Research Paper

Effects of Using Interactive Tasks on EFL Students' Self-Monitoring, Self-Regulation and Willingness to Communicate

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ABSTRACT

The current quantitative study aimed to find out if interactive tasks could impact Iranian EFL students' self-monitoring, self-regulation, and willingness to communicate in a classroom setting. To this purpose, it utilized three questionnaires measuring self-monitoring scale (SMS), self-regulated language learning scale (SRLLS), and willingness to communicate (WTC) to assess changes in interactive scores of 40 students in an experimental group with the interactive scores of 40 students in a control group. The obtained results, using an independent sample t-test, clearly displayed that the students with interactive tasks outperformed those with regular instruction. Furthermore, the results showed that the interactive tasks were effective to improve the students' achievement and alleviating their performance through utilizing interactional competence. The findings of this research imply that teaching methods should address interactive activities in an operative and meaningful way in a non-threatening classroom environment to increase engagement in the language classroom and improve the students' self-confidence and learning enhancement.

Keywords: Interactive task; Self-monitoring strategy; Self-regulation strategy; Strategy instruction; Willingness to communicate

INTRODUCTION

Tasks are used to investigate language construction, communication, and discussion of areas of language to improve L2 learners' acquisition (Van den Branden, 2006). A better context is provided to open up learning processes by involving students in the workplace. Both teacher and students have a responsibility to improve classroom interaction in task-based learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2004, p.223). At the same time, skills and strategies taught in school should lead to academic success in the classroom. Appropriate modes of participation and interaction during classroom in-

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struction are defined as academic engagement (Simoson, Fairbanks, Brish, Myers, & Sugai, 2008). Classification of academic engagement can include active (eg, verbally answering a question, writing) or passive (eg, quietly listening to a speaker) engagement. Successful academic learning, as well as student behavior, can result in academic engagement. Students engaged in the learning process are more likely to present inappropriate behavior and more likely to achieve academic success (Simonsen et al., 2008).

Teachers must provide students with constructive learning experiences in a caring yet structured learning environment during the critical period of cognitive development. To

do this, the teacher must go through a hands-on phase in the classroom. With the digital nature of today's learners in mind, teachers can promote self-directed learning by adapting teaching methods to suit students' styles and needs. Teachers can increase student engagement by providing opportunities for supportive and challenging students, fostering relationships through learning environments and autonomy (Desi, Welland, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991), and generally improving the learning experience. You can contribute. In turn, teachers and researchers must rethink their approaches to learning, teaching methods, and curricula to settle the requirements of the students. A deeper understanding of student motivation and self-regulation, two factors that promote participatory learning, can result from data collection that reflects student perceptions (Huang, 2010). While slight consideration has been given to college students and engagement when technology is integrated into foreign language classrooms, there is numerous research on learning and engagement in general.

There are many problems and difficulties in Iran in connection with learner motivation and interaction which is very low in the classroom. This weakness about speaking may relate to teachers, as their role in the classroom is important and if they do not pay attention to the type of speech they speak, student interactions, student motivation, classroom interactions, etc., their learners can even speak. (Langrudi and Amiri, 2013). The current research addresses issues concerning the absence of understanding of the ability to predict English efficiency through current strategic interventions. The research data was collected through the quantitative method to guide the study concerning the Self-Assessment Scale (SMS), Self-Regulatory Language Learning Scale (SRLLS), and a Competitive Communication Questionnaire (WTC).

About the impact of interactive task use, the following research questions were addressed in the present study:

Q1. To what extent does the application of interactive tasks affect Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-monitoring?

Q2. To what extent does the application of interactive tasks affect Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-regulation?

Q3. To what extent does the application of interactive tasks affect Iranian intermediate EFL students' willingness to communicate?

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Brown (2007), in the course of second language acquisition, interaction is regarded to be the core of communication, and effective language learning depends on classroom communication, meaning that by interacting in the context via the target language in the classroom environment, the learners can communicate and show their active engagement in the process of learning a second language.

Andrade & Evans (2013) believe that learners' interaction with peers, teachers, and others to enhance learning is the social environment dimension of learning a second language. The interaction of students with teachers developed to regulate the learners' behavior and, as another contextual factor, affect their efforts. Also, Zeidner, Boekaerts, & Pintrich (2000) believe that social interaction between learners and teachers can encourage self-regulated learning.

Self-regulated learning has arisen as an important educational institution. It has become clear that one of the most vital issues in self-regulated learning is the skill to successfully distinguish and integrate learning (Bockerts, 1999). Zimmerman and Schunk (1989) describe self-regulated learning in terms of thoughts, feelings, and self-directed actions in an orderly method to accomplish students` goals. Winne (1995) defined self-regulatory learning as an inventive and self-directed process.

