



JOURNAL OF SECOND LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

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An Investigation of English Language Needs of Iraqi Non-English Major Students: A Case of EAP Students

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KEY TERMS

English Language Skills
Needs Analysis
English for Academic courses
Learners' English Language needs

ABSTRACT

Needs analysis as the systematic collection of data on students' needs and preferences especially for English for Academic Purposes courses can provide insights for designing a course or finding the weaknesses and strengths of such courses. Relying on Needs Analysis as a cornerstone of such courses, the researcher conducted needs analysis on a group of 200 male and female non-English major students at the Thi-Qar University in Iraq. The researcher conducted a convergent mixed parallel method through the administration of TAŞÇI's questionnaire and conducting structured interviews with 15 students. The findings suggest that the reading skill was the prioritized skill followed by the speaking skill. Also, it was found that the students' problems included poor vocabulary and the complex use of reading materials in general and professional texts. They also mentioned pronunciation as a problematic area. It was also inferred from the interviews that the students' needs were not limited to the campus use and they needed this skill off campus for reading English subtitles or e-books. Policy makers and syllabus designers at Thi-Qar University as well as other Iraqi universities in the region are suggested to focus more on the reading skill.

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1. Introduction

The English language has a fundamental role in higher education. English for specific purposes emerged for the facilitation of communication in the 1950s as a consequence of the improvements in technology, science, and business worldwide when English was the lingua franca of the world (Kırkgöz & Dikilitaş, 2018). This trend continued with people's needs becoming more specific and their communication becoming more driven based on needs that led to the emergence of ESP sub-branches such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or EOP (English for occupational courses). ESP can be referred to as an applied field of English Language teaching divided into different branches

such as EAP and EOP (Daulay, 2020). Thus, in EAP, needs of the language learners in various disciplines became more specific (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Kirkgöz & Dikilitaş, 2018).

Paltridge and Starfield (2013) define ESP as a learner-centered approach in which the development of the communicative competence is meant to happen based on the specific realities and needs of a specific target group of learners. ESP is a “unique domain” because the kind of materials and even the teaching procedure have to be in agreement with the needs of learners (Habtoor, 2012). Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) state that the ESP courses have the aim of satisfying the specific needs of specific groups of learners and they are in contrast with general language purposes. The importance of English for undergraduate students is emphasized by Soliman (2016) who states that the inability to master English will be a hindrance in students’ ability for studying in not only vocational fields but also in their demands of the millennial life. According to Robinson (1991) there are two important characteristic features to any ESP course. One is that it is “goal-oriented” and the second one is that it relies heavily on “needs analysis”. It has also been noted that the focus on the needs of learners will help them with the development of some basic language skills required of them (Ali, 2011; Begimkulova & Mannonova, 2020) and also it will “aid teachers in making an appropriate decision for material development” (Menggo, et al., 2019, p. 740). Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998, p. 121) define NA as “the process of establishing the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of a course.” This can help to deeply understand the wants and needs of learners whose goals might vary from other learners to learn English. According to Robinson (1991) NA aims at determining what the students precisely need to do using the English language.

Concerning EAP courses, it has been highlighted that they are basically more practical rather than theoretical (Hyland, 2006). Besides, a number of teaching methodologies as well as syllabi are recommended for such courses including the early views focusing on lexico-grammar (Grabe 1994, cited in Flowerdew & peacock, 2001), to more learner-centered ones or hybrid ones (Hyland, 2006). However, while the practical aspect is more important than theory and while each context (Durmusoglu Köse, et al., 2019) merits its own attention, it seems that Needs Analysis can present actual information for the improvement of EAP courses while it can work as a compensation for problems and needs (Harwood & Petric, 2011). Besides, needs analysis can provide EAP stakeholders with rich data to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the current courses and a pre-evaluation of prospective courses.

Many universities in Iraq offer EAP courses. The English courses offered at university level in Iraq normally focus on a range of skills and sub-skills. However, research findings including the conduct of Needs Analysis have not supported the use of specific skills or sub skills that are presented to the students and the courses are not based on Needs Analysis. Research papers written by Iraqi scholars either review the situation (Aljorani, 2019; Al Kaabi, 2020; Edan & Mahdi, 2011), or have focused on engineering faculties (Celik, et al., 2014), technical institutes (Najmaddin, 2019), and problems and challenges of teachers in Iraq (Kareem, 2020). Thus, concerning the fact that needs analysis is a critical step for any EAP course, this study sought to investigate the non-English major students’ needs of the four English language skills and their sub-skills together with their English language problems at the university level to fill the gap and find the students’ views.

2. Methodology

This present study employed a mixed method using both quantitative data and qualitative data. The kind of mixed-method was parallel (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The type of parallel mixed method in this study was convergent as both qualitative and quantitative data collection is conducted within the same phase giving equal weights to both data and analyzing each separately. However, interpretation is based on putting the results together (Creswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011). As for the quantitative data, it was analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21. Descriptive analysis was run in order to find the frequencies and percentages for each skill. The data related to the interviews was transcribed and then analyzed. Data was examined to develop codes by recurrently reading and reflecting on the data to be reduced to themes (Dornyei, 2007).

2.1 Participants and Setting

The accessible population for the present study included the university non-English major students at the University of Thi-Qar located in Nasiriyah, Iraq. The departments from which data was collected included Law, Geography, History, and Psychology. The students had a variety of language proficiency levels and backgrounds. The research sample included 200 students who were selected based on purposive sampling technique based on the research objectives and questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The age range of the students was from 17 to 40. There were 136 male (68%) and 64 (32%) female students. As for the qualitative phase of data collection, the structured interviews, 15 students were interviewed who were randomly selected from among the sample.

2.2 Instrumentation

In order to collect the quantitative data TAŞÇI's questionnaire (2007) was adapted. A reliability index of 0.75 was found for the present study. The questionnaire included 5 sections including the four language skills section and the problems section in Likert scale. In addition, to collect students' views structured interviews were conducted. Interviews are also recommended by Richards (2001) as a means of collecting data for Needs Analysis. The interviews were conducted through face-to-face meetings. The interview research questions asked the students their attitudes and preferences toward the English language four skills as well as their problems in its learning.

3. Data Analysis

This section presents the analysis of the data and the findings.

3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive analysis for students' opinions about the importance of learning and using the four language skills. The majority of the students selected 'Reading' as the most important skill ($f=122$, $p=61\%$) and 'Listening' as the least important skill ($f=12$, $p=6\%$).

Table 1

Results of Descriptive Analysis for Students' Opinions about Learning and Using the Four Language Skills

	1		2		3		4		Mean	SD
	(The most important)				(The least important)					
	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		
Listening	73	36.5	75	37.5	30	15	12	6	2.07	.88
Speaking	101	50.5	62	31	33	16.5	4	2	3.10	.95
Reading	122	61	56	28	20	10	2	1	3.33	1.14
Writing	77	38.5	81	40.5	31	15.5	11	5.5	2.16	.77

Figure 1 shows the bar graph of the importance of four different skills. Based on the findings, it is observed that the most important skill is reading, followed by speaking, while listening is considered the least important.

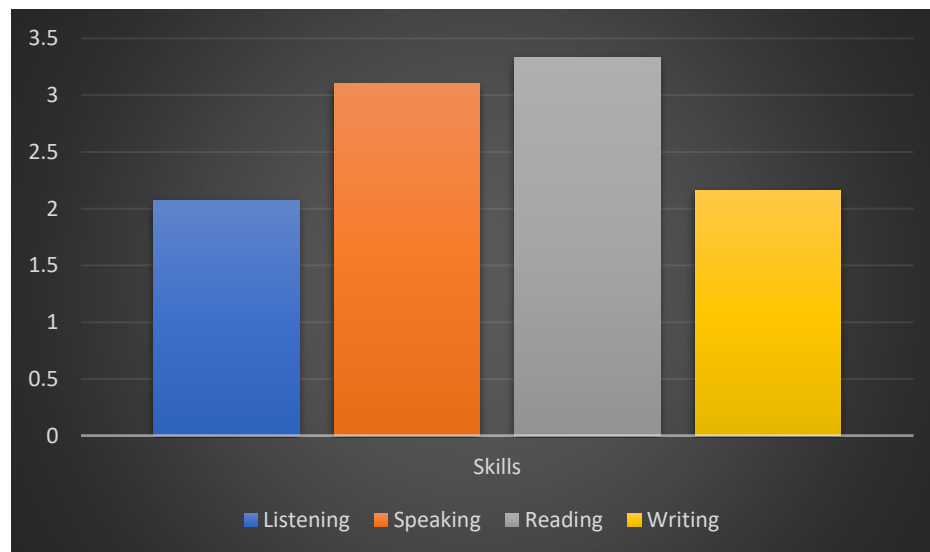


Figure 1 the bar graph of the importance of four different skills

Table 2 shows the results of descriptive analysis for students' opinions about English language problems. Poor vocabulary ($f=131$, $p=65.5\%$) had the highest percent of strongly agree and "The complex use of English in reading materials in general", and "The complex use of English in professional field" ($f=99$, $p=49.5\%$) had the highest percent of agree.

Table 2*Results of Descriptive Analysis for Students' Opinions about English Language Problems*

	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Poor vocabulary	1	.5	0	0	4	2	64	32	131	65.5	4.62	.581
Poor grammar	1	.5	1	.5	3	1.5	96	48	99	49.5	4.46	.608
Poor listening comprehension	1	.5	0	0	5	2.5	88	44	106	53	4.49	.601
Poor speaking skill	1	.5	1	.5	3	1.5	95	47.5	100	50	4.46	.608
Slow reading speed	1	.5	0	0	8	4	85	42.5	106	53	4.48	.626
Poor writing skill	1	.5	0	0	9	4.5	75	37.5	115	57	4.52	.634
Poor pronunciation	1	.5	1	.5	10	5	81	40.5	107	53.5	4.49	.626
The complex use of English in reading materials in general.	0	0	4	2	9	4.5	99	49.5	88	44	4.44	.615
The complex use of English in professional field	0	0	3	1.5	13	6.5	99	49.5	85	42.5	4.46	.664

To answer the first research question frequency and percentage were utilized. Table 3 shows frequencies and percentages of the items on the reading skill construct. This skill includes 11 items. The majority of the participants selected agree and strongly agree for this skill. Among 11 items, items 1 had the highest percent of strongly agree (52%). This means that based on the participants' perspective, English reading skill is very important for "reading textbooks". Regarding the next part, why reading skills are necessary for Iraqi students, the majority of participants selected "To understand the main ideas of reading texts" (49%).

Table 3*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the reading skill*

Item	Strongly disagree		disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Textbooks	0	0	6	3	26	13	63	31.5	105	52.5	4.34	.816
Exam questions	0	0	1	.5	18	9	87	43.5	94	47	4.37	.667
Journals	1	.5	4	2	15	7.5	99	49.5	81	40.5	4.28	.729
Novels	0	0	3	1.5	15	7.5	96	48	86	43	4.33	.679
Newspapers	0	0	0	0	15	7.5	113	56.5	72	36	4.29	.596
Tables	0	0	0	0	16	8	105	52.5	79	39.5	4.32	.615
Main ideas	0	0	0	0	21	10.5	81	40.5	98	49	4.39	.670
In detail	0	0	0	0	16	8	94	47	90	45	4.37	.629
Translate	0	0	0	0	9	4.5	107	53.5	84	42	4.38	.571
Interpret	0	0	1	.5	14	7	120	60	65	32.5	4.25	.597
Summarize	1	.5	0	0	9	4.5	105	52.5	85	42.5	4.37	.619

To answer the second research question frequency and percentage were utilized. Table 4 shows frequencies and percentages of the items on the speaking skill construct. This skill includes 5 items. The majority of the participants selected agree for speaking skill. Among the 6 items, “To make presentations at seminars and conferences” had the highest percent of strongly agree (43%). This means that based on the participants’ perspective, English speaking skill is very important for “making presentations at seminars and conferences”. In addition, “To participate in class discussions” had the highest percent of agree (63.5%).

Table 4*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the speaking skill*

Item	Strongly disagree		disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Class discussions	0	0	2	1	44	22	127	63.5	27	13.5	3.90	.621
Daily conver.	1	.5	16	8	114	57	60	30	9	4.5	3.30	.702
Talk to foreigners	0	0	2	1	71	35.5	81	40.5	46	23	3.86	.779
Presentations	0	0	0	0	20	10	94	47	86	43	4.33	.651
Ask questions	0	0	2	1	7	3.5	116	58	75	37.5	4.32	.591

To answer the third research question frequency and percentage were utilized. Table 5 shows frequencies and percentages of the items on the listening skill construct. This skill includes 6 items. The majority of the participants selected agree for listening skill. Among 6 items, "To follow spoken instructions from lecturers" had the highest percent of strongly agree (54%). This means based on the participants' perspective, English listening skill is very important for following spoken instructions from lecturers. In addition, "To understand seminars, conferences." had the highest percent of agree (60.5%).

