class page' to motivate students more and give them the feeling of belonging to a specific community. I added a whole class photo, made the style of the page more modern, and entered all the significant dates related to the course; including homework assignments, and due dates for quizzes and exams.

In my teaching, I used various activities through Moodle, three of which I want to share here. Since the students were at elementary level, their first need while learning English was to improve their vocabulary. We usually encourage our students to keep a vocabulary journal to learn new words and phrases efficiently and thus expand their vocabulary knowledge. Keeping this approach in mind, for the first activity I designed a *class dictionary* to help students keep all the words they learned in this course. I guided students on how to enter the words in this section. They were to enter each word that they had learned in class by pointing out its part of speech, writing the meaning, synonyms or antonyms and giving an example about the target word.

Figure 1. Dictionary Page on Moodle

The second activity was aimed at improving the students' communication skills by using the "*Social Forum*" section on Moodle. I opened a social forum and entered different discussion topics to make students share their ideas and opinions about the selected topic. The topics were determined according to the students' interests or in order to get students reflection on what they have learned in reading or listening lessons in class. Each student responded to their friends replies, in which real life like communication took place.

Figure 2. Forum Page on Moodle

The third activity was about using *RSS feed* on Moodle. Although, they were elementary level learners and thus having difficulty in understanding the reading texts beyond their level, I guided them to read the news they see on the RSS section, in order to improve their reading skills. I provided certain newspapers' RSS feeds on the page and sometimes gave them as homework assignments to choose one of the daily news and write a summary of it. The following day students came to the class having finished their homework and gave a short presentation on the news they had chosen.

Figure 3. RSS Page on Moodle

Findings and Implications

Both the quantitative and qualitative data show that most students thought that the use of Moodle and blended learning during the course helped them to learn. 95% of students thought it enhanced their learning and 83% said it met their expectations (see table 1 below). As they stated in the interviews: "Moodle was a great tool to help my learning process, it really encouraged me to study English". At the beginning of this study, they were cautious, since they had difficulty in both understanding the uses of Moodle. However, once starting using it, they adapted to the new style quite fast. The page design helped them in this process, since 94% of the students found the "Moodle Design" useful.

Table 1

Data Analysis

Qs	USEFUL			MOTIVATING		
	Disagree	?	Agree	Disagree	?	Agree
Easy accessibility	0	0	18			
Met expectation	1	2	15			
Dictionary	1	2	15	2	6	10
Social forum	1	6	11	2	6	10
RSS	1	8	9	2	10	6
Moodle design	0	1	17	0	1	17

As table 1 shows, the class dictionary was found to be both useful (15 out of 18) and motivating (10 out of 18), and was used mostly while studying for the exams. One student said “The class dictionary section was useful when studying for the exam because I could easily find every word we had learned in class”. This suggests that storing, displaying all new words in one place is a very useful memory tool for student. Another benefit was to add newly learned words to the dictionary and this was felt to be useful, since students needed to look up new words to find synonyms, antonyms, example sentences etc., “I learned a lot from looking up new words and searching for the relevant or necessary information”. On the other hand, some students claimed that they never used the dictionary for studying. In this respect, dictionary use may be prioritized in the future in order to make sure that every student uses the class dictionary to some extent.

The use of social forums was found useful (11 out of 18) and motivating (10 out of 18) as 3 of the students said:

> Social forum was different from class activities and we had a chance to express our ideas in English. Furthermore, we could see our friends’ mistakes when they wrote something there
>
> Social forum created a discussion platform for us to share our ideas.

However, still some thought that the discussion topics should be determined according to their interests “More different subjects should be added on Social forum”. Thus, in the future this activity may work better if the discussion topics are chosen by students.

The RSS feed to access English newspapers was useful (9 out of 18) for some students but since the language level was too high, it was less motivating than the other activities (6 out of 18). As one student said:

> RSS tries to encourage us to read more in English but since the texts were above our level, we had difficulty in understanding them

Some students also thought that “if a person doesn’t have a habit of reading newspapers daily, having RSS on Moodle is useless”. In the future, RSS feeds may be opened after discussing with the students about their interests and language level in order to make them more useful and to make them use Moodle more.

Conclusion

Based on this study and the results, it is suggested that in order to increase student involvement in the use of Moodle, the page design can be attractive to catch students’ attention. In the use of the activities on Moodle, some traditional face-to-face activities can be adapted to be used on the page. For instance, in almost every class a number of discussions are held on different topics but holding discussions on Moodle page is another way to integrate Moodle into daily class teaching. In order to encourage students to read in English, RSS feed can be used according to students' level. In this respect, it is further suggested that teachers should consider their individual teaching context and design an appropriate Moodle page that fits their students' needs and characteristics, and contributes to students' quality learning (Tsai, Shen & Tsai, 2011).

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Biodata

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Value-added: Constructing Classroom Meta-Narratives Through Qualitative Action Research

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Abstract

Non-native English speaking teachers of English can add value to their performance and institutional planning teams by engaging in identification and completion of qualitative research projects based on language-rich authentic classroom situations. They will employ ethnographic methods of observation and transcription of "overheard" student conversation in the form of task-oriented "table talk." Teachers as researchers discover insights that lead to research questions, possible topics for theses, conference presentations, or journal articles, and a greater sense of professional direction and connection. Classroom-based teacher-research is an appropriate criterion for excellence in teacher's assessment portfolios and can lead to collaborative learning projects with students and colleagues.

Keywords: nnests, qualitative research, action research, ethnographic studies, formative assessment, professional development, teacher evaluation, collaborative learning

The challenges of teaching English to non-native speakers are all consuming. Few teachers have leisure to reflect systematically on their own practices; evolve individual teaching philosophies; or test out, share, and establish practices based on intuitions and experiences in their own departments and institutions. Classroom-based teacher-researcher studies, based on observations, transcriptions of informal student conversation, and reflections on the teaching day, can lead to small-scale projects based on legitimate questions related to *on-the-ground* practice. Such studies can develop new staff and re-energize seasoned professionals. Practically speaking, teacher-researcher studies are meta-narratives of interface between students, teachers, and tasks. If we listen well, they are therefore *de facto* formative assessments of program with full potential to shape curriculum and pedagogy with new theoretical assumptions. My central aim will be to illustrate how teachers' ideas for these classroom-based qualitative studies can be identified, developed, and presented to other teachers. Moreover, these studies can be, even should be, accorded a place in the teacher evaluation process.

How can non-native English language teachers (NNESTs) engage in identifying and planning research projects using classroom scenarios and transcripts of "overheard" student conversations, i.e. "table talk (Westgate, 1997)." Fortunately, the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESOL) profession has moved beyond Noam Chomsky's attempt to valorize native speaker's proficiency toward acknowledgment of the unique assets NNESTs bring to their teaching. For the most part, these advantages "emerge from NNESTs' experience of having learned English as an additional language (Mahboob, 2005)."

What is the precedent for NNESTs' engagement in classroom-based ethnographic teacher research? Foremost, in 2003 TESOL established an annual Award for Teacher as Classroom Action Researcher to encourage and recognize promising classroom-based research, which is also featured prominently in TESOL Conference strands. Action research by EFL instructors is published in the NNEST *Caucus Newsletter*, discussed in the nnest Electronic Village, and is regularly featured in major publications, such as *Educational Action Research.* At the end of the day, what do we do with the distinctly valuable musings of NNESTs with their rare double perspective who daily cross-reference their positions as former language learners and present day instructors? From this comparative insider/outsider stance, they might leave their institutions on many days mulling over such matters as successful interventions with students and the surprises of nonintervention; frustrations with a curriculum that for their student populations is just "wrong": too challenging, "dumbed" down, or based on incorrect stereotypes of English as a Foreign Language (ESL) learners. They also may wonder about how or if they brought about a particular student's quantum leap in reading ability, or even why making use of a serendipitous event, such as an eclipse or a fire alarm, precipitated learning for the class that day.

They may sense, as one of my TESOL masters' students did in her tutorial, that parental expectations and looming high-stakes tests, made learning nearly impossible as the test date approached. There might be an emergent pattern in grammatical errors occurring as students stretched themselves into essay writing or the efficacy of self-sought learning from internet sites. Formal assessment of writing simply does not reward the level of expression witnessed in journal free-writing. For every domain of teaching language, small scale "actionable" questions arise but are just as often lost.

My favorite narrative of how circumstance and the teacher's personality and interests intersect into an authentic action research project occurred early in my career as a teacher trainer and consultant. The Middle Eastern government with whom I was contracted required an intensive three week, five evening a week, mandatory training sequence in EFL strategies for all teachers. Our sessions started at 4pm. after a long and arduous day that had begun at 6:30am – typical desert hours. Our training, of course, was punctuated twice by the call to prayers and for refreshments, which men and women partook of separately, so we ended our workshops slightly before 10pm, a long day for all. One of the keenest participants was visibly fatigued and coughing by the end of each night, but she conscientiously completed her work. Several weeks later when I visited her department, I learned about her high regard among teachers and administrators, and when I visited her class, her dynamism and popularity with the students was apparent. To reward students after a successful drill or discussion, she re-performed the lesson with puppets and dolls, impersonating all the voices with great skill and humor. However, whenever I saw her in the halls during the week as I visited other teachers, her voice was reduced to a croak and then a whisper. Her fatigue, a slight cold, and the constant talking in the classroom had left her with no voice at all.

We sat down to identify her action research question, which indeed had already formed itself out of necessity: What would happen if Asma spent a period of time, even 5 minutes of each class period, shielded from students and their questions, not talking but writing her reflections on the students in her teaching journal as they worked and instructed one another? What would students gain from this non-directive time period; what might occur to Asma as a more sustainable method of teaching? Part of her findings was to appreciate the discovery learning students could initiate in groups, also that some of the students were gifted with puppet voices. Another thought was persistent: that, much as she adored her students and teaching, she was ready to begin a journey to greater professionalism and a different kind of school day. Asma began by sharing her insights from this project at a regional conference and today is a principal in charge of curriculum and pedagogy.

One of the techniques this classroom teacher used to arrive at her pedagogical insights and professional direction was listening deeply to "table-talk," which is a way of interesting ourselves in what students are saying to one another but not necessarily to us. This type of listening is deliberately kept casual, brief, and unencumbered by complicated protocols or technology. Simply deciding on a puzzling or perplexing domain is an easy-to-take first step. Usually there has been a concept or instruction presented in a 10 – 15 minute lesson, and then students work together in small groups to accomplish a task that involves language, in other words, a rather standard lesson but one that sets a particular challenge. I suggest not notifying students in advance about intentions to record but just to approach one group that is underway and request a recording with a mobile phone placed on their worktable “just for a study I am doing.” Protocols and permissions can come later if outside presentation or publication is sought.

While the sound quality from this unobtrusive recording may be less than perfect, it will suffice, even with gaps and background noise. In this initial phase, ten minutes of recording is sufficient, and the teacher moves on as usual to the completion of the task, only making sure to jot down observational notes and to save the material from the targeted group. The instructor, by the way, should leave the groups alone to work as much as possible; in fact, another of my graduate students, who has a project on autonomous learning, after setting the task leaves the room on a pretext. His student table talk indicated to him that students savor the element of surprising the teacher, particularly a teacher they like, and will be more creative and original when he allows the group an unsupervised, although brief and purposeful, “retreat” (Adilkhanov, 2012).

The second step in the process, performed as soon as possible in order to properly identify student voices, is transcribing the recording of what students say to one another (or even what a student, asked to think out loud while working alone in a tutorial session, mutters to him or herself.) You will notice silences, humor, digressions into student culture, attempts to interpret the assignment, scoldings from time-tasker types, stuck points, and occasions when Language 1 breaks in. Some students will take the lead or “chew” recursively over certain points, while others may only assent or dissent with grunts and groans or monosyllables. Transcription should include pauses, laughter, environmental interruptions, and leave inaudible words or trailing thoughts as is, indicating those with dashes and dots – no guesswork or correcting English.

Several systems are available for coding the transcription; the choice will depend on the context of the task. Most of my students used the system invented by Sinclair and Couthard (1992) because it is designed to capture and categorize student conversation in a natural way as it actually occurs in our lessons. The coding sorts comments into “moves,” such as initiating conversation or responding; “acts” such as nominating a topic for discussion or eliciting comments from other students; and “cognitive terms,” where a judgment has to made. Is the student recollecting prior learning or making a connection with the environment or the written instructions? (see appendix) Much of the evidence needed to interpret and code comes from the richness of the student's language since language as an adjunct to learning so often shows the mind at work.

Coding decisions by their nature raise teacher intuitions to the level of open-ended questioning. Questions are phrased in a fair-minded non-judgmental manner that does not assume that the status quo of the curriculum or institution will be reinforced. The questions are kept to the level of wondering out loud. For instance, to borrow another of my graduate student's projects, Ainur asked around the time of national day celebrations: "Does high emotional content and engagement produce spontaneous use of latent vocabulary? or Aiman's related question: "Are students better able to converse in Language 2 when the topic concerns their own culture?" Another teacher, a singer herself, wondered, "Is a singing voice at all related to precise punctuation? Is there a special "ear" that links these two?" Yet another queried, "On what classroom occasions do students tend to lapse into Language 1? What do "outbreaks" into Language 1 signal to the teacher and do these serve a learning purpose for students?"