Boekaerts, Zimmerman & Schunk, and Winne all shared the idea that students can manage their understanding, motivation, or behavior. Self-directed students can use the resources accessible to them; They can regulate their learning. They can allocate resources, ask for help, appraise their actions, modify and polish their work. Through these numerous processes of control, students attain their goals

and achieve higher points of attainment (Zimmerman, 1989).

Self-regulating learning castigation includes psychological procedures such as listening to instructions, processing and mixing information, and working knowledge, as well as fostering student beliefs. Self-directed learning not only expands student learning outcomes in several important ways but also helps endorse explanations of results that reflect their personal development. If possible, students' discernment of success will increase and their motivation to continue learning will increase. Thus, assisting students to develop self-regulation skills, such as planning, organizing, and tracking their learning, directly encourages a greater degree of control over their thoughts and focus. focus students' attention on the significance of operative learning efforts.

According to Rosenberg and Egbert (2011), "Self-monitoring is described as the process of regulating, controlling and preserving learners' behavior to enforce promising self-images on others. Self-assessment activities also emphasize students' capability to track their development toward learning goals.

This can lead to quicker and more operative administration of interferences that can back the success and accomplishment of learning actions. In addition, "self-monitoring is the process by which people record data about their behavior to change your level" (Coleman & Weber, 2002, p. 103).

According to Zimmerman (1995), there are three means of self-monitoring: monitoring allies (a) self-assessment, (b) strategy application, and (c) efforts to rationalize strategic outcomes. Self-discipline can be effective in improving goal setting and learning. Several empirical studies have also shown that students benefit from learning self-monitoring skills; By witnessing and recording their behavior, students understand the story more evidently (Coleman & Weber, 2002; Zimmerman, 1995). For example, a study by Lan (1996) of 72 students graduating from an elementary school program found that students in the self-monitoring group achieved better in both teaching and learning than students in the control group. Is White (1995) conducted a comparative study to examine the learning strategies of 417 foreign language students (143 students and 274 university students).

Their results show that recent graduates tend to be more cautious than their classmates. Of the monitoring techniques used, elementary school students are most interested in monitoring understanding and problem diagnosis. He tested his understanding of spoken language and recognized problems that delayed his labors. Coleman and Weber (2002) also show that self-reflection produces better academic achievement and better behavior in the classroom. Zimmerman, (1995) reported that self-assessment activities not only advance students' learning but also their achievement in the learning process. Self-assessment activities that provide students with a sense of self-mastery have been recognized as the primary source of intrinsic motivation to pursue self-study.

Researchers assert that self-monitoring aids learning in any teaching method (e.g, Linder & Harris, 1993; Zimmerman, 1990). Therefore, it is clear that when students move towards a higher education environment, self-esteem is the most vital skill that students must have. Follow-up activities include monitoring attention while reading or listening to the text, self-assessments to assess their understanding of the topic, and the practice of evaluation strategies (score prediction Checking, and editing costs (Chang, 2005). All of these tracking strategies warn the reader about differences in attention or comprehension that can be corrected by using a control strategy (Garcia and Pintrich, 1994).

Willingness to communicate (WTC) originates from the study of first language non-communication, where WTC is regarded as a characteristic, stable structure for the individual and all communication circumstances and communication patterns of the communicator (McCroskey and Baer, 1985 cited in MacIntyre [9]). WTC for second language learning (L2) is defined as "the capability to engage in an explicit talk with an individual, using L2" [10] (page 547). The capability to speak in the target language is considered by many to be the primary goal in learning L2. WTC is the primary necessity for operative

communication and, therefore, constant progress, as it relates to the individual's intellectual ability to utilize L2.

METHOD
Design
This study employed a quasi-experimental quantitative method research design. This method collects data on predetermined instruments to yield statistical data that can be quantified and exposed to statistical scrutiny to prove or disprove claims.

Participants
A random sampling technique was employed in the present study to select the participants. The participants comprised 80 Iranian EFL (male and female) students from Payame Noor University in Behbahan. They were chosen from among the undergraduate translation students and divided into two groups of 40 students as control and experimental groups. Table 1 below shows the distribution of the participants according to group, place, gender, and grade.