Table 5*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the listening skill*

Item	Strongly disagree		disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Daily conversation	1	.5	15	7.5	134	67	43	21.5	7	3.5	3.20	.642
Spoken instructions	1	.5	0	0	29	14.5	62	31	108	54	4.38	.767
Radio and TV	0	0	2	1	11	5.5	113	56.5	74	37	4.30	.616
Discussions	0	0	3	1.5	10	5	92	46	95	47.5	4.40	.657
Seminars	0	0	0	0	11	5.5	121	60.5	68	34	4.29	.562
Take notes	0	0	1	.5	9	4.5	110	55	80	40	4.35	.590

To answer the fourth research question frequency and percentage were utilized. Table 6 shows frequencies and percentages of the items on the writing skill construct. This skill includes 6 items. The majority of the participants selected agree and strongly agree for the writing skill. Among 6 items, "To write essays" had the highest percent of strongly agree (63.5%). This means that based on the participants' perspective, English writing skill is very important for writing essays. In addition, "To write term projects" had the highest percent of agree (61%).

Table 6*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the writing skill*

Item	Strongly disagree		disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Laboratory reports	1	.5	0	0	15	7.5	107	53.5	77	38.5	4.30	.648
Term projects	0	0	2	1	10	5	122	61	66	33	4.26	.595
Homework	1	.5	19	9.5	108	54	61	30.5	11	5.5	3.31	.739
Take notes	0	0	11	5.5	111	55.5	50	25	28	14	3.48	.802
Essays	1	.5	0	0	9	4.5	63	31.5	127	63.5	4.58	.630
Research papers	0	0	0	0	10	5	107	53.5	83	41.5	4.37	.577

To answer the last research question again frequency and percentage were utilized. Table 7 (Appendix 1) shows frequencies and percentages of the items on students' attitudes and preferences toward their English language needs. This questionnaire includes 21 items.

Among the 21 items, item 8 had the highest percent of strongly agree (74%). This means that the students required to be taught in separate classes according to their proficiency levels. In addition, item 7 had the highest percent of agree (77.5%). This means that the majority of the participants believe that even if students fail in English courses in preparatory classes, they should be allowed to continue their education. Finally, results revealed that item 15 had the highest percent of disagree. Therefore, 46.5% of participants think that there are not adequate English resources and textbooks translated into the English language.

3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The data for the interview questions were analyzed to be reduced to themes (Dornyei, 2007) and they were categorized based on their frequencies (Mackey & Gass, 2005). While for all the questions the researcher sought to find their views that were not pre-specified, emergent coding was conducted (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

The first question of the interview regarded the students' preferences for the reading skill. The most frequent reading sorts included 'reading the English movies and instructional materials' subtitles', 'reading various books, e-books and other non-books', and 'reading scientific articles and texts'. Table 8 presents the interviewees' responses to the first interview question.

Table 8*Interviewees' responses to the first interview question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Watch English movies and read their subtitles on YouTube On campus and off campus
2	Reading short instructional materials on YouTube for students
3	Strengthen these skills through social programs and communication
4	Reading textbooks and non-textbooks in English on campus and off-campus
5	Reading various books
6	Reading different texts in social media
7	Reading books in libraries and e-books
8	Reading scientific articles and movie subtitles
9	Reading texts written by the master
10	Reading stories and novels
11	Reading English subtitles of foreign movies and clips
12	Reading scientific texts
13	Reading scientific articles and movie subtitles
14	Watching English movies and reading subtitles on YouTube
15	Reading newspapers and magazines

The second question of the interview regarded the students' preferences for the speaking skill. The most frequent speaking sorts included 'communication with friends and teachers off and on campus' and conversation on cyberspace'. Table 9 presents the interviewees' responses to the second interview question.

Table 9*Interviewees' responses to the second interview question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Strengthening speaking by watching English movies and YouTube
2	Using the basic language
3	Social communication with my friend
4	Talking to teachers in the classroom
5	Speaking English at university
6	speaking English at university
7	Conversation on campus and off campus
8	Talking to myself at home and talking to classmates at university
9	Conversation through cyberspace
10	Speaking English with a university professor and with friends abroad
11	Speaking English on cyberspace
12	Explaining educational videos
13	Conversation through cyberspace
14	Explaining English movies
15	Explaining stories to friends in English

The third question of the interview regarded the students' preferences for the listening skill. The most frequent listening sorts that the students mentioned included 'listening to news', 'listening to educational and other clips', and 'listening to professors' teaching and instructions'. Table 10 presents the interviewees' responses to the third interview question.

Table 10*Interviewees' responses to the third interview question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Listening to the news in English
2	Listening to Mass media and YouTube
3	Listening to topics in English clips
4	Listening to teachers in the classroom
5	Listening to English lessons at the university
6	Listening to the teachers' curricula in English and the students' questions and answers with the professors
7	Listening to audiobooks and informative videos
8	Listening to the news
9	Listening to friends' conversations and news and stories
10	Listening and watching foreign movies
11	Listening to YouTube clips
12	Listening to educational clips
13	Listening to educational clips
14	Listening to the news
15	Listening to the news and foreign channels

The fourth question of the interview regarded the students' preferences for the writing skill. The most frequent writing sorts included 'writing reports, papers, and in exams', 'chatting through text', 'writing articles', and 'writing stories'. Table 11 presents the interviewees' responses to the fourth interview question.

Table 11*Interviewees' responses to the fourth interview question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Writing articles in English
2	Writing stories in this language
3	Chatting in English
4	Writing in all university exams in English
5	Writing various scientific and non-scientific texts
6	Writing my homework in English
7	Writing in university courses and course papers in English
8	Writing course reports in English for the teacher
9	Writing my personal information in English and writing about university stuff in English
10	Chatting with foreign friends
11	Chatting via Facebook
12	Chatting in English via Facebook or through posts in English on Instagram
13	Writing various scientific and non-scientific texts
14	Writing Professional articles in English
15	Writing a story

The fifth question of the interview regarded the students' problems. The most frequent problems that the students mentioned included 'the inability to pronounce long or hard words or sentences', and 'the inability to write sentences correctly'. Table 12 presents the interviewees' responses to the fifth interview question.

Table 12*Interviewees' responses to the fifth interview question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Pronouncing long words
2	Pronouncing hard words
3	Pronouncing long words and sentences
4	Pronouncing difficult words and long sentences
5	Pronouncing words correctly
6	Pronouncing long sentences
7	Pronouncing words correctly and quickly
8	Pronouncing words correctly and quickly
9	Pronouncing long sentences correctly
10	Writing sentences correctly
11	Writing sentences correctly
12	Understanding words and reading (pronouncing) them correctly
13	Pronouncing words correctly
14	Pronouncing long words
15	Inability to understand the teacher's speech in English and inability to pronounce long sentences correctly

4 Discussion and Conclusion

Needs analysis is the foundation step in designing courses (Almaiah & Alyoussef, 2019; Bernard & Zemach, 2003) and can be used for evaluating current courses for their weaknesses and strengths (Atefi Boroujeni & Moradian Fard, 2013). Through this sort of systematic collection of data specially that in the present study a mixed method was employed, a sound syllabus can be designed. While Thi-Qar University presents English for Academic Purposes course like many other universities, it seems that an on-going evaluation of the courses can have a contributing effect on the quality of courses. It has been stated that the English courses offered at Iraq Universities mostly ignore this important step and lack this stage. The theory which supports needs analysis is humanism which focuses on caring for human needs and looks for humanistic values (Seel, 2011).

The findings of the present study concerning the importance of the reading skill are in line with other researcher views such as Spector-Cohen et al. (2001) who believe in the inclusion of strategies for reading comprehension as well as linguistic forms. Furthermore, Taşçı (2007) also found similar results in the study conducted in Turkey on the students' needs. The participants viewed

reading as a primary important skill. Moreover, in the Saudi context also Alsamadani (2017) stated that students prioritized reading together with speaking. The same findings are also reported by Zohoorian (2015), who conducted needs analysis in the Iranian context and found out that reading was the prominent skill. Other researchers who report the same findings are Rostami and Zafarghandi, (2014) based on whose study the main skill of concern was selected as reading by the majority of the students (85%). The reading skill was also selected as the only skill the students of law needed in the Israel context.

Unlike the findings of the present study, in Algeria listening and speaking were the most important skills according to the students' views. These findings were in line with the study conducted in Thailand by Prachanant (2012) where speaking was the most important skill. As for the speaking skill, seminar skills are also mentioned by Gillett (2018) as an important aspect for EAP courses. The findings concerning the problems in English language learning were also in line with Prachanant's (2012) study in which the participants emphasized their problems of inability in understanding foreign accents that relates to pronunciation as well as understanding vocabularies and difficult expressions.

As far as the four language skills are concerned, it can be safely concluded through the analysis of the quantitative data that reading skill was the prioritized skill followed by the speaking skill. Moreover, it can be concluded that students suffer from their poor vocabulary as well as the complex use of Reading materials found in general and professional texts. Thus, the courses must tailor their focus on the reading and speaking skills. Also, it is concluded that more practice on pronunciation is needed which seems to be an ignored component. One of the sub skills to be focused on is 'understanding the main idea' which can be covered by instructors in their courses.

It can be inferred from the interviews that the students' needs are not limited to the campus use and they need this skill out of campus for reading English subtitles or e-books. While for the speaking skill the most important item was presenting in seminars or conferences, the students also needed it for off campus or for using the cyberspace conversation. The needs of the students for the listening skill were mainly limited to following instructions of the lecturers at campus. However, it seems that they also need it for listening to educational materials. The main concern of the students was the preparation of essays and term projects. Thus, it seems that the inclusion of complementary courses on academic writing can be helpful. It is also concluded that the students must be categorized and registered based on their proficiency levels. Moreover, having placement tests to determine the proficiency levels before sending the students to different groups can be supportive.

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Appendix 1

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the students' attitudes and preferences

Item	Strongly disagree		disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Q1	0	0	1	.5	9	4.5	84	42	106	53
Q2	0	0	1	.5	13	6.5	123	61.5	63	31.5
Q3	14	7	150	75	28	14	6	3	2	1
Q4	1	.5	3	1.5	6	3	54	27	136	68
Q5	0	0	2	1	10	5	170	85	18	9
Q6	1	.5	0	0	11	5.5	43	21.5	145	72.5
Q7	3	1.5	3	1.5	22	11	155	77.5	17	8.5
Q8	0	0	0	0	15	7.5	37	18.5	148	74
Q9	0	0	0	0	10	.5	104	52	86	43
Q10	1	.5	0	0	9	4.5	105	52.5	85	42.5
Q11	0	0	0	0	21	10.5	121	60.5	58	29
Q12	1	.5	3	1.5	32	16	119	59.5	45	22.5
Q13	1	.5	0	0	35	17.5	115	57.5	49	24.5
Q14	0	0	0	0	12	6	111	55.5	77	38.5
Q15	0	0	93	46.5	55	27.5	34	17	18	9
Q16	0	0	2	1	11	5.5	53	26.5	134	67
Q17	1	.5	1	.5	9	4.5	118	59	71	35.5
Q18	0	0	1	.5	7	3.5	113	56.5	79	39.5
Q19	1	.5	0	0	13	6.5	94	47	92	46
Q20	11	5.5	32	16	110	55	47	23.5	0	0
Q21	6	3	40	20	40	20	112	56	2	1



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A Summative Evaluation of English for Iraq Series for High School: A Focus on Motivational Design

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KEY TERMS

Motivational Design
Summative Evaluation
Attention, Relevance
Confidence
Satisfaction

ABSTRACT

Motivation to learn, as a core concept in educational psychology, is a major determinant of academic achievement and productivity. Motivational design, as an aspect of instructional design focusing on strategies, principles, and processes that make instruction appealing, can contribute to the learners' goals and achievement. The present paper is an attempt to conduct a summative evaluation of the book series 'English for Iraq' at high school level for its motivational design. Accordingly, a mixed-method design was employed, relying on Keller's model. The participants included 403 Iraqi university students selected through purposive sampling in the quantitative phase and 20 interviewees selected through random sampling in the qualitative phase. Descriptive statistics and thematic coding were conducted for the data analysis. It was concluded that the overall motivational design of the book series has been acceptable to the students. The analysis of the constructs in detail also showed that 'satisfaction,' followed by 'relevance,' received the highest scores. Moreover, based on the views of the students in the interviews, it was observed that most of them were motivated by the content of the book, although some had external motivation such as exam scores or achievement in exercises.

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1. Introduction

Motivation to learn has long been considered a core concept in educational psychology and has been viewed by many scholars as one of the major determinants of academic achievement and work productivity, along with ability, instruction, and feedback (Gagne, 2014; Maslow, 2019; O'Neil & Drilling, 2012; Petri, 2012). There is, however, considerable diversity of opinion among scholars and educational psychologists regarding the definition of motivation. For example, Petri (2012, p. 2) defined motivation as "those processes that can: (a) arouse and instigate behavior, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior, (c) allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular

behavior." Maslow (2019) offered a similar definition of motivation as "those processes that influence the arousal, strength, or direction of behavior." Gagne (2014) described motivation as the factors that arouse, direct, and sustain increased performance.

