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Effect of Self-regulated Strategies on Learners' Autonomy in Vocabulary Learning: Junior High School EFL Students in Focus

Elham Taghipour Ahangar*

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Qaemshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qameshahr, Iran

Research Article

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Keywords:

Self- regulated Learning, Learners' Autonomy, Vocabulary Learning, EFL Context

Abstract

The present study tried to indicate the effectiveness of self-regulated strategies on second grade junior high school learners' autonomy in learning vocabulary. To do this, out of 46 students of two intact classes who were selected based on cluster sampling, 40 of them labeled as pre-intermediate ones and participated in this study. Then, they were randomly assigned in two groups as control and experimental, each with 20 students. Participants of the experimental group subjected to employ self-regulated learning strategies for ten sessions, however the control group followed the normal way of teaching with no treatment. To gather data, learner's autonomy questionnaire developed by Zhang and Li (2004) was used. That is to say, the questionnaire specified the students' autonomy in vocabulary learning at the end of the teaching period in both groups. Data were analyzed through SPSS software, and analysis of findings indicated a significance difference between the participants of two groups in terms of learning autonomy. Finally, the study concluded that using self-regulation strategies have significant effect on EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary improvement. Findings of this work provide positive experience for students as well as teachers. It is hoped that they can reveal the importance of the mentioned strategies in the educational system.

تأثیر استراتژی‌های خودتنظیمی بر استقلال زبان‌آموزان در یادگیری واژگان: دانش‌آموزان دبیرستان در کانون توجه

پژوهش حاضر سعی دارد اثربخشی راهبردهای خودتنظیمی را بر استقلال دانش‌آموزان پایه دوم متوسطه در یادگیری واژگان نشان دهد. بدین منظور، از بین ٤٦ دانش‌آموز دو کلاس سالم که بر اساس نمونه‌گیری خوشه‌ای انتخاب شدند، ٤٠ نفر از آن‌ها به عنوان پیش‌متوسط برچسب‌گذاری شدند و در این پژوهش شرکت کردند. سپس به طور تصادفی در دو گروه کنترل و آزمایش هر کدام ٢٠ دانش آموز قرار گرفتند. شرکت‌کنندگان گروه آزمایش به مدت ده جلسه از راهبردهای یادگیری خودتنظیمی استفاده کردند، اما گروه گواه روش عادی تدریس را بدون درمان دنبال کردند. برای جمع آوری داده ها، از پرسشنامه خودمختاری یادگیرنده که توسط ژانگ و لی (٢٠٠٤) تهیه شده است، استفاده شد. یعنی پرسشنامه استقلال دانش آموزان را در یادگیری واژگان در پایان دوره آموزشی در هر دو گروه مشخص می کرد. داده ها با استفاده از نرم افزار SPSS مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت و تجزیه و تحلیل یافته ها نشان داد که بین شرکت کنندگان دو گروه از نظر استقلال یادگیری تفاوت معناداری وجود دارد. در نهایت، این مطالعه به این نتیجه رسید که استفاده از راهبردهای خودتنظیمی تأثیر معناداری بر استقلال زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی در بهبود واژگان دارد. یافته های این کار تجربه مثبتی را برای دانش آموزان و همچنین معلمان فراهم می کند. امید است که بتوانند اهمیت راهبردهای مذکور را در نظام آموزشی آشکار سازند.

واژگان کلیدی: یادگیری خودتنظیمی، خودمختاری زبان آموزان، یادگیری واژگان

Introduction

Self-regulation is a psychological concept, defined as self-generated thoughts, feelings, and behavior that are planned and adapted based on performance feedback to achieve self-set objectives (Zimmerman, 1990). In other places, Zimmerman (2008) viewed self-regulated learning (SRL) as setting aims, planning, selecting and employing strategies, self-monitoring one's effectiveness and self-evaluation. Pintrich (2000) also stated that self-regulated learning is "an active and constructive process whereby students set goals for their learning, and then try to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior guided and constrained by their goals, and the contextual features in the environment" (p.453). Moreover, Aregu (2013) defined self-regulated learning as an active learning process, in which students use various strategies to develop their cognition and to monitor their behavior. Similarly, Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) defined SRL as an approach to make learners autonomous in such a way that they are behaviorally, motivationally, and met cognitively active and able to take responsibility for their own learning and problem-solving. This process of making learners autonomous implies that self-regulation is an ability which can be improved.

Learners' self-regulatory capability plays a significant role in learning vocabulary (Graves & Fink, 2007). There is no doubt that vocabulary is the most essential factor in learning a language as a native or foreign. As Wilkins (2002) noted without vocabulary, nothing can be expressed and that vocabulary is even more important than grammar. Özkiraz (2015, p.34) also in the same view mentioned that "no learning can be achieved completely if the learner lack of sufficient vocabulary knowledge". He added that having learnt an amount of vocabulary the students will be able to communicate, maybe not in full sentences but they will be able to express themselves. However, without knowing the vocabulary, everything will be more challengeable if the student has no dictionary. "If language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh" (Harmer, 2001, p.153).

As there is a changed view in language learning and teaching, the more emphasis is on learners' role and participation. In learner - centered education, teachers are more than orchestra leaders and learners need more than learning. Language knowledge in this learner – centered approach cannot be even understood without considering the goals and purposes of the learners. Hedge (2006) argued that students should select their own homework, they are self- motivated ones who wants to learn and have their plans for their achievements. More importantly, some

scholars as Holec (1987) and Benson (2003) emphasized on the necessity of autonomy in education. In their view, students who think and work strategically are more motivated to learn and get a higher sense of confidence in their own learning ability. Also, students who depend on themselves in learning vocabulary are more able to succeed academically and more motivated than those who do not have effective strategies in learning by themselves. In learner-centered approach, learners can generalize their own knowledge and think actively. As Dickinson (1987) noted, the learner has to learn the process of learning and to be able to manage the complex learning network of learning goals, materials, sequencing of the materials, deciding how materials shall be used, deciding on tasks to be done, keeping records and making evaluations in order to reach this level of being able to use language to create meanings of a social kind and to participate in verbal contest and verbal display.

In learner-centered classrooms, students need to know strategies to generalize their knowledge and use it outside the classroom. "Research to learner strategies had made an important contribution to the field of ELT by highlighting the possibility of becoming more self –reliant in learning and by generating discussion of how learners can be trained to take on more responsibility for their own learning" (Hedge, 2006, p.79). According to Holec (1985) learner training should prepare students to direct their own learning so that they may gradually move from a state of dependence on a teacher to the greatest degree of independence or autonomy. Learning training is seen as taking learners further along the road to full autonomy. Also, self-directed learning is the realization of a learner's potential for autonomy. Therefore, emphasis should be focused on providing them with skills and raising an awareness for language learning strategies to teach how to learn languages (Nuray, 2015).

In renewed educational system, learners as constructors of their own learning, self- regulation can get special attention. As traditionally Iranian EFL learners depend on teachers, most attention must be paid to the pendulum movement from teachers' responsibility to the learners. As mentioned earlier, vocabulary is the most fundamental aspect of language learning. However, the limitation of classroom-based vocabulary learning to cover large amount of vocabulary, implies the necessity of learning vocabulary independently and regulate their learning effectively. Despite different research on self-regulated strategies, to the author's best knowledge, no study exactly explored the impact of such strategies on learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. Accordingly, the present study tries to bridge this gap through analyzing the following research question and hypothesis.

RQ1. Do self-regulated strategies have effect on EFL learners' autonomy in learning vocabulary?

H01. Self-regulated strategies do not have effect on learners' autonomy in learning vocabulary.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

In the cognitive literature on learning and instruction, autonomous learning is referred to as "self-regulation". The ability to take responsibility for learning often refers to learners' ownership of many learning processes traditionally owned by teachers such as setting goals; choosing learning methods, materials and tasks; monitoring and evaluating progress. In Vygotsky's theory, the goal of learning is to develop an independent, self-regulated, problem-solving individual. This can occur only with the help of more capable others (teachers, more competent peers, parents, or others), who offer assistance to the learner. This assistance is metaphorically known as scaffolding, i.e., the external structure that supports and holds up a building under construction. There comes a time when the edifice needs less and less external support or scaffolding. When something is no longer needed, it is gradually removed.

For instance, in higher-order cognitive development; the "more capable other" remove the scaffolding bit by bit from the individual learner as the learner becomes increasingly independent and self-regulated (Tavallali and Marzban, 2015, p75). The theoretical framework for this research is based on Oxford's (2011) self-regulation model of L2 learning, which is a continuation of Vygotsky's model of "dialogic, self- regulated learning" and Zimmerman's (1990) social-cognitive model of self- regulated learning. These models conceptualized learning characteristics of those language learners who are actively involved in and responsible for their own learning. This framework is consistent with the language learning methodology which focuses on the autonomy of learners who are viewed as agents of their own learning process (Ellis, 2012; Griffiths, 2008).

Jafarigohar and Morshedian (2013) analyzed the impact of three different journal writing techniques as individual journal writing, collaborative journal writing with peers, and collaborative journal writing with the teacher, on upper-intermediate EFL learners' self-regulation. 60 female students were selected and randomly assigned to four groups. The results revealed that collaborative journals that provide the chance to benefit from their teacher's or peer's feedback could significantly increases learners' self-regulatory skills. Findings of the study also confirmed

the individual journal writing as a form of reflective practice to improve learners' self-regulation significantly. In another study, the same authors (Jafarigohar & Morshedian, 2014) analyzed the effect of self-regulation instruction on the EFL readers' ability to make within-text inferences while reading. Two intact intermediate classes of an English language institute were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The experimental group was trained in self-regulatory processes which were directed at EFL reading comprehension for ten sessions, while the control group received the routine, traditional reading instruction involving pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks and activities.

The results of ANCOVA test indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test particularly in term of within-text inferencing. Thus, self-regulation instruction significantly contributed to learners' ability to make correct within-text inferences while reading in English as a foreign language. In a similar context, Maftoon and Tasnimi (2014) examined the effect of self-regulation on EFL learners' reading comprehension. 149 Iranian EFL language learners studying at Islamic Azad Universities were selected randomly and put into two experimental and control groups. The experimental group received direct teaching along with task-based instruction on self-regulation in reading. The results showed the rejection of the null hypothesis, thus concluding that self-regulation has a significant effect on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners.

Nejabati (2015) studied the effects of teaching self-regulated learning strategies on upper intermediate EFL students' reading comprehension. They were assigned to the experimental and control groups. The experimental group received training on self-regulated learning strategies and how to use these strategies in their reading comprehension course, while control group did not receive any instruction. According to the data of independent sample t-test, experimental group performed significantly better on posttest administration of the reading test. Moreover, Tavallali and Marzban (2015) explored the instructional efficacy of self-regulated learning strategies on Iranian EFL learners' autonomy. 40 Iranian intermediate learners were randomly divided into control and experimental group. Findings indicated that there was a significant difference between the participants in the two groups concerning their level of learning autonomy. However, no significant relationship was found between the participants' use of self-regulated learning strategies and their learning autonomy. It was also noted that there was no significant relationship between the participants' use of self-regulated learning strategies and learning autonomy in the control and experimental groups.

Hemmati et al., (2016) investigated the effect of training EFL learners in self- regulation of reading on their EFL literal and critical reading comprehension. Two intact experimental groups were taught self-regulatory reading processes, while two control groups received the traditional, routine reading instruction. Statistical analyses revealed that self-regulation instruction could significantly improve participants' EFL literal and critical reading comprehension, but their proficiency level did not moderate the effect of self-regulation training.

These findings can encourage EFL teachers to apply SRL strategies to reading tasks and activities. In the same year, Zarei et al., (2016) analyzed self-regulated learning strategies as predictors of reading comprehension. 119 Iranian B.A. and M.A. students of university were selected to participate. They were asked to respond to the self-regulation trait questionnaire. Findings indicated that from among the six components of self-regulated learning strategies, only planning and effort components were significant predictors of reading comprehension.

Fathi, Ahmadnejad and Nouroddin Yousofi (2019) examined the effects of a blog-mediated writing course on L2 students' writing motivation, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. 46 Iranian EFL learners of university were selected and randomly put into the control and experimental groups. The control group was taught using traditional writing instruction, whereas the experimental group was taught using a blog-mediated writing course. Results showed that integrating blogs into EFL writing instruction helped the experiment group to have more writing motivation and writing self-regulation than the control group that only had received regular in-class instruction. However, the blog-mediated writing course decreased the writing self-efficacy of the EFL students. Although some studies in the L2 literature have addressed self-regulated learning strategies and autonomy, few have studied considered both variables within the SRL framework. Also, vocabulary learning is ubiquitous and occurs throughout the learning of a language, which particularly seems to require strong conscious efforts and strategic learning for knowledge increment and refinement. More importantly, as mentioned earlier, no study exactly focused on the effectiveness of self-regulated learning strategies on high school EFL students' autonomy in learning vocabulary.

Method

At the beginning of the study, two intact classes of 46 English students were selected based on cluster sampling method. In accordance with Dornyei (2007) cluster sampling, the students of a high school (2nd grade), located in Babol, Mazandaran, were selected as the sample of this study.

At first, they took part in a proficiency test which is Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and 40 of them labeled as pre- intermediate EFL students. Then, they were divided in two groups, i.e., Experimental Group (EG) and Control Group (CG), each with 20 participants. All were female student with the same level of proficiency in both groups. After that, their autonomy level were collected through the Learner Autonomy Questionnaire (Zhang & Li, 2004) in both groups upon the completion of the treatment in EG and the conventional teaching in CG. That is to say, the questionnaire specified the students' autonomy in vocabulary learning at the end of the teaching period in both groups. It is worthy to note that given Iranian EFL community, the employment of this significant questionnaire could play a remarkable role in investigating autonomy in vocabulary learning. Also, such a questionnaire provides a comprehensive understanding of the nature of EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. It consists of 30 items, each includes Five-Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree".

As the purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of self-regulated strategies on EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning, thus it was on the basis of quasi experiment which has two groups with no randomization. Treatment as one of the most important steps of the research procedure was done in ten sessions. The control group took the normal course of instruction while the experimental group was exposed to the treatment in the form of instructions on how to use self-regulated strategies in learning vocabulary. The treatment was done to analyze the effect of students' awareness of self-regulated learning strategies as personal self-regulated learning strategies, behavioral self-regulated learning strategies, and environmental self-regulated learning strategies on their autonomy in vocabulary learning. That is to say, the students of EG received the treatment in order to know how to use self-regulation strategies. In Boud's (2000) words, an autonomous learner is the one who is prepared to take some remarkable responsibility for his/her own learning. In order to be good autonomous students, they should make decisions about their own learning, set their realistic objectives, plan their work, develop strategies for dealing with new and unexpected situations, evaluate and analyze their own work and learn from their own successes and failures which would help them to be more efficient learners in the future. More importantly, autonomous learners willingly partner with peers in learning and are reflective about their own learning.

After the treatment, to highlight the extent of their autonomy in vocabulary learning, both groups were asked to answer the autonomy questionnaire in a limited time (30 min). Their answers would be confidential and would be utilized for research only. In fact, they should check the most

appropriate answer to each statement based on their learning experience. Considering the students' proficiency level, the questionnaire was translated into Persian and reliability and validity of it were checked by the researcher. The reliability was analyzed through Cronbach's Alpha which was .83, and for validity, two experts observed the items before administration and they did not report any irrelevant points. In the last step, the collected data through the questionnaire were analyzed by SPSS software using descriptive statistics, and as two sets of data are non-paradigmatic, Willcoxon and Mann Withney U were used. Finally, the tests scores were gathered for analyzing and interpreting by the researcher.

Results and Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the current study analyzed the effectiveness of self-regulated learning strategies on EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. Data were analyzed through pre-and posttest. The first, second, and third tables show the participants' total mean scores on learning autonomy in vocabulary knowledge for the control group based on their answers to the items in the questionnaire.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Learning Before Treatment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
C pre	20	1.95	3.29	2.4857	.09306	.41617
C post	20	1.90	3.86	2.6524	.13069	.58446
Valid N (list wise)	20					

Table 2
Mean Ranks of Vocabulary Learning Before Treatment

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	Pretest	20	18.90	378.00
Control	Posttest	20	22.10	442.00
	Total	40		

As shown in table 1, the mean score in the control group pre-test is 2.4857 and in post- test is 2.6524. As table 2 shows, mean of pretest is 18.9, and the mean of posttest is 22.10. In table 3, the significant difference within the control group is .398 which is higher than .05, showing that the

control group's level of learning autonomy does not change in pre- test and post- test, so there is no meaningful difference between two tests in control group.

Table 3
Test Statistics Before Treatment[a]

Tests	Control
Mann-Whitney U	168.000
Wilcoxon W	378.000
Z	-.868
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.386
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.398[b]

As there was treatment in experimental group, the following tables indicate that participants in the experimental group were significantly more autonomous language learners than those in the control group after the treatment. In table 4, before the treatment, the mean of pre-test is 3.29 and the mean of posttest is 4.29 which indicates that the level of learning autonomy of the EG group in learning vocabulary is higher than the CG. Also, the significant difference, $P < 0.05$, showing that the level of learners' autonomy is higher before treatment.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Learning After Treatment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Posttest	20	2.57	4.29	3.3286	.13123	.58686
Pretest	20	2.10	3.29	2.4929	.08485	.37947
Valid N (list wise)	20					

Table 5
Mean Ranks After Treatment

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	Pretest	20	12.55	251.00
Test	Posttest	20	28.45	569.00
	Total	40		

Table 6
Test Statistics After Treatment[a]

	Test
Mann-Whitney U	41.000
Wilcoxon W	251.000
Z	-4.308

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Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.000[b]	

Table 7
Mean Ranks in Pre and Post Tests

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	Negative Ranks	20[a]	10.50	210.00
Pre - post	Positive Ranks	0[b]	.00	.00
	Ties	0[c]		
	Total	20		

Table 8
Test Statistics in Pre and Post Tests [a]

	Pre - post
Z	-3.923[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

At the end of study, the participants with knowledge of self-regulated strategies by implementing these strategies in learning vocabulary, received a higher level of learning autonomy. Thus, the experimental foundation shows that the null hypothesis cannot be accepted as self- regulated strategies had positive effect on the students' autonomy level in vocabulary learning in the EFL context. It should be noted that vocabulary has an essential role in learning English language. It is obvious that learning a foreign language needs learning words of that language. The words are saved and retrieved in the human brain. The learners should repeat the words if they want to recall them and employ them for communication. Language learning strategies are known as central issue in teaching and learning, especially in encouraging learners' autonomy. These days, language teachers try to make an interesting environment for teaching vocabulary and not employing traditional methods. Students in traditional methods imitated the teacher and repeat every word which is not meaningful leaning. Therefore, they do not have any motivation for participating in the class, and no interaction find between them as it is completely teacher-centered (Shahriarpour & Kafi, 2014). This study provides new data and views for employing self-regulated strategies in learning vocabularies and such data have effect on teaching vocabulary.