Table 1
Distribution of Participants

Group	Place	Gender	Grade	Frequency	Total
Experimental Group	University	Female	BA	24	40
	University	Male	BA	16	
Control group	University	Female	BA	23	40
	University	Male	BA	17	
Total				80	

Instruments
The study utilized the following tools to collect the needed data: Oxford Placement Test OPT, Self-Monitoring Scale (SMS), Self-Regulated Language Learning Scale (SRLLS), and the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire.

Procedures
About quantitative research, a questionnaire survey was conducted in the present study to collect data conclude the phenomenon under investigation, and describe the participants' behavior. Initially, a homogeneity test was run on the participants to check their proficiency level. Then, the data for the pre-test of the study came from the responses of the participants to the three SMS, SRLLS, and WTC questionnaires. In the treatment period, the experimental group was encouraged with the motivation to take part in the discussion by devoting free chat opportunities.

They were asked to speak of their individual and academic life, etc. The instructors (authors) paid no attention to grammar and vocabulary accuracy, peers' corrections, and self-corrections; instead, they focused on students' needs, abilities, interests, and let them feel free to express themselves and make rational decisions in any situation to develop the most acceptable models of thinking, action, and communication. The treatment and instruction of the experimental group took an entire academic semester, ten sittings for each group.

Finally, the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire was administered, and the gathered data on attitudes towards the use of motivating strategies in an interactive context for their language learning activities were analyzed through SPSS.

Additionally, to compute the attitude of the translation students on the practice of the instructional interventions, a sample t-test was run. The quantitative outcomes are illustrated in the following sections.

RESULTS
As for the first research question; that is, whether using interactive tasks significantly affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-monitoring, the results obtained from the pre-test/post-test of the control group are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics (Control Group)

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Self-Monitoring	Pretest	40	11	19	8	16.725	3.4197352	< 0.05
	Posttest	40	11	20	9	16.675	3.2690271	< 0.05

Table 2 shows that there is no weighty variance in students' performance. Therefore, these results indicate that the interaction can form a different construct as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics (Experimental Group)

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Self-Monitoring	Pretest	40	12	20	8	17.75	2.8059131	< 0.05
	Posttest	40	15	26	11	19.375	2.6378653	< 0.05

To provide a reasonable response to the first research question, the interaction was run. Table 3 above shows that using interactive tasks significantly affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' self- monitoring. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between the two control and experimental groups' achievement on the pre-test and post-test as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4
T-Test

G		N	Mean. (Control)	Mean (Experimental)	Std.D (Control)	Std.D (Experimental)	*t*	P
Self-Monitoring	Pretest	40	16.725	17.75	3.4197352	2.8059131	0.5667906	0.001
	Posttest	40	16.675	19.375	3.2690271	2.6378653	0.5818827	0.001

In respect of group comparison, the independent samples t-test, as depicted in Table 4, was utilized for a possibility of a significant difference indicating the participants' performance in the post-test of the control group and experimental group.

Regarding the second research question of the study, i.e. whether using interactive tasks significantly affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-regulated language learning, Table 5 below clearly illustrates the answer.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics (Control Group

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Self-Regulated	Pretest	40	15	22	7	18.025	2.1269507	< 0.05
Language Learning	Posttest	40	16	22	6	17.95	2.0748803	< 0.05

Note: SRLL Mean values are based on a 5-item Likert scale (5-strongly agree; 4-agree; 3-not sure; 2-disagree; 1-strongly disagree)

The descriptive analyses for participants' self-regulation scores for the control group in the pre-test and post-test are given in Table 5. The mean scores and the standard deviation scores of the participants in the pre-test and post-test show that the impact of the research on the academic performance of the respondents was slight.Table 6 below reflects the results of descriptive statistics of the experimental group.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics (Experimental Group)

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Self-Regulated	Pretest	40	15	23	8	20.375	2.0461093	< 0.05
Language Learning	Posttest	40	20	26	7	22.5	1.8536174	< 0.05

Note: SRLL Mean values are based on a 5-item Likert scale (5-strongly agree; 4-agree; 3-not sure; 2-disagree; 1-strongly disagree)

As a group-dominated comparison, the independent samples t-test was used to compare the scores of the possible differences of participants in the control group and the experimental group. The results are presented in Table 7 below

Table 7

T-Test

G		N	Mean. (Control)	Mean (Experimental)	Std.D (Control)	Std.D (Experimental)	t	P
Self-Monitoring Language Learning	Pretest	40	18.025	20.375	2.1269507	2.0461093	0.6922894	0.001
	Posttest	40	17.95	22.5	2.0748803	1.8536174	0.7135127	0.001

These results prove the group difference in favor of the experimental group in the post-test toward learning and communication; meaning that the experimental group was better in the post-test and had higher scores than the control group.