On the other hand, Babula (2013) contends that motivation entails the forces within a person that compel the individual to satisfy their basic needs. The internal variable of motivation in Babula's definition is further elaborated by motivation and cognition as both internal and external to the learner. Gagne (2014) describes the internal condition of learning as the skills and knowledge that the learner brings to the learning situation, while the external conditions for learning are the experiences that the learner is exposed to in order to bring about learning.

The rise of technology has made it easy for students to replace books with media content to acquire the English language. However, according to Richards (2013), the educational textbooks used in the process of teaching English as a second language play a considerable role. A textbook is a key component of learning and plays a focal role in students' learning (López-Medina, 2021; Papakonstantinou & Anastasiadou, 2021; Razzaq, 2021). What is more important is the evaluation of the educational materials to make them suitable for learners (Kalfut, 2024). The type of evaluation must be identical to the evaluation of everyday life needs of the language learners (Koshino et al., 2013). The comprehensive evaluation and efficacy of the book are both essential to achieve the goal of teaching. The selection of suitable materials, as well as the evaluation of materials that need to be culturally and locally appropriate, is fundamental for providing learners with their needs in any teaching/learning context (Bemani & Jahangard, 2014). Teaching materials need to have a motivational effect, and it is possible to evaluate materials in this regard. One way to evaluate materials, including textbooks, is through summative evaluation, which is used to assess the learners' learning at the end of the course by comparing it against some standard goals. This approach helps in understanding the worth of the program being evaluated (Estrada-Araoz, et al., 2023). In addition, there is formative evaluation, which is conducted while a course is being designed or prepared (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). According to Zohoorian et al. (2018), the findings of such an evaluation method give insight into whether the course should be adopted or modified. Summative evaluation, also known as external evaluation, "provides an assessment of the program's value, based on the evaluation. They take place towards or at the end of a project" (Corlazzoli and White, 2013, p.80) and can help both learners and teachers achieve their goals of language learning (Zohrabi et al., 2014). Motivational design in instruction relates to the arrangement of tools and processes to create motivational improvements, including the creation of teaching materials (Zhou, et al., 2023). One well-accepted model of motivational design is Keller's ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) model, which is based on an integrated theory of motivation and instructional design (Keller, 1983a).

This model draws from various areas of empirical research on human motivation, such as expectancy-value theory, equity theory, reinforcement theory, social learning theory, achievement theory, and attribution theory. These theories are synthesized to describe the relationships between motivation and cognitive and environmental factors in the learning situation. Many researchers (more than 2000 according to the Google Scholar website) have used this model in various areas, including material evaluation and development. The process of motivation in the ARCS model involves capturing and sustaining learners' attention, establishing the relevance of the instruction, building learners' confidence, and providing learners with opportunities and environments for satisfying consequences in the learning situation (Alzahrani, 2023; Na, et al., 2024; Sung & Huang, 2024). Keller (2010) describes

the influence of personal and environmental factors on three categories of responses: performance, effort, and consequence. In this model, attention, also referred to as "interest" (Keller, 1983b), encompasses all the characteristics of the individual that explain how concentration is achieved and sustained. Relevance refers to learners' perceived or related needs in instructional activity (Keller, 1983b). Satisfaction is defined as the relationship between the outcomes of performance and learners' expectations (Abd Aziz, et al., 2023). The extent to which the outcomes of the learning task align with learners' motivational elements influences motivation (Keller, 1987). Confidence describes the combined influences of fear of failure and the desire to succeed on motivation (Keller, 1983b).

Regarding the English for Iraq book series, existing studies have focused on sociocultural values (Razzaq, 2021), cultural aspects (Mathi, 2020), skill activities (Ibrahim, 2021), horizontal sequence of content (Mashkour & Hammadi, 2023), or based on skills model of Litz (Nafashi, et al., 2024). However, there is a lack of research on the motivational design of the books. To address this gap, the current study explores the strengths and weaknesses of the series by employing the ARCS model.

2. Methodology

The current study utilized a mixed method of the explanatory sequential design type in the form of a survey for the quantitative phase and in the form of an interview for the qualitative phase. A mixed method study includes the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, and the qualitative data adds depth to the data collected through the quantitative phase (Tashakkori, et al., 2020). The sequential explanatory research is characterized by first collecting quantitative data followed by the qualitative data. Thus, quantitative data is given priority, while the two methods will finally integrate at the interpretation stage (Maxwell & Loomis, 2010).

As for the quantitative phase, descriptive statistics (percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to gain detailed information for the overall measure and its constructs. As for the qualitative data, the recorded interviews were first transcribed. Then, a thematic coding procedure through an inductive approach was conducted to find the pre-specified themes for the first four interview questions, and emergent coding was used for the open-ended general question of the interview. To analyze the three stages of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, were conducted (Ezzy, 2013; Roulston & Choi, 2017). According to Dey (2003), pre-specified themes are already known to the researcher based on already defined constructs or a theory, while emergent themes are explored through data analysis.

2.1 Participants and Setting

The target population for the present study consisted of Iraqi students at the high-school level in both private and governmental sectors. Accordingly, the accessible population for the present study included the students of Nasiriya. The sample included 403 students, with 203 males and 200 females from different schools in Nasiriya city. The students were in the 6th grade of high school and their ages ranged from 17 to 19 years old. The sample included students from 10 different high schools, and these schools gave the researcher official approval to conduct interviews with the students. The sampling procedure for the quantitative phase of the present study involved purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, where the researcher selects the units to be studied based on their

own judgment. This allows the researcher to generalize the findings (Sharma, 2017). For the second phase of the study, 20 students were interviewed. The sampling procedure for the qualitative phase was random, wherein the researcher chose interviewees randomly from the entire sample from the different schools (Wyse, et al., 2016). The number of interviewees in the explanatory mixed method is determined by the researcher according to the objectives of the study (Tashakkori, et al., 2020).

2.2 Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this research study was developed by Keller (2009). This measure comprises 36 items on a 5-point Likert scale. The model incorporates four primary areas of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 1987). Keller (2009) has reported the survey's internal consistency as acceptable, with a Cronbach's alpha index of 0.96 for the overall survey. Additionally, the reliability and validity of this measure are highly accepted by several researchers and scholars (Huett, 2006), while Zohoorian et al. (2018) report reliability indices of over 0.7 for the overall measure and its separate constructs.

For the qualitative data for the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted. A semi-structured interview is conducted by asking "both open-ended and more theoretically driven questions," focusing on existing constructs. In the case of the present study, the four constructs of the study, as well as students' other motivational factors (open-ended) concerning the book, were the focus (Galletta, 2013, p. 45). Thus, the following theoretically-based relevant interview questions were designed to collect students' motivation in terms of the three constructs of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

3. Data Analysis

This section presents the analysis of both the quantitative as well as the qualitative data collected.

3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics of the four sub-constructs of the instructional materials motivation survey (attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction), including the mean, standard deviation, maximum, and minimum scores.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Sub-constructs of Instructional Materials Motivation Survey

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean per item
Attention	403	14.00	60.00	37.84	6.58	3.15
Relevance	403	10.00	45.00	30.72	5.78	3.41
Confidence	403	10.00	45.00	28.48	5.14	3.16
Satisfaction	403	6.00	30.00	21.16	4.88	3.52
OVERALL	403	57.00	180.00	118.22	18.20	3.28

As can be seen in the last column, among the four subscales of the scale, Satisfaction has the highest mean score and Attention has the lowest mean score. Figure 1 presents the mean scores of the four sub-constructs.

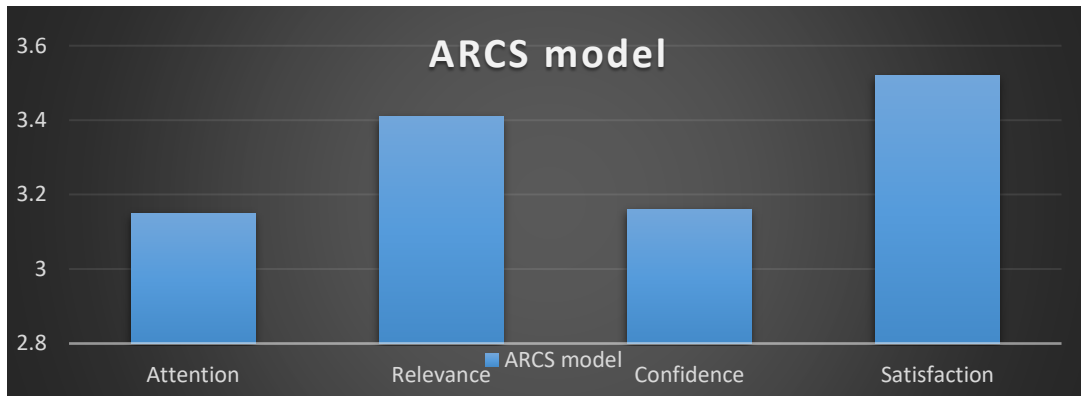


Figure 1 The mean scores of four sub-constructs of instructional materials motivation

It can be observed that the mean scores for all four constructs were higher than 3. The order of acceptance of the constructs by the students is as follows: Satisfaction, Relevance, Confidence, and Attention. To answer the first research question ("To what extent is the textbook 'English for Iraq' motivating based on the ARCS model?"), frequency and percentage were used for each of the sub-constructs of the questionnaire to answer the minor research questions based on the ARCS model. The first minor question was concerned with attention.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the Attention Factor

Item	not true		slightly true		moderately true		mostly true		very true	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Q2	52	12.9	68	16.9	76	18.9	104	25.8	103	25.6
Q8	25	6.2	39	9.7	129	32	101	25.1	109	27
Q11	51	12.7	59	14.6	111	27.5	83	20.6	99	24.6
Q12	84	20.8	71	17.6	129	32	66	16.4	53	13.2
Q15	89	22.1	100	24.8	89	22.1	61	15.1	64	15.9
Q17	63	15.6	55	13.6	86	21.3	91	22.6	108	26.8
Q20	36	8.9	57	14.1	113	28	98	24.3	99	24.6
Q22	105	26.1	77	19.1	109	27	60	14.9	52	12.9
Q24	38	9.4	58	14.4	103	25.6	85	21.1	119	29.5
Q28	61	15.1	42	10.4	83	20.6	73	18.1	144	35.7
Q29	93	23.1	63	15.6	108	26.8	67	16.6	72	17.9
Q31	92	22.8	83	20.6	114	28.3	66	16.4	48	11.9

As Table 2 indicates, the majority of the participants selected "moderately true" for the Attention Factor. Based on the results, it can be concluded that this book has been successful in grabbing the students' attention. Minor question two was concerned with relevance. Table 3 displays frequencies and percentages of the items on the relevance factor.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the Relevance Factor

Item	not true		slightly true		moderately true		mostly true		very true	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Q6	43	10.7	54	13.4	116	28.8	104	25.8	86	21.3
Q9	36	8.9	49	12.2	111	27.5	98	24.3	109	27
Q10	27	6.7	43	10.7	111	27.5	86	21.3	136	33.7
Q16	49	12.2	42	10.4	104	25.8	75	18.6	133	33
Q18	32	7.9	53	13.2	121	30	107	26.6	90	22.3
Q23	36	8.9	47	11.7	114	28.3	94	23.3	112	27.8
Q26	86	21.3	84	20.8	122	30.3	57	14.1	54	13.4
Q30	34	8.4	51	12.7	118	29.3	96	23.8	104	25.8
Q33	30	7.4	43	10.7	111	27.5	91	22.6	128	31.8

As indicated in Table 3, the majority of the participants selected "moderately true" for the Relevance Factor. The above table demonstrates that students believed the topics were relevant to their needs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the book has achieved a moderate level of success in providing relevant topics and examples. Minor question three focused on confidence. Table 4 presents the frequencies and percentages of the items related to the confidence factor.

Table 4*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the Confidence Factor*

Item	not true		slightly true		moderately true		mostly true		very true	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Q1	51	12.7	64	15.9	89	22.1	70	17.4	129	32
Q3	118	29.3	90	22.3	74	18.4	53	13.2	68	16.9
Q4	36	8.9	50	12.4	93	23.1	74	18.4	150	37.2
Q7	98	24.3	92	22.8	101	25.1	73	18.1	39	9.6
Q13	27	6.7	56	13.9	106	26.3	97	24.1	117	29
Q19	86	21.3	100	24.8	109	27	60	14.9	48	11.9
Q25	33	8.2	44	10.9	111	27.5	87	21.6	128	33.8
Q34	109	27	93	23.1	91	22.6	59	14.6	51	12.7
Q35	34	8.4	47	11.7	91	22.6	78	19.4	153	38

As indicated in Table 4, the majority of participants selected "moderately true" for the Confidence Factor. It can be concluded that the book has had moderate success in the area of confidence. Minor question four related to satisfaction. Table 5 presents the frequencies and percentages of the items on the satisfaction factor.