The results of this research are in accordance with the findings of some previously studies in the related literature. For instance, Hemmati et al., (2016) reported that self-regulation instruction

could significantly improve participants' EFL literal and critical reading comprehension. These findings can encourage EFL teachers to apply SRL strategies to reading tasks and activities. Also, findings of this study are partially support the study of Zarei et al., (2016) who mentioned that among the six components of self-regulated learning strategies, only two components were significant predictors of reading comprehension. Additionally, the results are in line with Nejabati (2015) declared the positive effects of teaching self-regulated learning strategies on students' reading comprehension. However, findings of this work are not in line with Tavallali and Marzban (2015) who examined the instructional efficacy of self-regulated learning strategies on Iranian EFL learners' autonomy. They found no relationship between the participants' use of self-regulated learning strategies and their learning autonomy.

Conclusion and Implications

As mentioned in the previous part, findings indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in the control group and in the experimental group concerning their level of learning autonomy, suggesting that after treatment, the participants of the experimental group were more autonomous language learners than those in the control group. That is to say, in conducting the present study, the experimental group showed a noticeable improvement from the pre-test to the post-test, this is likely due to the self-regulation strategies they received. In fact, the treatment group which received additional vocabulary instruction incorporating the use of self-regulation strategies revealed greater achievement than the control group receiving traditional vocabulary instruction. Accordingly, the study concluded that using self-regulation strategies have significant effect on EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary improvement. According to the quantitative analysis of received data, it can be said that self-regulated strategies provided the advantages over the conventional method of teaching in developing vocabulary as a language sub skill. This difference was due to the mentioned method since the researcher controlled all extraneous variables.

Being an autonomous learner means using different learning strategies. Actually, learners need to be able to employ vocabulary strategies to deal with unknown vocabulary in listening or reading texts, and to make up for gaps in productive vocabulary in speaking and writing. Step by step, they gain fluency in using known vocabulary and to learn new words in isolation. Most of these strategies can begin to be improved in the earliest English classes (Nation, 2001).

In student's autonomous world of learning, the teacher's role is decreased as facilitators. However, it does not mean that teachers are passive in learning process. They actually have different roles as teaching vocabulary relevant to the tasks as well as judging and giving instruction in strategies that help retention. Language teachers should enhance autonomous learning since it is of great importance for students. Besides, they should consider these effective strategies in teaching process to learn vocabulary autonomously.

On the basis of findings, the research has some implications. The results provide positive experience for students as well as teachers. They help lecturers to be creative in their teaching methods and students to be active and creative. Moreover, EFL teachers can increase their students' awareness of these learning strategies and encourage them to employ them in learning language in order to make them more autonomous learners. More importantly, teachers need a firm intellectual understanding of self-regulated learning strategies in order to encourage students to develop language skills. Furthermore, findings can be used to redesign the courses at language institutes, schools, and other educational settings. This study like other ones has some limitations as the sample and time. The number of participants was not sufficient and treatment occurred in short period of time.

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14

Exploring Cultural Hybridity in 10 English Films Dubbed into Persian By Namayesh Channel

Mehrzad Razavi Moghadam*

M.A., Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran
m_rsheytoonak@yahoo.com

Research Article

Abstract
As the world is becoming smaller, the ideas and beliefs of different societies and cultures encounter each other, bringing about the emergence of hybridity. In the modern world, cultural hybridity plays an important role in eradicating the barriers between cultures and people. This study aims to investigate the most frequently applied strategies by translators based on Venuti's translation theory. In this research 10 English films and their Persian translations are examined based on Delabastita's four distinctions of film signs including audio-verbal, audio-nonverbal, visual-verbal, and visual-nonverbal. The results of the study show that most of the strategies were related to domestication strategy and most of the hybrid elements were related to audio-verbal and visual-nonverbal levels of hybridity.

بررسی ترکیب فرهنگی در ۱۰ فیلم انگلیسی دوبله شده به فارسی توسط کانال نمایش

با کوچک‌تر شدن جهان، عقاید و باورهای جوامع و فرهنگ‌های مختلف با یکدیگر مواجه می‌شوند و ترکیبی را پدید می‌آورند. در دنیای مدرن، ترکیب فرهنگی نقش مهمی در از بین بردن موانع بین فرهنگ ها و مردم ایفا می کند. هدف این پژوهش بررسی راهبردهای متداول به کار رفته توسط مترجمان بر اساس نظریه ترجمه ونوتی است. در این تحقیق ۱۰ فیلم انگلیسی و ترجمه فارسی آنها بر اساس چهار تمایز دلابستیتا از نشانه های فیلم شامل سمعی-کلامی، شنیداری-غیرکلامی، دیداری-کلامی و بصری-غیرکلامی بررسی شده است. نتایج تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که بیشتر استراتژی‌ها مربوط به استراتژی بومی سازی و بیشتر عناصر ترکیبی مربوط به سطوح سمعی-کلامی و بصری-غیرکلامی ترکیبی بوده است.

واژه های کلیدی: ترکیب فرهنگی، شنیداری-کلامی، دیداری-کلامی، بیگانه سازی، بومی سازی

Introduction

Language connects different cultures and it is a way of expressing emotions and ideas (Abbasi & et al, 2012). There are many definitions regarding the nature of translation, but the definition mentioned in this study is related to the components that affect the translation process. Therefore, in a perfect text, the translator should write the source text again. While, the real process of translation is more complicated and intricate.

The incoherent type and nature of textual and extra textual features of both source and target language and also the transmutation of the communicative actions make it difficult for translators to do their job (Nagodawithana, 2020). Between these communicative elements` , culture has a vast impact on the process of translation among languages. Culture displays a combination of different qualities and features of that society and it makes difficult limitation and restrictions for the translators during the process of translation. The place of culture during the process of translation, the grandeur of influence of culture on the linguistic and other features of source and target text, the structure of cultural features and qualities in the process of translation and the translators' selections of texts to translate are the most important components in the discourse of culture (Nagodawithana, 2020).

When two things encounter with each other, when two different cultures are brought together, when two various genres are mixed to each other, something new is created which is called hybrid. Nowadays hybridity consists of positive ideas and concepts which are related to cultural theory and cyborg theory. Mixed cultures and ideas are so valuable so as to create new ideas and emotions and to express and explain the ever changing nature of sociocultural concepts (Simon, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Cultures of different countries are strongly connected to each other and affect each other in many ways. In modern, world every culture has a strong bond with other cultures. In this way, the ideas and beliefs which are new for other cultures are brought to them. So, cultures definitely change through the time. The way they treat and behave these new ideas are not the same. Some cultures have the capacity to accept them and others can't accept them because of cultural differences.

In Iran, these ideas and beliefs are treated differently by different translators. Some try to adapt them by using creative ways and others try to remove them because of the religious and cultural beliefs which exist in the Iranian culture. There are many factors which bring about the ideas and

beliefs of a certain country for example the government, the culture of that country, the traditions which are passed through generations from past and the religion of the society.

Research questions

Do political and religious ideologies affect the performance of translators?

What strategies do the translators use to deal with cultural hybrid elements according to Venuti's strategies?

What are the most and the least frequent strategies used to handle cultural hybrid elements?

Literature Review

History of Cultural Hybridity

Language and culture are connected together in many ways. It is an essential part of culture. It registers the stages of human development through the history of mankind. Language reverberates human's social and cultural improvement and It is also a tool for communication and interaction. Language can't exist without culture and vice versa. Language always improves in a cultural setting. (Min, 2018).

Cultural criticism and cultural studies raised the attention in west since 1980s. many scholars started to investigate cultural problems from different aspects. People no longer considered translation as a genuine academic study. They take it into account as a specific social and cultural setting. In translation this is called cultural turn. (Min, 2018)

Hybridity has been in center of attention in many fields. Originally the term "hybridity" goes back to Latin. In online Etymology Dictionary it drives back to Latin "hybrida" which means "offspring of a tan snow and a wild boar ". It is somehow connected to Greek "hubris". According to encyclopedia Britannica "hybrid means offspring of parents that differ is genetically determined traits. The parents may be of different spices, genres or families". Therefore, this term is so vast and considers animals, plants and etc. Hybridity has also been used in different fields like electronics, chemistry, social science, linguistic and etc. (Dai, 2016).

The notion of cultural hybridity in the translation studies concerns linguistic creolization and transculturation. The concept that cultures are mixed with each other raised attention with the advent of postcolonial theory in the last decades of 20th century. It is believed that hybridity is a new concept in cultural and social life of people around the world. But, as it is shown in the history of human life, migration and diasporic consciousness are features of human life. During the history

people have moved from one continent to another or trade passages like silk road that connected many nations, brought about mixing cultures, translation and hybridity (Simon, 2011).

Hybridity is one of the key concepts of postcolonial theory. Post-colonialism is originally referred to a period when the ideas and beliefs of colonizers hand over to colonized territories. There are many theories regarding this term. It includes a hazardous era in the lives of colonized people in which there were no political, cultural equity between the colonizer and the colonized. There was also the imbalance of power which happened and is happening through discursive practices. Nowadays post-colonialism has become a prominent theory because of its importance in literary research. Culture is an important factor in this theory so as to discern it with imperialism, colonization and neocolonialism (Wang, 2018).

Post-colonialism appeared as a theory in the USA IN 1970s and then it spread in Europe and all over the world (Wang, 2018).   One of the most prominent scholars in post-colonialism is Homi Bhabha. Bhabha is originally Persian born in India. He has developed cultural hybridity in his book "The location of cultures" (1994).

Related Studies

The first work deals with cultural aspect of hybridity research and criticism written by Kraidy (2002). The concept of hybridity is the most criticized and controversial ones of postcolonial theory. The paper mentions the scholarship of hybridity and assess some articles on cultural globalization published in the Washington Post in 1998. At last, it deals with the conceptual ambiguity of hybridity. It mentions asserts that hybridity is an inevitable reality that we have contact with in the world of translation.

Kuortti and Nyman (2007) have gathered the viewpoints of different scholars regarding the concept of hybridity and post-colonial studies in translation in the form of a book called 'Reconstructing hybridity'. This book includes two parts, the first part seeks to introduce a discussion about the term hybridity and its usage in post-colonial discourse. In this sense, the viewpoints of different theorists like Bhabha and Calcini are presented. The second part consists of theoretical studies in this volume.

One of the studies related to postcolonial theory is written by Yan Sayegh (2008). According to him in postcolonial theories, hybridity is having the capacity to go over and beyond the modern binaries. As Yan Sayegh has mentioned, the term hybridity has caused many long discussions and

debates yet this term refers to ideologies of racism. He pointed out that the origin of the word "hybrid" goes back to the 17th century and it is divided from Latin. It was related to biology or botanical descriptions.

Bhatia (2010) has conducted this research on cultural hybridity, acculturation and human development. As he has pointed "Hybridity is one of the most controversial ideas to have appeared from the discourse of globalization". Some postcolonial scholars like Stuart Hall (1991) and Homi.k Bhabha have helped to develop the theories of hybridity. These theories resulted in to show the structure of opposition and domination in colonial and postcolonial world. In this paper he mentioned and reminded us these theories show how power and agency are related to each other in the practice of hybridity.

There are a few works related to this concept in this area. One of the studies is written by Farahzad (2010). This study covers the changes that hybrid texts go through them while translating. This study aims to examine those changes through the process of translation. In the same manner, Mollanazar and Khalil (2011) have conducted a study regarding cultural hybridity. In this paper the summary of a study in large corpus of 2400 minutes of movies for finding different manifestations has been carried out. According to this study, names and dates were the most frequent manifestations of hybridity and many of the elements were cultural.

Shabani rad (2011) investigates the strategies applied in translation of culture-specific items in literary texts. He attempts to identify and investigate the problems that translators may go through during the translation of literary texts. More importantly, the cultural gaps that exist between two cultures. There are some words and expressions that are very cultural. Therefore, translators find it difficult to find a suitable equivalent for them in the target language. So, they search and try to find strategies to solve these kinds of problems during translation.

Young (2012) has carried out a research regarding the relation between hybridity and cultural translation. The idea of cultural translation emerged in the concepts of anthropology. However, the ideas hadn't been accepted by the scholars of anthropology. This resulted in that the scholars make relation between this idea and postcolonial studies especially hybridity. However, the complexity of this concept and its connection with linguistic translation still exists. The results of the study show that cultural and linguistic translation are different from each other.

Another research regarding this volume is related to translation and hybridity written by Birjandi and Parham (2014). This study has been carried out to demonstrate how Fillmore's scenes and frame semantics (SFS) can be used as a framework to show the process of understanding and

translating hybrid text. They first go over the base and origin of SFS then relates SFS with Nida's linguistic model of translation process and the interpretive theory of translation. In the next part different forms of understanding and translating hybrid texts are investigated. This study covers four layers which includes hybridization, dehybridization, rehybridization and hybridity preservation. The conclusion is that SFS can justify and explain different aspects of hybridity.

Klinger (2015) has written a book about translation and linguistic hybridity. The book summarizes a new approach regarding the study of linguistic hybridity and its translation in cross-cultural writing on the basis of concepts such as narratology, cognitive poetics, stylistics and film studies. It investigates the way linguistic hybridity brings about the audience's structure of textual factors of their viewpoints toward the world.

A study has been conducted related to hybrid modelling of intelligence and linguistic factors in the quality of translation by Pishghadam, Shayesteh and Heidari (2016). In this study they attempt investigate the quality of backward and forward translation on the basis of 2 points of view regarding intelligence including narrative intelligence (NI) and verbal intelligence (VI) and linguistic viewpoints. For the linguistic viewpoints the L1 and L2 proficiency levels of translator were considered to distinguish that if NI, VI or L1 and L2 proficiency are able to predict the quality of translation.

Nazavenko and Milostivya have conducted a research about the work of the famous philosopher Bhabha's "The location of culture" in the translation into the Russian language carried out by Nazavenko and Milostivya (2017). Bhabha is one of the most popular scholars in the field of cultural hybridity. According to them "hybridity" is one of the most regressive concepts in postcolonial cultural criticism and it makes easy to understand bilingual translators who belong to several cultures.

One of the articles is related to hybrid humor in cultural hybridity written by Bendi (2018). This article is about the effect of humor in cultural translation. As he declares "Hybrid humor has an important societal role in breaking psychological barriers between people as well as in denouncing dominant discourses, criticizing realities and promoting resistance." (Bendi, 2018, p.1). This paper covers the effect of humor in hybridity in the domain of cultural translation.

Regarding the influence of culture on translation in literary texts, Min Zhang (2018) has done a study. According to the research, translation is a cultural activity which is influenced by many

social and cultural factors. It is aimed to investigate the translator's binary identity and his/her choices of translation strategies.

Another study conducted in this area is related to cultural hybridity and subtitling written by Mollanazar and Omranipur (2019). According to Mollanazar and Omranipur the findings show different manifestations of hybridity can appear in all layers with various degrees. Names and dates employ the first place in the degree of manifestations. The most frequent manifestations appear at verbal and visual verbal layers. All of these manifestations of hybridity can be seen as a foreign identity by which the target product becomes linguistically and culturally hybrid in all aspects. Javidshad (2020) has done a study about poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal according to Homi.k Bhabha's postcolonial theories and postcolonial key terms including hybridity. The results show that b third space is the result of cultural hybridity and otherization.

Ha Jin's self-translation in A good fall written by Hui and Hong (2020) is another study in this field. The translation of A good fall by Ha Jin makes use of the norms and strategies of nativism which covers both source and target language. Although there are a lot of researches about his English books, nothing has been written about his self-translation. This study shows how skopos has affected his way of translation and the way his writing style affected his way of translation. It adds that how translation can bring about different views and ideas toward the future of literature and translation.

One of the recent researches is The research about the question of hybridity and the possibility of retaining Islamic identity in Leila Aboulela's 'The translator' (2021). This study aims to examine the possibility of maintaining the Islamic identity in a postcolonial and hybrid context in Leila Aboulela's the translator. Sammer is a Sudanese widow who works as an Arab translator for a Scottish scholar whom she falls in love with. At this point, she finds herself in a dilemma between East and West. This article attempts to analyze the challenge and dilemma Sammer, the protagonist goes through whether to go to hybridization process or maintain her Islamic identity.

Methodology

Corpus

As Nordquist mentions "Corpus linguistics is the study of language based on large collections of 'real life' language use stored in corpora- computerized databases created in linguistic (Nordquist, 2019, p.1).

Quantitative techniques are vital and important means for corpus analyzing and a large effort has been devoted to examining and explaining the quantitative elements and items (Nordquist, 2019). In this research the corpus consists of 10 American and British films and their dubbed version into Persian to examine the hybrid items. In the chart beneath the number of hybrid elements in each film, the overall number of hybrid elements in the whole films, the running time of each film, and the overall running time of the whole films are presented.

Table 1

The number of hybrid elements in each film and their running time

Name	Number of hybrid elements	Running time
The notebook	4	124 minutes
Snow piercer	4	126 minutes
Second act	6	104 minutes
Aladdin	3	128 minutes
Once upon a time in Hollywood	7	159 minutes
Playing with fire	4	96 minutes
Radioactive	3	109 minutes
Serenity	5	106 minutes
Summerland	3	99 minutes
Total number of hybrid elements and the running time	45	1155 minutes

Design

The framework of the study is a model by Mollanazar and Parham (2009) based on Delabastita's distinction of film signs which covers for factors including: audio-verbal, audio-nonverbal, visual-verbal and visual nonverbal. As Dalabastita mentions "A film constitutes a complex sign, in a way not unlike the theatrical performance sign. From a different perspective, however, film communication and theater communication show an important difference which has a direct bearing on the translation potential of a film as opposed to the translation potential of drama texts/ theater texts". (Dalabastita, 1988, p.197)

The audio and visual channels are the tools by which the message of the films reaches the audience. In most of the films visual channels are used to transmit both verbal signs and nonverbal signs, for example the place names which are verbal and the lifestyles of people in the film which are nonverbal. The acoustic channels do the same in transferring the verbal and nonverbal signs

for instance the sound of music in a film which is nonverbal. (Dalabastita, 1988). The framework of the study is explained in detail in chapter 1 of the research.

In this research Venuti's translation strategies have been employed. Both foreignization and domestication have a long history in the world of translation. Whether the translators choose domestication or foreignization doesn't depend on the translator's choice, it is related to the books, films or any other cultural and literal product they are working on. In other words, it is content based (Wang,2013).