The second segment of the study can be set up to gather data in a similar way: a tentative question, short instruction, a similar task, recording of table talk, using the same group of students or a second sample for comparison purposes, and transcription. By now certain patterns are discernible and tentative interpretations possible, but because of the small sample claims are kept modest. They preserve the tone of investigatory spirit and often begin with phrases such as, "It is possible that…" "It might seem…." "There may be a pattern…"

Plans for further study are also indicated along with a suggestion of means for pursuing it. The follow up might be an agenda for looking at the findings in a larger sample using surveys, questionnaires or focus groups, or it might pursue the opposite, a more in-depth smaller focus, such as a case study on one typical, or better yet, perplexing student. An eclectic assemblage of data collecting methodologies is allowable, even encouraged in qualitative ethnographic research, neither does the study necessarily need time definition. In any case, the teacher's observation journal is carefully kept, and pairs or teams of teachers might look at different aspects of the question in their classes for purposes of comparison. Again, one prong of my student Askar's study on autonomous learning involved the use of a manipulative, in this case, laptop computers. He wanted to know how students would go about creating a performance if given minimal instructions and internet access (Adilkhanov 2012). For comparative control, another teacher in the same department might give the same task but without the electronic manipulative or with different manipulatives, such as art materials, to see the difference in outcomes.

What are some do-able ways for teachers to "publish" their tentative results for other teachers on the local level? Also how can teacher-researcher findings be put to immediate use in the curriculum? My institution has just sponsored a university-wide conference to share research-in-progress with one another and the surrounding region. For the first time, two undergraduates presented their research papers, and the conference is an open forum for receiving input for our projects. Our *Language Center Newsletter* also featured teacher-researcher projects from my course in *Linguistics* and other Masters Level teaching studies as a way to share not only findings but to publicize an approachable method for doing classroom-based teacher research. However, I believe that informal invitations to share results with one's teaching team has the most immediate effect because it is most apt to act within the feedback loop to result in longitudinal evaluation of program. Do all teaching teams at the end of term discuss the outcomes of the semester with one another and share their informal findings? Last year on several occasions I shared and illustrated brief, novel, low stakes methods for thumbnail formative assessment; one was how to use a Straw Poll and immediately quantify the results with impromptu bar charts. Realizing the tendency of formative assessment to become summative, we redesigned the syllabus to provide new alternatives.

As part of a report-out of last summer's teaching, I described my experiment with kinesthetic activities that combine learning and movement: an outdoor "Scavenger Hunt" with phone cameras to snap wasted resources on campus; a walk-a-round to paste sticky note comments on one another's creative projects, creation of a time line for a novel using stickers, and, of course, my favorite closure activity: the sharing of one's completed draft with all the other class members by moving down a gauntlet of facing chairs reading segments of the essays, my "musical chairs" activity. The team speculated with me on just why movement in the classroom seemed to consolidate learning. Timely input that adapts the direction of the next semester's curriculum and approach is *collaborative* formative assessment. Not only is effectiveness examined, but teachers come to know and respect one another's strengths and styles, team investment is ratified, and the curriculum itself becomes an organism open to adaptation.

How can insights from these small studies lead to the identification of a research question and possible topic for a thesis or article? Firstly, they locate the Teacher-Researcher in an area of interest and possible expertise. Secondly, the Teacher-Researcher joins a domain and the intellectual cluster around it that then provides ready access to sites, blogs, journals, and conferences with their calls for manuscripts and conference invitations. The partially answered questions of action research studies lead to honest research questions, likely to add new knowledge to EFL teaching or to create new areas of inquiry. Through such research and the circularity of the mind as it attends to recurrent questions, the Teacher-Researcher usually discovers his or her personal connection to the nagging questions that we need to answer for ourselves, the realization that in many ways questions and concerns choose us.

Four educators described their intensive summer experience creating a “yaya” project, an expressive art installation which each designed to reflect her self-conceptualization as a Teacher-Researcher. The outer layer visible to the world, the public face of the teacher persona, was easy to construct, but the harder task was to represent spatially the private space for reflection and authoring. Influenced by the work of Holland et al.(as cited in Nicol,1998), the teachers needed to confront how their professional worlds were rife with unexamined, hard-wired assumptions, which limit or prohibit inquiry and interpretation, especially in relation to questions of institutional purpose (Nicol, 2004).

Are there models for providing an incentive for including teacher-research as evidence of professional engagement in teachers’ assessment portfolios? The Qatar Supreme Education Council required every secondary teacher to undertake an action research study under the guidance of the Supervising Teacher. In many systems in the United States and in the United Kingdom, this is an option for professional re-credentialing. Action research projects exist also within the wider community of ethnographic research, which is itself an international degree-granting gathering of scholars interested in issues of social justice and techniques for grassroots empowerment. In keeping with the philosophy of accessibility, the websites for *living educational theory*, sponsored by Jack Whitehead in the UK and Jean McNiff in the United States (Whitehead, MacNiff, 2012), post materials and invite projects that will accomplish radical change in society-at-large through education.

Particularly in the language classroom, teachers and administrators attend to the feedback loop of test scores and student comments, but do they sufficiently prize the valuable perspective of observations of students and what they can tell us about their stuck-points and learning processes? Teaching a second language is always a thoughtful process, slippery, recursive, and while we do not always know how well our students will command language on a given occasion, we know or can know our students. What would it mean to share our reflections and musings with students? As they become co-participants in our projects, we honor them by showing that they too have a role in our professional concerns. I have just completed a semester with 21 students in our required academic writing course and marked their 25 page research studies and related drafts. At several junctures, I showed them pieces of my own research writing, an abstract, a literature review, the long list of references in my dissertation. What I wish is that I had undertaken this project right along with them, meeting the same deadlines and asking for their input. After all I designed our section as a course for investigative reporters and approved topics on the basis of an authentic and contemporary need to know. Perhaps I can pioneer this next fall.

What does it mean to co-quest with a team of teachers or to connect with the work of other teachers at conferences or by e-mail working through the same classroom concerns? How would it be if the meta-narratives of teacher's musings could be more easily infolded as a value-added feature of a constantly evolving program? This work also perhaps can be extended into fall.

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Biodata

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Appendix

Learning with Manipulatives: an Exploratory Project Based on Classroom Research

Askar Adilkhanov

I have been reading about a study of students in India, who taught themselves a needed skill, a second language, when they were challenged by a simple “manipulative,” an exposed computer with a keyboard but no instructions or teacher. I saw a chance to test out this idea of autonomous learning in my own class of *Academic Speaking*.

The assignment called for students to prepare a dialogue using appropriate sources of information. The instruction was to stage out the reaction of society towards kissing in public places, a top news story from the United States summer news. The group was split into 4 sub-groups. The time limit was 15 minutes. This assignment, I thought, should encourage an autonomous situation, and I planned to leave students alone to figure it out while I simply observed.

The task was given to prepare a group dialogue based on a topic involving a cultural issue. It was assumed that the students would use manipulatives to find information. In this case, manipulatives were – the internet, electronic dictionaries, and other gadgets (belts, mobiles, etc.)

<u>My first observation</u>

In the middle of the preparation process, I was able to record a brief conversation with a group of students, trying to be as non-directive as possible. Later I transcribed and coded the transcript

Speaker	Text	Move	Act	Cog
I:	How are you doing there?	I	el/n	
S1:	OK	R	rep	
I:	Oh, you are searching the internet…	I/E	e/el	MC
S2:	Teacher, I don't understand. We must play, yes?	I	el/n	R
I:	Yes, you must.	R	rep	
S3:	Which play you need me? We should, we should make? I don't know. Which play?	I	el	
I:	Through your play you need to show the attitude of society towards those people (who are kissing in the public).	R	rep/i	
S3:	Like we were doing now?	I	el	R
I:	Yes. Or like in the video, the speaker said it was a challenge.	R	rep/i	R
S3:	Challenge? Why?	I	el/i	
I:	Well or it was like a…. (pause)	R	rep/i	R
S2:	Shock…	R/I	rep/el	R
I:	It wasn't a shock. It something like a …tease.	R	rep/el	R

Terms:

Moves	Acts	Cognitive terms
I – initiation (of a topic, talk)	el – elicit	R – recollection
R – response	n – nominate	MC – making connection
E – evaluation	rep – reply	
	e- evaluate	

Discussion of Observation 1:

- The result was that I while I assumed that the instructor's conversation should be rich with cognitive features, like MCs and Rs (see the terms above), and fewer evaluation phrases, I was surprised that I the instructor continued to use typical evaluation phrases like "How are you doing there?", or "Oh, you are using the internet…".
- The question that arises from the conclusions based on the analysis is whether an extended time limit will promote learner autonomy and decrease the typical IRE approach.
- Might the study have been done under the topic of mental grammar/lexicon that can be checked and better revealed in the autonomous and authentic situation?
- Therefore, another observation seemed to be appropriate, this time with less time-limit pressure, which presumably discourages creativity and autonomy, and minimal teacher intervention.
-

A second observation:

For the second analysis, I decided to create a situation where students were more completely autonomous. Therefore I instructed that the students were to record themselves for the Intensive Reading Group Play task. I split the class into 4 groups and let them go to any part of the building (some preferred to go outside) and work on their own. Again, free access to electronic manipulatives was assumed. The time limit was 15 minutes. In fact it took every group 25+ minutes to prepare. The recording I used was for the group that preferred to stay in the classroom.

The assignment itself aimed at seeing whether the number of cognitive phrases would increase with students working autonomously and with free use of electronic manipulatives.

Coding 2

Dialogue	Sinclair/Coulthard's coding system		
	Move	Act	Cog
S1: (Is Mr. Blakemore… Sharlot,	I	n	R
S2: Sharlot?	I	rep/e	MC
S1: And… Mr. Blakemore (refers to another student, who is preparing the recording technology) Hi. (Student is busy)	I	n/el	R/MC
S1: (a loud noise comes out) Wow!	E	e/rep	MC
S2: We are going to another part of the room to record ourselves. We'll do that in secret. ….	I	n/el	MC?
S3: (People are recording themselves). Постучи ногами по парте, чтобы сделать звук похожий на то как человек садится. (Make noise with your legs to make it sound like)	I	n/el	MC

Terms:

Moves	Acts	Cognitive terms
I – initiation (of a topic, talk)	el – elicit	R – recollection
R – response	n – nominate	MC – making connection
E – evaluation	rep – reply	
	e- evaluate	

Discussion of Observation 2:

- Discussion does not stop, as many think, without teacher initiation. The group was speaking lively and productively (See the final product of their assignment).
- What is more interesting was that the number of cognitive phrases increased dramatically in the teacher's absence in comparison with the previous coding. However, portions of the "figuring it out" conversation occurred primarily in Russian.
- Another peculiarity I noticed is that for better results, the students needed to be alone. They stayed in the room, but they preferred to another part of the classroom, where they did not have to look back at the teacher and exactly there the most creative work has begun ("Make noise with your legs to make it sound real."

Conclusion:

Therefore, usage of manipulatives in an autonomous learning environment presents considerable opportunities for creative and student-centered learning. Definitely, this idea needs to be more seriously observed, since the results obtained from the two previous observations registered some improvement in the students' progress in foreign language acquisition.

Appraisal and Professional Development of Teachers
at Kindergarten thru 12^{th}Grade Educational Institutions

Volkan Çiçek

Appraising the teachers to assess their strengths and weaknesses is needed to provide them with specific professional development opportunities based on these weaknesses. Appraisals can be done in many ways but a method that is deemed more suitable to the Kindergarten thru 12^{th} grade educational institutions is discussed within this study within the context of teacher orientation that consists of the following stages of appraisal calendar, formal observation and its subtopics of preliminary conference, domains, scoring guide, post-observation conference; walkthroughs, and summative report and summative annual conference. Also, goal of professional development is to improve student performance through the professional development of teachers on certain areas determined by appraisals. Potential professional development program opportunities that are suitable primarily for Kindergarten grade thru 12^{th} grade are discussed within the context of in-service professional development programs that are either campus wide, cluster wide or district wide as well as professional development opportunities at other professional institutions such as directorate and ministries of educations or private institutions.

Introduction

The work of a teacher is the most valuable work there is today because the future of our society depends on an educated population. Teachers are in the greatest position for having a positive impact on children if they stay on top of their game considering teaching profession is a life-long learning process. Thus, appraisals and professional development on areas determined by appraisals is a major aspect of teaching profession. In this study, major area of focus is appraisal and professional development of teachers as it is practiced in U.S. public school districts with implementations in Texas State are highlighted.

Characteristics of professional development and appraisal system (PDAS) in U.S. public school setting is that it is learner-centered, aligned with the objectives of the district and the state mandated curriculum and the emphasis on high standards of teacher proficiency via teacher growth and teacher improvement and collaboration. (Fallon, 2004)

As stated in Senate Bill 1 passed in 1995 (History of Texas Education, 2008) and Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.351, criteria for PDAS system include:

(1) teachers' implementation of discipline management procedures; and
(2) the performance of teachers' students.

A teacher who directs extracurricular activities in addition to performing classroom teaching duties is appraised only on the basis of classroom teaching performance and not on performance in connection with the extracurricular activities (Performance Appraisal Evaluation of Teachers, 2010).

In addition to the state recommended PDAS system the legislation allows school districts to adopt policies at the local level to modify the appraisal schedule for qualifying teachers (in Educator Excellence, 2005).

Teacher appraisals must be done at least once during each school year (Texas Education Code Section 21.352, 2007). A teacher may be appraised less frequently if the teacher agrees in writing and the teacher's most recent appraisal rated the teacher as at least ‘proficient’, or the equivalent, and did not identify any area of deficiency. A teacher who is appraised less frequently than annually must be appraised at least once during each period of five school years (Professional Development and Appraisal System Procedures Manual, 2009).

The four performance levels under PDAS; exceeds expectations, proficient, below expectations, and unsatisfactory, are defined in terms of the impact on student learning (Professional Development and Appraisal System Teacher Manual, 2005). Since the goal of PDAS is to enhance the learning of all students, the “proficient” level is a high standard of performance. Teaching behaviors that result in considerable impact on student learning and which are demonstrated a high percentage of the time and with a high percentage of students that is a minimum of 80% is ‘proficient’, while over 89% is considered to exceed expectations. Words associated with ‘proficient’ teaching behaviors or with the rating of ‘proficient’ are skillful, experienced, masterful, well-advanced, and knowledgeable.