Table 5*Frequencies and Percentages of the Items on the Satisfaction Factor*

Item	not true		slightly true		moderately true		mostly true		very true	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Q5	67	16.6	46	11.4	94	23.3	86	21.3	110	27.3
Q14	39	9.7	72	17.9	97	24.1	89	22.1	106	26.3
Q21	40	9.9	42	10.4	112	27.8	93	23.1	116	28.8
Q27	38	9.4	48	11.9	114	28.3	90	22.3	113	28
Q32	23	5.7	36	8.9	120	29.8	89	22.1	135	33.5
Q36	31	7.7	52	12.9	69	17.1	60	14.9	191	47.4

As indicated in Table 5, the majority of the participants selected "very true" for the Satisfaction Factor. It can therefore be concluded that the book has succeeded well in the area of satisfaction. Furthermore, to answer the main question of the study, it can be concluded that since all the

constructs received a mean score higher than 3, the overall motivational design of the book has been accepted by the students.

3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

In the qualitative phase, the interview questions included the following, which were based on the constructs of Keller's motivational design questionnaire used in the quantitative phase:

Q1: Was the content of the book interesting and did it motivate you to study the content?

Q2: Were the topics presented in this book relevant and useful?

Q3: Was the content of this book easy for you to learn?

Q4: Were you satisfied with the amount of effort you put in and your achievements?

Since the questions were based on the already defined constructs, the analysis involved pre-specified thematic coding. The researcher sought to identify patterns and themes based on clustering and counting of the responses (Miles, et al., 2014).

The first question addressed the students' views on their 'attention' toward the book content. Based on the frequency count, it can be observed that 18 out of 20 interviewees mentioned that the book content attracted their attention. The reasons included the inclusion of pictures and descriptions of historic sites, as well as a focus on heritage (interviewees 2, 4, 5, 6, 10), poems and literature (interviewees 1, 5, 13, 19), and learning terms used in daily life, especially related to healthcare (interviewees 3, 5, 11, 17, 18). It was also found that some interviewees found the book easy (8 & 9) and relied on teachers' assistance and instructions (12, 15, and 18). The two students who found it demotivating and uninteresting mentioned that the design was dull and repeated throughout all the books in the series (interviewee 14), and that there was no guide book for the students (interviewee 12). Table 6 presents the responses to the first interview question.

Table 6*Interviewees' Responses for the First Interview Question*

Interviewee	Response
1	Literature
2	ancient pictures
3	new vocabulary such as healthcare
4	Iraqi history and civilization
5	Literature, vocabulary training, history
6	history and heritage
7	interaction with an actual native speaker in real life or in social media
8	the design is short and easy to learn
9	The book is simplified and easy to navigate through
10	information from the old times
11	phrases dealing with healthcare, new everyday terminology
12	cannot be understood and studied without the instructions of the teacher
13	Literature, literature
14	have the same designs/colors and sizes, boring design
15	The audio records
16	learning the tenses and grammatical rules
17	Vocabulary
18	common vocabulary, vocabulary related to health policy etc.
19	Literature
20	exciting writing style and the colorful pages

The second question regarded the students' views on the 'relevance' of the book content. Based on the frequency count it can be observed that 20 out of 20 interviewees referred to the book content as being relevant to them. The reasons for this were also categorized based on common answers. The interviewees stated that the "information was about our society", "I happen to witness many of the situations and events that are relevant to the content of my English book" (interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 16, 17, 18, 19), "... can be used in our daily life, like using communicative materials to talk with English users..." (interviewees 1,3,7,9,18,19), "the book is useful to prepare us for a similar situation" (7,11, 14, 20), etc. The following table (Table 7) presents the responses to the second interview question.

Table 7

Interviewees' Responses for the Second Interview Question

Interviewee	Response
1	Relevant to real situations from our daily lives, about our society
2	<i>Many of the situations and events that are relevant to the content</i>
3	Many topics were relevant and useful to daily life
4	many of the topics are relevant
5	some situations in which used book content
6	many topics in the book are relevant to our life
7	useful to prepare for a similar situation in daily life.
8	know how, when, and where to use the content in real-life situations.
9	useful vocabulary in daily life.
10	put them to use regular life for example applying for a job.
11	helpful content in preparing for similar situations
12	Content used in many circumstances and events
13	topics commonly known
14	Know how, when, and where to use the content in real-life situations.
15	Topics related to real life.
16	topics relevant and based on reality
17	content is useful and relevant
18	most of these topics relevant to my daily life
19	valuable and relevant to our daily needs
20	Use the content in right place

The third question regarded the students' views on their 'confidence'. Based on the frequency count it can be observed that most of the students, 19 out of 20, believed that they had confidence in studying the book content. However, among these, 7 students (interviewees 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18) relied on the teachers' assistance and guidance. They mentioned that "with the assist of our competent teachers that direct us and simplify the problems that we face which make the content easy to learn and practice.", ... by talking about them with my colleges and by asking my teacher...", "we work on it with our teacher on daily basis which makes the content of the book easy", etc. other interviewees referred to the book as needing practice and focus (5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14), and easy (interviewees 8, 15, 17, 18, 19). The following table (Table 8) presents the responses to the third interview question.

Table 8

Interviewees' Responses for the Third Interview Question

Interviewee	Response
1	I can use the information
2	especially with the assist of our competent teachers
3	the style of the writing and the colorful pages
4	the topics were clarified talking about them with my colleges and asking my teacher
5	just with little focus in the class and after
6	Yes, when I manage to do my exercise by myself after the class and achieve learning goal
7	every day practice on daily basis
8	the content is easy and useful for daily use
9	some training needed
10	with the support of our professional teachers
11	tough without the teacher's guidance, hard to comprehend
12	with a little emphasis in the class
13	Work with our teacher on a regular basis
14	step by step practice, no difficulties in understanding and using
15	it was easy
16	I have a background about lots of the topics, not much difficulty
17	useful and easy to use
18	Some topics easy and even the hard ones were simplified by the teacher.
19	the majority were easy to understand and to use
20	never felt tired or bored

The fourth question regarded the students' views on their 'satisfaction. Based on the frequency count it can be observed that only two students (interviewee 6 & 10) were not satisfied. Interviewee 6 stated that there had not been much effort so there was no satisfaction; and interviewee 10 mentioned the lack of spelling practice in the design of the book. Overall, most of the students (18) stated their satisfaction. However, 10 interviewees related their satisfaction to their achievement in exams and in doing exercises or getting good scores (interviewees 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20). Others mentioned answering spontaneous and random questions in communication (interviewees 13, 17, 18), and understanding content (3, 8). The following table (Table 9) presents the responses to the fourth interview question.

Table 9

Interviewees' Responses for the Fourth Interview Question

Interviewee	Response
1	hard effort given me so much in return. achieve a good score or answer the teacher correctly
2	solve my homework or I use any information
3	Have had Effort to understand the content
4	effort spent
5	If I get a full score
6	I haven't even spent that much effort to gain
7	I feel satisfied with the effort
8	I can write read and answer correctly and efficiently
9	if I answer exam questions correctly, I feel I have reached goals
10	spent a lot of time for mastering spelling, the book didn't have practice
11	feel a sense of accomplishment, understand the knowledge and respond correctly for exam and exercises
12	Much effort, pleased with current level and effort
13	sense of accomplishment, can answer or communicate random questions.
14	sense of satisfaction, address the book exercises
15	feeling the achievement
16	feeling of achievement answering exercises of the book
17	The sense of achievement happens when I can answer or communicate spontaneous questions
18	Achievement if I can communicate and answer
19	feel achievement when use information in real-life and network
20	sense of achievement in exams

Based on the views of the students in interviews, it can be observed that most of them were motivated toward the content of the book although some had external motivation such as scores for exams or achievement in exercises.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

Considering the fact that textbook evaluation is a vital stage in successful education, especially when the textbook is employed nationwide, is undeniable. It is believed that "There can be no doubt that evaluating the official textbooks for learning English in Iraq is a task of great importance to the future success of English learning programs" (Al-Akraa, 2013, p.2). Based on the statistical analysis of the quantitative data, it was found out that the construct which received the highest score was satisfaction, followed by relevance. Also, attention, followed by confidence, received the lowest means.

As for the attention factor, the majority of the students believed that the book is attractive and the variety of the passages, exercises, and illustrations could keep them attentive. However, they believed that the lessons were abstract, which is confirmed through the data analysis as well.

As far as the relevance factor is concerned, more than 50% of the students believed that completion of the lesson has been important to them and through the explanations and examples, they could know how the ideas would be used by people. However, around 30% of the students believed that they already knew the materials. The reason for such a perception can be traced back to the fact that the Iraqi students study English from early classes in schools (Al-Akraa, 2013; Amin, 2017), and their English level might be higher than what is presented to them.

Regarding the confidence construct, it was found out that the majority of the students had confidence in what they are supposed to learn from the book. However, the importance of the tests was also confirmed.

As for the last construct, satisfaction, the majority of the students had the perception that the book is well-designed and they were pleased with it. This comprised about half of the students who had chosen 'very true' for item 36 (it was a pleasure to work on such a well-designed lesson).

In line with the findings of the quantitative phase, based on the findings of the qualitative phase of the study, including the interviews, several students have referred to the literature or historical themes related to Iraq, which have attracted their attention. The fact that such pictures, themes, or topics have been interesting and attracted students' attention can be related to the idea of localization. According to Mishan and Timmis (2015), there is a growing interest among developers to consider the geographical context. They refer to the localization of the materials as solving the problem of cultural familiarity, which can hinder learning and the attention of the learners. Another important theme found in the students' interviews was the daily life use of the language and its vocabulary, including healthcare. Tok (2010) highlights that the use of such materials can not only increase students' motivation but can also bring "greater realism and relevance to the ESL/EFL classroom" (p. 515). In the same vein, Ayu and Indrawati (2019) state that the use of realistic situations is in line with a student-centered approach advocated in the current era of education. Students like to study materials that are related to real life and include pictures (Derakhshan, 2024; Priscylio, et al., Anwar, 2018). Materials and situations related to daily life and the use of such real concepts can help students apply them in their real life as well (Ayu, 2020). In fact, it is believed that associating materials with daily life will make learning meaningful (Wuryani, 2018). Some students also highlighted the use of materials related to their societies and cultures. Joseph and Joy (2019) confirm that while making materials, "the content and the language elements should not alienate the learners from their life and society; it should resemble their daily life" (p. 133). Thus, materials that are learned should be applicable in the daily lives of the learners (Nisak, et al., 2021).

There are some units such as Unit 1 (the health service), Unit 5 (holidays), Unit 6 (banking and finance), and Unit 8 (the environment and recycling) that are related to the students' daily and routine lives. Topics such as "Let's Start with Diet" on page 12, "Airport Security" on page 18, "If You Could Choose Any Job" on page 28, "What's Your Personality Type" on page 39, "Why Are Holidays So Important" on page 51, "Making Money" on page 61, "Improve Your Computer Skills" on page 66, "Using the Library" on page 71, and "Recycling Waste" on page 75 are observed throughout the book, confirming the relevance aspect to what the students have stated.

Some other students referred to the relevance as they saw familiar site pictures. Such instances can be observed on page 78, "the Euphrates River." As for the attention aspect, where the students stated that the literature included in the book attracted their attention, an instance can be found on pages 85 and 86 where "Mohammed Khudhair," a writer, is introduced. Ten interviewees, on the other hand, attributed their satisfaction to their progress in tests and exercises, as well as high grades. Based on this, it can be concluded that their motivation has been partly due to external factors.

As for the 'confidence' element, it seems that a large group of the students relied on the teacher's support and guidance, as well as practice and focus. It is claimed that materials need to follow Krashen's input hypothesis ($i+1$), which states that it must be one level above the comprehensibility level (Mishan & Timmis, 2015). Based on the findings, it seems that many students seek to gain support from the teacher and are too reliant on teacher assistance. Similarly, there is too much emphasis on the part of the learners on gaining acceptable grades or passing tests. Thus, it seems that there must be modifications in the materials to enhance success opportunities strategies as well as learning requirements strategies to improve confidence.

As for the last element, satisfaction, Keller (2010) maintains that in order to promote satisfaction, strategies such as using personally meaningful and relevant topics or achieving a desirable level of success can be used. However, too much focus on scores and obtaining perfect grades is believed to be positive intrinsic satisfaction by Keller, which will be different from intrinsic satisfaction. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the students mainly had extrinsic satisfaction rather than intrinsic. However, it seems that intrinsic satisfaction is not enhanced through the book materials, which can be considered as a point of weakness.