Domestication is "a term used to describe the translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for the target readers" and foreignization "is used to designate the type of translation in which a target text is produced which deliberately breaks the target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original" (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2004). The hybrid elements of each film and their Persian translations are analyzed and compared and each of elements and their Persian versions are explained based on the theoretical framework of this study. The strategies based on foreignization and domestication were also examined which are divided as subgroups of Venuti's strategies.

Table 2
Distinction of translation methods based on Venuti's translation theory

Domestication	foreignization
Deletion	Borrowing
Translation of the meaning of elements	Literal translation
Euphemism	
Use of synonyms	

Data collection procedure

The researcher went through the films two or three times and detected the hybrid elements which seemed new and not acceptable in the target language and then went through their counterparts in Persian and discovered them. Finally, the items were analyzed and examined.

Data analysis procedure

The data were analyzed, the frequency of each unit determined and the most frequent and the least frequent applied strategies by the translators were analyzed based on the Venuti's distinction of translation methods including foreignization and domestication. The hybrid elements of all the movies were divided in the 4 groups of film signs which consists of audio-verbal, audio-nonverbal,

visual-verbal and visual-nonverbal. Their Persian versions were analyzed too. After the analysis, the answer to each research question is provided.

Results and Discussion

44 examples of hybrid elements were mentioned and analyzed. 35 of the cases are related to domestication. According to the results, 12 cases of items are related to removing them in the recipient culture. 13 cases of them are related to euphemism. 8 cases of them are based on translating the meaning of items and 2 cases are related to using synonyms. 9 cases of elements are related to foreignization which 8 of them are based on borrowing and one of them is related to literal translation.

According to the findings among 44 cases 6 of them are instances of visual-nonverbal levels and the rest are manifestations of audio-verbal levels. Based on the findings, the translators have applied more of domestication strategies to deal with cultural hybrid items. The translators have tried to localize the hybrid elements in order to be faithful to the target culture. The results are shown in the chart.

Table 3

The number of each translation strategy

Domestication		Foreignization	
Removing the items	12	Borrowing	8
The meaning of items	8	Literal translation	1
Euphemism	13		
Using synonyms	2		

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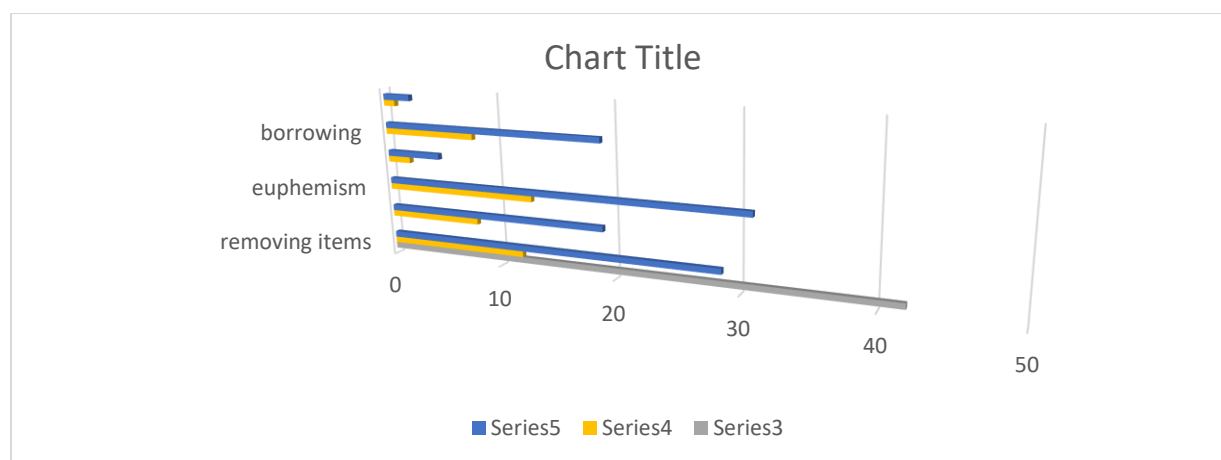
Table 4
Frequency of translation methods of cultural hybrid items

removing items	27%
the meaning of items	19%
euphemism	30%
using synonym	4%
borrowing	19%
literal translation	2%

Table 5
The number of hybrid elements based on Delabastita's distinction

Audio-verbal	Audio-nonverbal	Visual-verbal	Visual-nonverbal
38	-	-	6

Answer to the research questions

1. Do cultural and religious ideologies affect the performance of translators? The answer is yes. In this study 44 examples of hybrid elements and their Persian translations are examined. many of these examples are related to religious ideologies of target language which are removed or transferred by using the euphemism strategy to adopt them to the receiving culture., Therefore, the results show that religious and cultural ideologies have a great influence and effect on the performance of the translators.

2. What strategies do the translators use to deal with cultural hybridity according to Venuti's strategies including foreignization and domestication?

In 13 examples the translator applied euphemism to translate the hybrid elements. In 12 examples the hybrid examples are removed and not translated in the target language. In 8 instances the translators used borrowing strategy to transmit the items. In 8 instances which mostly included idioms the translators didn't find a counterpart for it so they translated their meaning to transfer them. In 2 examples the hybrid items were translated based on using synonyms and in 1 example the translator has used literal translation.

Based on the results 1n 35 cases they applied and used domestication strategies for transferring the hybrid elements and in 9 cases they used foreignization. Therefore, domestication strategy is used more than foreignization.

3. What are the most and the least frequent strategies used to handle cultural hybridity? As it was mentioned in the answer of previous question, 1n 12 instances items were removed in the target language, in 13 instances they applied euphemism, 1n 8 cases the borrowing strategy is conducted, in 8cases the meaning of the terms translated, in 2 cases using synonyms in recipient

culture is applied and in 1 instance literal translation has been applied. So based on the results, removing the items and euphemism are mostly used in the translation processes.

Conclusion

The aim of this study is to detect the strategies which the translators applied to transfer cultural hybridity in the translation of these 10 English films based on Venuti's translation strategies. The strategies which were used are mostly related to domestication strategy including euphemism, removing the items and translating the definition of idioms.

The theoretical framework of this study is according to Mollanazar and Parham's model based on 4 distinction of film signs which include audio-verbal, audio-nonverbal, visual-verbal and visual-nonverbal of dubbing. Most of the instances of this study are related to audio-verbal and visual-nonverbal levels.

The way the translators deal with cultural hybridity doesn't depend on source or target language or culture. It depends on the ideologies which the translator follows and ideas he / she has in his / her mind, specially, their creativity. Some of them are faithful to the target language and translate based on the notions of the target culture. While others use their creativity and different strategies in order to both retain the hybrid element and adapt it to the target culture.

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Impact of Extra-Curricular Reading Materials on the Development of EFL Learners' Motivation

Marzieh Rahaei[1], Hadi Salehi[2]*

Ph.D. Candidate, English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

Assistant Professor, English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

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Keywords:
Extra-curricular materials, motivation, concepts

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the impact of extra-curricular resources and materials on the development of EFL learners' motivation and ability to understand basic concepts of language. The IELTS pre-test and post-test scores of forty EFL learners, selected conveniently and homogenized through a Level Assessment (OPT) test, were compared to achieve this purpose. In addition, the participants who were randomly divided into experimental and control groups completed a motivation questionnaire, also called the academic motivation scale. This questionnaire was used to assess the participants' motivation to learn English through extra-curricular materials used outside a classroom. The obtained results indicated the effectiveness of using extra-curricular materials on motivation. The results also confirmed the recent findings that using extra-curricular materials is a useful way to improve the understanding of the learners' basic English language concepts and the development of their motivation.

تاثیر مطالب خواندنی فوق برنامه بر رشد انگیزه زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی

هدف از این مطالعه بررسی تأثیر منابع و مواد فوق برنامه بر رشد انگیزه و توانایی زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی برای درک مفاهیم اساسی زبان بود. نمرات پیش آزمون و پس آزمون آیلتس چهل زبان آموز زبان انگلیسی که به راحتی انتخاب شده و از طریق آزمون ارزیابی سطح (OPT) یکسان شده بودند، برای دستیابی به این هدف مقایسه شدند. علاوه بر این، شرکت کنندگانی که به طور تصادفی به دو گروه آزمایش و کنترل تقسیم شدند، پرسشنامه انگیزشی را که مقیاس انگیزش تحصیلی نیز نامیده می شود، تکمیل کردند. این پرسشنامه برای ارزیابی انگیزه شرکت کنندگان برای یادگیری زبان انگلیسی از طریق مواد فوق برنامه مورد استفاده در خارج از کلاس استفاده شد. نتایج بهدستآمده حاکی از اثربخشی استفاده از مواد فوق برنامه بر انگیزش بود. نتایج همچنین یافتههای اخیر را تأیید کرد که استفاده از مواد فوق برنامه راهی مفید برای بهبود درک مفاهیم پایه زبان انگلیسی زبانآموزان و همچنین توسعه انگیزه آنها است.

واژه های کلیدی: مطالب غیر آموزشی، انگیزه، مواد آموزشی، مفاهیم

Introduction

The ability to learn non-English language subjects plays an important role in the daily lives of high school students and creates more motivation for them to learn more. This skill can develop other language skills, such as English speaking, reading and writing skills. Improving English language learning skills can also develop other language skills in the classroom (Brown, 2004). Students acquire the necessary knowledge and information through the skill of learning non-English subjects and how to learn to read and write. They can recognize the correct pronunciation of wordswhen they listen to words several times. As in children, the hearing takes precedence over speaking. According to Brown, language learning skills play an important role both in facilitating languagecomprehension and in the process of learning it. This skill is like a channel through which learners make their first contact with the target language and culture. (Curtain & Pesola, 1988). In recent years, language learning skills through extra-curricular reading have become a priority in the English language teaching and learning process because of their significant impacton motivating knowledge acquisition. Students have to learn more and more English. Today, the emphasis on language teaching methods is not limited to productive skills, dialect, and writing. Theability to understand learning English is a very complex process because listeners must understandthe meaning of speech from the information given by the speaker (Curtain & Pesola, 1988).

It seems that people who learn English as a foreign language have a hard time hearing, even if the elements of tone and pronunciation are not fast, they feel unable to understand conversations or songs. Therefore, practicing English as much as possible by reading extra-curricular material canbe a great help in motivating people to learn this language. It is difficult to learn English as a foreign language. Therefore, learners need strong and rich resources to encourage them to learn accurately and understand messages Extra-curricular English materials are educational aids that provide learners with visual and environmental features. These features of non-teaching materialscan help learners compensate for any deficiencies in comprehension and learning (Thanajaro, 2000)

Critical and thematic Exposure to English outside the classroom can help strengthen learners' ability to learn. They believe that with the rapid development of audio-visual technologiessuch as the Internet, satellite, social networks, etc., the need to learn English has increased. (Bahrani, & Tam (2012).

English language learning skills play an important role in the educational process and everyday communication. Because English is a foreign language in Iran, many English language learners do not have the opportunity to meet English speakers in the country to improve their English language learning skills. This fact indicates that Iranian language learners will definitely have difficulty learning English. Therefore, teachers should find solutions to improve their English language learning skills through extra-curricular study. Singleton (1989) believes that the use of extra-curricular materials increases the motivation of learners to learn English. Curricula developed solely for teaching are more enjoyable and interesting, so the use of extra-curricular materials should be considered an important criterion in developing learners' skills in improving the language learning process.

The purpose of this study is to find the answer to the question of whether the use of extra-curricular materials at intermediate levels can increase the motivation of learners or not. This study also examines the effect of these materials on learners' learning abilities. Unfortunately, in most English language classes in Iran, less attention is paid to extra-curricular learning skills, while the use of non-educational materials is useful as a learning method for language learners Singleton (1989).

Many researchers have pointed to the need to use extra-curricular activities in the classroom. The researchers believe that exposing students to extra-curricular activities provides opportunities for them to become more familiar with English texts that are used in everyday life. In this way, language learners become interested in learning English. The use of extra-curricular materials can also increase the learning ability of English learners as a foreign language. Another necessity is to use extra-curricular materials to improve social skills and learners' confidence.

Literature Review

Definition of non-teaching materials

Training is done with two types of training materials: Teaching materials and non-teaching materials. Curriculum refers to the types of teaching materials that are provided for teaching purposes, but there is disagreement about extra-teaching materials. Therefore, these materials are defined in different ways.

Hitler says: "extra-curricular material includes any text written by English speakers for the use of English speakers. Tomlinson defines extra-curricular material as follows "A text that is not written or spoken for language teaching Bacon, & Finneman (2019). Newspaper, poem, song,

story, an interview "Television is allexamples of extra-curricular texts." In fact, he thinks extra-curricular materials are designed to convey information.

According to Bacon & Finneman (2019), extra-curricular materials are materials that English speakersprovide for non-educational purposes. Taylor (2020) calls any English text, especially text that is notintended for language teaching, non-teaching materials. Gilmore (2018) considers non-educational materials to be non-educational materials that convey the true message of real writers and speakers,which can be transmitted through a variety of audio-visual programs such as cartoons, movies, news, and more.

Seguni (2009) argues that extra-curricular materials to learn more English give learners the opportunity to experience the language used in everyday life. They enable students to "process information meaningfully, be responsible for their own learning, and become independent learners." In fact, this approach can provide opportunities.Provide learners with the opportunity to experience real language in the classroom. Exposing learners to extracurricular and real-world material is essential as they prepare to communicate in real life.

Extra-curricular materials and motivation

English language learning skills play an important role in everyday communication and the learning process. Developing the ability to learn English through extra-curricular study improves other skills, just as children listen first and then speak before speaking. Qader Panahi believes that "because English language learning skills are less explicit than other language skills, this feature makes it more difficult to learn." Otte (2016) also believes that engaging learners with non-teachingmaterials improve their listening comprehension as well as their motivation, so using raw and non-teaching materials in language classes is the best way to achieve this goal. And teachers needto pay more attention to choosing the right non-teaching materials.

Using extra-curricular materials is a way to increase students' motivation. There have been many studies on the effect of extra-curricular materials on students' ability to increase motivation and learning. Some empirical studies indicate the positive effects of using non-teaching aural materials on language learners. For example, Breen (2017) believes that the use of real language in language classes gives learners the ability to make direct contact with input data, which affects their communication in the target language.

Harmer (2018) also believes that these materials enhance students' listening and reading skills,

as well as their motivation to learn, according to Allen et al. According to Allen et al., quoting Baird & Radmond (2020), "the development of students' strategies in understanding extra-curricular texts leads to the development of writing skills and motivation in learning a second language."

Gilmore (2018) has also studied the effect of using extra-curricular texts on the development of communication skills and increasing motivation in learning so that extra-curricular materials can be used to provide comprehensible input and use in the program.

Extra-curricular and motivation

Motivation as an important factor in learning has been studied many times. In the process of language learning, motivation plays an important role in the development and promotion of learning. Marzban and Dovaji (2017) believe that motivation leads to the desire to learn a language.According to Salehi (2015), a motivated learner can be independent and responsible Be your own learning. In addition, many researchers and authors believe that extra-curricular texts are more interesting and engaging than textbooks and that these texts have a positive effect on students' motivation in foreign language classes. It is on this basis that Peacock states that "extra-curricular texts motivate learners because they are inherently more interesting and engaging in teaching than textbooks and fiction." Extra-curricular texts suggest that they motivate and maintain students' motivation to learn.

Many researchers give reasons for the motivating power of extra-curricular texts. McNeil (2012) and Kilickaya (2014) have shown that using extra-curricular texts and materials is a way to increase motivation to learn a language. They claim that through non-textbooks, learners can visualize themselves in the real world, and experience the real world outside the classroom. Thus, exposureto real texts in language classes can increase students' motivation and boost their self-confidence. In addition, this learning method will help develop some of their social skills.

Some empirical studies suggest that extra-curricular materials are useful in creating meaningful learning because these texts relate to the real-life needs and want of learners and make them independently interested in continuing to learn English through extra-curricular texts. be.

Berardo (2019) believes that the choice of extra-curricular texts is based on these factors: content relevance, usability, and readability. He believes that content if it interests learners and is appropriate, meets their needs and abilities.

Research Questions

Based on what was mentioned above, the present study sought to answer the following   research questions:

RQ1. Do extra-curricular activities improve EFL learners' motivation to learn English?

RQ2. Do extra-curricular activities develop EFL learners' ability to learn basic language concepts?

Method

Participants

This research was conducted on forty Iranian EFL learners in two different classes, in a language institute located in Isfahan province. The participants were conveniently selected from among seventy students and homogenized through Level Assessment (OPT) test. They were randomly divided into experimental and control groups of 20 students.

Instruments

In this study, the three following instruments were used to collect data:

1) Oxford Placement Test, which is a normal test and belongs to the University of Oxford to determine the level of language skills of students. By performing this test, the statistical samples become homogeneous.

2) ELTS learning test, which includes two twenty-question tests as a pre-test and post-test.

3) Motivation questionnaire which is known as the academic motivation scale and was administered at the beginning and end of the training.

Procedure

The participants were first divided into two groups. The treatment group received extra-listening materials and the control group received the in-class teaching materials in 10 sessions. Classes were held twice a week, lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. In both groups, the students listened to audio texts. The material for the experimental group included audiomaterial the words on the *street program,* which was broadcasted daily by the BBC. The material for the control group consisted of materials in audio sections of *Four Corners 2*.

Before starting the training program, the IELTS learning test was conducted as a pre-test to measure the experimental participants' listening comprehension ability. The same test and used as a post-test to measure the effect of extra-curricular materials on learners' learning ability at the end of the course. The Motivation scale questionnaire was also used at the beginning and end of

the training course to assess the effect of extra-curricular materials on the participants' motivation. The estimated time to answer the questions was 25 minutes. The same process was done for the control group.

Results and Discussion

The results of this study prove the claim of many researchers about the positive effect of using extra-curricular material on language learners' motivation and on improving their comprehension ability. Proponents of extra-curricular material believe that if teachers use extra-curricular materials in the classroom and create opportunities for the learners to experience real-world texts, they will beable to better understand written and audio texts.

According to the findings of many researchers, the use of extra-curricular materials in language classes makes learners interested in learning English. The results of this study also confirm recent findings in the use of extra-curricular materialsin English language classes as a useful way to improve students' comprehension skills.

As far as the first research question of the study is concerned, the results indicate that language learners who use extra-curricular materials are more interested to learn the language and their listening skills are more developed. These findings are in line with the beliefs of Little, et al. (1989). They justify the use of extra-curricular material in the language classroom.

As for the second research question, which deals with the effect of extra-curricular materials on the learners' ability to understand the basic concepts of the English language, the obtained results were to the positive.

All in all, the findings of the present study are consistent with those of Salehi and Vafakhah (2013) regarding the improvement of the learners' understanding of basic concepts of language.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study confirm that the use of extra-curricular material in the English language classroom improves the learners' ability to understand basic concepts and makes them interested in learning English. Little, et al. (1989) argue that extra-curricular material actually brings learners closer to the target language culture, making learning more enjoyable and interesting.