District policy may stipulate if the appraisal accompanying a teacher new to a district or campus meets the option, whether the appraisal is to be accepted or whether that teacher is to be appraised by the new campus administrator (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010).

Pursuant to local policy, if an appraiser becomes aware of a teacher who is performing below expectations whether through direct observation or notification from a third party, the appraiser may place the teacher on the traditional annual appraisal cycle even if the teacher had agreed to less frequent appraisals based on his or her most recent evaluation. Nothing in the legislation prohibits a walkthrough or other informal observation by appraisers, even for those teachers who have qualified for less frequent appraisals (Texas Education Code Teacher In Need of Assistance, 2010.

Appraisal Calendar

Each school district is required to establish a calendar for the appraisal of teachers. The appraisal period for each teacher must include all of the days of a teacher's contract. Observations during the appraisal period must be conducted during the required days of instruction for students during one school year (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010).

Even if the timelines are not met, teachers and appraisers are still encouraged to complete the appraisal process, because the system can still contribute to professional development, especially through completion of the Teacher Self-Report (TSR) and the annual summative appraisal. However, when timelines are not adhered to, the appraisal cannot be used for employment decisions (Educator Excellence, 2005).

Any documentation collected after the summative conference but before the end of the contract term during one school year may be considered as part of the appraisal of a teacher. If the documentation affects the teacher's evaluation in any domain, another summative report shall be developed and another summative conference shall be held to inform the teacher of the change(s) (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010).

Appraisal Process Steps

Recommended PDAS system includes the following components;

1. Teacher Orientation; section 150.1007 of the Commissioner’s Rules requires that all teachers be provided with an orientation of the PDAS no later than the final day of the first three weeks of school and at least three weeks before the first observation (19 TAC

Chapter 150, Subchapter AA, 2010). Districts are required to conduct additional orientations any time substantial changes occur in the PDAS. Teachers new to a district are to receive an orientation of the PDAS at least three weeks before the teacher's first observation. The approved new PDAS teacher orientation curriculum consists of approximately six hours of instruction. If necessary, the orientation may be broken into smaller segments of instruction. The materials used shall include all local appraisal policies, the local appraisal calendar, and information on the requirements for the completion of the Teacher Self-Report form. All teacher orientation must address the following required topics:

a) explanation of the rules,
b) explanation of the domains,
c) explanation of the Teacher Self-Report form and
d) an explanation of the scoring procedures.

2. Teacher Self Report (TSR); completion of Section I of the Teacher Self-Report Form is presented to the principal within the first three weeks from the day of completion of the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) orientation (Teacher Self Report Form, 2010). Revision of Section I if necessary and completion of Sections II and III of the Teacher Self-Report Form is presented to the principal at least two weeks prior to the summative annual conference.
3. Formal Classroom Observation; at least one classroom observation of a minimum of 45 minutes is conducted annually at the discretion of the certified appraiser but 45 minutes can be segmented into smaller segments if mutually agreed upon by the teacher and appraiser with the condition that the time segments must aggregate to 45 minutes. A written summary of each observation is given to teachers within ten working days after the completion of an observation (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010). Pre- and post-observation conferences are conducted at the request of the teacher or certified appraiser. Pre-conference is a two-way meeting and is used to communicate expectations of the appraiser and teacher, while post-conference is used for feedback, growth, and planning. Pre and post-conferences are highly recommended due to more communication results in more efficient appraisals and professional development opportunities.

Formal observations cannot be realized earlier than 3 weeks after the teacher orientation and on the last day of instruction before any official school holiday or on any other day deemed inappropriate by the school district board of trustees. Completing observations and conferences in the fall semester can direct professional development for the rest of year, thus at least one observation in the first 12 weeks and a minimum of two per semester is highly recommended for an efficient assessment of professional development goals. Advance notice may be given to the teacher as to when the formal observation will take place but is not required. Formal observation includes fifty-one evaluation criteria organized in eight domains.

4. Walkthroughs may begin the first day of instruction and continue through the final day of instruction; they are used at the discretion of the appraiser while walkthrough documentation is shared with the teacher within 10 days (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010).
5. Student Performance as seen in Campus Performance Rating and AYP. AYP or Adequate Yearly Progress is the evaluation indicator of the United States federal NCLB (No Child Left Behind) Act that allows the U.S. Department of Education to determine how every public school and school district in the country is performing academically according to results on standardized tests in three measures (Adequate Yearly Progress, 2011);
   a) Reading/Language Arts,
   b) Mathematics and
   c) Graduation Rate for high schools and districts or Attendance Rate for elementary and middle/junior high schools.
6. Other cumulative data regarding job-related teacher performance are collected in addition to formal classroom observations. Any third-party information from a source other than the certified appraiser that the certified appraiser wishes to include as cumulative data must be verified and documented by the certified appraiser and must be shared in writing with the teacher within ten working days of the certified appraiser's knowledge of the occurrence if it will influence the teacher's summative annual appraisal report. The principal is also notified of such documents in writing when the certified appraiser is not the teacher's principal. Any document evaluating the performance of a teacher or administrator is confidential (Appraisal Implementation Manual for Teachers, 2009). Documentation in general needs to include the following as well;
   - Date; date of occurrence and date of notification of the teacher
   - Facts; who, what, when, and where
   - Behavior observed
   - Explicit; as it relates to language used in the PDAS framework

7. Summative Annual Report; a written summative annual appraisal report is produced and shared with the teacher no later than five working days before the summative conference and no later than 15 working days before the last day of instruction for students. Summative annual report includes overall observation summary and walkthrough documentation. The written summative annual appraisal report is placed in the teacher's personnel file by the end of the appraisal period (19 TAC Chapter 150, Subchapter AA, 2010).

   Summative Annual Conference is not conducted later than 15 working days before last day of instruction unless waived in writing by the teacher. It is highly recommended to have it earlier especially in cases where a 2nd appraisal is requested. Summative annual conference focuses on the written summative report and related data sources. In cases where the certified appraiser is not an administrator on the teacher's campus, either the principal, assistant principal, or another supervisory staff member designated as an administrator on the campus must participate in the summative annual conference.

8. Teacher Response; a teacher has two options within 10 working days (can be extended to 15 days if needed by the appraiser) after receiving the observation summary, summative annual report or any other written documentation associated with the teacher's appraisal if the teacher does not agree with the report;
   a) Teacher may submit a written response or rebuttal which becomes a part of the teacher’s appraisal; or
   b) Teacher may request a 2nd observation in writing; the way 2nd appraisals initiated and weighted is stated in district’s local appraisal policy. Commonly, 2nd appraisal includes the following;
      i. a 45 minute observation or equivalent amount of time in shorter segments, scoring of all domains,
      ii. Teacher Self-Report Form and cumulative documentation collected by the first appraiser, particularly in Domains VI, VII, and VIII, and
      iii. any walk-through documentation that are used to score any or all domains.

   A teacher may be given advance notice of the date or time of a second appraisal, but advance notice is not required.

   Each school district adopts written procedures for a teacher to present grievances and receive written comments in response to the written annual report. Each district also adopts written procedures for determining the selection of second appraisers. These procedures are disseminated to each teacher at the time of employment and updated annually or as needed (Texas Education Agency Teacher Manual, 2005).

Teacher Orientation

Teacher orientations are commonly realized during the in-service professional development program conducted by the school districts before the start of the school year thus meeting the deadline that is conducting the orientation latest three weeks into the academic year. Teacher orientation that takes around 6 hours is usually broken down as follows (Professional Development and Appraisal System Trainer Notes for Teacher Orientation, 2005);

1. *30 minutes for Introduction & Overview of the PDAS*
    a) Teacher Manual contents
    b) Video introduction to the system
    c) PDAS Characteristics
    d) Appraisal Process Steps
    e) Timeline
2. *40 minutes for explaining Domains I and II*
    a) Appraisal Framework
    b) Proficient as a high standard
    c) Classroom Centered Domains I and II
3. *50 minutes for explaining Domains III, IV and V*
    a) Classroom Centered Domains III, IV, and V
    b) Scoring Criteria Guide
    c) Comparison of criteria in Framework and Scoring Guide
4. *30 minutes for explaining Domains VI and VII*
    a) Domain VI and Professional Development
    b) Domain VII
    c) Non-Classroom domains
    d) When and where inference is used in scoring
5. *25 minutes for explaining Domains VIII*
    a) Domain VIII and legal requirement about student performance
    b) Observation Summary and Summative Report Form
    c) Continuous Improvement Process
6. *25 minutes for Teacher Self Report Section I*

a) Creating understanding of link between TSR and Summative Appraisal

b) View examples of teachers speaking about the TSR

7. *80 minutes for Classroom Observation*
   a) Make-up of the 45 minute observation
   b) Walkthroughs and their significance in the PDAS
   c) Scoring factors and the SIVA
8. *30 minutes for Teacher Self Report Sections II and III*
   a) Sections II and III of the TSR
   b) Domain VIII and Criterion 10
   c) TSR and Professional Development
9. *30 minutes for Summative Appraisal and Summative Conference*
   a) Purpose of summative conference
   b) Review of the timeline
   c) Conclusion and contact information

Teacher Self Report

Teacher Self Report gives the teacher an opportunity to have input into appraisal process. It serves as a platform to align instruction, is a reflective tool. Teacher Self Report consists of three sections of which the first section must be completed no later than 3 weeks after orientation, while the remaining two sections must be completed no later than two weeks prior to the summative conference. Part I can be revised during the school year as needed, however this must be done at least 2 weeks prior to the Summative Annual Conference. The appraiser should use the TSR as one piece of the data in completing the Summative Annual Appraisal. The TSR should also help to drive all of the appraisal conferences, especially the summative conference.

Part I of TSR includes the state mandated curriculum objectives to be taught for a certain course and the processes that are planned to be used or used to assess the needs of students with regard to academic skills corresponding to the respective state mandated curriculum objectives. All grades and subjects teach or reinforce some of all of these skills within the context of the respective curriculum and at the appropriate level for the assigned students.

Parts II and III of the TSR give the teacher an opportunity to give the appraiser additional information about teacher’s efforts to improve students’ performance.

Part II of TSR includes the following components;

1. Description of a specific instructional adjustment, e.g., materials, sequencing, etc., which the teacher has made based on the needs assessment of the students.

   A teacher response may include the specific type of students teacher has such as Gifted and Talented (GT) students and the work that the teacher has done such as attending professional development training on teaching GT students, differentiation of instruction and incorporation of tiered assignments.
2. Description of the approaches teacher has used to monitor classroom performance and to provide feedback to students regarding their progress in academic skills, e.g. state mandated curriculum objectives.

   A teacher response may include the data and feedback received from benchmark tests, mock tests to assess progress and understanding with students. The students may grade their own work resulting in discussions about why an answer is wrong or right.
3. Description of how the teacher assisted the students who were experiencing serious attendance problems.

   A teacher response may include student encouragement to attend school via working with parents by means phone calls, emails and written mails.
4. Description of the teacher's approach in working with students who were failing or in danger of failing.

   A teacher response may include assigning individualized homework for such students and having three way conferences that consist of the student, teacher and the parents to help students focus.

Part III of TSR includes the following components;

1. Description of teacher's professional development activities for the past year related to campus/district goals, assigned subject/content, needs of students, or prior appraisal performance in the areas of:
   - In-service,
   - team planning,
   - mentoring,
   - collaboration with colleagues,
   - self-study,
   - video coursework or distance learning,
   - university-level coursework,
   - professional conferences and

- other non-traditional activities.

  A teacher response may include the trainings attend such as 6 hours of science training, 12 hours of Gifted/Talented/Differentiation training, video study of the state mandated curriculum for 5th grade level, 3 hours technology integration in service training, 6 hours preparation training for bilingual generalist, 3 hours pedagogy and professional responsibilities preparation, 6 hours international baccalaureate primary years program training. Other answers may include team planning, content and curriculum planning at the team level as well as with the science vertical team.

2. Description of positive impacts of these professional development activities on the learning of students.

   A teacher response may include being able to differentiate for more students based on the related trainings.

3. Description of three target areas for continued professional growth.

   A teacher response may include

   a) Meeting the needs of ESL learners
   b) Incorporating more differentiation in the curriculum
   c) Fine tuning curriculum to meet the needs of students

Preliminary Conference

Pre-conference is a two-way meeting and is used to communicate expectations of the appraiser and teacher (Teacher Evaluation System, 2010). Pre-conference is highly recommended due to more communication results in more efficient appraisals and professional development opportunities. In preliminary conferences, teachers usually communicate to the observers their intentions for the upcoming lesson including;

1. Lesson plan revisions; if necessary;
2. Agreement about the terms of the upcoming observation session;
3. Choice of an observation instrument or method of data collection;
4. Other topics;
   a) The mechanics of the observation; e.g. length of the observation, where would the teacher prefer you to sit, etc.
   b) Any specifics of the upcoming lesson that the observer may need to know; e.g. if the questioning method will be used, the seating chart is needed.

Latest on the day of the conference, teacher should have the following available for the observer;

a) Lesson plans for that week and previous week
b) Current seating chart
c) Textbook (if used during the lesson)
d) Handouts or other materials used for class that day

It is ok for the teacher to tell the students that the class is going to be observed, because it is supposed to be the best class of the teacher.

It is a common practice that teachers also fill out pre-observation form to be given to the appraiser latest one day before the observation, which includes specific information about the class such as;

- topic of the class to be observed;
- goal(s) for the session;
- objective for the session; what will the students be able to do/know by the end of the session;
- teaching strategies/methods that the teacher will use to help the learners to reach the lesson objectives;
- connections to previous learning;
- planned activities;
- assessment tool(s); how will the students show that they know and can do what is expected of them;
- Instructor concerns/focus; what the teacher would like the observer to pay special attention to;
- Special characteristics of the class

Formal observation evaluation criteria and domains are included as attachments for teacher's convenience when the form is given to the teacher by the appraiser to be filled out.