While the confidence and attention factors were ranked lowly, it seems inevitable that some amendments to the book in future revised versions can increase the motivational design level of the book. As for the attention factor, raising the curiosity, concentration, and interest of the learners can solve this problem (Keller, 2006). Also, for the confidence factor, which can be described as the combined influences of fear of failure and the desire to succeed (Keller, 1983), the future versions must provide "positive expectations for achieving success" (Malik, 2014) by helping the learners to have better learning experiences. While Keller's model focuses on three aspects of expectancy for success, perceived competence, and personal control, it seems that the personal control factor is missing in the current books. Most of the students related their success to achieving high scores or having their teachers' support. Thus, it is recommended that policymakers modify the book in future versions so that there would be more intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985) to let the students feel more control over their learning. Positive aspects of the textbooks, such as the familiar topics (health, banking, security), and related topics to daily lives, should be preserved in the revision of the textbook.

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A Comparative Evaluation of Four Corners Series and Vision Series from a Communicative Perspective: A Mixed-Methods Study

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ABSTRACT

Given the fundamental importance of textbooks and their impact on the learning process in today's world, this study aims to compare the Four Corners series textbooks with the Vision series senior Vision English textbooks from a communicative standpoint. By utilizing a mixed-methods design, the study consisted of two stages: a theoretical assessment based on a communicative language teaching framework and an empirical assessment based on data collected from 16 university professors through questionnaires. The evaluation aimed to gather feedback from experts to be merged. To analyze the quantitative data descriptive statistics were employed and for the qualitative data content analysis was employed. The results indicated that, compared to the Four Corners series, the Vision series seems to be more communicative across all language skills as well as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The findings can help teachers in selecting appropriate textbooks. Moreover, curriculum developers and intercultural communicative competence experts can benefit from the present study. The findings of the current investigation hold substantial implications for multiple stakeholders in the field of language education.

1. Introduction

Within the realm of communication, the English language possesses a unique importance (Badpa, et al., 2023). English holds a significant position within the educational curriculum. Consequently, the

country has implemented English language instruction across various educational levels, including primary, junior high, and senior visions. To support educators in delivering lessons and meeting educational objectives, a variety of instructional materials can be utilized for teaching and learning activities in the classroom including printed materials as well as non-printed materials and resources available on the internet and through computer-based platforms. Among these, textbooks are among the most frequently utilized resources (Zohoorian, et al., 2018). The communicative language teaching approach emphasizes that Iranian learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) are instructed in English to engage actively with the global community (Alavi Moghaddam et al., 2018).

According to Richards (2001), instructional materials are a crucial aspect of language programs, providing the primary input for learners during language instruction in classrooms. One of such instructional materials include textbooks which hold significant importance for both teachers and students. They serve as a guide for teachers and provide essential explanations and activities while influencing the attitudes and performance of learners (McGrath, 2013; 2016). When students have positive attitudes toward their textbooks, they actively engage in the classroom activities, making it essential for teachers to involve learners with the content (Rahimi & Hassani, 2012). Textbook can also offer learners an excellent chance to communicate in English during classroom activities (Harmer, 2007). According to Genesee (2001), the evaluation process in language teaching environments involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. He contends that this systematic approach allows educators and materials developers to make informed decisions, ultimately enhancing student achievement and improving the overall effectiveness of educational programs. While the development of English usage in education, trade, and diplomacy has been observed (Ariawan et al., 2022; Dahmardeh & Kim, 2021), Richards and Rodgers (2014), the proficiency of the workforce in essential economic sectors and the accessibility of educational and technical resources are closely tied to English proficiency, highlighting the importance of catering educational materials to societal needs. Moreover, as far as language programs effectiveness is concerned, Surtikanti (2020) highlights the significance of their course book quality.

Several characteristics have been introduced for effective language instructional materials, including contextualized and functional language use, promoting learner engagement (Richards & Renandya, 2014), being realistic and authentic (Zohoorian & Rahimi, 2016), promoting learner autonomy, being flexible to accommodate individual and contextual differences (Michel & Kouadio, 2018).

There have been a myriad of studies focusing on the evaluation of instructional materials around the globe and in Iran. Also, some studies have focused on developing checklists. For example, Demir and Ertas (2014) conducted a comprehensive literature review to develop a diverse checklist by combining items from existing instruments. The checklist comprises elements from twenty checklists and additional items created by the researchers, divided into four categories of subject and content, skills and sub-skills, layout and physical structure, and practical considerations.

Yasemin (2009) assessed three English books used in 4th-grade classes in state schools in Turkey. Teachers and students shared their views on the books through the 37-item Smiley questionnaire to achieve the study objectives. Additionally, interviews were conducted to gain more

insight into how teachers and students perceived the books. The findings indicated the suitability for young learners.

Ruben's study (2010), thorough examination of Dutch early childhood teacher education, revealed that the selected textbooks aligned with the curriculum's goals and objectives. The study also found that while the textbooks adequately address the content standards of the teacher's professional profile and the educational profile, some aspects of the primary work process with less depth, such as the need for strategy planning, reflection, and evaluation, the development of educational policy, and collaboration with practitioners from other fields and disciplines. The findings indicated a need to modernize the textbooks used.

Alajjar and Cinkara (2024) conducted a research study to examine the views of English language instructors. The material of concern was the Self-Learning Program English Textbooks which were adopted. The main concerns were the effectiveness and relevance as far as non-formal and educational environments were concerned. A total of 106 English language teachers participated, comprising females (43) and males (63). Through a mixed-methods approach and by utilizing a questionnaire containing 49 items five structured categories were found. They included layout and design, textbook objectives, teaching methodologies and activities, and language competencies. Furthermore, the qualitative data of the interviews were analyzed. More than 60% of the educators suggested that the adapted textbooks were suitable.

In the Iranian context several researchers have made attempts to evaluate materials and textbooks. In a research study conducted by Nasiri and Ahmadi (2011) the textbook Summit 2B was evaluated to find out if it was appropriate for university students, focusing on subject matter and vocabulary/structure. The study involved ten teachers and 150 students who completed a checklist created by Doaud and Celce Murcia (1979). Additionally, the researchers interviewed the teachers to gather qualitative data on their opinions about the textbook. The findings indicated that Summit 2B is adequate for its intended students.

In another study, Torki and Chalak (2017) sought to examine the perspectives of teachers and students regarding English textbooks taught in visions in Iran. To achieve this goal, 150 male and female students responded to a questionnaire of 45 items crafted by Karavas-Doukas (1996). The analysis of the collected data indicated that a significant portion of the survey participants believe that the textbooks adequately embody the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). However, this does not negate the perceived requirement for further enhancement and revision in textbook analysis.

Alavinia and Siyadat (2013) investigated the characteristics of four series of textbooks utilized in various educational institutions across Iran, employing a checklist developed by Cunningsworth (1995). In the data collection process, 320 male students from West Azerbaijan were asked to evaluate the textbooks: American English File 1, American Cutting Edge 1, American Headway 1, and New Interchange 1. The results indicated that American English File 1 was more effective than the other three textbooks, attributed to its contemporary materials, engaging content, appealing illustrations, and well-designed website.

In a recent study conducted by Derakhshan, (2024), focused on the representation of culture in language textbooks through a semiotic approach. The qualitative study used the Peircean semiotic theory to find the relationships among text, image, as well as tasks. This study investigated how such elements can contribute to both the construction as well as reconstruction of culture understanding. The Vision 1 book was evaluated through the viewpoints of Iranian EFL students, their teachers, and the teacher educators. The data related to the interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings suggested that the recent localized Iranian textbook provides minor opportunity for its readers to advance cultural awareness.

In the Iranian context, following the prevalence of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), the recently published vision English textbooks by the Ministry of Education, currently in use in visions, are publicized as communicative which assume to employ communicative language teaching as their methodology and framework. However, after several years of implementation within the Iranian educational system, these new textbooks including the vision series have not achieved the objectives mentioned earlier. This study seeks to evaluate the presentation of these objectives in the textbook series vision and compare them with Four Corners series, one of the latest book series from international publishers that endorse communicative language teaching as their methodological framework. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research questions.

To what extent do textbooks help students develop Communication Skills?

Do the textbooks facilitate authentic language use and promote interaction in the classroom?

Has proportionate attention been given to the integrative teaching of the four language skills and language areas of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation?

How do teachers assess the quality of the textbooks according to the Communicative Approach?

2. Methodology

The study sought to evaluate the two series of textbooks based on the communicative approach. It employed a mixed methods of the type parallel convergent (De Vaus). Both the analysis of the textbooks' activities by the researchers as well as quantitative data of the questionnaire were mixed to answer the research questions. The qualitative phase included content analysis of the textbooks. Content analysis entails a research method which is used to systematically analyze the content including texts, images, or videos. This is done to discover patterns, themes, as well as insights (Krippendorff, 2018). It can be either qualitative or quantitative. In the context of the present study, the researchers have employed the qualitative type of content analysis.

2.1 Participants and Setting

For the first phase of the study the researchers conducted content analysis based on communicative language teaching criteria (McDonough & Shaw, 2013). The three analysts were all applied linguists having over 5 years of language education experience. Participants for the quantitative phase included 16 university professors selected from diverse geographical regions based on convenience sampling,

including Tehran, Khorasan, Hormozgan, Kerman, and various cities in Sistan and Baluchistan. To collect data, some participants were provided with books to review and complete the questionnaires on-line, while others were personally met and given the questionnaire. The gender representation encompassed a balanced combination of male and female. The study included a range of educators with at least three years of teaching experience to holding MA and PhD degrees. The age of the participants varied from 24 to 52 years. In total, sixteen questionnaires were completed for each of the two series of textbooks, namely Four Corners and Vision.

2.2 Instrumentation

To conduct the study, the researcher-made framework was employed which was based on McDonough and Shaw (2013). It focused on the analysis of different language skills and language areas as well as activities presented in the two textbook series. Based on the same framework, the researchers developed a questionnaire including 25 items. The items focused on characteristic features, language skills, language areas, and Organization and Structure. The items were given to three experts for face and content validity evaluation. Modifications, reductions, and additions were made to the items based on the comments. Through a pilot study with 25 teacher participants' data was collected to ensure the reliability. A reliability index of 0.68 was achieved which is, though low, considered acceptable.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected during the academic year of 2024. Consent was taken from the participants to voluntarily participate in the study. The three researchers of the study conducted content analysis to ensure inter-rater agreement or reliability (Brennan & Prediger, 2021). The three observers who evaluated the textbooks agreed upon the evaluations. As the next phase of the study, the quantitative data were collected seeking participation of university professors. The questionnaire as well as a copy of the textbooks were sent to the participants to evaluate the two book series based on CLT criteria. The data collected through the completed questionnaires were later analyzed. Then, the data were analyzed through descriptive analysis. Finally employing a convergent method, the data of the quantitative phase and the qualitative phase were merged (Creswell, 2014) for achieving conclusions.

3. Data Analysis

This section presents the content analysis of English textbooks of Iranian visions, the Vision as well as the Four Corners series and an analysis of the teacher's views collected through the questionnaire.

3.1 Content Analysis of the Textbooks

Content analysis of the Four Corners series and the textbooks about their compatibility with the communicative approach in teaching language skills and areas of grammar and vocabulary is given below.

3.1.1 Four Corner Series

The analysis of the Four Corners is presented in two parts: the first part discusses the organization of each unit of the books and the second part deals with their teaching of language skills and areas.

3.1.1.1 Four Corner Series Language Skills

Textbooks' evaluation of the inclusion of the language skills based on CLT is presented below:

Listening

Some listening activities require the student to listen and circle the correct answer among two options to identify the correct answer among the other two or three options. Listening and writing the answers, listening and writing true or false next to the sentences and listening, and correcting the false information are among the other activities included in listening to the textbooks. Figure 1 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

2 Listening When's a good time to visit?

A Listen to three people talk to friends about a good time to visit these cities. Are their friends' opinions the same or different? Circle your answers.

B Listen again. Write T (true) or F (false) next to the sentences.

- Gabriel is from Rio de Janeiro, but Bianca isn't. F
- It's very hot in Rio de Janeiro in February. _____
- Patricia thinks it's fine to visit New Zealand anytime. _____
- It's extremely cold in New Zealand in July and August. _____
- Sophie is from Marseille. _____
- A lot of stores and restaurants in France close in August. _____

Figure 1 A sample of the listening activities in Four Corner Series

Speaking

Speaking activities are categorized into Pair work/ Interviewing a partner/ Telling the other classmate about your partner's answers/ Looking at a picture and talking about the people in it/ Roleplaying and changing the roles/ Interviewing and taking notes, or completing charts/ Playing games/ Group work and sharing ideas. Figure 2 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

4 Speaking What are you interested in?

A Pair work Interview your partner. Take notes.

- Are you interested in literature?
 - Yes. Who's your favorite writer?
 - No. What books are in your house?
- Are you interested in technology?
 - Yes. What's a good cell phone?
 - No. How old is your cell phone?
- Are you and your friends interested in similar things?
 - Yes. What are you and your friends interested in?
 - No. What are your friends interested in?

B Pair work Tell another classmate about your partner's answers.
 "Elena is interested in literature. Her favorite writer is Jane Austen."