Various methods have been used to investigate the effect of extra-curricular material on the development of motivation and auditory comprehension ability of learners. In the current study, the analysis of the data showed that most of the learners' listening problems are due to not practicing and not being exposed to extra-curricular activities. In fact, the results displayed the positive

effect of such materials on the development of the EFL learners' motivation because, through extra-curricular materials, language learners will have direct contact with the real-life language presented by English speakers.

In conclusion, it can be stated that extra-curricular reading materials can have a significant impact on the development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' motivation. Below are some ways in which this can happen:

Increased interest in the language: When EFL learners read materials that they find interesting, they are more likely to become engaged and motivated to continue learning the language. This interest can extend beyond the text they are reading to other areas of the language, such as grammar and vocabulary.

Exposure to authentic language: Extra-curricular reading materials can expose EFL learners to authentic language, which can help them develop their language skills in a more natural way. They can learn vocabulary and expressions that are used in real-life situations, which can help them communicate more effectively.

Confidence building: Reading materials that are appropriate to the learner's level can help them feel more confident in their ability to read and understand English. This can lead to a sense of accomplishment and motivation to continue learning.

Diversification of learning materials: By using extra-curricular reading materials, EFL learners can diversify their learning materials and avoid boredom. This can help them maintain their motivation and interest in learning the language.

As for motivation, extra-curricular materials can be a powerful tool for developing motivation in a variety of ways. Here are some ways in which extra-curricular materials can help to develop motivation:

Choice: Extra-curricular materials allow learners to have more choice and control over what they are learning. When learners have the freedom to choose what they are interested in, they are more likely to be motivated to learn.

Relevance: Extra-curricular materials can be tailored to the individual learner's interests and needs, making them more relevant and meaningful. When learners can see the relevance of what they are learning to their own lives, they are more likely to be motivated to continue.

Variety: Extra-curricular materials provide a wider variety of materials and topics, which can help to keep learners engaged and motivated. When learners have access to a range of different

materials, they are less likely to become bored or disengaged.

Challenge: Extra-curricular materials can provide learners with more challenging materials and tasks, which can help to develop a sense of accomplishment and motivation to continue learning.

Autonomy: Extra-curricular materials allow learners to work independently, which can help to develop a sense of autonomy and ownership over their learning. When learners feel that they are in control of their own learning, they are more likely to be motivated to continue.

Interest: Extra-curricular materials can be designed to cater to learners' interests and passions, which can help to develop motivation. When learners are working on materials that they find interesting, they are more likely to be motivated to continue.

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Challenges of E-Learning Faced by ESL Learners during the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study

Yazid Meftah Ali Wahas*

English Department, Faculty of Education ABS, Hajjah University, Yemen

Research Article

Available online

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way of life, learning, and work. It shook the entire world and caused the largest disruption to all levels of education in history. As the world went into lockdowns, to reduce the proliferation of the pandemic, people worldwide were confined to their homes; virtual and digital platforms for learning and teaching remained the cornerstone of continuing education. Despite the rapid development of learning technologies, ESL students still face many challenges in learning a language while shifting to e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the current study aimed to investigate the challenges faced by the ESL students of the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India. The study followed a qualitative method, where a questionnaire was designed via Google Forms. According to the study's findings, students were dissatisfied with e-learning because they faced numerous challenges such as technological accessibility, social interaction, e-assessment, and academic performance.

چالش‌های یادگیری مجازی در خلال همه‌گیری کووید-۱۹: مطالعه موردی

همه گیری کووید-۱۹ شیوه زندگی، یادگیری و کار را تغییر داده است. کل جهان را تکان داد و بزرگترین اختلال را در تمام سطوح آموزشی در تاریخ ایجاد کرد. از آنجایی که جهان وارد قرنطینه شد، برای کاهش گسترش همه‌گیری، مردم در سراسر جهان در خانه‌های خود محبوس شدند. بسترهای مجازی و دیجیتالی برای یادگیری و آموزش سنگ بنای آموزش مداوم باقی ماندند. علیرغم توسعه سریع فناوری‌های یادگیری، دانش‌آموزان ESL همچنان با چالش‌های زیادی در یادگیری زبان مواجه هستند و در طول همه‌گیری-COVID 19 به آموزش الکترونیکی روی می‌آورند. بنابراین، مطالعه حاضر با هدف بررسی چالش‌های پیش روی دانشجویان ESL گروه زبان انگلیسی، دانشگاه مسلمانان(AMU) Aligarh ، هند انجام شد. این مطالعه از یک روش کیفی پیروی کرد که در آن پرسشنامه از طریق Google Forms طراحی شد. بر اساس یافته‌های این مطالعه، دانش‌آموزان از یادگیری الکترونیکی ناراضی بودند، زیرا با چالش‌های متعددی مانند دسترسی فناوری، تعامل اجتماعی، ارزیابی الکترونیکی و عملکرد تحصیلی مواجه بودند.

واژگان کلیدی: همه گیری، چالش های یادگیری مجازی، زبان آموزان

*Corresponding Author's Email:
yazeedwahas@gmail.com

Introduction

The unexpected outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a dramatic loss of human life and caused profound crises affecting all domains of life including education at all stages. As of May 10, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected 215 countries across the globe, and many of these faced lockdowns (2020). As a result, educational institutions around the world have either temporarily suspended or closed their operations to maintain social distancing in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 and avoid losses. In addition, they postponed all events to prevent gatherings where the pandemic might spread. Similarly, AMU was among the first few institutions that suspended all its activities. The prolonged lockdown imposed by COVID-19 has made studying and working from home the new norm. Due to the suspension of face-to-face teaching, a shift to online teaching was the only alternative method to reduce the spread of the pandemic and decrease the contact between teachers with students as well as among students themselves so that teaching can continue. According to Hodges et al. (2020), a temporal shift to an alternative teaching way due to crisis conditions such as the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be compared with a well-designed and planned online teaching process and even less with face-to-face learning.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about new ways to conduct different events such as teaching business, public services and other meetings. "With the advent of COVID-19, e-learning seems to be one of the safest and easiest ways to impart education for acquiring new skills, exploring new career options, or for that matter new hobby development" (2020). The unexpected shift from face-to-face classes to online has caused many challenges for both teachers and learners. In turn, a great burden has been placed on teachers who were mostly unprepared and accustomed to face-to-face classes. They found it difficult to adopt new ways of teaching and had to possess a variety of skills with digital platforms. Gradually, they coped and familiarized themselves with it; therefore, they didn't hesitate to accept any change. "Teachers play a vital role in creating an environment that supports students' learning" (Johnson, 2017, p. 46).

Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) is a challenging job, particularly for students who require/need continual guidance and observation of teachers in the classroom. These challenges are in teaching language skills, including writing, speaking, listening, and reading during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of social interaction between the teachers and learners during teaching English language skills such as speaking and reading may make students feel too shy to practice. Moreover, Lukas and Yunus (2021) comment that a lack of confidence in speaking

during the virtual class made students more uncomfortable when compared to a face-to-face meeting in the classroom. Unlike online learning, traditional teaching allows teachers to interact and discuss students' questions and inquiries. Thus, students vary in terms of learning styles, interests, and competence levels, particularly when learning English as a second language, which is influenced by many linguistic, cultural, and individual factors.

Literature Review

Some studies have discussed the challenges associated with the shifting from traditional learning to e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lukas and Yunus (2021) conducted a study examining the challenges experienced by ESL teachers in applying online learning during COVID-19. It involved 20 primary ESL teachers in Malaysia. The study concluded that e-learning was effective with some limitations such as the lack of readiness of teachers to adapt to e-learning, technological barriers concerning internet connectivity, and students' evaluation and participation.

Ying et al (2021) investigated the challenges ESL learners experienced in learning English skills using virtual tools during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study presented a literature review on ESL learners' challenges in learning speaking skills. According to the study's results, lack of self-confidence, motivation, hesitation, anxiety and limited vocabulary acquisition were some of the challenges faced by ESL learners. The study recommended that integrating virtual tools, including video conferencing, is useful in overcoming learners' obstacles to speaking skills during the pandemic.

Shahzad et al (2020) examined the impact of virtual and digital teaching on the attitude of ESL learners during the COVID-19 pandemic at the postgraduate level in Pakistan. The study was carried out by creating a questionnaire to assess ESL students' attitudes toward online teaching. The study included 100 postgraduate students of the English Department of Khawaja Freed University of Engineering and Technology, Punjab, Pakistan. Analyzing one hundred students' responses, the study found some drawbacks of online learning, such as lack of facilities, internet connectivity and technology, and deficiency of resource material. The study's results revealed that online teaching brings a positive increase in the attitudes of students. Students were excited, motivated, and welcomed online teaching during COVID-19.

Krishnan et al. (2020) identified learners' perception of learning English via free online resources and traditional learning during COVID-19. The study included 25 international pre-elementary intensive English students. The study dealt with challenges that both learners and

teachers faced, such as familiarity with the use of e-learning platforms to gain extra value, teachers being available when needed, as well as the ability to provide quick feedback to students. As for the institutions, they might find some challenges in the cost of implementing online learning facilities. The study results revealed that students weren't very keen to use online resources such as ESL websites for additional learning as they were forced to do so.

E-Learning in ESL Classroom

E-learning describes using digital platforms for teaching and learning instead of face-to-face learning. Rodrigues et al. defined e-learning as a creative digital system developed through the use of digital technologies and a variety of learning materials and resources to provide students with a learner-centered, conducive, and interactive environment. Likewise, Zarei and Mohammadi (2021), defined e-learning as a flexible, interactive, self-paced, and elaborate pedagogical method that introduces educational approaches using a wide variety of platforms. "The e-learning system is an important source of information, because of its ubiquity (i.e., availability anywhere and anytime), low cost, ease of use, and interactive character" (Almiah et al., 2020, p. 5262).

In this mode of teaching, teachers and learners can meet virtually using laptops and smartphones through different conferencing applications such as Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Webex meetings, Microsoft Teams, Telegram, or Line. In terms of English language teaching and learning, the extensive use of online learning and modern technology has a tremendous influence on learners and teachers alike. The rapid technological progress in recent decades has helped in the provision of opportunities for language learning. For instance, the use of audio, graphics, and animation effects increased the effectiveness and appeal of e-learning (Wijaya & Helmi, 2018). Thus, teachers and students have to take into account that e-learning will be the future learning norm.

Advantages of E-Learning

The only advantage of COVID-19 is that it has compelled the majority of educational institutions worldwide to adopt the idea of online learning. Hernandez and Flórez (2020) stated that "COVID-19 opened the door to online teaching during the emergency and as a benchmark to the future learning spaces" (p.162). The next section will discuss some advantages of e-learning.

Accessibility

Online learning provides very effective ways to conduct classes. With online applications, teachers can easily upload their materials, present their videos and assign assessment tests. In addition, teachers can record the lectures and lessons and share their references with a wide range of audiences and students can access them anytime and, in any place, as long as there is a device and connectivity. Maatuk (2021) said many users of online learning platforms find that e-learning is simple to manage as well as the students can obtain the teaching materials easily.

Affordability and Time-Saving

One advantage of online learning is that no textbooks are required from the learners. It is more affordable/cheaper if compared to face-to-face learning. Learners can access the teaching materials online easily without any constraints. Unlike textbooks which need to be retrieved and reprinted again when they become outdated, online materials can be updated and reloaded many times. Furthermore, when compared to the traditional method, online learning saves time. Designing and preparing teaching curricula in the traditional method is a complicated process, however, online lessons can be updated and prepared efficiently and quickly. As reported by Maatuk et al. (2020), e-learning "helped reduce the effort and travel expenses and other expenses that accompany traditional learning" (p22). Moreover, it is a friend of the environment, as it is paperless. It does not share in creating any of the environmental issues accompanying paper production. Thus, e-learning saves money and time.

Self-paced and Less Absenteeism

E-learning is described as self-paced. Learners can manage their own schedule and time, instead of the class attendance requirements of traditional learning. It allows learners to express their thoughts with their peers and teachers. Self-paced learning helps in increasing the satisfaction of learners and decreases their anxiety, resulting in better learning outcomes for everyone involved. Absenteeism is one issue of face-to-face learning. With online learning, learners are not required to physically attend. Therefore, learners can access classes easily from their homes or other places.

Challenges Faced by ESL Learners in Shifting to Online Learning Mode

Despite the rapid technological growth, teachers and learners face challenges when shifting to e-learning, particularly in underdeveloped countries. Students who take online classes face

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challenges they have never faced in a traditional learning and teaching environment. On a positive aspect, the pandemic acted as a catalyst forcing many educational institutions to devise effective solutions in a comparatively short period. Todorova and Bjorn-Andersen (2011), stated that the most important lesson for others from this pandemic is to adopt e-learning technology before disaster strikes. The pandemic certainly has sped up the process of online teaching. "Online teaching-learning became a massive challenge to deal with, and stakeholders are not potentially fit to adjust to the sudden educational change as they are not technologically competent to embrace the current situation" (Sujata, 2022, p. 187).

On the one hand, the pandemic exposed the insufficiency of India's education system. Many institutions lack online teaching tools, and most teachers are not well-skilled and familiar with the new mode of teaching. As well, some students without reliable internet access struggle to take part in digital and virtual learning. The following section will summarize some of the e-learning challenges faced by ESL learners during the COVID-19 pandemic in detail:

Technological Accessibility Challenges

One of the primary requirements for e-learning is a high-speed internet connection. The lack of technological readiness of educational institutions in many countries including India is one of the main challenges in implementing online learning. Despite the accessibility of online resources, the transfer of knowledge has not been effective due to inconsistency in the system. One of the online teaching challenges at Aligarh Muslim University is that major students live in remote areas having less internet connectivity. In some regions of India, people are still utilizing 2G or 3G internet speeds. "During the lockdown period, 70% of Indian students attended online classes, the majority of which used android smartphones, but digital platforms used for e-learning are not compatible with smartphones" (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2021, p. 9). This results in enormous difficulties in uploading and scanning their assignments on plain sheets of paper depending upon the internet speed and quality of smartphones and load on the university server. Furthermore, app problems during teaching may deprive the learner of the lesson's allotted time.

In addition to connectivity issues, students could not afford the price of laptops or new smartphones. According to reports, a significant part of students come from poor families (Fry and Cilluffo, 2019). As matter of fact, a huge proportion of Indian society are farmers facing a financial crisis and cannot afford the costs of new devices.

Social Interaction Challenges

The lack of interaction between teachers and fellow learners is another major challenge of e-learning. Interaction is defined as the exchange of knowledge and information between teachers and students as it plays a vital role in developing learners' language skills. Unlike face-to-face learning, e-learning limits the interaction between teachers and students and students themselves. The absence of effective contact between teachers and learners is a big issue in the language learning process. Some students are categorized as tactile learners who require face-to-face interaction with their instructors to comprehend the challenging material provided online (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2021). The entire suspension of face-to-face interaction resulted in an incomplete process of information exchange and transmission, and students' skills cannot be developed. For learners, it is better to be with their teachers as they can discuss, talk and interact, which is an important aspect of learning a language. Digital efficiency, which is described as the understanding, abilities, and attitudes needed to participate in digital classes is another significant obstacle to remote learning (Ferrari, 2013). Similarly, teachers' lack of readiness to encourage learners to participate and finish their tasks may lead them to lose their focus and feel bored. Moreover, insufficient online lesson deprives ESL learners to practice their language skills. Thus, teachers must keep their sessions interactive enough to make learners focused despite the limits e-learning places on peer interaction.

E-assessment Challenges

Another key challenge of online learning faced by students is the e-assessment process. E-assessment as a way of assessing learners has developed recently with the advent of e-learning. It simply means electronic assessment. Reju and Adesina (2009) defined e-assessment as the end-to-end electronic assessment process that starts with the setting and planning and ends with data analysis and results. Some universities adopted it in place of the traditional method in order to obtain a faster and more accurate method to assess learners. E-assessment has improved student outcomes measurement and allowed them to receive immediate and direct feedback. The multiple options of e-assessment including automatic assignments, digitizing sheets, and online tests that include various choices added a challenge for students during COVID-19.

The key advantages of using e-assessment in online learning are: providing students with direct and immediate feedback, improving students' outcomes, minimizing the teacher's time and effort, reducing the institution's expenses, and promoting positive thinking which is one of the learning

goals (Alruwais et al., 2018). According to Osuji (2012), the challenges of e-assessment can lie in poor technological infrastructure, especially in underdeveloped countries, unfamiliarity and lack of teachers' and students' experiences with the process of e-assessment as well as the accessibility of the internet, particularly in remote areas. Conducting e-assessments remotely has posed additional challenges for higher education institutions as Aligarh Muslim University did. As a result, online education relied on an untested trial-and-error system that was largely hit-or-miss; online evaluation and assessment also had significant flaws and ambiguity (Tahseen, 2020).

Academic Challenges

The academic challenge is also a hindrance for ESL students in e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sudden shift to e-learning has added daunting tasks for teachers, as it requires more effort such as mental preparation, memorizing, reading, and online recording. Teachers could not achieve their academic objectives during COVID-19 because of numerous issues including a lack of communication skills among teachers and learners, a lack of reading and writing skills, a lack of group discussions during assignments as well as a lack of vocabulary acquisition. In online classes, learners feel it is difficult to share with their teachers and to speak as they are afraid to make grammatical mistakes. At the same time, online classes lack writing skills in which the class is focusing on speaking and listening only. "It could be assumed that the transition from face-to-face classes to virtual learning spaces due to COVID-19 has originated certain discomfort in students so that they feel limited to speak or write unless it is requested from the teacher" (Hernandez and Flórez, p. 232, 2020). As a result, learners lose interest in learning language skills. Aside from language skills, learners feel unsatisfied to have learning at home that lacks motivation and interaction, which are important factors when acquiring any foreign language including English. Sayuti et al, mention that learners' lack of communication and confidence during electronic learning has made it more difficult for them to speak the words properly. They also lack ample vocabulary and practice which made them feel difficulty expressing themselves as they are shy, afraid, and hesitant of making mistakes or being mocked by their peers (Syafiq et al., 2021). Therefore, learners' limited exposure to language content made them anxious and afraid to communicate and express themselves.

Online Teaching at Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh Muslim University was among the first few institutions that decided immediately shut down all its activities hopefully to avoid the spread of the pandemic and minimize the loss. Online teaching was the only option to continue teaching at Aligarh Muslim University. On 23 March 2020, the Vice-Chancellor of AMU emphasized the importance of information technology during the pandemic. He urged teachers to assist students in overcoming the loss of classes and tutorials through email and other electronic mode interactions. He also appealed to the teachers to regularly upload the teaching materials and circulate them via WhatsApp and/or emails (AMU website, 2020). The university asserted that it is a priority to utilize information technology in the teaching process and in preparing the workforce for the future.