Formal Observation

Formal observation sessions are intended to focus on the teacher's performance and students' response, as well as contextual factors that impact the teaching and learning process (Professional Development and Appraisal System Teacher Manual, 2005). During the formal observations, the observer focuses on the specific goals identified in the pre-conference as well as other information that is gathered in multiple ways and that would contribute to the overall assessment of the teacher's ability to address the performance terms. The observer does not intervene in the teacher's lesson unless a safety issue arises. Formal observation includes fifty-one evaluation criteria organized in eight domains that are;

Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process

Domain II: Learner-Centered Instruction

Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress

Domain IV: Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time and Materials

Domain V: Professional Communication

Domain VI: Professional Development

Domain VII: Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements

Domain VIII: Improvement of Academic Performance of all Students on the Campus

The first five domains are classroom centered domains and sometimes the first four domains are replaced with the following domains by local districts (Alternative Appraisal Report, 2010);

Domain I: Teaching Plans and Materials

Domain II: Clarity of Content Presented

Domain III: Classroom Management

Domain IV: Proficiency in Instruction

<u>Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process Evaluation Criteria</u>

1. Students are actively engaged in learning.
2. Students are successful in learning.
3. Student behaviors indicate learning is at a high cognitive level (e.g., critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, etc.).
4. Students are self-directed/self-initiated as appropriate to the lesson objectives.
5. Students are connecting learning to work and life applications, both within the discipline and with other disciplines.

<u>Domain I: Teaching Plans and Materials Evaluation Criteria</u>

1. Specifies or selects learner objectives for lessons.
2. Specifies or selects teaching procedures for lessons.
3. Specifies or selects content, materials, and media for lessons.

4. Specifies or selects materials and procedures for assessing learner progress in the objectives.
5. Plans instruction at a variety of levels.
6. Organizes instruction to take into account differences in capabilities.
7. Organizes instruction to take into account differences in learning styles.
8. Communicates with individual learners about their needs and progress.
9. Obtains and uses information about learners from cumulative records.
10. Identifies learners who require the assistance of specialists.
11. Identifies desired/appropriate student behaviors expected for activity.

Domain II: Learner-Centered Instruction Evaluation Criteria

1. Objectives and goals include basic knowledge/skills and central themes/concepts of the discipline.
2. Instructional content is learner-centered (e.g., relates to the interests and varied characteristics of students).
3. Instructional strategies promote critical thinking and problem solving.
4. Instructional strategies include motivational techniques to successfully and actively engage students in the learning process.
5. Instructional strategies are aligned with the objectives, activities, student characteristics, prior learning, and work and life applications, both within the discipline and with other disciplines.
6. The teacher varies activities appropriately and maintains appropriate pacing and sequencing of instruction.
7. The teacher emphasizes the value and importance of the activity/content.
8. The teacher uses appropriate questioning and inquiry techniques to challenge students.
9. The teacher makes appropriate and effective use of available technology as a part of the instructional process.

Domain II: Clarity of Content Presented Evaluation Criteria

1. The lesson was presented in a logical manner
2. The teacher identified important points for the students
3. Important points were written on the board or a chart
4. Important points were clearly explained
5. Important points were repeated
6. Summaries and reviews were included within the lesson

7. Examples were presented to reinforce each major point
8. The teacher paused to reinforce important points or to allow learners to ask questions

Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress Evaluation Criteria

1. Academic progress of students is monitored and assessed.
2. Assessment and feedback are aligned with goals and objectives and instructional strategies.
3. Assessment strategies are appropriate to the varied characteristics of students.
4. Student learning is reinforced.
5. Students receive specific constructive feedback.
6. The teacher provides opportunities for relearning and re-evaluation of material.

Domain III: Classroom Management Evaluation Criteria

1. Furniture, equipment, and materials are placed appropriately for the lesson.
2. Teacher is aware of what is occurring in all areas of the classroom.
3. Teacher clearly outlines rules/routines or students are familiar with rules/routines – students behave accordingly.
4. Helps children acquire good habits; work and study
5. Handles behavior problems individually when possible; anticipates friction and guards against it.
6. Is proactive and positive with interventions
7. Makes certain that the children know what is expected of them
8. Keeps the atmosphere of the room free from hurry and tenseness
9. Teacher moves throughout the room to help or hinder classroom control.
10. Willingly gives extra help or instruction to an individual child.

Domain IV: Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time, and Materials Evaluation Criteria

1. The teacher effectively implements the discipline-management procedures approved by the campus. The teacher participates in the development of discipline management procedures and offers suggestions for improvement.
2. The teacher establishes a classroom environment which promotes and encourages self-discipline and self-directed learning as appropriate.
3. The teacher interacts with students in an equitable manner, including the fair application of rules.

4. The teacher specifies expectations for desired behavior.
5. The teacher intervenes and re-directs off-task, inappropriate or disruptive behavior as needed.
6. The teacher reinforces desired behavior when appropriate.
7. The instructional materials selected by the teacher are equitable and acknowledge the varied characteristics of all students.
8. The teacher effectively and efficiently manages time and materials.

Domain IV: Proficiency in Instruction Evaluation Criteria

1. Uses teaching methods appropriate for objectives, learners and environment.
2. Adjusts plans to meet unusual or difficult situations
3. Arouses and holds student interests; stimulates critical thinking
4. Helps children relate new ideas to previous learning
5. Uses instructional equipment and other instructional aids.
6. Gives directions and explanations related to lesson content.
7. Clarifies directions and explanations when learners misunderstand lesson content
8. Provides for the needs of individual pupils by differentiating assignments to meet the needs of students with different learning styles
9. Makes assignments clear; provides definite direction for study
10. Makes smooth transitions from one activity to another
11. Implements learning objectives in a logical sequence
12. Uses responses and questions from learners in teaching
13. Provides feedback to learners throughout the lesson.
14. Uses acceptable written and oral expression with learners.
15. Maintains learner involvement in lessons.
16. Provides learners with opportunities for participating.
17. Reinforces and encourages the efforts of learners to maintain involvement.

Domain V: Professional Communication Evaluation Criteria

1. The teacher uses appropriate and accurate written communication with students.
2. The teacher uses appropriate and accurate verbal and non-verbal communication with students.
3. The teacher encourages and supports students who are reluctant or having difficulty.
4. The teacher uses appropriate and accurate written communication with parents, staff, community members, and other professionals.

5. The teacher uses appropriate and accurate verbal and non-verbal communication with parents, staff, community members, and other professionals.
6. The teacher’s interactions are supportive, courteous, and respectful with students, parents, staff, community members, and other professionals.

It is unlikely that appraisers will observe all of the criteria in Domain V in the classroom. Identify which criteria are likely to be seen in the classroom and which are not.

Domain VI: Professional Development Evaluation Criteria

1. The teacher successfully seeks out and engages in professional development activities that positively correlate with the goals of the campus and district.
2. The teacher successfully correlates professional development activities with assigned subject content and the varied needs of students.
3. The teacher successfully engages in professional development activities that positively correlate with the prior performance appraisal.
4. The teacher works collaboratively and constructively with colleagues and other professionals toward the overall improvement of student performance.

Inference cannot be used in Domain VI. Teachers may have input into their own appraisal ratings, especially in Domain VI (Professional Development) and Domain VIII (Efforts to Improve Academic Performance), through the inclusion of the TSR (Teacher Self Report) Form. This enables teachers to submit concrete examples of their best work, in a limited format, to their appraiser for consideration in the appraisal process.

Domain VII: Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements Evaluation Criteria

1. The teacher complies with all policies, operating procedures, and legal requirements of federal, state, district, and campus.
2. The teacher complies with all verbal and written directives, participates in the development of operating procedures, and offers suggestions for improvement.
3. Apart from classroom responsibilities, the teacher consistently contributes to making the whole school safe and orderly and a stimulating learning environment for all students.

In Domain VII, inference can be used to score “Proficient” only if there is no evidence of noncompliance compliance with policies.

Domain VIII: Improvement of Academic Performance of All Students on The Campus

Evaluation Criteria

There are ten criterion in Domain VIII of which the first five criteria relate to "Efforts to Enhance Academic Performance" via teacher efforts to plan, analyze, and deliver instruction that are aligned with appropriate academic skills objectives addressed within the teacher's particular assignment.

1. The teacher works with colleagues to align instruction to include appropriate objectives needed to achieve in state standardized tests.
2. The teacher works with colleagues to analyze standardized test performance data relevant to all students in assigned classes prior to beginning instruction.
3. The teacher coordinates with others within and outside the teacher's discipline to determine the sequencing of classroom instruction to appropriately incorporate standardized test objectives.
4. The teacher collaborates with others within and outside the teacher's discipline to select/adapt instructional materials and activities which are correlated with appropriate standardized test objectives.
5. The teacher provides feedback to all students regarding their learning progress on appropriate standardized test objectives.

Sixth criterion in this domain relates to "Efforts to Enhance Student Attendance".

6. Teacher's continuing efforts to monitor student attendance and to be proactive in intervening with regard to students who experience attendance problems by contacting parents, counselors, or other school officials regarding an intervention plan for students with serious attendance problems.

7th, 8th, and 9th criteria relate to teachers' "Efforts to Identify and Intervene Appropriately with Students in At-Risk Situations".

7. The teacher works with teachers, counselors, and other school professionals to seek information to identify and assess the needs of assigned students in at-risk situations.
8. The teacher meets with parents and/or other teachers of students who are failing or in danger of failing to develop an appropriate plan for intervention.
9. The teacher participates in and/or contributes to campus-wide programs to modify and adapt classroom materials and/or instruction for students in at-risk situations.

Finally, a tenth criterion is the shared score on the overall campus performance rating and AYP status.

10. Campus performance includes the most recent Campus Performance Rating as reported in the State accountability system (AEIS) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as designated in the campus AYP report.

Campus performance rating can be 4, 2, 1, and 0 for exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable and academically unacceptable statuses; respectively; while AYP status can be either 1 if the school meets the federal AYP standards and 0 if not.

Graduation rate, attendance and participation records and performance data are indicators of whether the campus needs improvement to meet AYP standards or not. Related to the definition of graduation rate, attendance and participation performances, TEC § 29.081 Compensatory, Intensive, and Accelerated Instruction states that "student at risk of dropping out of school" (Texas Constitution and Statutes, 2009) includes each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;
2) if the student is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12, did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;
3) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument;
4) if the student is in prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3, did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;
5) is pregnant or is a parent;
6) has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with Section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year;
7) has been expelled in accordance with Section 37.007 during the preceding or current school year;
8) is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release;

9) was previously reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to have dropped out of school;
10) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by Section 29.052;
11) is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;
12) is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302, and its subsequent amendments;
13) resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house, or foster group home.

Teachers in their first year on the campus are rated in Domain VIII only on criteria 1 to 9. Criterion 10 is reported but not included in the rating for these teachers. Thus, an experienced teacher needs to obtain a minimum of 40 up to 5 x 10 = 50 points to be considered exceeding expectations from Domain VIII, while the same range is 37 to 5 x 9 = 45 points for the first year teacher.

Scoring Guide

There are two major scores; Quality and Quantity. Quality scoring standards are SIVA (Professional Development and Appraisal System Teacher Manual, 2005);

- S trength
- I mpact
- V ariety
- A lignment

Strength

- Thinking at high cognitive levels
- Depth & Complexity knowledge
- Significant Content
- Making connections within and across disciplines
- Connecting learning to work and life applications
- Effective, clear & substantive

Impact

- Promotes student success

- Effective use of assessments; effective formative and summative assessment, multiple forms of assessments
- Data-driven decision making
- Responsibility
- Reflection
- Challenging

Variety

- Varied student characteristics of learners
- Differentiated instruction
- Range of strategies and support services

Alignment

- Curriculum, instruction and assessment aligned with state mandated curriculum and district objectives
- Assessment data
- Targeted instruction
- Congruent

While Quantity scoring standards address the following questions;

- Can you see it?
- Did it happen?
- How often?
- How many students?

Quantitatively if evaluation criteria is met almost all of the time, that is 90% to 100% and the matching qualitative assessment is “exceeds expectations” and the criteria is worth 5 points. Quantitatively if evaluation criteria is met most of the time, that is 80% to %89 and the matching qualitative assessment is “proficient” and the criteria is worth 3 points. Quantitatively if evaluation criteria is met some of the time, that is 50% to %79 and the matching qualitative assessment is “below expectations” and the criteria is worth 1 points. Quantitatively if evaluation criteria is met less than half of the time, that is 0% to %49 and the matching qualitative assessment is “unsatisfactory” and the criteria is worth 0 points.

The four performance levels; Exceeds Expectations, Proficient, Below Expectations, and Unsatisfactory are defined in terms of the impact on student learning and with how many students does the positive impact on learning occur.

Using inference for scoring is acceptable in the following cases:

- In domains I, II, III, IV, V, VII, and VIII except Criteria 10.
- Proficient rating can be inferred in only one criterion out of a domain if 80% of the other criteria in the domain are proficient or better.
- All of Domain VII can be inferred if there is no evidence otherwise.
- None of Domain VI can be inferred.

Post-Observation Conference

Post-conference is highly recommended due to more communication results in more efficient appraisals and professional development opportunities. In post observation conferences the data that were collected during the observation is discussed. The congruencies and discrepancies that may exist between what the teacher thought occurred and what the observer has documented are discussed. Teacher and appraiser provide suggestions or ideas regarding possible alternatives or changes that should be considered in the near future. A course of action is chosen and an appointment for the next conference (What is the Purpose of Post Observation Conference, 2012).