Figure 2 A sample of the speaking activities in Four Corner Series

Reading

The reading passages of the textbooks are about a wide variety of topics such as free time, sports, music, food, internet, movies, work, studying, giving advice, nature, interests, fashion, experiences, etc. All the reading passages start with warm-up questions asking students to look at the pictures in the texts asking questions about the topic to make them interested and prepared for the topic. The new vocabulary is in bold letters, and the text is followed by pair work in which students talk about topics related to the reading. Figure 3 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

Online fun

1 Reading

A Look at the pictures in the article. What do you see?

B Read the article. What's the **best title**? Check (✓) the correct answer.
 New Websites Chat Fun Online Activities

Try one of these activities in your free time.

 Buy and Sell What do you want? A new video game? A new phone? What <i>don't</i> you want? Your old jeans? Your old schoolbooks? Buy and sell things online!	 Where is your best friend from elementary school now? Does your friend live in your city? Search his or her name, and find your friend.	 Do you have pictures or movies on your cell phone or camera? Post them! Upload your favorite photos and videos for friends.
 Tour a museum from your home! Go to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Barcelona's Picasso Museum, or Kyoto's National Museum.	 Where do you want to go? Search the address and city, and find a map. Get directions to stores, parks, or a new restaurant.	 Do you want to discover a new band or listen to your favorite singer on your cellphone? Use an app to stream music.

C Read the article again. Where do the headings go? Write them in the article.

Map it!	Take a Tour	Share Photos and Videos
Get Music	✓ Buy and Sell	Find an Old Friend

D PAIR WORK What activities do you do online? Tell your partner.
 "I hardly ever sell things online, but I sometimes buy clothes online."

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Figure 3 A sample of the reading activities in Four Corner Series

Writing

The writing activities of the textbooks are integrated with reading and speaking and include a variety of writing tasks such as favorite thing, my abilities, a blog post, a postcard, an email to a friend, a description of yourself, a music review, a natural wonder etc. The writing is a combination of product and process models first there are some questions to answer about the topic then there is a writing model. According to the model of writing and the answers the students are asked to write their draft. Figure 4 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

3 Writing and speaking Interesting people, places, or things


A Choose one of the topics. Answer the questions.

Topics	Questions
A close friend I've had	Who is your friend? How exactly did you meet? Is this person your friend now? Why or why not?
A special place I've been	Where is this place? What made this place so special? Have you ever been back? Why or why not?
An interesting thing I've done	What did you do? How did you feel after doing it? Would you like to do it again? Why or why not?

B Write a paragraph about your topic. Use the model and your answers in Part A to help you.

My Friend Lucas

I've had several good friends, but one that was very special to me was my friend Lucas. He moved into the house next door when I was eight. We became good friends. We walked to school together and always played together at his house. He had a great bike, and I used to ride it. He moved to another city after a year. I've tried to find him online, but haven't had any luck. I...



C Pair work Read your partner's paragraph. Write five questions to get more information.

D Pair work Ask and answer your questions.
"So, tell me, why did you become friends?"

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Figure 4 A sample of the writing activities in Four Corner Series

3.1.1.2 Four Corner Series Language Areas

Textbooks' evaluation of the inclusion of the language areas based on CLT is presented below.

Grammar

In the Four Corners textbooks, the Grammar is presented inductively with sentence examples. In each unit, there are two Grammar parts. The Grammar activities require students to circle the correct words, complete the blanks with appropriate words, match the questions and answers, complete the conversation with proper words, fill in the blanks with the accurate form of the words in parentheses and write sentences and ask and answer questions. Figure 5 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

3 Grammar Past continuous vs. simple past

Use the past continuous to describe an action in progress in the past.
Angela **was cooking** pasta last night. Tetsu and his friends **were watching** a movie.

Use the simple past for an event that interrupts that action in progress.
Angela **was cooking** pasta when everything **went** dark.
While Tetsu and his friends **were watching** a movie, the lights **went** out.

A Complete the conversations with the past continuous or simple past forms of the verbs. Then practice with a partner.

- A: What were you doing (do) last night when the storm (begin)?

B: I _____ (use) my computer. While I _____ (write) my report, the electricity suddenly _____ (go) off.

A: _____ you _____ (lose) your work?

B: Yeah. Unfortunately, I _____ (need) to do it again.
- A: How _____ you _____ (break) your foot?

B: Oh, I _____ (ski).

A: Really? _____ it _____ (hurt)?

B: Of course! But fortunately, someone _____ (call) an ambulance.

A: That's good.

B: Yeah, and while I _____ (wait) my friends _____ (bring) me hot chocolate.

B Pair work Ask and answer questions about what you were doing at the times below.

7:00 this morning 10:00 last night 4:30 yesterday afternoon this time yesterday

Figure 5 A sample of the grammar activities in Four Corner Series

Vocabulary

Vocabulary topics include jobs, names, clothes and colors, food, vacations, sports and activities, music and movies, environment, fashion, experiences, etc. Each vocabulary item is written under its related picture. The activities used for teaching vocabulary are matching the words with images, matching words with their definition, antonyms, completing the phrasal verbs, filling in the blanks and talking about them in pairs and discussing the ideas. Figure 6 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

A **Where were you?**

1 Vocabulary Adjectives

A 🎧 Listen and repeat.



exciting / fun / great all right / OK / so-so awful / terrible

boring interesting noisy quiet

B PAIR WORK Think of things that each adjective describes. Discuss your ideas.

A: Sports are exciting.
B: Basketball is exciting, but I think soccer is boring.

Figure 6 A sample of the vocabulary activities in Four Corner Series

Pronunciation

In every unit of the textbooks, there is a heading titled pronunciation which makes students aware of the correct pronunciation of words and syllables and includes the proper pronunciation of contraction forms, word stress, plurals, the stress in numbers, ending 'ed', linked sounds, article 'the' before the vowel and consonant sounds, falling and rising intonation in sentences, sentence stress, stress shift, the intonation of tag questions, etc. It contains activities such as: listening and repeating the correct pronunciation, listening and writing the words, showing the stressed syllable and showing falling and rising intonations, and showing the links between the consonants and vowels are among activities included in pronunciation section. Figure 7 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

4 Pronunciation Word stress

A 🎧 Listen and repeat. Notice the stressed syllables in the nationalities.



B 🎧 Listen and repeat. Underline the stressed syllables in the nationalities.

Japanese Australian Spanish Thai

Figure 7 A sample of the pronunciation activities in Four Corner Series

3.1.2 Vision Series

The analysis of senior vision textbooks named 'Vision Series' is presented. This section entails the four language skills and areas.

3.1.2.1 Vision Series Language Skills

Textbooks' evaluation of the inclusion of the language skills based on CLT is presented below.

Listening

Listening activities only include the listening to a conversation to answer question. It seems that integration of the skills is not followed except writing. The do not prepare students for real listening tasks. Figure 8 presents a sample taken from the textbook.



B. Listen to the following conversations and answer the questions.

Conversation 1



Where does Mina live?

Why hasn't Zoreh invited Mina yet?

Figure 8 A sample of the listening activities in vision Series

Speaking

Speaking activities include answering the questions related to the conversation orally after the talk, reading the sentences as a kind of accuracy practice, asking and answering according to the patterns presented and implemented in a discussion about different topics, paring up and asking and answering from a partner after listening to a conversation. Figure 9 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

Listening and Speaking

Speaking Strategy
Talking and asking about schedules/plans

A. You may use 'future tense' to ask someone about their plans or talk about your own plans.

- What are you going to do this weekend?
- I am going to go to Golestan Forest.
- Are you going to visit a museum?
- No, I am going to go out and enjoy wildlife.



You may use the following patterns to ask and answer about the future plans.

What will you do? / What are you going to do?
I will ... / I am going to ...
Where will you go? / Where are you going to go?
I will go ... / I'm going to go ...

Figure 9 A sample of the speaking activities in vision Series

Reading

Reading activities for grade X, Vision 1 contain a reading passage and reading comprehension questions like choosing the correct answer, True or False and matching two halves according to the passage. For grades XI and XII, Vision 2 and 3 after each reading passage there is a 'Reading Strategy' section explaining a reading strategy like scanning, skimming, highlighting, finding the reference words etc.... and the reading comprehension questions are according to the plan and that strategy is practiced in the reading comprehension question. Figure 10 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

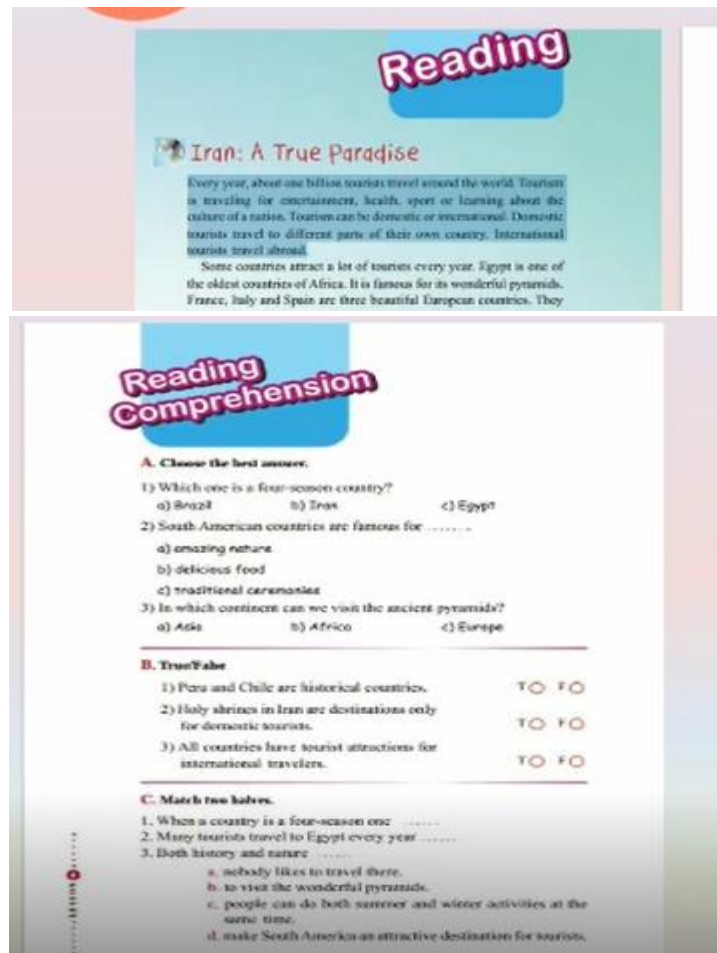


Figure 10 A sample of the reading activities in vision Series

Writing

Different activities for teaching Writing focus on common nouns and proper nouns and their correct spelling and capitalization and making them plural, places of adjectives and adverbs in sentences, finding the subject, the object, the verb, and the adverbs in sentences, rearranging the words to create correct sentences, gerunds and infinitives and their place in sentences, writing simple sentences and compound sentences using connecting words, knowing about the paragraph and different parts of the paragraph like a topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences, and identifying them in a paragraph, and writing a paragraph. Figure 11 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

The topic sentence

Many English paragraphs include a 'topic sentence'. This sentence which mostly comes at the beginning of a paragraph tells the reader:

the topic + the idea about that topic or an explanation of the topic

For example:

Topic sentence 1: My sister and I respect our parents all the time.
topic idea

Topic sentence 2: A cheetah is a wild animal from the cat family.
topic explanation

B. Look at the topic sentences from paragraphs you have seen in Vision 2. Find the topic and the idea or explanation of the topic.

- 1) Language is a system of communication.
- 2) About fifty percent of the world's languages have fewer than 5000 speakers.
- 3) Bad habits and addiction can be harmful to health.
- 4) Art is what people create with imagination and skill.
- 5) Handicrafts are good examples of the art and culture of a country.

Figure 11 A sample of the writing activities in vision Series

3.1.2.2 Vision Series Language Areas

Textbooks' evaluation of the inclusion of the language areas based on CLT is presented below.

Grammar

Grammar is taught inductively in the textbooks. Two texts are presented and the grammatical points of each lesson are highlighted in the texts, followed by example sentences highlighting the grammatical structures showing affirmative, negative and question forms of the structures. Figure 12 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

Comparative Adjectives

Damavand is	taller than	Dena.
Asia is	bigger than	Europe.
Omid is	younger than	Reza.


- Karoon is longer than Atrak.
- Mars is smaller than Jupiter.

Figure 12 A sample of the grammar activities in vision Series


Vocabulary

Vocabulary is presented within sentences, highlighting the new vocabulary with the picture related to each word. Before each reading passage, some new vocabulary is presented with their definition in English and a sentence example for each new word. Vocabulary exercises in the textbooks include matching the words, to odd out the unrelated word and filling in the blanks with the appropriate words. Figure 12 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

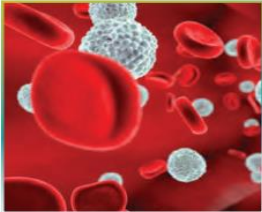
A. Look, Read and Practice.