 On 21 April 2020, Aligarh Muslim University launched an online teaching program. The step has been met with enthusiasm from teachers and students, and faculty members have dealt with the challenges creatively. To improve online teaching, it was decided that e-content/e-lab experiments would be created by the teachers involved and uploaded to the website. The University's HRDC (Human Resource Development Centre) instantly launched an online Faculty Development Program (FDP) for all teachers exclusively for the management of online classes and research. Online classes were held through conferencing tools (Google Meet, Microsoft Team, Webex or Zoom, etc.), and writing and reading assignments were done using various apps such as Google Classroom, email, and WhatsApp groups. Furthermore, Asim Siddiqui, a professor and head of the English Department at Aligarh Muslim University who taught on Zoom, stated that it was a revitalizing experience for him. I have found that in online classes, students aren't distracted and the teacher can make eye contact with the majority of them. (AMU website, 2020).

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative method was employed in this study. It was carried out based on primary and secondary data. The primary data of this study were collected from the questionnaire, while secondary data was also collected from published articles, research papers, and books.

Research Instrument and Participants

 To achieve the objectives of the study and data collection, an online questionnaire was conducted and distributed. The questionnaire was designed via Google Forms and distributed

among students through WhatsApp groups. Students who participated in this study were BA students in the Department of English of Aligarh Muslim University. 50 students participated in this study. They had the same cultural background with the same educational level. The questionnaire included 19 items. It covered four aspects- technological accessibility challenges, social interaction challenges, assessment challenges and academic challenges. The questionnaire was measured with a five-point Likert scale. Before distributing and executing the questionnaire, the respondents (students) were informed about the nature and objectives of the study and the importance of their participation in it, and contents were requested and obtained.

Results

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences 28) was used to analyze the data of the study. The questionnaire was made up of four aspects and 19 questions. A five-point Likert scale format from 1 to 5 (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5= strongly agree) was used to assess the responses of the teachers and students. The first aspect is about technological accessibility challenges during online learning. It includes five items (1-5). The second aspect is about the social interaction challenges and covers four items (6-9). The third aspect relates to the assessment's challenges. It includes three items (10-12). The fourth aspect of the study is academic challenges. It includes seven items (13-19). The designed questionnaire was given to one category of respondents, BA undergraduates of the English Department of AMU.

From Table 1, it is noticeable that the technological accessibility challenge was an important challenge faced by students during online learning at AMU. It showed that both institutions and students were not prepared to implement online learning. 33% of respondents agreed that the university lacks some of the necessary technological facilities and 31% of them agreed that some students need smartphones and laptops. Moreover, 29% of respondents agreed that there are some challenges with online conferencing apps. 29% of respondents agreed that they faced inadequate internet access as they live in remote areas. Whereas 21% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that internet packages are expensive.

Table 1

Question	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
The necessary technological facilities are unavailable	2	2	4	33	9
Some students' laptops and phones are incompatible.	2	3	6	31	8
There are some challenges with online conferencing apps	1	3	3	29	14
Inadequate internet access	1	2	9	28	10
The cost of internet packages is expensive	0	10	21	19	0

Table 1 above presents students' responses concerning the social interaction challenges. According to the result of the questionnaire, 33% of respondents agreed that online learning is personal and indirect while 26% of respondents agreed that e-learning lacks effective interaction between teachers and learners. In the same context, 26% of respondents 'online learning lacks group discussions during assignments. On the other hand, 26 respondents strongly disagreed that online learning is motivating when compared to traditional one.

Table 2

Question	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Online learning is more motivated compared to traditional teaching	26	19	3	0	2
Lack of interaction among learners and teachers	0	2	8	26	14
Online learning is too personal and indirect	3	2	6	33	6
Online learning lacks group discussions during assignments	0	2	10	26	12

Table 2 presents the responses of students about the challenges of e-assessment. The students agreed that there was an assessment challenge during online learning. The multiple modes of assessment made students dissatisfied with their scores and demoralize them to continue online learning. 30% of respondents agreed and 10% strongly agreed that e-assessment was one of the main e-learning challenges. 30% of respondents also agreed that e-learning is focusing on theory,

not practice as well as 22 agreed and 17 strongly agreed that e-learning lacks good monitoring during examinations and assignments.

Table 3

Question	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
The various methods of assessment are a challenge for students.	0	2	8	30	10
Online learning is focusing on theory, not practice	0	5	10	30	5
There is poor monitoring during e-learning	0	4	7	22	17

Table 3 above presents the responses of students about the academic challenges. This challenge included all language skills: speaking, writing, reading and listening, vocabulary and motivation. 29% of students confirmed that online learning did not address their needs for language skills and motivation. 36% of respondents agreed that e-learning lacks effective communication and reading skills. 14 respondents disagreed and 22 neither agreed nor disagreed that e-learning improves the writing skills and vocabulary acquisition of ESL learners. On the other hand, 24% of respondents disagreed and 18 strongly disagreed to study English online.

Table 4

Question	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Neutral	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Online learning is beneficial for ESL learners	4	22	13	11	0
Online learning is better than face-to-face learning	18	24	3	5	0
Online teaching of language differs from other subjects?	2	1	5	27	15
Online teaching fulfills learners' needs	14	29	5	2	0
Lack of effective communication and reading skills represents a challenge to ESL learners during online learning.	0	2	2	36	10

Online learning improves the writing skills and vocabulary acquisition of ESL learners.	0	14	22	14	0
Online learning causes a lack of motivation and self-confidence among learners	0	0	7	33	10

Reliability and Validity

SPSS version 28 was used to analyze the questionnaire data. The validity and reliability score of the questionnaire according to Cronbach's Alpha was as follows:

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.733	18

Discussion

This study investigated the e-learning challenges faced by ESL students of the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results showed that these challenges varied in terms of technology and way of teaching. These challenges can be technological accessibility challenges, social interaction, e-assessment and academic. Based on the questionnaire findings and in response to the first statement- technological accessibility challenges, it revealed that the students were not ready and discontented with online learning during the pandemic. Technological accessibility challenges include the availability of internet facilities, using compatible smartphones, conferencing app issues and internet package prices. According to the findings of the questionnaire, the item that states 'the necessary technological facilities are unavailable' earned the highest response 33%. It is followed by the item that explains 'some students' laptops and smartphones are incompatible' with 31 %, as almost of students are from low-income families. The next item that got 29% was 'there are some challenges with online conferencing apps. 'The cost of the internet package is expensive', was the item that got a minimum score varied between 21 neutral and 19 agreed.

As a matter of fact, these issues can happen especially in underdeveloped countries that lack technological infrastructure as the majority of students live in remote villages as well as their parents are farmers who can't afford the prices of smartphones and laptops. On one hand, in developed countries, e-learning can be effective in that both students and teachers can access

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online learning platforms easily (Ahmadi and Ilmiani, 2020). On the other hand, in underdeveloped countries, implementing e-learning for institutions is a big challenge for all including universities, teachers, and students. Thus, the current study identified that technological accessibility is one of the important online learning challenges faced by ESL students.

In response to the second statement- social interaction challenges, the findings showed that social interaction is a core element in learning English skills and without it, learners may not achieve the desired results. This aspect highlighted that e-learning is too personal and indirect with the highest percentage of 33%. Items state that 'learning lacks group discussions during assignments and interaction among learners and teachers' earned the second highest percentage of response of 26%. On the contrary, the lowest percentage varied between 0 agreed and 2 strongly disagreed in response to this statement- 'e-learning is more motivated when compared to traditional teaching'. According to Baber (2022), social interaction is an important element and has a significant positive impact on the effectiveness of online learning. The study found that the absence of personal interaction between teachers and students as well as students with their peers was one of the barriers to effective learning.

Responding to the third statement- e-assessment challenges- respondents showed that e-assessment is one of the challenges e-learning students face during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results revealed that students were dissatisfied with the e-assessment results due to their multiple ways. These difficulties can be found in the online test methods and question varieties, lack of experience and unfamiliarity of learners and teachers as well as the availability of technological infrastructure. 30% of respondents agreed and 10% strongly agreed that e-assessment is problematic. The focus on theory rather than practice, as well as poor instructors' mentoring during online lessons, are both disadvantages of e-assessment. 17% of respondents strongly agreed and 22% agreed that e-learning lacks good mentoring during the assessment. According to Alruwais et al. (2018) "Assessing a group project is a difficult job. It needs a monitor of the communication skills, evaluates the group work, assesses each member and the whole group, and provides feedback" (36).

Another point the participants agreed on was the academic challenge. The participants complained that e-learning did not meet their language needs. It lacks the necessary language skills strategies such as communication, motivation, vocabulary acquisition, speaking and writing practices as well as self-confidence. Furthermore, students don't dare to speak or discuss and share

information with their teachers and peers as they are afraid of making mistakes. The item 'lack of effective communication and reading skills' earned the highest percentage of 36% agreed and 10% strongly agreed. The item 'online learning causes a lack of motivation and self-confidence among learners' earned the second high percentage 36% agreed and 10% strongly agreed. Meanwhile, on the contrary, the point stating that 'online learning fulfills learners' needs' got the highest percentage of 14% strongly agreed and 29% agreed.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic put the global education system under pressure, forcing learners and teachers to shift to online learning suddenly. It has affected all domains of life including education. E-learning has become the safest alternative during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to avoid losses, as teaching can continue. The study's overall conclusions demonstrated that students faced numerous challenges with e-learning throughout COVID-19. The challenges were technological accessibility, lack of social interaction, e-assessment, and academic performance. As a substitute for face-to-face learning, students found e-learning to be unproductive as well as they were ready to shift to e-learning. They prefer traditional learning practices, considering them more effective and productive than e-learning.

Some suggestions and recommendations can be concluded from the findings of the study. One of these suggestions is that higher education institutions must be technologically prepared, including internet accessibility, digital platforms, and resources, particularly in underdeveloped countries. The other thing is that students and teachers have to take into account that online learning will be the future learning norm.

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An Investigation of the Most Common Difficulties Iranian Pre-university EFL Learners Face in Their Paragraph Writings

Hamed Zarabi *[1], Nima Yamrali [2], & Nadia Gharani[3]

[1] Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of humanities, Islamic Azad University, Gonbad-e-Kavous, Iran;

[2] Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of humanities, Islamic Azad University, Gonbad-e-Kavous, Iran;

[3] Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of humanities, Islamic Azad University, Gonbad-e-Kavous, Iran;

Research Article

Abstract
Due to the fact that writing is a cognitively demanding task and as a step toward removing some of the obstacles English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners encounter when performing writing tasks, this study attempted to investigate Iranian pre-university EFL learners' perceptions toward the most typical writing difficulties. For this to be done, 20 intermediate students from two different secondary high schools in Gonbad Kavoos, Iran were selected. Based on the steps of error analysis recommended by Corder (1967), a meticulous content analysis was conducted on the paragraphs written in their final exams and it was revealed that the most common writing problems these students face were related to their 'grammatical knowledge', 'lexical knowledge', 'semantical knowledge', and 'mechanical knowledge'. All of these types of errors were fully explained and exemplified in the article. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview with students was conducted and the result of the interviews also confirmed the results of the content analysis of their paragraphs. Ten English language teachers' opinions were gathered and listed through semi-structured interviews and coding analysis in order to find solutions to their problems. There are some practical ramifications for educators, students, content creators, and curriculum designers in this regard at the article's conclusion.

بررسی رایج ترین مشکلاتی که زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی پیش دانشگاهی ایرانی در پاراگراف نویسی خود با آن مواجه هستند

با توجه به اینکه رایتینگ از نظر شناختی کار سختی است و به عنوان گامی در جهت رفع برخی از موانع پیش روی زبان آموزان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی (EFL) در هنگام انجام تکالیف نوشتاری با آن مواجه می شوند، این پژوهش سعی بر آن داشت تا درک زبان آموزان پیش دانشگاهی زبان انگلیسی را نسبت به آن مورد بررسی قرار دهد. معمولی ترین مشکلات نوشتن برای انجام این کار، ۲۰ دانش آموز مقطع متوسطه از دو دبیرستان مختلف در گنبدکاووس انتخاب شدند. بر اساس مراحل تجزیه و تحلیل خطا که کوردر (۱۹۶۷) توصیه می کند، یک تحلیل محتوای دقیق بر روی پاراگراف های نوشته شده در امتحانات پایان ترم انجام شد و مشخص شد که رایج ترین مشکلات نوشتاری این دانش آموزان مربوط به دانش دستوری آنها است. «دانش واژگانی»، «دانش معنایی» و «دانش مکانیکی». همه این نوع خطاها به طور کامل در مقاله توضیح داده شده و نمونه‌هایی از آنها ارائه شده است. همچنین مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته با دانشجویان انجام شد و نتیجه مصاحبه نیز نتایج تحلیل محتوای پاراگراف های آنها را تأیید کرد. نظرات ۱۰ معلم زبان انگلیسی از طریق مصاحبه های نیمه ساختاریافته و تحلیل کدگذاری گردآوری و فهرست شد تا راه حلی برای مشکلات آنها بیابند. در پایان مقاله پیامدهای عملی برای مربیان، دانش آموزان، تولیدکنندگان محتوا و طراحان برنامه درسی در این زمینه وجود دارد.
کلمات کلیدی: طبقه بندی خطاها، انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان خارجی(EFL) ، زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی، مشکلات نوشتاری، مهارت نوشتاری
واژگان کلیدی: همه گیری، چالش های یادگیری مجازی، زبان آموزان

Introduction

English as a Foreign Language

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is never simple to learn or teach, especially in places where it is not widely spoken. In this respect, it can be claimed that despite the fact that English language instruction has been used in Iran for at least 50 years, many students still find it difficult to learn the language, as shown by their results on English state-level school exams. This is true because there isn't much English used in day-to-day communication and because of the ineffective teaching methods. (Amirbakzadeh & Vakil Alroaia, 2020; Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Iranmehr & Davari, 2018). Another contributing factor to this propensity for ineffective English language teaching and learning may be the significant influence that testing has on what is taught in schools. Most students learn vocabulary and grammar through rote memorization in order to ace tests rather than learning them so they can use them in real-world contexts (Akbari, 2015).

Writing Skill

Writing is thought to be one of the most difficult skills for EFL students to learn because it is neglected in the educational process and is difficult. (Du, 2020; Gholaminejad et al., 2013; Jabali, 2018; Tillema, 2012). As a result, the challenges faced by L2 learner writers have been widely publicized for a long time (Al Mubarak, 2017; Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Braine, 1995; Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Johns, 1995). Despite the complexity of writing, most people utilize writing every day to complete a variety of chores, including expressing thoughts, attitudes, and opinions, communicating knowledge, expressing feelings and ideas, and persuading others. Additionally, individuals may write for pleasure in their diaries or journals. Writing can be used in a learning environment to capture significant information as it is learned as well as to create academic reports, theses, essays, and compositions that satisfy the requirements of the intended authorities. It is therefore advised that writing be incorporated into the EFL teaching curricula in schools because it can aid students in remembering what they have learned through other skills, allow them to use language in context, and aid them in going beyond what they have learned by putting what they have learned to use in writing tasks (Hyland, 2013). In other words, writing can be a means of learning English and a means to an end. For instance, students can use writing to reinforce their understanding of brand-new vocabulary or grammatical constructions, or they can use it to help them retain new vocabulary. Additionally, by having students write regularly,

instructors can keep tabs on their development, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and then give feedback to students (Hyland, 2019; Parr & Timperley, 2010).

Writing, One of the Biggest Challenges for Iranian Students

Of the four English language skills, writing seems to be one of the most complex and difficult skills for teaching and learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The problem is based on generating and organizing opinions along with translating them into legible text (Richards & Renandya, 2002). When you want to be a proficient writer in a second language (L2) and especially in a foreign language (FL) is a claiming task for most learners, because they involve with difficult challenges in vocabulary, grammar, and synthetic skills. (Tabatabaei & Assefi, 2012), (Du, 2020; Gholaminejad et al., 2013; Jabali, 2018; Tillema, 2012). Thus, the difficulties faced by L2 students for writing tasks across a wide range of skill levels have long acquired great importance (Al Mubarak, 2017; Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Braine, 1995; Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Johns, 1995).

Hence, it is advisable to incorporate writing abilities into the EFL syllabus at educational institutions since writing can strengthen the knowledge acquired through other skills, endows pupils with the prospect of working with the language in a practical setting, and enables them to extend their comprehension by employing the acquired concepts in writing assignments. (Jabali, 2018). In other words, writing can be both an end in itself and a tool for learning English. For example, learners can use writing to reinforce learning of new structures or vocabulary or use it to help them remember new elements in a language. Additionally, through writing exercises, teachers can track students' progress and diagnose their weaknesses and strengths, and then provide students with feedback (Hyland, 2019; Parr & Timperley, 2010).

The inability of university students to express themselves in writing in a way that is clear, accurate, and understandable is another common complaint that is frequently heard. Numerous factors may contribute to students' writing difficulties. The complexity of writing as a skill itself may be one of the reasons for this difficulty (Gautam, 2019; Nasser, 2016; Patience, 2020). According to Byrnes' (2002) theory, most people, both speakers of their native language and those who speak it as a second language, use writing as a complex discourse medium.

It is significant to note that because writing is both significant and challenging, researchers have focused on the writing difficulties that students encounter in various EFL contexts. Numerous empirical reviews have endeavored to identify writing problems and solutions in this regard (e.g.,

Al-Khasawneh & Huwari, 2013; Chen & Wu, 2001; Jafari & Ansari, 2012). Few empirical studies have focused specifically on pre-university students' attitudes and perceptions toward problematic areas in their paragraph writing, which is the topic of the current study (e.g., Al Mubarak, 2017; Bani Younes & Salamh Albalawi, 2015; Jabali, 2018; Mwangi, 2017). As far as the researchers know, however, only a few studies have used interviews to look into students' perspectives and attitudes toward the reasons behind EFL writing challenges in the context of Iran. As a result, in order to advance and contribute to this still-evolving field of research, the current study seeks to understand how Iranian pre-university students perceive the most common challenges they face when performing paragraph writing tasks.

Paragraph Writing

Developing the skills necessary for coherent and readable paragraphs can be difficult for English language learners (ESLs), who must overcome the personal challenges associated with this type of writing, such as coming up with ideas, organizing their thoughts, and using proper mechanics. This explains why students consistently perform poorly in the English language at all levels of education in Iran. There have been put forth a number of explanations for this phenomenon. Ajayi (1996) lists a few of these, including the lack of clearly defined objectives, the scarcity of qualified language teachers, the absence of adequate and realistic syllabuses, and the lack of testing methods. The misuse of pertinent essay-teaching techniques is a problem that is added to these issues (Ohia & Adeosun 2010).