Walk-Through Visits

Walkthroughs can take place any time during the year and may be any length the appraiser feels is necessary and are used at the discretion of the appraiser. There are different forms that can be used during a walkthrough to record information by the appraiser ranging from a simple form specific for walkthroughs up to a systematic teacher observation form (SLP Version Walk-through Form, 2011). Simple walkthrough forms usually used for walkthroughs that take about 5 to 10 minutes consist of descriptive information such as;

- teacher’s name, subject, class and the date
- whether there are teaching plans and materials
- whether important points such as objectives, homework, etc. are written on the board or a chart.
- whether furniture, equipment, and materials are placed appropriately for the lesson
- whether the teacher keeps the atmosphere of the room free from hurry and tenseness.

- whether the students are on task.
- whether there are dress code violations by the students and the teacher as well as other disciplinary violations by the students are taking place.
- additional notes if any

Other forms have more indicators that are used mostly for lengthy walkthroughs (Modified PDAS Walk-Through Form, 2012).

Other Cumulative Data

As other cumulative data can be obtained from a third party resource, they can be obtained via additional forms that are usually typed or hand-written opposed to scoring of formal observations that is usually recorded at the database using a software. Such forms include;

Teacher Evaluation Form

A teacher evaluation form is a general form commonly used as an aid for appraisal that summarizes the on the surface data with regards to a teacher and a certain class that he/she teaches. Summarized items are;

- Classroom observation
- Content area competency/ teaching in classroom/instructional strategies
- Classroom management
- Lesson plan(database)
- Using database
    1. gradebook
    2. assignments
    3. attendance
    4. test center
- Relations with parents, students, other staff, administration and teachers
- Cluster meeting attendance
- Assessment, mock tests, benchmark results, tutorials
- Miscellaneous
    1. dress code
    2. clock-in and out
    3. attendance
    4. duties
- Attending trainings, workshops at Region 4 or other outside institutions

- TPRI implementation; K thru 3rd grade
- AR implementation; all reading and homeroom teachers
- Extra Curricular activities; UIL, student clubs, etc.
- Resources, IT, classroom equipment, supplies
- Suggestions for next year; classroom equipments, resources, supplies, etc.
- Staffing plan for next year

Goal Setting Agreement

Goal setting agreements can be made between the teacher and the mentor based on observations (Goal Setting Form, 2001). First part of the agreement includes open-ended items that are;

- Objective
- Teacher activities to reach the objective
- Consulting or mentor teacher activities to reach the objective

While the second part includes results and comments in the general categories in which the objective to be achieved that are;

- Teaching procedures
- Classroom management
- Knowledge of subject matter
- personal characteristics and professional responsibilities

Checklist of Teacher Actions

Checklist of teacher actions form can be used in parallel with the goal setting agreements between the appraiser and the intern, the first year teacher, the inexperienced teacher as well as for the appraisals by administrators during post conferences (Texas Education Agency Teacher Manual, 2005).

Checklist of teacher actions form includes the activities to be completed, detailed tasks with regards to these activities, the time frame these activities to be completed and information on whether they are completed or not. Activities that are included are;

- participation in teacher orientation
- completion of teacher self-report
- participation on observations
- participation in summative annual conference

Teacher's Self Evaluation Form

A teacher's self evaluation form aids with the appraisal and professional development process both from the aspect of the teacher and the appraiser and includes items such as;

1. Extracurricular activities, other than clubs, organized by the teacher and whether it was successful or not provided the evidence.
2. Participation in in-service trainings, e.g. cluster meetings, stating reasons if not attended or left early.
3. Participation in extracurricular activities, e.g. parent picnic, thanksgiving dinner, talent show, school-wide science fair, college awareness night, international night, city wide science fair award ceremony, etc.
4. Whether the teacher prepared any student for any competition like Chess, UIL, Math Counts, Science Fairs, Robotics, Science Bowl, Science Olympiad, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, Athletic or Art competitions listing all the names who participated in the competition and the awards if they had any.
5. Any field trip organized? Where and when (month)? How many students did participate in?
6. Number of home visits the teacher realized in the year along with the feedbacks from these visits.
7. What is the teacher's students' passing percentage for each grade level in Mock tests (practice state standardized tests)?
8. Did the teacher give any After School/Saturday Tutorial? How many times listing the name of the students who participated in the tutorial.
9. Did the teacher submit all weekly lesson plans on the database for each lesson on time? If no, how many are missed?
10. How would the teacher like to perfect his/her skills as a teacher mentioning at least three areas that he/she wants to work on.
11. How many workshops/PD activities has the teacher participated in and outside of the school listing their titles and the dates realized.

It is also common to ask the teachers to rate themselves from 1 to 10 providing justifications in areas such as;

- Interactions with students
- Communication with parents

- Relationship with teachers
- Relationship with Administration
- Academic performance
- Discipline/Classroom Management
- Coming school on time

Summative Annual Report

Summative annual report includes mainly TSR, formal observation summaries and walkthrough documentation (Texas Education Code Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences, 2010). Other cumulative data included from teaching folders may include;

- Yearly-Unit-Lesson Plans
- Test/assignments/activities
- Grades; excel report taken from grade book in database, every 6 weeks report card period
- Sub-folders
- Parental Communication Log, .e.g. print-outs of email communications with parents or parent-teacher conference forms
- Other official documentations

Other data may include general academic performance such as extracurricular activities that are academic in content such as tutorials, sponsoring projects, training specific teams for competitions, organizing parental programs, etc.

Summative Conference

Summative annual conference occurs within the required timeline and focuses on the written summative report and related data sources as stated in §150.1003 Appraisals, Data Sources, and Conferences of TEC.

Teacher In Need Of Assistance (TINA)

A teacher in need of assistance is a teacher whose performance meets one of the following circumstances (Texas Education Code Teacher In Need of Assistance, 2010);

1. a teacher who is evaluated as ‘unsatisfactory’ in one or more domains; or
2. a teacher who is evaluated as ‘below expectations’ in two or more domains.

When a teacher is designated as a teacher in need of assistance, the certified appraiser and the campus principal or designee, in consultation with the teacher, develop an intervention plan that includes the following;

1. domain(s) that designate a teacher as a teacher in need of assistance;
2. directives or recommendations for professional improvement activities;
3. evidence that is used to determine successful completion of professional improvement activities;
4. directives for changes in teacher behavior;
5. evidence that is used to determine if teacher behavior has changed; and
6. specific time line for successful completion.

In cases when the teacher's appraiser is not the teacher's principal, the principal is involved in the development and evaluation of the intervention plan. A teacher who has not met all requirements of the intervention plan for teachers in need of assistance by the time specified may be considered for separation from the assignment, campus, and/or district. The intervention plan includes options for professional development activities designed to enhance teacher proficiency. At least one option shall not place significant financial burden on either the teacher or the school district. An intervention plan may be developed at any time at the discretion of the certified appraiser for teachers that are not designated as TINA yet when the certified appraiser has documentation that would potentially produce an evaluation rating of "below expectations" or "unsatisfactory." When a teacher needs to be placed on a TINA, earlier is better.

Appraiser Qualifications

The teacher-appraisal process requires at least one certified appraiser. Under the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), a campus administrator includes a principal, an assistant principal, or other supervisory staff designated as an administrator of an open-enrolment charter school or as an administrator who holds a comparable administrator/supervisor certificate established by the State Board for Educator Certification. A campus administrator who is a certified PDAS appraiser and approved by the school district board of trustees conducts a teacher's appraisal.

Before conducting an appraisal, an appraiser must be certified by having satisfactorily completed uniform appraiser training, including required Instructional Leadership Training (ILT) or Instructional Leadership Development (ILD) certification, with a trainer and curriculum approved by the commissioner of education. Periodic recertification and training is also required.

An appraiser who is a classroom teacher may not appraise the performance of another classroom teacher who teaches at the same school campus at which the appraiser teaches, unless it is impractical because of the number of campuses or unless the appraiser is the chair of a department or grade level whose job description includes classroom observation responsibilities.

Appraisal of Administrators

Districts adopt a recommended appraisal process and criteria on which to appraise the performance of various classifications of school administrators. The criteria must be based on job-related performance (Texas Education Code Appraiser Qualification, 2010). Advice of teachers and administrators may be solicited and considered in developing the appraisal process and performance criteria for administrators. Funds of a school district may not be used to pay an administrator who has not been appraised in the preceding 15 months.

Staff Development Requirements

The staff developments are predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives (Texas Education Code Section 21.451d, 2011). The staff development may include training in;

1. technology;
2. conflict resolution; and
3. discipline strategies, including classroom management, district discipline policies, and the student code of conduct;
   and training that
4. relates to instruction of students with disabilities; and
5. is designed for educators who work primarily outside the area of special education;

Professional Development

Goal of Professional Development is to improve student performance through the professional development of teachers. Research has established that a school where adults are learning and growing tends to be a place where students are learning and growing, too. The amount or quantity of professional development is not significant. Impact on student performance is significant. Professional development that is aligned with the needs of students, state mandated curriculum, and campus/district goals and objectives will make an impact on student performance.

Under Section 21.401 of the Education Code, teacher contracts must be for a minimum of 187 days of service (Texas Education Code Minimum Service Required, 2007) and under Section 25.081, a school district must provide 180 days of instruction for students (Optional Flexible Year Program, 2008). The remaining seven days are used for staff development unless used for instruction for students in specific cases. There are certain requirements and guidelines for the content and delivery of staff development found in Section 21.541 of the Education Code and in Section 153.1011. The professional development planning team consists of an administrator that is most commonly the dean of academics, the department chair and the teacher.

Certificate Renewal Requirements

All classroom teachers are required to complete at least 150 clock hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) during each five-year renewable period for teaching certificates (Classroom Teacher Standard Certificate Renewal and Continuing Professional Educator Requirements, 2005). Thus teachers are encouraged to complete a minimum of 30 clock hours of CPE each year of the renewal period. Only those professional education activities from approved registered providers are accepted for renewal purposes. Teachers who fail to satisfy each of the requirements to renew their standard certificate(s) by the renewal date move to inactive status and are ineligible for employment in public school districts in a position for which that certificate is required until all appropriate requirements are satisfied.

150 clock hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) can be in 6 areas that are;

- Content area development with no limit of hours to be earned
- Professional development with no limit of hours to be earned
- Independent studies with a limit of 30 hours
- Teaching or presenting CPEs with a limit of 15 hours
- Serving as a mentor educator with a limit of 45 hours
- Serving as an assessor with a limit of 15 hours

Acceptable Continuing Professional Educational Activities

1. Participation in institutes, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service or staff developments which are related to or enhanced professional knowledge and skills of the educator;
2. Completion of undergraduate courses in the content area knowledge and skills related to the certificate being renewed, graduate courses, or training programs which are taken through an accredited institution of higher education; one semester hour of credit earned at an accredited institution of higher education is equivalent to 15 CPE clock hours.
3. Participation in interactive distance learning, video conferencing, or online activities or conferences;
4. Independent study, not to exceed 20% of the required clock hours, which may include self-study of relevant professional materials; books, journals, periodicals, video/audio tapes, computer software, and on-line information or authoring a published work;
5. Development of curriculum or CPE training materials;
6. Serving as an assessor that does not include the required annual evaluation of the principal not to exceed 10% of the required clock hours;
7. Teaching or presenting a CPE activity, not to exceed 10% of the required clock hours; and/or
8. Providing professional guidance as a mentor educator, not to exceed 30% of the required clock hours.

At least 80% of the CPE activities should be directly related to the certificate(s) being renewed and focused on the standards required for the initial issuance of the certificate(s) including;

1. content area knowledge and skills;
2. Professional ethics and standards of conduct;
3. Professional development, which should encompass topics such as the following;
   a) District and campus priorities and objectives;
   b) Child development including research on how children learn;
   c) Discipline management;
   d) Applicable federal and state laws;
   e) Diversity and special needs of student populations;
   f) Increasing and maintaining parental involvement;
   g) Integration of technology into educational practices;

h) Ensuring that students read on or above grade level;
i) Diagnosing and removing obstacles to student achievement and;
j) Instructional techniques.

Educators are encouraged to identify CPE activities based on results of the annual appraisal required under TEC, Chapter 21, Subchapter H.

Components of Professional Development

There are two major components of professional development (Professional Development and Appraisal System, 2009);

1. Professional Development Days (Recommended Programs and Durations)
   a) In-service Programs:
      i. District-wide In Service Programs.
         I. 2 (or 3) day program before the school starts
         II. District-wide seminars/workshops
      ii. Campus-wide In Service Programs.
         I. 2-3 days before the school starts
         II. 4-6 days during the school year
      iii. Cluster Department Meetings
   b) Workshops at Outside Educational Institutions (Universities, Educational Service Centers,…)
      i. At least 12 hours (or two full days) for experienced teachers
      ii. At least 18 hours (or three full days) for first year teachers

2. Mentoring Program as an Ongoing Professional Development Activity:

<u>Sample Campus In-Service Program</u>

Monday

08:30-10:00: Introduction

- Ice-break ideas such as one good, and not good about summer
- Introducing admins and admin&support duty delegation
- Payroll
- Staff handbook can be reviewed

- Staff Forms can be reviewed such as
    - Absence from duty form
    - Local travel form
    - Reimbursement form

10:15-12:00: Curriculum, Special Programs

- Lesson Plan Binder expectations

12:00-01:00: Lunch

01:00-02:30: PD and Teacher Evaluation

02:45-04:30: Library/Reading Program/Teacher Resources

- Library Policy
- AR
- Teacher Resources
- Textbook

Tuesday

08:30-10:00: After school

- After school policy
- After school schedule
- Clubs
    - Clubs policy
    - Assigning club supervisors
    - Expectations from club supervisors

10:15-12:00: Activity Calendar

12:00-01:00: Lunch

01:00-02:30: Open House Preparation

02:45-03:30: Routines & Procedures

- Academic Calendar will be reviewed
- Schedule will be given
- Bell schedule
- Floor plan review
- Duty roster review, duty job descriptions review
- Access to building before and after school hours policy
- Expectations from HR (Homeroom) teachers

03:45-04:30: Grade Level Meeting

Friday

10:00 -12:00 Database & Technology on Friday

- Laptops will be checked out
- Zip-loc; class key, entrance key, cabinet keys,time cards,projector controller, network cable
- Outlook, setting emails, school database, projectors, printers, website, email from home, online student records,
- Staff extension numbers will be given
- Setting up voice message instructions
- ADT Alarm code

12:00-01:00: Lunch

01:00-02:30: Discipline

- Student Handbook will be reviewed
- Uniform Policy
- PE Uniform policy

02:45-03:30: School Safety

- Review Safety Handbook
- Fire drill procedure

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Embracing Challenges in Teachers' Professional Development; Dealing with Teachers' Burnout

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The need for ongoing professional development (PD) has been a recurring theme in language teaching circles in the recent years. Formal teacher training programs are the start not the end. Therefore, many language teachers seek opportunities for professional development. There are two broad kinds of goals within the scope of teacher education. They are defined as teacher training and teacher development. Teacher training involves the understanding of the main concepts and principles of teaching as prerequisites for applying them in the classroom. The content of such training is usually determined by teacher trainers and experts and is often available in the standard formal teacher training programs or courses. They have short-term goals like getting a teaching position or doing certain task or assuming a specific responsibility. On the other hand, teacher development doesn’t focus on a specific job or task. It serves a long-term goal and seeks to facilitate teachers’ understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers. It involves documenting different kinds of teaching practices; observation forms, reflective journals, evidence of peer discussion and collaboration with peers on a class project, and insights on the teaching practice that shows deep understanding of the teaching rationale. The latter is more sustainable and it involves more conceptualization of teacher learning on the long-run.