Water is a type of **liquid**.



There are some **drops** of paint on his shirt.



Blood **cells** are red and white.



About one **thousand** people live in this village.

Figure 13 A sample of the vocabulary activities in vision Series

Pronunciation

In this section, learners will get familiar with the raising and falling intonation of different sentences, parts of sentences which are pronounced with more emphasis, and parts or syllables of the words which are pronounced with more stress. Figure 13 presents a sample taken from the textbook.

Pronunciation



A. Listen to the following sentences. They have rising intonation.

1. Is this your new car? ↗
2. Was the book interesting? ↗
3. Is this problem easier than that one? ↗
4. Are they the most expensive houses in this city? ↗

Figure 14 A sample of the pronunciation activities in vision Series

3.1.3 A Comparative Analysis of Four Corners Series and Vision

A comparative analysis of both series of textbooks is presented based on the principles representing characteristic features of CLT and teaching of four language skills and areas.

3.1.3.1 A comparison of Language Skills

Listening

-The purpose of listening has been stated clearly neither in the Four Corners Series nor in Vision English textbooks.

-There are no pre-listening activities in any of the series of textbooks.

-Listening activities of the two textbooks contain activities that require students to listen for specific information in a listening task like listening and filling in blanks, or checking some information.

-Both series of textbooks lack listening activities requiring students to make inferences.

-In Four Corners textbooks the listening activities contain activities such as note-taking, summarizing and using prior knowledge to predict as the listening's are about a wide range of topics. These elements are absent in vision textbooks.

Speaking

-In Four Corners textbooks students are not bound to use specific patterns, they can use the language for crossing meaning through different forms and patterns and different kinds of activities in vision textbooks, in speaking parts, there are some patterns and students are told that they could use the following patterns for diverse functions.

-In both series of the textbooks speaking practice involves pair-work and group-work but the number and range of activities for pair and group work in Four Corners Series are more than those in vision textbooks.

-Using target language in pair work, group work, and different kinds of activities, the class plays the role of social context, and speaking is the vehicle for interaction in the classroom.

Reading

-Reading passages of Four Corners provide a model and topic for writing and speaking so that the other two skills are about the same subject, but the reading passages of vision textbooks do not play such a role.

-The Reading passages of the Four Corners Series are authentic. However, reading passages from vision textbooks cover a small range of issues and are not as authentic as those.

-Reading passages of vision textbooks are short but Four Corners reading passages are not. Reading passages from Four Corners are exciting.

-Reading passages of vision textbooks are good for intensive reading and do not provide an opportunity for extensive reading since they are short. Four Corners reading passages are suitable for both intensive and extensive reading since they provide supplementary reading through the website and workbook.

-Both Skimming and Scanning strategies in reading have been included in vision textbooks, and they have been explained before the related activities. But in the Four Corners Series, they have not been referred to.

Writing

-Mechanics of writing have been explained, especially in Vision 3 for grade XII of vision textbooks and there are some explanations and activities regarding that. In Four Corners, there are not any explanations about the mechanics of writing.

-In the Four Corners Series after writing tasks students ask and answer and share ideas about their writing task and they are about real-life situations but vision textbooks do not have these characteristics.

-Writing as a process to write, plan, anticipate and review has not completely been referred to in both series of books. However, in the writing section of Four Corners, there are first some questions to answer then there is a model to write and finally sharing ideas with classmates.

-Writings of Four Corners are integrated with other skills like reading, speaking and listening each skill reinforces the other in Four Corners, but the writings of vision textbooks are not integrated with others.

3.1.3.2 A comparison of Language Skills

Grammar

-Grammatical explanations are simple and easy to understand in the Four Corners series. The grammar parts of vision textbooks is more comprehensive and gives more examples.

-Tables show the affirmative, negative and interrogative tenses in vision textbooks, but lack of tables in the Four Corners series is observable.

-Grammatical explanations are short in the Four Corners Series and there are more examples in vision textbooks.

-Grammar is embedded into a general language course and is not presented as a discrete skill in a separate course.

-The grammar is presented in Reading, Speaking and Conversation in both series of textbooks.

Vocabulary

Both series of textbooks present vocabulary in textual context. There is a list of irregular verbs and their past and past participles at the end of both series of textbooks. Both Four Corners and Vision textbooks provide different kinds of activities for vocabulary practice

Pronunciation

Due attention has been given to pronunciation in the Four Corners Series. Both segmental and supra-segmental features have been covered in the books. Word stress, sentence stress, contractions, consonant-vowel links, falling and raising intonation, emphatic pronunciation etc., all have been covered in the Four Corners series

3.2 Analysis of the Quantitative Data

The questionnaire findings are presented in this section.

3.2.1 Four Corners Analysis

Data from the questionnaire on teachers' evaluation of the Four Corners series is given below.

3.2.1.1 Characteristic Features of CLT

The items on characteristic features of CLT included 7 items and the results are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Four Corners Evaluation on Characteristic Features of CLT (N=16)

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
1. The books pay balanced attention to language skills and areas.	6 (37.5%)	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)
2. Translation into the mother tongue is neither presented nor required in the books.	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)
3. The books contain sufficient authentic tasks and activities.	2 (12.5%)	12 (75%)	1 (6.25%)	1 (6.25%)
4. The culture of the speakers of the target language has been presented in the books.	5	6	3	2

	(31.25%)	(37.5%)	(18.75%)	(12.5%)
5. Content is relevant, engaging and interesting.	7 (43.75%)	5 (31.25%)	4 (25%)	0 (0%)
6. The teaching of language skills is integrated.	3 (18.75%)	9 (56.25%)	2 (12.5%)	2 (12.5%)
7. The books contain information gap activities.	3 (18.75%)	7 (43.75%)	5 (31.25%)	1 (6.25%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

Analysis of data showed that 75% of the respondents believed that the books paid balanced attention to language skills and areas (37.5% fully evident, 37.5% mostly evident), 56.25% agreed that translation into mother tongue is neither presented nor required in the textbooks (25% fully evident, 31.25% mostly evident), and 87.5% of the respondents believed that the books contain sufficient authentic tasks and activities (12.5% fully evident, 75% mostly evident). 68.75% believed that the culture of the speakers of the target language has been presented in the textbooks (31.25% fully evident, 37.5% mostly evident). 75% of the respondents agreed that the content of the textbooks is relevant, engaging and interesting (43.75% fully evident, 31.25% mostly evident). In response to the question of whether the teaching of language skills is integrated, 75% of respondents believed that it was integrated (18.75% fully evident, 56.25% mostly evident). 62.5% of the respondents believed that the books contain information gap activities (18.75% fully evident, 43.75% mostly evident).

3.2.1.1 Analysis of Language Skills

The results of the teachers' evaluation of language skills are given in table 2.

Table 2*Teachers' Evaluation of Language Skills in Four Corners (N=16)*

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
8. A variety of real-life listening activities such as note-taking, summarizing, and listening for the main idea and specific information are presented in the books.	2 (12.5%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)	2 (12.5%)
9. The books provide students with sufficient opportunities to practice speaking through pair work and group work.	8 (50%)	4 (25%)	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)
10. Informal expressions are included in the books.	3 (18.75%)	4 (25%)	7 (43.75%)	2 (12.5%)
11. The reading of the books can provide a model and topic for writing and speaking.	4 (25%)	8 (50%)	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)
12. The books present scanning and skimming in reading exercises.	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)
13. The books require students to write: narrative, descriptive, application, letter of complaint, appreciation and invitation letter.	4 (25%)	0 (0%)	10 (62.5%)	2 (12.5%)
14. The process of writing (brainstorming, drafting, revising, anticipating and reviewing) is presented in the books.	2 (12.5%)	7 (43.75%)	3 (18.25%)	4 (25%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

In response to the question on listening skills, 62.5% of the respondents believed that the books contained a variety of real-life listening activities like note-taking, summarizing, and listening for the main idea and specific information (12.5% fully evident, 50% mostly evident). In response to the question on speaking activity 75% of the respondents believed that the books provided sufficient opportunities for students to practice speaking through pair work and group work (50% fully evident, 25% mostly evident), but only 44% believed that informal expressions were included in the books. Regarding reading skills, 75% of the respondents believed that the readings of the books provided a model and topic for speaking and writing (25% fully evident, 50% mostly evident) and 56.25% believed that readings of the books included skimming and scanning exercises (37.5% fully evident, 18.75% mostly evident). In response to the question on writing the books require students to write narrative,

descriptive, application, letter of complaint, appreciation and invitation letters, only 25% of the respondents believed that the books required students to write such writings. However, 56.25% believed that the process of writing: brainstorming, drafting, revising, anticipating and reviewing were presented in the books (12.5% fully evident, 43.75% mostly evident).

3.2.1.2 Analysis of Language Areas

Regarding language areas of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation six questions were designed and the results of teachers' evaluation of language areas is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Teachers' Evaluation of Language Areas in Four Corners (N=16)

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
15. The books do not present words as discrete units, but they are presented in context.	4 (25%)	6 (37.5%)	5 (31.25%)	1 (6.25%)
16. A wide range of topics and diverse vocabulary are presented in the books.	6 (37.5%)	7 (43.75%)	0 (0%)	3 (18.75%)
17. Grammatical explanations are brief, simple and comprehensive.	7 (43.75%)	7 (43.75%)	1 (6.25%)	1 (6.25%)
18. One item is explained at one time. Rules and exceptions are not given at the same time.	2 (12.5%)	6 (37.5%)	5 (31.25%)	3 (18.75%)
19. Grammar is contextualized in meaningful language use.	3 (18.75%)	8 (50%)	3 (18.75%)	2 (12.5%)
20. Both segmental and supra segmental features are presented in appropriate contexts.	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

As is shown in Table 3, the first question related to vocabulary on not presenting words as a discrete unit, and presenting them in the context received a positive response with 62.5% agreeing (25% fully evident, 37.5% mostly evident) and the other question on presenting a wide range of topics and vocabulary in the books received a very positive response with 81.25% agreeing (37.5% fully

evident, 43.75% mostly evident). As can be seen in Table 3 on item 17 the teachers strongly believed that the grammatical explanations were brief, simple and comprehensive in the textbooks with 87.5% agreeing (43.75% fully evident, 43.75% mostly evident). In response to item 18 on grammar when one item is explained at one time and rules and exceptions are not given at the same time 50% agreed and the other half of the respondents disagreed with this item. However, 68.75% believed that grammar is contextualized in meaningful language use (18.75% fully evident, 50% mostly evident). An item which had the least positive responses was the last item on presenting both segmental and suprasegmental features in appropriate context which only 43.75% responded positively.

3.2.1.3 Organization and Structure

Regarding the organization and structure of the books, five items were designed in the questionnaire for teachers to evaluate. The results of the teacher's evaluation of the organization and structure of the books is given in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Teachers' Evaluation of Organization and Structure

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
21. The books can play a motivational and instructional role.	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	1 (6.25%)
22. The content and language are further practiced at the end of each lesson.	4 (25%)	8 (50%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)
23. New structures and words are presented in interesting situations and recycled throughout the books.	3 (18.75%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)	1 (6.25%)
24. The books have a clear and consistent unit structure.	7 (43.75%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	0 (0%)
25. Content and exercises are graded.	7 (43.75%)	4 (25%)	2 (12.5%)	3 (18.75%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

As can be seen in Table 4, 62.5% of the participants believed that the books can play motivational and instructional roles (37.5% fully evident, 25% mostly evident) and 75% of the

respondents believed that the content and language material are further practiced at the end of each lesson (25% fully evident, 50% mostly evident). The last three items of the questionnaire received the same number of positive responses 68.75% respectively, item 23 on the new structure and words are presented in an interesting situation and recycled throughout the books (18.75% fully evident, 50% mostly evident). Item 24 on the books has a clear and consistent unit structure (43.75% fully evident, 25% mostly evident) and item 25 on content and exercises are graded (43.75% fully evident, 25% mostly evident).

3.2.2 Vision Series Analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire data related to the vision series is presented in this section.

3.2.2.1 Characteristic Features of CLT

As is shown in Table 5, the teachers' analysis of vision textbooks on the characteristic features of CLT, the majority of the responses to the questions are negative. On item one about paying balanced attention to language skills and areas only 25% of the respondents believed that there is balanced attention to language skills and areas in the books and 75% disagreed (50% partially evident, 25% little or no evident). In response to the question on translation into the mother tongue is neither presented nor required in the textbooks only 18.75% had a positive response and 81.25% disagreed (31.25% partially evident, 50% little or no evident). One item which had the least positive responses was number 3 on containing sufficient authentic tasks and activities in the books which only 6.25% agreed and 93.75% believed that there weren't sufficient authentic tasks and activities in the books. Only 31.25% believed that the culture of the speakers of the target language has been presented in the books and the other 68.75% did not agree. 75% of the respondents believed that the content of the books is not relevant, engaging and interesting and only 6.25% of the respondents agreed that the teaching of language skills is integrated and a great percentage of 93.75% disagreed. In response to item number seven 37.5% believed that the books contain information gap activities.