Concerning the third research question of the study; that is, whether using interactive tasks significantly affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' willingness to communicate, the obtained results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics (Control Group)

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Willingness to Communicate	Pretest	40	30	37	7	32.55	3.0157029	< 0.05
	Posttest	40	31	37	6	32.6	2.9682076	< 0.05

Note: WTC Mean values are based on a 5-item The frequency of time scale

(1 = Rarely willing; 2 = Sometimes willing; 3 = Willing half of the time; 4 = Usually willing 5 = Almost always willing)

Table 8 represents the main findings to answer the third research question. As can be seen in this Table, the WTC scores of the participants imply no significant differences in students' willingness to communicate. To examine any significant differences between the willingness to communicate and academic achievement, the authors ran correlation analyses. The improvement of the students' speaking ability can be seen clearly in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics (Experimental Group)

G		N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std.D	P
Willingness to Communicate	Pretest	40	31	36	5	38.525	2.1630479	< 0.05
	Posttest	40	40	47	7	42.025	1.9280321	< 0.5

Note: WTC Mean values are based on a 5-item The frequency of time scale

(1 = Rarely willing; 2 = Sometimes willing; 3 = Willing half of the time; 4 = Usually willing 5 = Almost always willing)

Table 9 reveals that interaction improves the students' speaking skills significantly and that positive effects of the students' use of interactive tasks to communicate lead to further participation. As for group comparison, the independent *t*-test was applied to compare the

control group and experimental group scores.

The results are presented n Table 10 below:

Table 10
T-Test

G		N	Mean. (Control)	Mean (Experimental)	Std.D (Control)	Std.D (Experimental)	*t*	P
Self-Monitoring Language Learning	Pretest	40	32.55	38.525	3.0157029	2.1630479	0.6214447	0.001
	Posttest	40	32.6	42.025	2.9682076	1.9280321	0.4519273	0.001

As seen, no meaningful difference was detected between the control group and the experimental group in the pre-test.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results obtained from the descriptive analysis of the collected data provide a testbed for discussion in this section of the study. The first research objective of the study was to determine the extent of the impact of using interactive tasks on Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-monitoring. A close look into data analysis results reveals that the participants' interactive activities can positively affect the learners and give them the capability to pursue attainable goals and monitor their progress. In other words, the learners become competent enough to develop learning-oriented goals as well as performance-oriented goals in the classroom. This is in line with the finding of the research by Bruhn, McDaniel, & Kreigh (2015) who state that interventions planned to reinforce self-monitoring skills are effective in dropping problems and enhancing learners' care and efficiency.

The second research objective was to recognize if using interactive tasks affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' self-regulation. The results showed that they could self-observe their performance and adapt it strategically to self-regulate the physical and social environment. In other words, they adapted their performance with feedback obtained from self-observation. In this connection, proper statistics were run to show a significant change between the control and experimental groups. The results revealed that the students receiving interactive instruction effectively outperformed those receiving regular instruction, which contributed to enhancing their learning. This is partly in line with Noels' (2010) finding that the students focus on their character to share their personalities and background and consequently better communication in a language-learning classroom.

The third research objective was to see if using interactive tasks meaningfully affects Iranian intermediate EFL students' willingness to communicate. The results illustrated that the participants used self-confidence to enhance their sense of independence and responsibility. In effect, they made use of opportunities to take a risk and even make errors in constructing a safe and relevant communicating environment. In such a learning context, the teacher tried to create a friendly atmosphere and deploy activities with his centeredness in the classroom to create positive relationships.

Based on the findings of the current study, the interaction can offer the profile of mixing the two balanced optimally and implemented effectively grammar and communicative language skills for the desired level of language learning outcomes. Students can find the ability to do a task alongside more self-confidence leading to more goal-directed behaviors and becoming independent in their learning process as well as more confident with speaking tasks.

The findings of the current study have the following implications for instructors, curriculum experts, and materials developers, 1) Curriculum experts should provide teachers with appropriate textbooks to encourage autonomy in the language classroom, 2) English education policymakers, should recommend more efficient speaking courses to meet the speaking skills needs of the EFL learners, 3) Program administrators should consider sufficient

times for speaking classes. In doing so, they are recommended to hold the speaking classes at the appropriate times, when students have sufficient energy and more willingness to participate in class discussions, 4) EFL instructors should encourage the learners to consider the communication phenomenon as a natural process of language learning, and warn them not to overestimate their linguistic knowledge in speaking.

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