A strong piece of writing should adhere to a structure that includes a general idea in a single sentence, supporting sentences that provide clear explanations and details, and examples to support the main ideas (Ariana, 2010). To support our studies and careers, writing is a skill that must be emphasized. According to Imane (2015), proficient writing is frequently regarded as the last language skill to be learned for both native speakers of the language and for foreign/second language learners, after the four essential language skills.

Academic writing needs to have a strong paragraph. An effective paragraph is essential because it aids readers in understanding the writing's subject matter. Readers will be able to identify the main idea and supporting details of the paragraph if the paragraph is coherent and the main idea is sufficiently developed and supported by the appropriate supporting sentences. Furthermore, for

paragraphs to work together cohesively, there must be coherence between them. It demonstrates to readers how cohesive the paragraph is.

For students, understanding how to structure a paragraph is crucial, especially when writing academically. They must ensure that the language used in creating the paragraph is appropriate for academic purposes, correct, formal, and systematic. Additionally, sentences should be organized so that readers can understand them easily. To fulfill academic requirements, students must also take into account academic features like citation style and writing format.

EFL students need to work harder than L1 students when producing an academic text. EFL students may encounter more difficulties when writing a paragraph than L1 speakers (Hussen, 2015). They might both be experiencing the same problems with writing mechanics and format. However, L2 learners of English have it harder than L1 learners when it comes to writing academic text (Yakhontova, 2003). Students who speak English as a second language are likely to struggle more with vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure.

In EFL contexts, academic writing includes the use of a foreign language, adherence to proper academic standards, and additional requirements for writing paragraphs. Due to these requirements, academic writing may be more challenging to complete and may be more challenging for EFL students than for L1 students. Finding out what difficulties Iranian EFL students face when writing English paragraphs was the purpose of this study. This study additionally attempted to provide some solutions for those problems after they had been found in the paragraph writing of Iranian pre-university students.

Review of Literature

According to Ginting (2019), writing is seen as a useful skill that imports cognitive processes such as idea generation, problem-solving, and critical thinking. However, despite the significance of writing for learning, numerous studies have found that language learners struggle with their writing abilities in comparison to other language abilities (Kouhpeyma & Kashefian-Naeeini, 2020). Through the use of innovative teaching strategies, particularly those that emphasize teaching students how to write in a foreign language, Iranian language teachers have significantly improved their ability to instruct foreign languages over the past few decades. But, there is a lot to think about. The teaching of writing in EFL settings is frequently subpar, despite it being the hardest of the four skills to master. EFL students need a foundation on which to build their experience-based learning in order to advance much more quickly.

In this view, some studies examined how using various writing strategies and techniques affects students' performance (Bulqiyah, 2021; Anshu & Yesu, 2022;). Sahebkheir (2018), for instance, carried out an experimental study to investigate the impact of the self-assessment portfolio as a learner-centered method on the writing performance of Iranian EFL students in a control group. The experiment group's members exhibited consistent use of critical reasoning abilities and a strong sense of responsibility throughout their training, according to the researcher.

Self-directed learning's effects on the writing abilities of Iranian EFL students in the pre- and middle-school years were researched by Aghayani and Janfeshan (2020). The study's findings demonstrated that both preschoolers' and middle schoolers' writing abilities were significantly enhanced by the self-directed learning strategy. Additionally, the outcomes demonstrated that pre- and middle-school students who learned using a self-directed learning approach outperformed those who learned the same material using conventional writing instruction methods on the post-test.

In a different study, Kouhpeyma and Kashefian-Naeeini (2020) looked at the impact reflective writing—which includes the use of a portfolio, peer assessment, and self-assessment—has on Iranian EFL students' writing performance. As a result, learners' writing performance was not significantly impacted by reflective writing, according to the findings.

The two aspects of writing that Hailu Anshu and Yibre Yesu (2022) concentrated on were content and coherence, and they looked at how collaborative writing affected EFL students' paragraph-level writing abilities. The experiment and control groups, each made up of 44 11th graders, were created by the researchers to accomplish this. Participants in the experimental group practiced writing paragraph-level tasks collaboratively over a 12-week period, whereas participants in the control group had to carry out the same tasks independently. The findings revealed that students who completed the writing assignments collaboratively experienced a more pronounced improvement in the content and coherence of the paragraphs they produced following the training than students who worked alone on the assignments. Additionally, it was noted that the experimental group participants had a favorable attitude toward collaborative writing.

In a mixed-methods study, Thi Ngoc Hoang and Hoang (2022) looked at the effects of frequent Google Docs collaboration on Vietnamese EFL students' academic writing abilities in English. Researchers discovered that the participants' general academic writing abilities significantly improved after taking the online EFL writing course. Individual academic writing components,

task performance, and lexical resources all showed significant improvement, but cohesion and coherence, as well as grammatical range and accuracy, did not change significantly. These students had mixed feelings about how much they enjoyed working together on the Google Docs platform, despite realizing how crucial it was for improving their academic English writing skills.

Studies have uncovered the issues and challenges faced by EFL learners when it comes to writing due to the significance and difficult nature of the writing skill. This is demonstrated by research done by Baghaei and Sadighi (2015), who found prepositional mistakes in the writing of Iranian TEFL postgraduate students. The preposition "for" was allegedly used more frequently than "to" by participants when writing.

To determine how Iranian EFL students perceived the most frequent writing difficulties, Derakhshan and Karimian Shirejini (2020) also conducted a mixed-methods study. The majority of participants, according to the findings, thought that grammar and punctuation instruction should be contextualized and connected to the other four skills. Additionally, they made the case that instructors ought to model proper punctuation for their pupils while also using it themselves. Additionally, it was thought that by using mnemonics, students could remember the correct spelling of words.

Explanatory research was done by Bulqiyah (2021) to look at 21 undergraduate students' perspectives on essay writing challenges. The researchers came to the conclusion that students' issues with essay writing can be categorized into a number of different categories based on the findings of the quantitative and qualitative data. These categories include emotional problems resulting from the attitudes of lecturers and students during teaching and learning, cognitive issues with the perspective of writing, language transmission, and the writing process, and linguistic issues with lexico-grammar, vocabulary, and essay structure. They employed evaluation strategies more frequently when writing their papers than the other summary writing styles. The use of strategies, summary quality, and writing ability all showed a moderate correlation. The findings demonstrated that high-, intermediate-, and low-skilled typists' summarization abilities and writing techniques varied significantly.

Despite the fact that there have been numerous studies on the writing difficulties of language learners up to this point, the goal of this study was to address the difficulties Iranian pre-university students were having with writing paragraphs. As a result, the researchers tried to provide answers to the following study's questions.

1. What are the problems of Iranian Pre-University students in paragraph writing?

2. What are the solutions in paragraph writing for Iranian Pre-University students?

Methodology

This investigation, which was a descriptive qualitative study, focused on the content analysis method to pinpoint the most challenging aspects of Iranian pre-university students' paragraph writing by examining samples of their written work from exam papers. The teachers and students were also subjected to a semi-structured interview in order to gain a deeper understanding of the aspects of paragraph writing that the students find the most challenging and to develop some solutions based on the teachers' opinions. The problems and solutions were then divided into various categories.

Participants

For the purposes of the study and for students to be homogeneous in terms of their linguistic knowledge, 20 intermediate pre-university students from two different high schools in Gonbad Kavoos, Iran, were chosen based on the results of the Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). The ages of the students ranged from 17 to 19 and they were all females. Additionally, ten English language instructors with varying levels of experience, from five to more than thirty years, were interviewed to get their thoughts on the subject.

Instruments

The steps of error analysis recommended by Corder (1967) were adhered to in order to pinpoint the most challenging aspects of paragraph writing for the purpose of the content analysis approach. Twenty students and ten teachers participated in a semi-structured interview for the purpose of interview analysis.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

To determine the types and number of errors, each paragraph was first carefully read word for word and sentence for sentence. Second, they were coded into various categories and then converted into percentages to look at the frequency. The teacher participants were asked to discuss various ways students can address their writing issues, and the student participants were asked to voluntarily participate in the semi-structured interview to discuss the English writing challenges

they faced. Each interview lasted for roughly 10 to 15 minutes, and all of the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using an analytical coding procedure.

Results

Content Analysis of Paragraphs

This study used Corder's (1967) taxonomy of writing errors: Structural errors, Lexical errors, Semantical errors, and Mechanical errors. According to the findings of the research, there was a substantial difference in the frequency of errors made by the students (as shown in Table / Figure 1).

Table 1

Different Categories and Types of Errors Committed by the Students in Their Paragraphs

	N	Type of Error	Frequency	Percentage
Grammatical Errors	20	Tense	46	14%
		Subject-verb agreement	34	10%
		Singularity/Plurality	28	8%
		Word order	14	5%
		Sentence Structure	9	2%
Lexical Errors	20	Verbs	39	11%
		Nouns	27	8%
		Pronouns	21	6%
		Adverbs	12	3%
		Prepositions	9	2%
		Articles	5	1%
Semantical Errors	20	Word selection	18	6%
Mechanical Errors	20	Dictation	56	17%
		Punctuation	26	7%
Total Number of Errors	20		344	100%

Figure 1

A Pie Chart of Different Problematic Areas with Their Percentage Occurrence
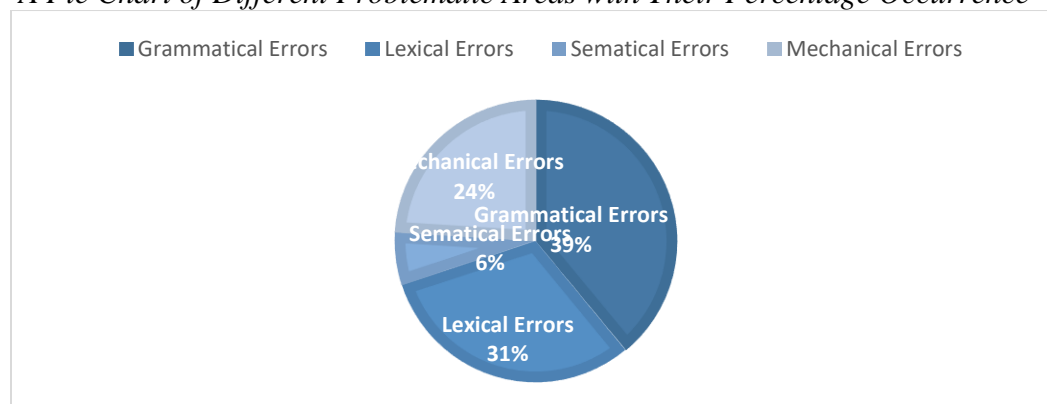
According to the findings of the research, the students made the highest number of errors in the grammatical areas of their paragraphs (39%), from which the verb tenses with 14 percent received the highest percentage and sentence structure with only 2 percent the lowest percentage. Considering the second area (Lexical Errors), the most challenging types of errors were related to verbs (11%) and the lowest were related to articles (1%). The third area with 24% of the total percentage of errors deals with the mechanical mistakes made by the students such as spelling and dictation problems (17%) and punctuation challenges with 7 percent occurrence. The last but not least, semantical errors received the lowest amount of mistakes with only 6 percent in the type of word choices.

Table 2

Some Examples of Errors Committed by the Students in Their Written Paragraphs

Error Type	Example of the Students	Correct Form
Tense	*I visit my grandmother last month.*	*I visited my grandmother last month.*
Subject-verb agreement	*He play football every day.*	*He plays football every day.*
Singularity/Plurality	*Every countries has a unique culture.*	*Every country has a unique culture.*
Word order	*My teacher is a teacher kind.*	*My teacher is a kind teacher.*
Sentence Structure	*My mother is cook lunch.*	*My mother is cooking lunch.*
Verbs	*My friend draw some beautiful pictures.*	*My friend draws some beautiful pictures.*
Nouns	*I really enjoy the dark of the night.*	*I really enjoy the darkness of the night.*
Pronouns	*My teacher is a hero. She teaches we nicely.*	*My teacher is a hero. She teaches us nicely.*
Adverbs	*He drives fastly.*	*He drives fast.*
Prepositions	*I always wake up on 7 in the morning.*	*I always wake up at 7 in the morning.*
Articles	*I ate a apple for breakfast yesterday.*	*I ate an apple for breakfast yesterday.*
Word selection	*We should eat well food.*	*We should eat healthy foods.*
Dictation	*People shoud obey the trafic rules.*	*People should obey the traffic rules.*
Punctuation	*We have a big house. It has three bedrooms two bathrooms and two garages.*	*We have a big house. It has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and two garages.*

Interview Analysis with Students (Problems)

In an effort to better understand the writing challenges students encounter when writing their paragraphs, researchers set up some semi-structured interview questions with open-ended questions. The researchers made an effort to ask 20 Iranian pre-university students for their thoughts on the most challenging areas they deal with in their written paragraphs. All of their comments were meticulously recorded and typed out for analysis later. The interviewees also had the impression that their information would be kept confidential. The interview was conducted entirely in the participants' native tongue (i. e. Persian) to avoid any difficulties brought about by a lack of proficiency. All of the participants' names were changed to pseudonyms to protect their privacy and maintain anonymity.

Making grammatical sentences is the hardest part for them, according to every interviewee, which is consistent with the findings of the content analysis. They claimed that while it may seem simple to write a single sentence accurately, it can be very difficult to organize the sentences into a paragraph that flows smoothly. The interviewees also stated that dictation and punctuation are a challenge for them when they want to write sentences, and more specifically paragraphs, which is consistent with the data from the content analysis. In addition, there are lexical difficulties with verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc., as well as subject-verb agreement, tenses, sentence structure, and word choice. The other elements that contribute to the difficulty of the writing task include idiomatic expressions and collocations, unfamiliarity with topics, and rhetorical structure. The ideas were shaped into themes were thoroughly explained below (Only a few of the interviewees' statements are reported here due to the word limit, and we made an effort not to draw attention to the interviewees' frequently repeated and similar ideas):

Grammar is so complicated (Grammatical problems)

All of the students mentioned having issues with poor grammar. The majority of them claimed to lack strong grammar skills.

Student 1: Zahra

∗ Grammar is so complicated for me. The first issue is grammar because occasionally I don't know how to construct a sentence correctly. Due to a lack of vocabulary and grammar, translating sentences from Persian into English is another challenging issue for me. I suppose I should read and write more in English to solve my problem. ∗

Structuring a good sentence is like a nightmare (Cohesion/Coherence problems)

Students were aware of the significance of a paragraph's coherence and cohesiveness. Coherence and cohesiveness, according to the majority of students, are still challenging to achieve. Most likely as a result of their lack of planning and brainstorming. They actually did the drafting. They struggled to maintain control over the supporting clauses and concentrated solely on providing evidence for the main ideas. Aside from that, it also rendered the connections between sentences insufficient. Another respondent claimed that she had trouble with sentence structure when writing.

Student 2: Sheyda

∗ *I believe that connecting sentences and organizing their parts are difficult for me. I believe I can learn more by writing about a variety of subjects, learning about linking verbs, coordinating conjunctions, and conjunctive adverbs, and becoming an expert writer's organizer. At this point in my life structuring a good sentence is like a nightmare to me.* ∗

Student 3: Mobina

∗ *It's difficult to write an effective paragraph. I should check to see if each sentence and each paragraph are related, as suggested by my teacher. I suppose that is my weakness and somehow hard for me to make a good sentence that contributes to the main idea.* ∗

Student 4: Diana

∗ *The fact that I have trouble concluding my writing and linking ideas coherently is probably the most difficult problem I face. I have trouble structuring my thoughts and adding supporting clauses. I suppose I can write better if I read more, expand my vocabulary, learn about structures, and brainstorm.* ∗

It is better to give us some topics that we have a background about (Unfamiliarity with the topic)

One of the issues frequently mentioned in the participants' responses was the fact that unfamiliarity with the topic is of the most challenging issues they sometimes have to deal with.

Student 5: Masoomeh

٭ *If you ask me, I think when we are given a familiar topic like the ones we have in our textbook, then we can perform better and write more and more effectively. But if we are given some unfamiliar topics, then it would be even impossible to write even a sentence let alone a paragraph.*

Student 6: Nazanin

٭ *Of course, it is better to give us some topics that we have a background about. I mean the topic in the books are good ones because we have already read about them and have some familiarity with them. I really like to write about some common and simple topics such as nature, family, sports, and the things like these.* ٭

I'm not very good at brainstorming (Brainstorming problems)

Brainstorming is critical as the first step in the paragraph development process to gather ideas. Some students expressed displeasure with the brainstorming process. The goal is to collect as many ideas as we can. The main idea is first created supporting sentences are added.

Student 7: Fatemeh

٭ *Usually, I only include information that I believe is pertinent to my paragraph. Developing the idea can be effective at times. Anything is possible. It is merely a random idea. In order to come up with numerous ideas for the paragraph, writers must brainstorm. The ideas in the paragraph are sometimes insufficient and not very rich without brainstorming. Unfortunately, I'm not very good at brainstorming.* ٭

I see periods and nothing else (Punctuation problems)

Almost all the students had great difficulty with the punctuation rules of their work.

Student 8: Soheyla

٭ *Punctuation, in general, and the requirements of a proper text are issues for me. Since teachers have not placed much emphasis on them, I believe I can solve the problem by practicing and learning more about them. I really don't know where to put colons, parentheses, or semi-colons. Sometimes I look at my paragraph and I see periods and nothing else.* ٭

I find myself at a loss for words (Word choice problems)

Some ideas could not be expressed by students because they lacked English words for them. Furthermore, they had a hard time coming up with the right words to convey their thoughts. They claimed that the reason was a lack of vocabulary.

Student 9: Sogand

⁎ I find it challenging to communicate in English. To find the right words, I have to consult a dictionary every time. When a word has three, four, or even more synonyms that all mean the same thing, I find myself at a loss for words. Reading various English books, reports, articles, etc. helps us become more accustomed to various writing styles and word usage. ⁎

Is it plain, plan, or plane, I don't know (Dictation problems)
Student 10: Samaneh

⁎ I occasionally struggle with spelling words like plain, plan, and plane when I'm writing. Perhaps someone should make us practice dictation because we don't spend enough time on word spelling. We can then address our orthographic issues by writing more and more from different words, especially similar ones. ⁎

Interview Analysis with Teachers (Solutions)

A semi-structured interview with the teachers was carried out in order to find some solutions for the most common difficulties students face in their paragraph writing. The following categories were driven by a careful content analysis of the teachers' responses to the interview question. They have been put into different categories.