Understanding the differences between the novice and experienced language teachers can be very helpful in deciding the type of professional development that would be most beneficial for them; “the different ways in which they relate to their contexts of work, and hence their conceptions and understanding of teaching, which is developed in these contexts” (Tsui, 2003, p.245). The experienced teachers approach their work differently, carrying their experience and knowledge of the subject matter and teaching practices into the classroom. On the other hand, the novice teachers lack “an adequate repertoire of mental scripts and behavioral routines" (Berliner, 1987, p.72). Hence, there comes the role of the experienced language teachers to work collaboratively with novice teachers to help them overcome challenges they face in their first years of teaching. Moreover, novice teachers themselves can get the opportunity to create a self-development system to avoid burnout through the activities discussed in this article.

Language teachers, whether novice or experts always complain about the challenges they face in getting a professional development (PD) opportunity; such as expenses of the PD opportunities, and the time; as teachers are usually busy planning for their lessons and catching up on administrative tasks. As a result, teachers reach a point of de-motivation or "burnout". As Matheny, Gfroerer and Harris define it, burnout is "a teacher's loss of idealism and enthusiasm for work". It is a natural consequence of daily routine; planning for the class, developing class materials and, sometimes, making administrative decisions.

In many cases, this has the result that language teachers feel so overwhelmed that they disregard or, simply, forget their need to be thinking of their professional teachers. Burnout is an occupational hazard for teachers. It is a response to chronic stress associated with factors in the educational organization and the teaching environment (Hendrickson, 1979). Teacher development groups is an approach that solves this problem, and helps teachers overcome such challenges. It also involves the collaboration of the novice language teachers with the experienced teachers and the cooperation of the novice teachers themselves to help each other grow professionally.

Teacher development groups involve many different activities that teachers can do at their workplace, without the need of inviting a guest speaker or attending a professional conference at a high cost. Some of these activities also involve the collaboration of the novice teachers with the experienced teachers to provide assistance and advice for the success of the institution. This article outlines four activities that are innovative and motivating to language teachers to pursue professional development and acquire a critical eye on their teaching practices as well as themselves as professional teachers.

The first activity is using reflective journals at the workplace, as a tool to help teachers reflect on their teaching practices and seek assistance, when needed. Recent literature in teacher education abounds with calls for support for specially beginning teachers. There is a call for programs that focus on support coupled with evaluation (Smith&Wilson , 1986; Stoddart & Feiman-Nemser, 1988). To set up this activity, administrators or supervisors need to set a requirement for teachers to keep a weekly teaching journal. The format and length of these journals is flexible, but it should be a well-informed reflection that shows a rationale for classroom activities done for that week. The audience for this journal can be one of the three; the teacher himself, peers and the supervisor. In the first case, the teacher will be using his reflections to give himself some time to think about his class and the activities he does and whether they were effective in learning or not. Its purpose is mainly to provide this space for the teacher to self-reflect on the patterns that happen over a certain period of time. It is sometimes called an intrapersonal journal (Gebhard, 1999). In the second case, the reflective journal can be the main component of a teacher development group. Teachers at the same institution can work on developing these journals for themselves and then have a weekly meeting to share their reflections and give each other feedback or ideas. It can also be the basis of a group discussion on problems that are recurrent in different classes and help give a focus on suggesting solutions or alternative teaching methods. It can also be a rich source for sharing classroom lessons and activities among teachers as teachers will not have to visit each other classes to learn about a new teaching idea or activity. Instead, they can easily share their reflective journals on their classes. The third case will work better with novice teachers and supportive administrators who are willing to give the time and dedication to a certain teacher to grow professionally and become aware of his/her strengths and flaws. In this cases, the teacher share his/her reflective journal with the supervisor who in turn holds a weekly meeting with the teacher, after reading the journal, to discuss points and highlights of the reflections. Giving consultations in this situation is more of a supportive encouraging kind of feedback than a critical or de-motivating one. The role of the supervisor is to help the teacher, with his/her experience and rich background, to develop a critical eye on his/her teaching practices and sometimes teaching philosophy. It helps the teacher look at the bigger justified picture rather than focusing on the details that have no rationale! For example, the supervisor, during the one-on-one meeting with the teacher, may ask the teacher about the reasons why he/she did a certain activity or teach a specific language target at this point in the course. Such questions, based on the teacher's written reflections, can help solidify the habit of reflection and ultimately, the betterment of teaching itself. In all of the three cases, teachers can review their journals and use them later in their teaching portfolios for future jobs. Using reflective journals is also a very useful tool for teachers within the same institution. It provides opportunities for sharing class ideas and activities, concerns and successes, and seeking help and advice from others. This also helps in boosting the cooperation and teamwork spirits at the workplace as teachers are using each other as resources by doing this simple activity.

Another kind of teacher development groups is seen in doing book clubs for teachers. This involves either investing some money on getting professional development books and resources for teachers or using available resources; online or self-developed, in a monthly meeting at work to discuss in groups of teachers. Starting this book club, administrators or teachers themselves suggest an article they read recently dealing with a problem or need they have at their teaching context. Then, teachers get in groups to discuss the article and whether they have ideas to add or reject. This atmosphere has many benefits; it sets aside time for busy teachers to sit down and read about the issues in the profession and gives them the chance to exchange ideas with colleagues whom they may see everyday only days greetings before or after classes. It provides an opportunity for discovering the new trends in teaching and may also serve as a consolidation of what teachers learned in the formal training in college when the discussion is built around an academic topic and gets advanced by exchanging opinions that are supported by evidence. Doing this book club regularly can also have a long-term goal in motivating teacher, especially young novice teachers, to gain an experience of the academic environment and discussions, which can be the basis for them to use later in pursuing their post graduate studies or even in doing action research at the institution.

A third type of teacher professional development groups embraces the idea of extending the development of teachers by taking them a step towards the outer world of professionals. It doesn't mean brining a guest speaker nor does it mean spending a lot of money on getting the teachers out to attend professional development events. It simply involves holding workshops at work for teachers to get training in writing conference proposals and applying for conferences through an in-house journal! The idea starts with developing an in-house journal for teachers with certain guidelines and outlines for submission and writing. Then, giving the necessary training, done by supervisors or through the above mentioned development group; that is reading about writing tips in journals. Teachers can choose to have their journal issued monthly or quarterly. Topics also can be thematic, addressing a certain issue at work, for example, teaching reading or challenges in dealing with troublemakers and solutions. Teachers can work with peers to write an article or they can collaborate to get an article done. The writing process requires peer review and feedback. It also involves references to previously read articles or books in the profession. All assistance and advice is done at the same institution within the group of teachers. It is not top-down method; that is the supervisor or administrator is not the only one who gives advice, rather it is a collaborative work. The end product is the teaching journal that includes pieces of writings from teachers. This activity can build confidence in novice and young teachers to submit proposals to regional conferences after learning about the process and guidelines to get published done in a small scale.

The last type of teacher development groups suggested is teacher network group. This is again a project to start at your institution, no matter how big or small it is. Joining professional networks can be very important to language teachers as they can see themselves as part of a larger community of educators. Setting a professional network can start at home, at home, at your institution, by simply starting a blog or website at a law cost using Webs or Ning, where teachers can share their class materials and ideas and read each other's comments and suggestions. This website, when developed, can serve as an in-house network for teachers at the same workplace. It can be also a space for teachers to have a voice at their institutions regarding any administrative complaints or decisions they never get the chance to meet their administrators to speak up their minds and voice their issues, which result at the end in causing the "burnout" mentioned early in this article.

As language teachers, we are taking a profession that will guarantee us more than our fair share of challenges, growth, joy, and fulfillment (Brown, p.2). It is challenging in the sense that it can offer us opportunities for growth that we may not be aware of or ready to take because of the daily routine that busy teachers indulge in. The source of joy and fulfillment for nay teacher is when the student really learns the language and be able to develop an autonomous approach to his/her own learning. However, joy and fulfillment can be also achieved through acquiring growth through professional development opportunities that embrace the challenges teachers have in achieving that goal and provide the needed support to keep busy teachers motivated and ready to teach classes that always notch up success.

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Features of T-talk: The Aspect of Learner Involvement

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Classroom based research has focused a great deal on classroom discourse and has been investigating the nature, features, and effects of it in a detailed way. Some of the prominent names who researched on classroom discourse and provided inherent descriptions are Van Lier (1984, 1989); Kumaravadivelu (1993); Seedhouse (1996); Cullen (1998); Moskowitz (1976); and Walsh (2006).

Classroom discourse, as defined by Nunan and Bailey (2009: 340), is “the distinctive type of interaction that occurs between teachers and students, and also among students during lessons.” It is of critical importance to language learning/teaching processes that, as Walsh (2006: 144) states, “understanding the process of second language acquisition entails understanding the process of [classroom] interaction”, because classroom interaction is one of the primary means by which learning is accomplished in classrooms (Hall and Walsh, 2002).

Classroom-based research has dealt with classroom interaction issues in 3 categories: (a) Teacher Talk (T-talk), (b) Learner Talk, and (c) Teacher-Learner Interaction. Each of these categories is crucial for the language learning process. However, the focus of this study will be mainly on T-talk, and the other two categories are beyond the scope of this study.

The research reported in this paper aims to describe the features of T-talk of a novice and an experienced English language teacher in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context in Turkey. It attempts to explore the learner involvement opportunities in classroom interaction taking place in classes of a novice and an experienced language teacher. It also seeks to investigate the features of T-talk that increase and decrease learner involvement opportunities in the classes of the novice and the experienced teacher. Therefore, the present study addresses the following research questions and tries to present comparative results:

1. Which features of teacher talk (T-talk) do the experienced and the novice teacher make use of during the observed classes?

2. What are the features of T-talk that increase opportunities for learner involvement in observed classes of the experienced and the novice teacher?
3. What are the features of T-talk that reduce opportunities for learner involvement in observed classes of the experienced and the novice teacher?

Literature Review

Teacher talk, according to Bailey and Nunan (2009: 356), "is a very crucial element in the classroom [that] … in many EFL contexts, teacher talk represents the only 'live' target language input that learners receive". Some of the points under the category of T-talk that have been investigated in classroom-based research are teacher talking time (TTT), pedagogical functions of T-talk, teacher questions, error treatment, repair, and correction (Nunan and Bailey, 2009: 356-360).

Research on T-talk has shifted its interest more towards the quality of T-talk from the quantity, so from how much teachers talk to how effectively they do it to support learning and provide opportunities for communicative interaction to take place (Cullen, 1998: 179). The quality of T-talk is of critical importance in terms of the extent to which it is suited to intended learning outcomes; and it is the teachers' ability to relate features of T-talk to intended learning outcomes (Walsh, 2006: 112).

For many years, researchers and educators have been interested in the communicativeness of the classroom by comparing it to the real world communication (Walsh, 2002: 3). The thought of failure, as research reveals, to create genuine communication in the classrooms of teachers who adopt even Communicative Language Teaching Methodologies (Kumaravadivelu, 1993: 12) led to the analysis of T-talk focusing on the characteristics that make or fail to make the talk communicative (Cullen, 1998). The notion of communicative classroom, according to Kumaravadivelu (1993), entails the promotion of interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning where learners are active by asking for information, seeking clarification, expressing an opinion, agreeing or disagreeing with peers and teachers. Similarly, the notion of communicative T-talk is characterized by genuine communication, which, according to Nunan (1987), "… includes uneven distribution of information, topic nomination and negotiation of more than one speaker, and the right of interlocutors to decide whether to contribute to an interaction or not". However, there is evidence that such communicative classrooms are rare and there is persistence of non-communicative patterns of interaction in classrooms (Kumaravadivelu, 1993; Nunan, 1987). On the contrary, Cullen (1998: 185) suggests “a more productive approach [which] identifies categories of teachers’ verbal behavior in the classroom and determines what it means to be communicative in each one” rather than comparing it with the outside talk. Moreover, Seedhouse (1996) challenges the possibility of producing genuine communication in the classrooms and labels classroom interaction as ‘institutionalized talk’, which is meaningful in itself with certain features and pedagogic goals. Therefore, as Cullen (1998) puts, T-talk can provide communicative classrooms in itself with pedagogical purposes rather than replicating talk outside the classroom context.

Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC), a system-based observation scheme developed by Flanders (1970), reported T-talk as having the following characteristics (cited in Walsh, 2006: 41):

(1) Accepts feelings
(2) Praises or encourages
(3) Accepts or uses ideas of pupils
(4) Asks questions
(5) Lectures
(6) Gives direction, and
(7) Criticizes and uses authority.

It has been widely accepted that “some teacher-fronted tasks may require high levels of quite complex teacher talk and very little learner participation, while it is hoped that others will result in more active learner participation” (Walsh, 2002: 4-5). In line with this, Kumaravadivelu (1993: 13-14) proposes the use of five macrostrategies in T-talk in order to maximize learner potential in the communicative classroom. The suggested macrostrategies are as follows:

(1) Create learning opportunities in class
(2) Utilize learning opportunities created by learners
(3) Facilitate negotiated interaction between participants
(4) Activate the intuitive heuristics of the learner
(5) Contextualize linguistic input.

Some of the macrostrategies suggested by Kumaravadivelu (1993) may be very much related to the features of T-talk that are sought for in this study. For example, the first one can be achieved by Scaffolding and Turn completion; the second by Content feedback, Extended learner turn, or Scaffolding; the third by Seeking clarification and Confirmation checks; the fourth and the fifth by Referential questions.

What the present study investigates is features of T-talk based on an observation instrument called SETT: Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk, which was developed by Walsh (2006) to "enable an enhanced understanding of the dialogic nature of classroom discourse, of the extent to which meaning making is fundamental to learning and of the primary role of the teacher in orchestrating learning-oriented discourse" (p. 110). SETT instrument includes the following interactional features that are sought in the T-talk: (A) Scaffolding, (B) Direct repair, (C) Content feedback, (D) Extended wait-time, (E) Referential questions, (F) Seeking clarification, (G) Confirmation checks, (H) Extended learner turn, (I) Teacher echo, (J) Teacher interruption, (K) Extended teacher turn, (L) Turn completion, (M) Display questions, and (N) Form-focused feedback (please see the Appendix 1 for the definitions).

Certain features of T-talk, as classroom-based research revealed, have been identified as communicative and creating and facilitating learning opportunities, while some others appeared to be non-communicative and hindering learning opportunities (Thornbury, 1996; Cullen, 1998; Walsh, 2002 – 2006). Some of the features that are found out as facilitating learner involvement and learning opportunities are referential questions, content feedback, (extended-) wait time, checking for confirmation, scaffolding, and student initiated talk, and speech modifications (Thornbury, 1996; Walsh, 2002; Cullen, 1998). On the contrary, features that are reported to cause hindrance to learner involvement and reducing learning potential are turn completion, teacher echo, teacher interruptions, form-focused feedback, and excessive use of display questions (Thornbury, 1996; Walsh, 2002; Cullen, 1998).

The features of T-talk used by the two teachers observed in this study and the features that facilitate and hinder learner involvement in the classroom interaction are expected to be parallel to what research has revealed so far. Therefore, such a classification of the features, maybe with slight differences, will be obtained expectedly. However, this research is thought to have a value to present the features of T-talk employed by the novice and the experienced teacher observed in this study in a high school context with a comparative approach.

The next section of the paper will introduce the method, data collection instruments and procedures providing detailed information about the setting and the participants.

Method

This study investigating the features of T-talk of a novice and an experienced teacher and the opportunities they provide for learner involvement in the classroom interaction was conducted at a high school in Muğla, Turkey. Data was collected through classroom observation, video-recording, and written statements of the teachers. The observation was based on a framework called SETT: Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (Walsh, 2006), "which is designed to help teachers both describe the classroom interaction of their lessons and foster an understanding of interactional processes … [as well as] gain a fuller understanding of the relationship between language use, interaction and opportunities for learning " (Walsh, 2006: 62).

This study is based on the interpretive research paradigm as a general framework. It is a case study of two teachers, a novice and an experienced teacher and adopts an interaction analysis approach to investigate the intended research questions. Interpretive research includes qualitative methods with the purpose of describing and understanding L2 acquisition through the intensive study of a limited number of cases, usually as a longitudinal procedure (Nunan and Bailey, 2009). Interpretive research, according to Borko, Whitcomb, and Byrnes (2008: 1025), "seeks to perceive, describe, analyze, and interpret features of a specific situation or context in which the researcher acts as an observer or participant-observer reflecting a situative perspective."

As mentioned before, the present study has an interaction analysis approach. Walsh (2006) classifies interaction analysis approaches into 2 different subcategories: System-based approaches and Ad-hoc approaches. System-based approaches have a more quantitative basis and a fixed system including a series of observation instruments. Some of the examples of the observation instruments or coding systems include FIAC: Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (Flanders, 1970), FLINT: Foreign Language Interaction (Moskowitz, 1971), and COLT: Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (Allen, Fröhlich, and Spada, 1984; Spada and Frölich, 1995) (cited in Walsh, 2006: 39-44).

Contrary to System-based approaches, Ad-hoc approaches, as Walsh (2006: 44) suggests:

> …offer the construction of a more flexible instrument, which may, for example, be based on a specific classroom problem or area of interest … [and] give greater insights into the issues under investigation. (…) Moreover, ad-hoc interaction analysis allows attention to be devoted to the microcosms of interactions that might so easily be missed by the 'broad brush' descriptions provided by systems-based approaches.

Therefore, Ad-hoc approaches to interaction analysis and the SETT instrument is well suited to this study, whose focus is on T-talk.

Setting and the Participants

This study was conducted at a public high school in Muğla, Turkey. One naturally occurring English Language class taught by a novice teacher and one taught by an experienced teacher were observed and video-recorded to represent teaching practices of the two type of teachers.

One of the teachers, T1, who is accepted as the experienced teacher in this study, is female and has 18 years of experience in teaching English as a profession. The students in this class are ninth graders who are reported to have eight months of six-hours-a-week English language instruction since the beginning of the school year. The other teacher, T2, who is expected as the novice teacher in this study, is male and has 10 months of experience in teaching English as a profession. The students in this class are tenth graders who had English Language instruction six hours a week during the previous school year and have been instructed 4 hours a week from the beginning of the school year, which makes approximately eight months. Both of the teachers are graduates of a four year English Language Teaching program.

As for the classroom atmosphere, it can be easily observed that in T1's classroom, the students feel free to ask questions, make comments on the topic, and most of them seem to be willing to participate in the classroom interaction and have communication with the teacher. However, in T2's classroom, participation is lower, and the students' reluctance to interact is observable. Nevertheless, some of the students get involved in the interaction and contribute to communication to take place in the classroom.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The data was collected through classroom observation, video-recording of the classes observed, the SETT instrument (Walsh, 2006) as the observation scheme, and the teachers' written statements of the pedagogic goals for their classes. Oral consent of the teachers about the observation and the video-recording, as well as their anonymous use as the data in a research study was taken. However, the teachers were not informed about the focus of observation in order to be able to obtain the most natural data possible.

Before the observations started, written statements of the pedagogic goals of the teachers were collected in order for the right interpretation of what and why the teachers do in the observed classes. During the 45-minute classroom observation for each teacher, occurrences of certain features of T-talk by the novice and the experienced teachers were tallied and example occurrences were noted down in the observation scheme. Then, right after the observations, the video-recorded data was used to check the accuracy of the tallied data and add the missed items. As the last step of the data collection procedure, full transcriptions of the video-recorded classes were made in order to have a good understanding of the interactions and features of T-talk in the classes taught by the novice and the experienced teacher.

After the data collection and the transcription of the video-taped classes were completed, obtained data was coded according to the SETT Instrument. Therefore, certain features of T-talk employed by the novice and the experienced teachers and the number of their occurrences were determined.

Data Analysis

In this part, analysis of the collected data and the findings will be presented. First, identification, according to the SETT Instrument, of the features of T-talk employed by the novice and the experienced teachers and numbering were done. Quantitative analysis results were illustrated in the tables to account for the first research question. As the next step, in order to find answers to the second and the third research questions, qualitative analysis of the classroom interaction was completed. Additionally, the written statements of the pedagogic goals of the teachers were taken into consideration in order to be able to make proper interpretation of the classes. Sequences of T-talk were analyzed in terms of their effects on the learner involvement. Finally, possible reasons of the findings were commented on in the light of the literature.

Findings

Based on the information obtained from the written statements of the teachers, pedagogic goals of T1 (the experienced teacher in the study) and T2 (the novice teacher in the study) are as follows:

> T1: … to do a follow up task in order to practice ‘used to’ and ‘past tense’ forms in context which were taught in the previous classes … plus a listening activity again to enable students use the forms of ‘used to’.
>
> T2: … a pre-reading activity which aims to make students familiar with the vocabulary items and make the students use the items in their speeches, for the reason that they are actively used in the reading passage (which is found in the course book) about the UFOs.

1. *Which features of teacher talk (T-talk) do the experienced and the novice teacher make use of during the observed classes?*

The features of T-talk employed by the experienced (T1) and the novice (T2) teachers and the numbers of occurrences are displayed in the Table 1. In the experienced teacher's (T1) T-talk, features such as Scaffolding, Content feedback, Extended wait-time, Teacher echo, Extended teacher turn, and Display questions are observed to be remarkable. Display questions and Teacher echo are the most frequently used features by T1 with occurrence numbers of 25 and 26 successively. Teacher echo is classified into 2 categories: echo of the self and echo of the student contribution; and T1 used echo of the self and echo of the student contribution 13 times each. On the other hand, Turn completion and Extended learner turn are the features that were not observed in the interaction of the classroom taught by the experienced teacher.

On the contrary, the features frequently employed by the novice teacher (T2) are Scaffolding, Referential questions, Teacher echo, Extended teacher turn, Display questions, and the comprehension checks. The distribution of occurrences of Teacher echo into 2 categories is 32 occurrences of echo of the self and 12 occurrences of echo of the student contribution. Therefore, it can be said that T2 has a habit of echoing nearly every utterance of himself. On the other hand, Content feedback, Extended wait-time, Extended learner turn, and Turn completion are the ones that are not employed by T2.

As for the comparison of features used by T1 and T2, Content feedback is frequently used by T1 whereas it is not used by T2 at all. Moreover, the number of occurrences of Scaffolding and the Comprehension checks by T2 are twice as many times as T1 does. On the other hand, the use of Turn completion and Extended learner turn are not observed in T-talk of both of the teachers. Comparison related to the quality of T-talk and the features that increase and decrease learner involvement will be presented below under the research questions 1 and 2.

2. *What are the features of T-talk that increase opportunities for learner involvement in observed classes of the experienced and the novice teacher?*

From this part on, the teachers, T1 and T2, will be discussed separately and the extracts will be used for illustrative purposes only. Note that the intention is not to evaluate the instructional skills of the teachers, but only to comment on the learner involvement opportunities.

First of all, it is observed that T1's class is teacher-fronted and the control of the interaction is all the time with the teacher. However, though it is clearly observed that the interaction is dominantly orchestrated by T1, the experienced teacher, there is a qualified learner involvement. What is meant here is that, learners are frequently getting involved in the interaction and negotiating the meaning with the teacher.

It is obvious that in T1's class, *Display questions* have a good effect on the learner involvement. It's observed that whenever she asks a display question, there is a qualified response from the students which resulted in negotiated interaction. However, there is a point here that needs to be made clear. The *Display questions* T1 frequently uses throughout the classroom interaction are a kind of guessing questions. They are not found in an activity in the course book whose answers are obvious; rather they are the questions that the teacher asks about her own childhood, which students do not know that answers and are obviously seem interested. The extracts of the classroom interaction below illustrate the use of *Display questions* and their effect on learner involvement.

Extract 1

(1) **T1**: … What kind of a child do you think I was? … Do you think I was a naughty child?

(2) **S1**: No …amm ... I don't think so. You wasn't a naughty child…

(3) **S**: [sneezes]

(4) **S:** Çok yaşa

(5) **T1**: God bless .. you, ok?... You think I was a …

(6) **S1**: You wasn't a naughty child.

Extract 2

(7) **T1**: Amm… I made them very angry. Ok? They they they were very mad about me. Amm … what do you think I used to do when I was child? … Yes…

(8) **S2**: I think … you were popular.

(9) **T1**: Popular? … Yees, I think I … used to be a popular … girl, child because … I used to fight with boys …

(10) **S3**: Me, too [laughs]

(11) **T1**: You, too? … Ok, and … what else do you think I used to do when I was a child? … Do you think I used to … did I use to bite my nails?

It is clear that Display questions in (1) and (7) provide opportunity for learner involvement. Furthermore, the teacher's scaffolding S2's utterance and extension in line (9) create another learner involvement and S3 gets involved in the interaction in line (10).

However, the teacher seems to miss an opportunity for the S3 by only saying "You, too?" and passing to another question. Maybe if the teacher negotiated the meaning with the S3 and sought clarification by posing a related question, the student may have ended up in a learning opportunity. Nevertheless, throughout the whole interaction, the teacher's Display questions create learner involvement opportunities. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to note that there is always general solicit in the classroom except for one situation, and the students want to involve in the interaction very often by their own will. So, this makes the interaction more communicative just like the 'outside communication', in which interlocutors are not forced to take turns.

The other feature that is observed to increase the learner involvement in teacher 1's classroom is *Scaffolding*. *Extract 3* is one part of the whole interaction to illustrate an occurrence of Scaffolding.

Extract 3

(12) **T1**: … Do you think, do you think I used to do my homework … regularly? Do you think I used to be a … lazy student or … a hardworking student? Yes Fatih?

(13) **S4:** Amm … you … you do homework … you did homework regu … don't regularly … yani you didn't…

(14) **T1:** You didn't use to do your homework regularly…

(15) **S4**: But you do, you did homework.

(16) **T1**: You did your homework …

(17) **S4**: But…

(18) **T1**: not regularly … Yes I … was a naughty girl but … I used to do my homework very regularly, ok? …

In *Extract 3*, it is obvious that in lines (14), (16), (18) T1 does scaffolding to the utterances of S4 and by this way T1 facilitates a learning opportunity because the student tries to express what he wants to say, and at the end the teacher understands what he means and there is negotiated interaction, which the other students may have benefited, as well.