Solutions for the Grammatical problems

- Grammar lessons ought to be contextualized.
- Place a focus on understanding the concepts of grammar that are being studied.
- It is important to emphasize extensive grammar practice.
- Persian should not be used to break down the rules of English grammar.
- Prioritizing accuracy over fluency is a good idea.
- It is important to teach grammar rules alongside paragraph writing.

- Grammar instruction shouldn't be centered on memorization and rote rules.

- Teaching strategy of grammar instruction should be form-focused.

- English verb tenses should be practiced with students.

Solutions for the Structural problems (Cohesion/Coherence)

- Students should get familiar with different cohesive devices in context.

- Students should try linking parts of a text together by using cohesive devices such as pronouns.

- Students should be exposed to different texts that have cohesion but not coherence and vice versa to fully understand the concept of these two important notions.

- Contextual and co-textual relationships should be practiced.

Solutions for the Dictation problems

- Teachers should draw students' attention to the difference between written and spoken English.

- The origin of English words should be mentioned in class to help students understand how challenging it is to learn how to spell them.

- It's important for students to understand how Persian and English phonology differ.

- Students ought to read more.

- Books should aid students in improving their spelling skills.

- inspire students to take up spelling.

- To the extent necessary, teachers should be able to assist students in improving their spelling.

- It is appropriate to give the students written homework based on the texts.

- Extra sections should be devoted to the dictation of the words in their formative written exams.

Solutions for the Punctuation problems

- Punctuation should be introduced in the context of the sentence.

- Teachers need to consistently check for proper punctuation.

- Teachers should assist students in identifying the similarities and differences between the Persian and English punctuation systems.

- Teachers should use punctuation in their writing classes.

- In order to support their understanding, teachers should encourage students to conduct additional research on punctuation.

- Teachers should encourage their students to become enthusiastic about punctuation.

- Some blank text should be provided for the student to add punctuation to.

Additional Suggestions

- Grammar should be taught using authentic texts.

- Familiar topics should be focused on more.

- Supplementary materials should be introduced to the students to improve their academic paragraph writing.

- Students should practice writing in class.

- The four phases of writing a paragraph (brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing) should receive attention.

- Examples of acceptable paragraphs related to different topics should be given to the students and analyzed in the class by the teacher.

- Extracurricular classes for boosting writing skills can be held at schools.

- Different parts of a paragraph should be practiced and students should get familiar with the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.

- Students should know that not all Persian sentences can be transferred positively into English.

- Different genres should be introduced to the students.

- Idiomatic expressions and collocations should receive some instruction.

- Teachers should provide students with written corrective feedback and their writing assignments should always be checked.

- In order to make writing easier and more enjoyable, an emphasis should be placed on in and out of the class writing activities.

Discussion

Writing is considered to be one of the hardest skills to learn and teach, according to Al Murshidi (2014). Numerous studies have been conducted in the past to identify major sources of writing difficulties and suggest workable solutions to get past these roadblocks in the way of successful writing performance in order to deal with these issues in the development of the writing skill in a more tangible way (e.g., Akbari, 2015; Al-Khasawneh & Huwari, 2013; Bahloul, 2007; Chen & Wu, 2001; Jafari & Ansari, 2012).

Grammatical, Lexical, Semantic, and Mechanics writing errors were classified according to Corder's (1967) taxonomy in this study. The research's findings showed a significant difference in the number of errors made in each type, and it was discovered that "grammatical errors" were the most typical problem Iranian pre-university students had with their paragraphs. The majority of errors made by study participants (131=39%), according to the study's findings, were grammatical errors.

A more recent study conducted by Nuruzzaman et al. (2018) at Tabuk University in Saudi Arabia and Napitupulu (2017) in a university setting in Indonesia also came to similar conclusions. In their study, in grammatical errors, 'verb tense' ranked the highest (10.33%) in total in all three groups. The second area of difficulty in grammar was subject-verb agreement and it scored (9.32%). The second category of errors was 'mechanics' which consisted of 29.66% of the total errors. In 'mechanics', spelling (14.23%) was the most frequently committed error which was followed by capitalization (8.14%) and punctuation (7.28%). These findings were consistent with the findings of the current investigation because, in this instance, grammatical errors also received the highest percentage of errors in general, and "tense errors" received the highest percentage of errors made by Iranian pre-university students. The category of 'subject-verb agreement' received second place. Another similarity was discovered in the area of "mechanical errors," with the same outcome as in Nuruzzaman et al.'s (2018) study, which showed that dictation and punctuation errors were the most frequently made by the participants.

The study by Almarwany, M. (2008), which focuses on the writing challenges faced by EFL secondary school students in Almunawwarh, is consistent with the current study's findings. Lexical errors ranked third, with preposition errors topping the list (7.45 percent), followed by article errors (5.59 percent), and verb errors (4.06 percent). The word choice category accounts for 41.91% of all errors overall.

The results closely match those of the Ridha, N. study. S. (2012), where the researcher looked into grammatical and mechanical mistakes made by EFL Iraqi College students who were writing essays in English. These mistakes were the most serious and common. Similar findings were found in Ruwaida's (2015) study, which found that Arab students generally have a very difficult time writing English paragraphs that are fluent, informative, well-organized, and accurate while also following the correct grammatical conventions, punctuation, and spelling.

It's also noteworthy that students' negative transfers from their first language, Persian, account for the majority of their grammatical mistakes. The lack of knowledge in L2, however, also contributed to some of the issues. The cause of this is that learners have more trouble learning English grammatical structures that are similar to but also dissimilar from grammatical structures in their native tongue. For instance, "noun" is placed before "adjective" (e.g.. "teacher kind" rather than "teacher kind"). They always turn to literal translation before creating English patterns, which is the key to this issue. Additionally, they translate phrases word-for-word, rather than phrase-for-phrase, from one language into another. These results concur with those of Abbasi, Karimian, and Sadeghi from 2011 and 2009.

Furthermore, it can be said that if L2 learners use L1 grammatical features and apply them when writing L2 structures, their use of first-language grammatical structures will occasionally result in errors and contribute to the gap between L1 and L2 lexical features. These were also made clear in Ruwaida's (2015) study, which claimed that it is difficult to assist Arab students in learning English stylistics so they can create well-written paragraphs because they carry over the style of their native tongue. They also don't have the right vocabulary to convey their ideas effectively. In accordance with some other studies of both Arab and other EFL contexts, the findings of this study also showed that Iranian pre-university EFL learners lacked proficiency in grammar rules, vocabulary, spelling, mechanics, and semantics.

According to the students' overall perceptions expressed in their interviews, it can be said that these students, like the participants in the earlier studies by Al Murshidi (2014) and Bahloul (2007), find writing paragraphs to be a difficult task.

It's interesting to note that there are currently very few studies available that inquire about the students' opinions regarding the problematic areas in their paragraph writing. Studies by Jabali (2018) and Bani Younes and Salamh Albalawi (2015) stand out as exceptions in this regard because they demonstrate how young this field of study is and how it needs to be strengthened by

additional, pertinent empirical research in the future. However, the settings in which these two studies were conducted were Turkey and Palestine, respectively. Identifying Palestinian EFL learners' attitudes toward writing and examining whether students believe there to be any significant difference between how they express their ideas in English and Arabic writing productions were the two main goals of Jabali's (2018) study, which provides more detail on the findings of the two studies previously mentioned in this area. In conclusion, his research revealed that students had favorable attitudes toward the writing process in general as well as toward the textbooks, teaching methods, and writing class strategies. In addition, Turley, Bani Younes, and Salamh Albalawi (2015) asked 40 English major participants about the writing issues they run into when writing in English. According to the findings, the participants thought that spelling issues, such as difficulty using substitution, omission, addition, disordering, segmentation, and unrecognizable words, were the three most frequent sources of writing difficulty for them. They also thought that punctuation issues and grammatical issues, such as difficulty using tenses, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, and article use, were second and third. According to this study's findings, dictation and punctuation errors were among the most frequent mistakes made in the composition of paragraphs by Iranian pre-university EFL students. This finding is consistent with the findings of the two previous studies on the perceptions of writing difficulties among students.

Grammatical constructions, spelling, and punctuation are challenging to master, according to the results of the follow-up interview. The students also concurred that writing can be a difficult task made even more difficult by organization, vocabulary choice, collocations, idiomatic expressions, and rhetorical devices. According to the interview, students recognized having spelling difficulties (student 10: Samaneh). Some identified having grammar problems (student 1: Zahra). In structuring a good English sentence some students reported great difficulties (Sheyda, Diana, and Mobina). Also, Massomeh and Nazanin stated that if they are given familiar topics, they can compose much better paragraphs. In punctuation, (Student 8: Soheyla) acknowledged having difficulties in punctuation and she said that she does not know how to use punctuations like colon or semi-colon. Dictation problems were yet another challenging area for the students mentioned by Samaneh. She said that there are numerous words in English that have similar spelling systems which make dictation a Hercules task. Also, a lack of vocabulary was another issue mentioned by a participant (Sogand). She said that she could not find suitable vocabulary when she is writing a paragraph and sometimes it is inevitable to use a dictionary. One of the

interviewees in our study also reported that linking ideas coherently and cohesively is one of the challenges they usually encounter. As she said in her interview "*The fact that I have trouble concluding my writing and linking ideas coherently is probably the most difficult problem I face*" confirms that linking ideas in a paragraph is yet another issue to be considered.

The current study's findings support Al Mubarak's (2017) study, which found that students struggled to master grammar, punctuation, and spelling, all of which are crucial to the writing process. Al Mubarak discovered that irregular verb tenses, prepositional usage, weak expressions, lack of structure, consistency, and punctuation all play significant roles in writing difficulty.

Furthermore, our findings support Mahmoud's (2005) study in that EFL learners face significant challenges due to syntactic errors and student errors like a verb and prepositional errors. Additionally, Farouq (2012) asserted that grammar is the most challenging subject for L2 learners, which is consistent with our findings. The hypotheses advanced by Nyasimi (2014), who contends that in addition to encountering difficulties with the use of proper sentence structure and paragraph development, students must struggle with the creation of coherent text, also support this idea.

Additionally, Li and Zeng (2019) found that the main vocabulary, grammar, and writing resource issues in academic writing were supported by our findings. As a result, our results are consistent with their findings. Our findings run counter to those of Lee and Tajino (2008), who found that students thought language-related academic writing components were more challenging than structure/content-related ones. Our results are consistent with those of Mwangi (2017), who discovered that students struggled with spelling, proper punctuation, the use of appropriate vocabulary, the formation of verb tenses, and the pluralization of words.

Derakhshan and Shirejini (2020) conducted a recent study in Iran, and the majority of the participants concurred that teaching grammar and punctuation should be combined with the other four skills and embedded in a context. They also believed that teachers should explicitly teach students how to punctuate both their written work and their own speech. Additionally, it was believed that by employing mnemonics, students could more effectively learn word spelling. According to the findings of the interviews, other elements that make the writing task difficult include idiomatic expressions and collocations, grammar, spelling, punctuation, word choice, organization, familiarity with genres and rhetorical structures, negative transfer from Persian to English, and genre and rhetorical structure familiarity.

Conclusion

The current study is limited to determining how Iranian pre-university students construct paragraphs and what difficulties they experience when writing academic paragraphs. Additionally, it displayed a variety of student mistakes of various sizes and types, along with a variety of solutions offered by the instructor. In the grammatical category, 'verb tense' and 'subject-verb agreement' were the two areas where students committed the highest number of errors. Likewise, 'punctuation' and 'dictation' were the two error-prone areas in mechanics whereas, in the lexical category, students made the most errors in 'verbs and 'nouns. Also, 'word choice' was a challenging issue for the participants in the semantical area. The result of the interview analysis confirmed the content analysis of the paragraphs. Most of the students mentioned that they have great difficulties in their grammar, structuring and linking ideas, lack of word knowledge, unfamiliarity with the topic, punctuation, and spelling problems, unfamiliarity with different steps of paragraph writing such as brainstorming, and word-choice issues and not knowing which word to use.

The present study suggests that teachers need to put emphasis on certain aspects of writing in English. They should teach basic grammar rules, tense, subject-verb-agreement, mechanics, lexical items, word order, etc. Furthermore, they must make students aware of the differences between English and Persian structures of phrases and sentences. Thus, this study provides insight into language learning problems that occur when L2 learners internalize the rules of the target language. The errors identified in this study can serve as a useful guide for English teachers and stakeholders to design an effective curriculum for teaching and learning of English as a second language. Iranian students in EFL writing classes should be given ample opportunities for practice in and outside the classroom in order to be acquainted with the appropriate style of writing English composition.

However, there are some restrictions on the current study. First of all, none of the participants received a questionnaire looking into the students' problematic areas in paragraph writing. In this study, only female students participated, and secondly, there were a very small number of participants. Future studies should use a mixed-method design, using both qualitative and quantitative instruments. Examining the areas where men and women differ in their writing abilities in high-stakes situations is another idea.

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Relationship between EFL Learners' Personality Traits (Extroversion/ Introversion) and Their Productive Skills

Asma Sadat Mirhosseini[1]*, Ali Asghar Rostami Abousaeedi[2]

[1]*Department of English Language, Kerman Branch, Kerman Institute of Higher Education, Kerman, Iran*
[2]*Professor of English Language and Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran*

Research Article

Abstract
The present study was targeted at analyzing the relationship between the language learners' personality traits and their productive skills. In doing so, out of 46 students of intermediate level who were selected based on available sampling, 40 of them participated in this study. After that, a related personality questionnaire was distributed among them. Regarding the score scale, the participants were labeled as extroverts and introverts and put in two groups as Extrovert Group and Introvert Group. Then, pre-test of writing and speaking was conducted and the students' scores were recorded. After receiving the same treatment, posttests of writing and speaking were done to evaluate the participants' progress in terms of their personality traits. Finally, all the students' scores were collected and inserted to SPSS software for analyzing the possible relationship between students' personality traits and their productive skills. Findings indicated that extroversion had effect on the students' productive skills, as a positive relationship found between extroverted students and their achievement in writing and speaking language skills. Based on the received information, there was a considerable difference between the extroversion personality trait and the students' writing and speaking skills. However, after treatment in the introverted learners' group, no significant correlation found between their personality traits and their scores of productive skills. Accordingly, it can be said that the higher extroversion in language learners, the more successful achievement in their productive skills.

تحلیل رابطه ویژگیهای (صفات) شخصیتی زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی و مهارت های تولیدی آنها

پژوهش حاضر با هدف تحلیل رابطه بین ویژگی‌های شخصیتی زبان‌آموزان زبان انگلیسی (برون‌گرا/ درون‌گرا) و مهارت‌های تولیدی آن‌ها انجام شد. بدین منظور، از ۴۶ دانش آموز مقطع متوسطه که بر اساس نمونه گیری در دسترس انتخاب شدند، ۴۰ نفر در این پژوهش شرکت کردند. سپس پرسشنامه شخصیتی مرتبط بین آنها توزیع شد. با توجه به مقیاس نمره، شرکت کنندگان به عنوان برون گرا و درون گرا مشخص شدند و برای شرکت در این پژوهش در دو گروه، برون گرا و گروه درون گرا قرار گرفتند. سپس، پیش آزمون نوشتاری و گفتاری انجام شد و نمرات زبان آموزان ثبت شد. پس از دریافت آموزش یکسان ، پس آزمون نوشتاری و گفتاری برای ارزیابی پیشرفت شرکت کنندگان از نظر ویژگی های شخصیتی انجام شد. در نهایت، نمرات همه دانش آموزان برای تجزیه و تحلیل رابطه احتمالی بین ویژگی‌های شخصیتی و مهارت‌های تولیدی آنها، جمع‌آوری و وارد نرم افزار اس پی اس اس شد. یافته‌ها نشان داد که برون‌گرایی بر مهارت‌های تولیدی دانش‌آموزان تأثیر دارد، زیرا بین زبان آموزان برون‌گرا و دستاوردهای آنها در مهارت‌های نوشتاری و گفتاری رابطه مثبت یافت شد. بر اساس اطلاعات دریافتی، بین ویژگی شخصیتی برون‌گرایی و مهارت‌های نوشتاری و گفتاری دانش‌آموزان تفاوت قابل توجهی وجود دارد. اما در گروه یادگیرندگان درون‌گرا پس از آموزش، هیچ ارتباط معناداری بین ویژگی های شخصیتی و نمرات مهارت های تولیدی آنها یافت نشد. بر این اساس می‌توان گفت که هر چه برون‌گرایی در زبان آموزان بالاتر باشد، در مهارت‌های تولیدی موفق‌تر هستند.

واژگان کلیدی: ویژگی های شخصیتی، برونگرایی/ درونگرایی، مهارت نوشتاری، مهارت گفتار

Introduction

The result of language skill achievement can be influenced by Personality traits (Introversion/Extroversion), as Boroujeni, Roohani and Hasanimanesh, (2015) argued that "the way we learn is very much affected by our personality". Based on the knowledge that all individuals have different personalities, behaviors, opinions, and abilities, they may have different aspects of learning a foreign language. This process is a complex one which can be influenced by many factors, one of the most important of which is personality traits (Özbay, Aydemir, & Atasoy, 2019). Personality traits especially extroversion and introversion are the two important types that have an influence on learning a foreign language which improves the fact that there is a close connection between the personality of EFL learners, the style, and the strategy that they develop in order to learn and succeed in learning a foreign language (Erton, 2010; Özbay et al., 2019). Introverted personalities retrieve their energy from the inner world, and tend to be quiet and reserved, in contrast, extroverted personalities focus on the outer world and can be characterized as sociable and impulsive (Costa & McCrae, 2008).

In studying language, there are basically four language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. On the other hand, language educators tend to talk about the way we use the language in terms of the four skills which are divided into two group as "Receptive skills" that are used for reading and listening, and "Productive Skills" which are used for speaking and writing (Harmer, 2007; Ginting, 2018). In the EFL classes, writing skill is normally taught after the three other skills, one reason is that writing is the most complicated skill and many language learners do not like this skill or do not interest in this skill (Ginting, 2018). Erton (2010) claimed that the impact of personality traits on writing competence and performance is considerable. On the other hand, speaking is a skill that is highly used in daily life. It is the tool to create social relationships as a human being (Harmer, 2007). Speaking can serve as one of the two main functions that are transactional, transfer of information, and interactional maintenance of social relationships (Brown & Yule, 2003). The importance of speaking instruction is clear because it helps students acquire EFL speaking skill and thus converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers (Torky, 2006).

Writing as one of the language skills must be learned deeply. In the EFL classes, the students not only wish to learn writing as an essential component of learning, but also to apply it to their academic and professional life (Dhanya & Alamelu, 2019). However, writing in English was not

easy for EFL students, it entails a lot of practice, good vocabulary, and high-quality grammar. Writing skill held an extremely important place compared to the other three language skills and it is difficult to instruct (Dixon & Nessel, 2003). Additionally, based on Lazaraton (2001), speaking in a second or foreign language had often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills. She moreover added that "for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the basic means of human communication (p.103)." The problem of the study will be supported by the findings of some related studies as Ghanem (2003), Touky (2006), and Al Khuli (2000) emphasized the fact that speaking skill was neglected in the secondary classes, which led to the observable shortage in EFL students' ability to communicate.

More importantly, the problem is sometimes not only caused by students' external factors, but also students' internal factors like personality traits (Faisal, 2019; Fatimawati, 2015). Personality factors within a person contribute in some ways to the success of language learning (Brown, 2000). Each language learner had different types of personality traits that need different learning methods with different results (Dewaele, 2005). Dealing with students' personalities, there were two types of personalities studied here: extrovert and introvert as these two types were the most researched personality aspect in L2 studies. Based on the statements above, it could be logically seen that there was a correlation between personality traits and some language learning skills. Accordingly, it is very important to carry out such a quantitative and correlational study through analyzing the relationship between the personality traits (introversion & extroversion) and EFL learners' productive skills, i.e., writing and speaking which had not been investigated before. Since there have been a few recent studies to highlight the importance of introverts and extroverts in language skills, such a study is essential and requires to be done. Therefore, the present study tried to analyze the relationship between the two main personality traits (extroversion & introversion) and productive language skills (speaking & writing). In order to meet the research objectives, the following questions have been designed.

Is there any relationship between extroverted EFL learners and their writing skill?

1. Is there any relationship between extroverted EFL learners and their speaking skill?
2. Is there any relationship between introverted EFL learners and their writing skill?
3. Is there any relationship between introverted EFL learners and their speaking skill?

Significance of the Study

The present study explored the potential of the individuals' personality traits in productive skills that will offer good views in this field. In fact, this study reveals how people can be different from each other in many aspects, particularly in personality. Moreover, learners' personality has a considerable effect on how to achieve the tips of writing skill and produce them. Thus, the methods which will be used by teachers can be more efficient to have a good result. Additionally, the result can help the teachers and researchers who would like to know the types of learners' personalities to guide them to improve their written text and can give some ways or suggestions to learners in order to improve their learners' achievement in writing and speaking skills.

Literature Review

In a more recent study, Kafryawan (2020) worked on the influence of extroversion personality towards EFL Learners' writing skills. The research study goal was on finding out whether there is a noticeable correlation between EFL learners' extroversion and their writing skills. The sample consisted of 50 participants of university. Both personality traits questionnaire and writing test were taken. The finding indicated that there was a medium correlation between EFL learners' extroversion personality and their writing skills.

In conclusion, extroversion personality gives a medium impact on EFL learners' writing skills, in other words, extroverted group learners tend to show good writing skills. In another recent study, Zaswita and Ihsan (2020) investigated the impact of personality types on students' writing ability. To do this, they selected the participants at a school and two classes were selected as samples (experimental class and control class). The data are analyzed by using a t-test. The finding of the testing proves that there is a significant impact on students' personalities on their writing ability. Students with introverted personalities have better writing scores than students with extroverted personalities.

Tung-hsien's (2019) study was on personality facets, writing strategy use, and writing performance of college students learning English as a foreign language. The case study was on the SEM technique to explore the predictive relations among personality facets, writing strategy use, and writing performance of college EFL students. 201 participants who composed an argument-based essay participated in the study. Before being surveyed, two self-report instruments were used which are the Personality Facet Scale, which measured 10 facets within the framework of the

Five-Factor Model, and the Writing Strategy Scale which assessed six types of strategy. As suggested adding and treating strategy use as a mediator could help elaborate and elucidate the facet–performance relations in the EFL writing context. In another study, Niati and Nurhasanah (2018) analyzed students' personality traits and their speaking skills. The aim of this research was to determine whether there is a significant correlation between students' personality traits and their speaking skills based on the Big Five Personality theory. The result showed a correlation between personality traits and speaking skills which means the higher extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness the higher the speaking skill is. However, the higher neuroticism is the lower speaking skill will be.

Besides, Boroujeni, Roohani, and Hasanimanesh (2015) investigated the impact of extroversion and introversion personality types on EFL learners' writing ability. The researchers elicited 50 writing samples from 50 extroverted and introverted university students. They aimed to investigate the possible impact of personality traits, which are extroverted/introverted of Iranian EFL learners on their writing performance in terms of its different subsets. Analysis of the results revealed that introverts considerably outperformed extroverts in all subsets except organization which might be due to some of the introverts' personal characteristics that the extroverts lack, such as being careful, having more concentration in their solitude, and having the ability to generate much more ideas alone.

Khotimah and Saputri (2014) tried to investigate the correlation between introvert-extrovert personality and students' speaking ability. The research was based on three objectives. The first is analyzing the significant correlation between students' personality (introvert -extrovert) and their speaking ability performance. The second is finding out the speaking ability performance of introverted personality traits groups. The third objective is to find out the speaking ability performance of extroverted personality groups.

The result showed that the correlation between introvert-extrovert personalities in speaking ability performance indicates a high correlation between these variables. Furthermore, the study mentioned the extroverted group as better speakers than the introverted. Finally, the researchers concluded that introverted and extroverted personalities affected students' performance in English speaking skills.

Method

Design of the Study

This study seeks to answer the research questions formulated before. The present study used correlational research design to analyze the relationship between personality traits (Extroversion/Introversion) as independent variables, and the EFL learners' productive skills (Writing & Speaking) as dependent ones. In the present study, the quantitative method was employed to collect and analyze data, as well as interpret the results. In other words, this study was correlational research, and quantitative method was chosen to answer the proposed research questions.

Participants and Sample

This research was administered to intermediate EFL learners in Afagh Foreign Language Institute, Tehran, Iran. The participants were intermediate EFL learners of female gender whose ages ranged from 16 to 18. At the beginning of the term, two intact classes of 46 students were selected based on available sampling. After that, Oxford placement test was used in order to assess a homogenized sample. All the participants were native speakers of Persian and received English for 4.5 hours a week.

Instruments

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

In order to homogenize the participants in terms of their language proficiency, Oxford Placement Test was employed. It is known as a standard test and since this test is in multiple-choice format, it is considered to be reliable in scoring. The test was administered at the beginning of the term and based on the test scores; 40 students labeled as the intermediate language learners.

Personality Questionnaire

To explore the participants' personalities, the extroversion/ introversion questionnaire adopted by Skellett (2017) was used in this study. The questionnaire focused on the introvert and extrovert characteristics of individuals. For the ease of implementation, the questionnaire was translated to Persian. The validity of it was checked by two experts and they did not report any irrelevant points. Also, the reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed through Cronbach's Alpha which is .79.

Pre and Post-test of Writing and Speaking

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researchers employed writing and speaking tests as the third instruments to gather the data. Pre and post-tests were administered for both groups to investigate their productive language skills (writing & speaking). The purpose of the pre-test was to identify the two groups' level of productive skills before using the treatment, and the aim of the post-test was to compare the results of the pre-tests with the results of the post-test after the treatment. In both pre and post-tests, the EFL learners' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary were examined. All the tests were extracted from their textbook, American English File 3 (Intermediate Level) and the score of each test was calculated out of 20.

Data Collection Procedures

At first, 46 students were selected based on the available sampling to collect data. All of the students had enrolled as the intermediate ones, but in order to be sure that all were at the same level of language proficiency, OPT was administered to them. Considering the scores, 40 of them were qualified as the intermediate language learners. In the second place, the personality questionnaire was distributed among the participants. Regarding the scoring scale provided by the questionnaire, the participants were labeled as extroverts and introverts and put in two groups, Extrovert Group (EG) and Introvert Group (IG) for receiving the same treatment by the teacher. In the third step, as pretest, the participants of both groups (EG & IG) were asked to write an essay in a limited time about describing a book or an article they have read recently and its effect on them. The allocated time was 30-35 minutes with the purpose to give them sufficient time for brainstorming, pre-writing/mind mapping, and final draft. For speaking pretest, an interesting topic was considered to discuss. They had to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of online classes which they had experienced. They were supposed to present their idea in 3-5 minutes.

After conducting the pre-test, the treatment started and both groups received the same treatment by the teacher. The treatment of writing was done in 8 sessions. The teacher who was one of the researchers taught different parts of writing skills, which consist of an introduction, main body, and conclusion. She also taught some vocabulary and grammar points. As an assignment, they had to expand their topics and write the details. It should be noted that during the writing class, all the practices had done in groups/pairs to reduce the students' anxiety. Furthermore, the students had an opportunity to learn from each other. Also, the teacher could have better monitoring. The speaking treatment was done in 7 sessions. The teacher explained how

to start speaking. Also, she taught some phrases which can help the participants to start speaking. After that, they practice through some topics in groups. Then, the students had to present a speech or send their voices in the group and the teacher checked them. The teacher checked the speaking parts based on task response, lexical, accuracy and fluency.

In post-test writing, the participants were asked to write an essay on the new topic. Their writing should be contained four paragraphs, an introduction, body, and conclusion in a limited time. The purpose of posttest writing was to measure their proficiency level in writing skill and to compare it with the previous one. The speaking post-test was done to evaluate the participants' speaking progress and compare it with the pretest scores. They were given a new topic to discuss. They had to present their views in 4-6 minutes. Also, the students were provided with some related pictures for discussing. Two raters (teacher & supervisor) scored their speaking through scoring checklist. They assessed their speaking based on accuracy; fluency, interaction, and coherence on a rating scale ranging from 0 to 20.

Data Analysis Method

The collected data were analyzed through SPSS software version 16 and EXCELL 2010. That is to say, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. In descriptive statistics, the researchers analyzed extroversion/ introversion questionnaire to highlight the students' personalities, and frequency tables were presented. In inferential statistics, in order to highlight the significant relationship between personality traits and productive skills, Pearson correlation test was used.

Results

Distribution of Research Variables

Before examining the research questions, the normality of the distribution of the research variables was checked. To check the normality of variables, there are different ways, one of which is to use the Shapiro-Wilk test, if the significance level of this test exceeds 0.05, the distribution of that variable would be normal. Referring to Table 1, the significance level of the Shapiro-Wilk test for most of the variables was less than 0.05, it can be said that the variables of this research did not have normal distribution, thus non-parametric tests were used to investigate the research questions.

Table 1

Distribution of Research Variables

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	**df**	**P-Value**
Extroverted Personality Trait	0.97	37	0.3
Introverted Personality Trait	0.94	37	0.04
Writing Skill (Pretest)	0.89	37	0.002
Speaking Skill (Pretest)	0.74	37	0.000
Writhing Skill (Posttest)	0.87	37	0.000
Speaking Skill (Posttest)	0.79	37	0.000

Examining the Relationship between Extroversion & Productive Skills

Pearson Correlation Test was used to investigate the relationship between extroversion and writing skill after the treatment. Results of Table 2 indicated that according to the significance level which is less than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.02), with 95% confidence, it can be said that after teaching writing skill, there is a significant correlation between the extroverted students and writing skill (r_s=0.39, n=37, $p<0.05$). It means that after teaching English, with the increase in extroversion, the students' writing skill improves and vice versa.

Table 2

Correlation between Extroverted Students and Writing Skill After Training

Variables	Spearman's rho	P-Value	n
Extroverted Personality Trait Writhing Skill	0.39	0.02	**37**

In addition, Pearson Correlation Test was used to investigate the relationship between extroversion and speaking skill after the treatment. Results of Table 3 displayed that according to the significance level which is less than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.02), with 95% confidence, it can be said that after teaching speaking skill, there is a significant correlation between the extroverted students and speaking skill (r_s=0.37, n=37, $p<0.05$). That is, after teaching speaking, with the increase in extroversion, the students' speaking skill improves and vice versa.

Table 3

Correlation between Extroverted Students and Speaking Skill After Training

Variables	Spearman's rho	P-Value	n
Extroverted Personality Trait Speaking Skill	0.37	0.02	**37**

Examining the Relationship between Introversion & Productive Skills

Once again, Pearson Correlation Test was used to investigate the relationship between introversion and writing skill after the treatment. Results of Table 4.10 indicated that according to the significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.021), with 95% confidence, it can be said that after teaching writing skill, there is no significant correlation between the introverted students and writing skill (rs=-0.21, n=37, p>0.05).

Table 4

Correlation between Introverted Students and Writing Skill After Training

Variables	Spearman's rho	P-Value	n
Introverted Personality Trait Writhing Skill	-0.21	0.2	**37**

Finally, Pearson Correlation Test was used to investigate the relationship between introversion and speaking skill after the treatment. Results of Table 4.12 showed that according to the significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.1), with 95% confidence, it can be said that after teaching speaking skill, there is no significant correlation between the introverted students and speaking skill (rs=-0.27, n=37, p>0.05).

Table 5

Correlation between Introverted Students and Speaking Skill After Training

Variables	Spearman's rho	P-Value	n
Introverted Personality Trait Speaking Skill	-0.27	0.1	**37**

Discussion

The study discussed four questions to investigate the analysis of the relationship between EFL learners' personality traits (Extroversion/ Introversion) and their productive skills (Writing/ Speaking). Pearson Correlation test was used to investigate the relationship between the research variables. Regarding the first research question, "*Is there any relationship between extroverted EFL learners and their writing skill?",* Pearson Correlation test was done to investigate the relationship between the mentioned variables. Results of the related table indicated that according to the significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.02), a significant correlation was achieved between the extroverted students and writing skill. That to say, after teaching English with the increase in extroversion, the students' writing skill improves. Therefore, there is no relationship between extroverted learners and their writing skills. For analyzing the second research question *"Is there any relationship between extroverted EFL learners and their speaking skill?",* Pearson Correlation test was used the relationship between extroversion and speaking skill after the treatment. Findings of the related table showed the significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.02), a significant correlation was seen between the extroverted students and writing skill (rs=0.37, n=37, p<0.05). It means that after teaching speaking the students' speaking skill improves. Thus, based on the careful analysis, there is no relationship between extroverted learners and their speaking skills.

Considering the third research question *"Is there any relationship between introverted EFL learners and their writing skill?",* once again Pearson correlation test was done to evaluate the relationship between the mentioned variables after the treatment. Based on the related table and the significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.021), no significant correlation reported between the introverted students and writing skill after teaching (rs=-0.21, n=37, p>0.05). Hence, based on the received data, there is no relationship between introverted learners and their writing skills. The last research question *"Is there any relationship between introverted EFL learners and speaking skill?",* examined the relationship between introversion and speaking skill and result of Pearson Correlation test revealed no significant correlation between the introverted students and speaking skill (rs=-0.27, n=37, p>0.05) with a significance level which is more than 0.05 (P-Value = 0.1). Accordingly, it can be said that, there is no relationship between introverted learners and their speaking skills.

Findings of the current research supported findings of Marwa and Thamrin (2016) who analyzed the effect of extroversion personality type on students' argumentative essay writing

skills. The result showed a correlation between extroversion personality and students' argumentative essay writing skills. Additionally, findings of this research are in accordance with a more recent study by Zaswita and Ihsan (2020) on the effectiveness of personality types and students' writing ability as they concluded a significant impact of students' personalities on their writing ability. In their study, students with introverted personalities have better writing scores than the extroverted ones. Besides, in the same year, Kafryawan (2020) worked on the influence of extroversion personality towards EFL Learners' writing skills. The finding indicated a correlation between EFL learners' extroversion personality and their writing skill. In fact, extroversion personality gives an impact on EFL learners' writing skill and extroverted group learners tend to show good writing skills. However, the results are not in line with a study done by Shokrpour and Moslehi (2015) and no significant relationship was found between personality types and EFL writing skills. In another study, Boroujeni et al. (2015) studied the impact of extroversion and introversion personality types on EFL learners' writing ability. Analysis of the results revealed that introverts significantly outperformed extroverts in all subsets except organization. Also, findings of this study are not compatible with a recent study by Qanwal and Ghani (2019), reported that no difference is between the writing performance and extroverted learner groups. In another more recent study done by Zaswita and Ihsan (2020) who investigated the impact of personality types on students' writing ability. They found a significant impact on students' personalities on their writing ability. In fact, students with introverted personalities have better writing scores than the extroverted ones.

Conclusion and Implications

As recently stated, findings of this study concentrated on analyzing the students' personality traits (Extroversion/ Introversion) and their productive skills (Writing/ Speaking). The results indicated that the one of the personality traits, i.e., extroversion, had effect on the students' productive skills, as a positive relationship found between extroverted students and their achievements in writing and speaking. Based on the received information, there is a difference between the extroversion personality trait and the students' writing and speaking skills. That is to say, after teaching English, with the increase in extroversion, the students' productive skills will also improve. In other words, the extroverted students presented better performance and made fewer errors than the introverted ones in writing and speaking tests. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the higher extroverted

learners, the more successful they tend to be in productive skills. This may be due to some of the extroverts' personal characteristics that the introverts lack, such as more being sociable, having more confidence, and having the ability to generate much more ideas in pairs or groups. However, in the introverted learners' group, before teaching English, a difference was seen between the students' personality trait and their productive skills, but after treatment, no significant correlation found between their personality and their scores of productive skills.

It is worthy to note that extrovert learners prefer to talk and are more active than the introverts. This personality type is very open and they are comfortable and felt more alive even in meeting new people. In contrast, introverted learners prefer to be quiet and solitary. They felt calm and at peace with their own world. Considering the ability to speak, certainly extrovert students are more apted. Not just talk, but also have good content. Thus, it can be said that there is a difference between extroverts and introverts toward speaking ability (Salsabila, 2021). Additionally, Hellystia and Gailea (2017) noted that personality traits have positive interactions in learning strategy and results of learning process. They also reported that extroverted students achieve higher learning results in cooperative and collaborative learning, which is more effective for this group. On the other hand, introverted learners are more active in individual works and do not prefer working in groups with their peers.

In the case of teaching language skills, knowledge of the language learners' personality types enables teachers to adjust their expectations with their students' abilities. Also, being aware of learner's personality traits enable the teachers to choose appropriate teaching methods. In addition, it is important to know the students' personality types before choosing the appropriate method or learning strategy. In fact, it is necessary for a teacher who is thinking of teaching language learning strategies in a real classroom setting, to make a careful plan to balance the teaching of subject matter and language learning strategies with focus on learners' individual differences. The administrators of English language departments should have concrete plans to develop and monitor their students' English language proficiency based on their personality traits. Also, they should establish bases and standards for allocating resources that contribute to the students' English language proficiency. Furthermore, they should provide professional development assistance for the faculty to inform them about their learners' personality traits and relevant approaches, methods, strategies and techniques in English language teaching. All in all, by knowing personality traits, EFL classroom teachers can be sensitized to both types of extroversion and introversion among

their students. This may guide them to activate the guidance aspects for dealing with the introverted and extroverted students.

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