Next, T1 facilitates learner involvement by giving Content feedback to students' responses, which is illustrated in *Extracts 4* and *5* below.

Extract 4

(19) **S1**: You wasn't a naughty child.

(20) **T1**: Yees, I used to be a … very naughty child. [writes the word 'naughty' on the board] I used to be a very naughty child … when I was … a child. … Really, yes. I used to drive my parents mad. Ok? … I used to drive my parents mad.

(21) **S1**: What did you do?

(22) **T:** Hı?

(23) **S1:** What did you do?

(24) **T1**: Amm… I made them very angry. Ok? They they they were very mad about me. Amm … what do you think I used to do when I was child? … Yes…

Extract 5

(25) **S1**: You used to do games with your friends after school.

(26) **T1:** Amm… without … without stopping after school you mean or at school?

(27) **S1**: Yes, after school.

(28) **T1**: After school ... yes, we were lucky when we were child Yağmur, as we used to PLAY lots of games with our friends amm … and we used to … prepare some plays … theatres … for our parents when I was a child.

(29) **S1:** And you used to knock [wrong pronunciation]

(30) **T1**: KNOCK?

(31) **S1**: Knocked others' doors .. and run away?

(32) **T1**: Hmmm… Really? How do you know that?

(33) **S1**: amm you were naughty.

(34) **T1**: Yes, I was naughty … but but … I was not irresponsible, and it's rude to knock someone's door and run away I think …

(35) **S1:** I used to

(36) **T1**: Aaa you used to … do it? Really? Interesting. …

As shown in Extract 4, T1 gives *Content feedback* in line (20) with extended teacher turn and this creates learner involvement; S1 seeks clarification by asking a question in line (21) and there is negotiated interaction to the benefit of both S1 and the others. T1's Content feedback in line (28) facilitates learner involvement and gives way to another question by S1 in line (29). The teacher gives another Content feedback in line (34) and this again creates an opportunity for learner involvement and S1 provides information about what she used to do. Therefore, both in Extracts 4 and 5, S1 shows a frequent participation in the interaction facilitated by the help of Content feedback. Furthermore, it is necessary to note that, Direct repair by the teacher to student's wrong pronunciation of the word knock in line (29) doesn't hinder the learner contribution and S1 goes on interacting in line (31) with the use of correct pronunciation.

As for the case of the novice teacher, his class is teacher fronted, as well in which learner involvement is controlled by the teacher. Most of the time, the students are observed to be unwilling to participate in the interaction and forced by the teacher to get involved. Nevertheless, in some parts of the classroom interaction, the teacher achieved providing opportunities for learner involvement by the use of some interactional features.

The features that are observed to facilitate learner involvement in his class are *Scaffolding* in some parts of the interaction and *Referential questions*. These parts are illustrated below.

Extract 6

(37) **T2**: Yes, it's hayali. … Ok … A question … to you. What would you do … if you saw such … an alien? What would you do? … For example … you just woke up … and … see an alien? What would you do?

(38) **S11**: A record.

(39) **T2**: Yes maybe a picture, taking a picture… yes, what else? … How would you feel?... afraid? Shocked?

(40) **Ss**: shocked, shocked…

Extract 7

(41) **T2**: Var olmak. … I think it's up to you. You don't have to believe. It's your choice. … you must think … all the evidence on this topic. Any others … who believe…in UFOs? … Can I see your hands? Just raise your hands. …Why do you think so? Try to explain please.

(42) **S9**: [raises hand] Vazgeçtim [laughs]…

(43) **T2**: Try to explain, please.

(44) **S9**: …

(45) **T2**: I believe, because …

(46) **S9**: I believe … because … çünkü var. [laughs]

(47) **T2**: They exist.

(48) **S9**: Yes.

(49) **T2**: They exist.

(50) **S9**: They exist.

(51) **T2**: They exist… I believe because they exist. … and you?

Extract 8

(52) **S13**: Because I believe in …

(53) **T2**: I don't believe in creatures because …

(54) **S13**: I don't believe in creatures because … they are, they haven't seen to all of the people in the world.

(55) **T2**: Yes, … some people don't accept their existence …

In lines (37), T2's use of Referential question results in student involvement and in line (38) an individual student, S11, responds. Then, the teacher *scaffolds* what he has said and poses another *Referential question*, which again results in the involvement of the whole class. In Extract 7, line (44) illustrates S9's silence and the teacher, in line (45) and on, uses Scaffolding trying to create an opportunity for S9 to get involved to some extent. In the next extract, T2 again uses Scaffolding in line (53), which creates an opportunity for S13 to convey his message.

Comparing T1 and T2, it is seen that *Scaffolding* is the common feature in their T-talk that is observed to facilitate learner involvement.

3. *What are the features of T-talk that reduce opportunities for learner involvement in observed classes of the experienced and the novice teacher?*

The only feature of T-talk that is observed to decrease learner involvement opportunities in T1's case is *Form focused feedback*. Extract 9 illustrates the use of *Form focused feedback* and its effect on the student's production.

Extract 9

(56) **S7**: Your parents are …

(57) **T1**: The past, we're talking about the past … my childhood … so, my parents were

(58) **S7**: Şey…

(59) **T1**: In the past, we are, we are talking about … my childhood.

(60) **S7**: Siz bana şey dememişmiydiniz … okuldan sonra çağırdıklarında yaptıklarınızı?

(61) **T1**: Evet ama, … çocukluğumdan bahsediyoruz, şu andan değil … çocukluğumda öğretmenlerim ailemi çağırdıktan sonra, eve gelince neler oluyor?

(62) **S7**: Tamam ben de onu diycektim. Your parents are …

(63) **T1:** ARE or WERE?

(64) **S7**: were [smiles] were crazy about you, and angry.

In lines (57) and (59), T1 gives *Form focused feedback* to S7's utterance in the present tense. It is observed that both attempts of the teacher to give form focused feedback hinder the student's opportunity for involvement. In line (58), after the teacher's feedback, S7 seems not to understand what's going on in the interaction and cannot say even a word; and in line (60), again after the teacher's feedback, he loses the point and he makes a confirmation check in L1 to be sure of what he has understood. On the other hand, in line (63) the teacher directly repairs the student's response by saying 'are or were'. Here, the use of *Direct repair* does not hinder the student's involvement; on the contrary, it may be regarded as creating a learning opportunity for the student. This situation is similar to the one in Extract 5, line (30) above. Therefore, the use of *Direct repair* may be regarded as facilitating opportunities for student learning or involvement.

As for the novice teacher in the study, T2, the features that decrease learner involvement are *Display questions*, some cases of *Scaffolding* where there is over use of it, *Teacher echo*, *Extended teacher turn* , and *Form focused feedback*.

The Extract 10 below illustrates the use of *Display questions* and how it decreases learner involvement.

Extract 10

(65) **T2**: A UFO, ok, how is it like? His eyes are …

(66) **Ss:** Big

(67) **T2**: Huge, huge, yes, big eyes. Ok. What color are they?

(68) **S3**: Black…

(69) **T2**: Ok black eyes. What about his body? What color is his body?

(70) **S1**: Green

(71) **T2**: Green or greenish?

(72) **S1**: Greenish

(73) **T2:** Greenish body … Does it like, does it look like human, humans? Does he look like us?

(74) **Ss**: …

(75) **T2**: Does he have … arms … arms [shows his arms]?

In lines (65), (67), (69), and (73) there is an excessive use of *Display questions* successively and students cannot go beyond answering these questions with single-word utterances. Especially after the first question in line (65), there is no Wait time observed and the teacher directly makes modeling with the utterance "His eyes are…" which results in restricting the students' extension to different clause types. Therefore, different from T1's case, *Display questions* in this classroom are observed to decrease learner involvement and so opportunities for learning.

Next, *Teacher echo* is observed to be dominantly hindering student involvement in the Extract 11. The over use of *Teacher echo* is remarkable throughout the classroom interaction with a frequency of 44 as shown in the Table above.

Extract 11

(76) **T2**: Maybe, so can we say … those aliens … or some … the creatures coming from outer space … are more clever than us. Who is more clever… humans or …

(77) **S2**: Martians…

(78) **T2** Martians let's say … aliens …who is more clever? …

(79) **Ss**: …

In lines (76) and (78), T2's *echoing* the same question repeatedly decreases learner involvement and in line (79) he cannot elicit any answers, which is also the case observed throughout the interaction.

Extended teacher turn is the other feature of T-talk that T2 employs in his classroom interaction, which is illustrated in *Extract 12.*

Extract 12

(80) **T2**: Siyah giyen adamlar. Eğer fantastic film seviyosanız, fantastic film seviyosanız., izleyebilirsiniz. Benim tercihim değil ama … siz izleyebilirsiniz.

(81) **S8**: Siz izlediniz mi?

(82) **T2**: Fragmanını biliyorum . özellikle izlemedim. Ama E.T.yi biliyorum, izledim. Bunu da öğrenmiş olun, Extra Terrestrials… ETnin adını aldığı terim. Yes, Extra Terrestrials, dünya dışı varlıklar. … Martians?

(83) **S9**: Marslılar.

(84) **T2**: Evet. Böyle birşey var… daha doğrusu var mı yok mu bilemiyoruz ama … marstan gelen insanlar diye düşünülüyor martians… uzaydan gelen insanlar, ama var mı yok mu bilmiyoruz. … Evet, yes, now, first… I want to make a … picture of … a huge ship, spaceship. Or … what's that, aircraft.

(85) **S11**: [raising hand]

(86) **T2**: Come… Draw something like this…

In lines (80), (82), and (84) *Extended teacher turn,* which is mostly in L1, obviously does not facilitate any learner involvement and does not provide any opportunities for learning, either. The students' responses are in the L1. What is more, S9's response in line (83) includes the Turkish equivalence of the word 'Martians' and does not have any communicative value. The teacher seems to miss a learning opportunity in lines (80) and (82) by talking in the L1, because S8's response in line (81) shows the student's tendency in getting involved in the interaction. However, since the teacher speaks in the L1, student asks the question in L1, too, missing an opportunity for having negotiated interaction.

Form focused feedback, parallel to T1's case, is another feature that decreases opportunities for learner involvement. You can find samples of the case below.

Extract 13

(87) **S14**: Yes, because amm… if … they … exist …

(88) **T2**: [writing on the board] yes, prove is the verb form … prove , … and proof is noun form. Proof … kanıt … prove … kanıtlamak. … [addressing to S14] because there is no, there is no … proof on this topic. … ok, any others … who has thoughts? … Ceyda (S15)?

(89) **S15**: Hocam istemiyorum.

In line (87), S14 is trying to express something but she is interrupted by the teacher's *Form focused feedback* and cannot go on communicating her idea. The teacher even does not let S14 try again and gives the turn to another student. S15. This is another example that hinders learner involvement.

As for the comparison of interaction in the classes of T1 and T2, it is seen that Display questions hindered learner involvement in T2's class while it facilitated and created involvement opportunities for students of T1. Moreover, in T2's class, in some parts of the interaction where the teacher used *Scaffolding*, it was surprising to notice the decrease of learner involvement.

Conclusion

This study investigated the features of T-talk used by a novice and an experienced teacher at the high school level, as well as identifying the features increasing and decreasing the learner involvement in the classroom interaction. The data was obtained through the classroom observation and video recordings of one class for each teacher to represent their teaching practices. Additionally, written statements for the pedagogic goals of the teachers were taken in order to have an understanding of what and why teachers do in the classroom.

It was found out that most remarkably used features of T-talk by the novice teacher were *Scaffolding, Display questions, Teacher echo, Extended teacher turn,* and *Referential questions.* Similarly, the experienced teacher used the features *Scaffolding, Extended teacher turn, Display questions,* and *Teacher echo*. In addition to them, she (the experienced teacher) also used Content feedback and Extended wait time in her T-talk.

As for the quality of the features used in terms of facilitating the learner involvement, the experienced teacher was observed to be able create more opportunities for learner involvement by employing *Display questions Scaffolding, Content feedback*, and *Direct repair* than the novice teacher who was able to do this by *Scaffolding* in certain parts and *Referential questions*. These findings are in line with the results of a similar study carried out by Walsh (2002), by which he found out that Direct error correction, Content feedback, and Scaffolding are the interactional features that increases learning potential. The present study also has in common with the results of the research conducted by Thrnbury (1996). In his study, Thornbury (1996) found about the positive effects of Referential questions and Content feedback on the student involvement.

On the contrary, the interactional features used by the experienced and the novice teachers that were observed to decrease learner involvement opportunities were over-used *Teacher echo* (T2), *Extended teacher turn* (T2), *Form focused feedback* (T1 & T2), *Display questions* (T2). The result that *Teacher echo* decreases the opportunities for learner involvement is also reached by Walsh's (2002) study in which he found out that "learners are prevented from interacting because of excessive use of echo."

However, despite sharing similarities with the previous research findings, the study may be limited in terms of number of classes observed. Therefore, further research that will be conducted on more than two classes can be suggested.

Tables

Table 1

Features of T-talk used by T1 and T2

Features of T-talk	T1	T2
Scaffolding	11	28
Direct repair	3	1
Content feedback	13	-
Extended wait-time	6	-
Referential questions	2	11
Confirmation checks	3	1
Seeking clarification	3	1
Extended learner turn	-	-
Teacher echo	26	44
Teacher interruptions	5	1
Extended teacher turn	11	12
Turn completion	-	-
Display questions	25	20
Comprehension checks	4	18
Total	109	134

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Biodata

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Appendix

Transcription Conventions

T1: The experienced teacher in the study

T2: the novice teacher in the study

S1, S2: Indentified students

Ss: Students in choral speech

… : Silence

xxx : Unintelligible speech

[ ]: Observer's comments