Table 5

The Results of Teachers' Evaluation of Characteristic Features of CLT in Vision (N=16)

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
1. The books pay balanced attention to language Skills and areas.	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)
2. Translation into the mother tongue is neither presented nor required in the books.	1 (6.25%)	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)	8 (50%)

3. the books contain sufficient authentic tasks and activities.	0 (0%)	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)	12 (75%)
4. The culture of the speakers of the target language has been presented in the books.	3 (25%)	1 (6.25%)	0 (0%)	11 (68.75%)
5. Content is relevant, engaging and interesting.	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.75%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)
6. The teaching of language skills is integrated.	0 (0%)	1 (6.25%)	7 (43.75%)	8 (50%)
7. The books contain information gap activities.	2 (12.5%)	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	10 (31.25%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

3.2.2.2 Analysis of Language Skills

The majority of responses to the questions on language skills were negative as it is shown in table 6. In response to the question about listening skills, only 6.25% believed that a variety of listening activities such as note-taking, summarizing, and listening for the main idea and specific information are presented in the books, the large percentage of 93.75% believed that the books lack such listening activities and only 18.75% agreed that the books provide sufficient opportunities for the student to practice speaking through pair work and group work. In response to the question that the books contain informal expressions only 25% believed and the majority of 75% did not agree. Again only 25% of the respondents agreed that the readings of the books can provide a model and topic for listening and speaking. The only item that had the most positive responses was number 12 which 68.75% believed that the books present skimming and scanning in reading exercises. The item which was very poorly responded to was number 13 that 0% of the respondents believed that the books require students to write narrative, descriptive, application, letter of complaint, appreciation and invitation letters and the other question about writing also had a considerable negative response and only 6.25% believed that the process of writing: brainstorming, drafting, revising, anticipating and reviewing are presented in the books.

Table 6*Teachers' Evaluation of Language Skills (N=16)*

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
8. A variety of real-life listening activities such as note-taking, summarizing, and listening for the main idea and specific information are presented in the books.	0 (0%)	1 (6.25%)	5 (31.25%)	10 (62.5%)
9. The books provide students with sufficient opportunities to practice speaking through pair work and group work.	0 (0%)	3 (18.75%)	5 (31.25%)	8 (50%)
10. Informal expressions are included in the books.	2 (12.5%)	2 (12.5%)	2 (12.5%)	10 (62.5%)
11. The reading of the books can provide a model and topic for writing and speaking.	1 (6.25%)	5 (18.75%)	4 (25%)	6 (37.5%)
12. The books present scanning and skimming in reading exercises.	5 (31.25%)	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)	1 (6.25%)
13. The books require students to write: narrative, descriptive, application, letter of complaint, appreciation and invitation letter.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6.25%)	15 (93.75%)
14. The process of writing: brainstorming, drafting, revising, anticipating and reviewing are presented in the books.	1 (6.25%)	0 (0%)	2 (12.5%)	13 (81.25%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

3.2.2.3 Analysis of Language Areas

As is shown in Table 7, the number of negative responses is less than in the previous table about language areas. 56.25% believed that the books did not present words as discrete units but they are presented in context (25% fully evident, 31.25% mostly evident) but only 43.75% believed that a wide range of topics and diverse vocabulary are presented in the books. On grammar, only 43.75% of the respondents believed that grammatical explanations were brief, simple and comprehensive and the other higher percentage did not agree. Item 18 received the most positive responses in the language areas section and 62.5% agreed that in grammatical explanations one item is given at one time and rules and exceptions are not given at the same time (37.5% fully evident, 25% mostly evident). Also,

56.25% agreed that grammar was contextualized in meaningful language use (12.5% fully evident, 43.75% mostly evident). The least positive response in this section was on item 20 which only 12.5% believed that both segmental and supra-segmental features are presented in appropriate context.

Table 7

Teachers' Evaluation of Language Areas (N=16)

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
15. The books do not present words as discrete units, but they are presented in context.	4 (25%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)
16. A wide range of topics and diverse vocabulary are presented in the books.	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)	2 (12.5%)	7 (43.75%)
17. Grammatical explanations are brief, simple and comprehensive.	1 (6.25%)	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)	6 (37.5%)
18. One item is explained at one time. Rules and exceptions are not given at the same time.	6 (37.5%)	4 (25%)	3 (18.75%)	3 (18.75%)
19. Grammar is contextualized in meaningful language use.	2 (12.5%)	7 (43.75%)	4 (25%)	3 (18.75%)
20. Both segmental and supra-segmental features are presented in appropriate contexts.	0 (0%)	2 (12.5%)	6 (37.5%)	8 (50%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

3.2.2.3 Analysis of Organization and Structure

Only 25% believed that vision books can play instructional and motivational roles (0% fully evident, 25% mostly evident). Only 18.75% of the respondents agreed that the content and language material were further practiced at the end of each lesson (0% fully evident, 18.75% fully evident). In response to question number 23, 62.5% believed that new structure and words are not presented in interesting situations and not recycled throughout the books and just 43.75% agreed that the books had a clear and consistent unit structure (12.5% fully evident, 31.25% mostly evident). And in response to the last item again the number of negative responses was more than positive ones only 37.5% believed that content and exercises were graded (6.25% fully evident, 31.25% mostly evident).

Table 8*Teachers' Evaluation of Organization and Structure (N=16)*

	FE	ME	PE	LNE
21. The books can play a motivational and instructional role.	0 (0%)	4 (25%)	4 (25%)	8 (50%)
22. the content and language material are further practiced at the end of each lesson	0 (0%)	3 (18.75%)	7 (43.75%)	6 (37.5%)
23. new structure and words are presented in interesting situations and recycled throughout the books	0 (0%)	6 (37.5%)	3 (18.75%)	7 (43.75%)
24. The books have a clear and consistent unit structure.	2 (12.5%)	5 (31.25%)	5 (31.25%)	4 (25%)
25. Content and exercise are graded.	1 (6.25%)	5 (31.25%)	3 (18.75%)	7 (43.75%)

***FE: fully evident; ME: mostly evident; PE: partially evident; LNE: little or no evident**

4 Discussion & Conclusion

The study was an attempt to evaluate the two textbook series Vision and Four Corners based on CLT frameworks. It was conducted through a parallel mixed methods of the type convergent. Content Analysis was done by the three researchers as the qualitative phase of the study. Also, a questionnaire was developed to evaluate the textbooks based on the experts' ideas.

Based on the findings of the content analysis it can be concluded that the Four Corners series involve a robust implementation of CLT features. For example, for listening activities, it is observed that there are diverse tasks such as listening for answers, true/false statements, and note-taking. Another important point relates to the audio files. They are recorded by native speakers through which authenticity of the listening experience is guaranteed. As for the speaking activities, it can be concluded that the series promotes interaction. There are discussions in the form of pair and group activities as well as role playing and interviews which simulate real-life sorts of communication. As for the reading skill, a wide range and array of topics are covered. Discussion is stimulated through comprehension questions. Noticing is provided through highlighted vocabularies. In the same vein, a variety of writing activities are presented including blog posts or letters which integrate reading and

speaking in an efficient way. The grammar is presented inductively through varying examples to reinforce learning. For vocabulary, visual aids are used which present them thematically. The vocabulary items seem to be in accordance with the students' interest. And finally for pronunciation, the series address different segmental and suprasegmental features.

Based on the experts' evaluations, Four Corners was rated positively based on its adherence to CLT. Others researcher also mention its title as reliable textbooks to be safely used for language education (Chegeni, et al., 2016). A majority of the participants believed that a balanced attention is devoted to language skills through authentic tasks. However, some areas for improvement were also noted. They included including more informal expressions as well as narrative writing tasks. Other scholars (Hamidi, et al., 2016) also state the books series is superior to interchange series. As for addressing the students' needs also, the teachers in Najafi Sarem's (2017) study were satisfied with Four Corners.

Based on the findings of the content analysis it can be concluded that contrary to Four Corners, Vision series falls short in several key areas. For example, though the listening activities audio materials are designated as native-like, they are not authentic. This can hinder comprehension. Moreover, listening tasks lack variety if compared to Four Corners. As for the speaking activities, they are limited in scope and real-life interaction and communication are not encouraged. For the reading skill, the passages are short and there is not a wide coverage of topics. Also, a lack of pre-reading activities seems evident which can enhance engagement. And finally for the writing skills, there is focus on basic sentence structure and functions and applications for real-life are no considered. For the language area of grammar, inductive teaching is prevalent. However, there is lack of contextualization. Also, rules and examples are not integrated. For vocabulary, there is not a broad range as far as topics are concerned. Language use exposure is also limited. For pronunciation, there is inconsistency across the different levels. This is in line with the findings of other scholars (Jamshidian, et al., 2024) who maintain that "Generally, the Vision series did not follow CLT principles to promote language learners' ability to communicate" (p.1).

The feedback received from teachers regarding the Vision series was primarily negative as far as its alignment with CLT principles was concerned. Many of the respondents believed that the textbooks did not adequately integrate language skills. Also, they stated that it does not provide engaging content. A significant number of participants showed their concerns related to the lack of authentic tasks. Moreover, the absence of cultural representation was also emphasized in the data. Other researchers have also expressed their concerns regarding this by mentioning that target language culture is absent (Gheitasi, et al., 2022).

Based on the analysis of the two textbook series, though they both exhibit strengths and weaknesses, it can be recommended for Four Corners to enhance its vocabulary review sections .For Vision, substantial revisions seem to be necessary if alignment with the CLT principles is the target. To improve the vision book series diversifying listening task and employing native audio are recommended. As for the speaking skill, games and role plays can be enhanced to foster student's engagement. Variety and length of reading passages were problematic and need attention along with the inclusion of pre-reading tasks. More real-life writing tasks are needed for the students' practical

communication needs. Vocabulary needs to be expanded and pronunciation tasks must ensure a comprehensive coverage for all phonetic features.

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Bridging the Global and the Local: Glocalizing Syllabus in the Light of Learning Style

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ABSTRACT

The education landscape is rapidly changing and there is a consensus among many stakeholders that teaching must be tailored to address different learners' needs. As the world becomes more connected, educational systems should consider both global and local perspectives in order to prepare students for a borderless world. The objective of this review paper is to present an educational syllabus that combines global and local perspectives, known as glocalizing syllabus. Key principles and components of syllabus design are then presented before examining various learning styles. Finally, it establishes a logical connection between the process of designing the syllabus and different learning preferences of students. This study has implications for EFL instructors, those responsible for curriculum development, and educational systems seeking to enhance their pedagogical practices. Also, the findings of this study emphasize the relevance of using a glocalized approach in curriculum design to promote more inclusive and adaptable learning environments. Educational systems can better prepare students for success in a varied, interconnected society by aligning syllabi with both global capabilities and local contexts, as well as accommodating individual learning styles. In conclusion, this study advocates for syllabi designing which takes into consideration individual variations in learning styles, as they can provide useful insights on instructional practices and curricular theories in education.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the most important research and educational development efforts have centered on language learners rather than on language teaching methodology. According to Rodríguez-Izquierdo et al. (2020), mainstream language teaching does not prioritize teaching approaches as significant factors in successful learning outcomes. According to Normadhi et al. (2019), each student's individual

learning styles and preferences, previous language learning experiences, linguistic attitudes, personalities, and possibly even their worldviews are completely different and unique, and these constitute the foundations of individual differences. Learners' individual differences can be considered in educational programs by developing a well-prepared syllabus based on their needs and styles. This review is a step toward helping students identify their learning styles and providing them with the opportunity to work with learning materials in ways that best suit their individual learning styles. This, in turn, paves the way for teachers to optimally present the lesson (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

2. The Importance of Syllabus Design

Numerous researchers have underscored and stated the goals of the course syllabus (e.g., Richlin, 2023; Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018; Fink, 2012). Brinkley-Etzkorn (2018), for example, stressed the syllabus's importance in faculty members' personnel reviews to assess their teaching abilities, as well as its potential to evaluate course accountability and rigor. Richlin (2023) suggested that a syllabus might be utilized for a variety of reasons, including serving as a formal contract between a faculty member and the students in the course. Like Chakrabarti et al. (2021), they felt that a syllabus can also be used as a map or script to guide the students through the course materials and content. Similarly, Wagner et al. (2022) pinpointed that the main goal of a syllabus is to convey and communicate information regarding a course.

Basically, syllabus design focuses on the units around which classroom activities or tasks are organized and the sequence in which they are to be administered. Instructors of the course generally create and utilize a syllabus to delineate the course plan, establish expectations for student-faculty communication, contextualize the topics within the broader curriculum, and specify anticipated student engagement with the course material (Karanja & Grant, 2020). Based on Miller et al. (2020), the design of syllabuses has a lot to do with the collection, sequencing, and validation of the course content.

The decisions regarding the curriculum and its sequence also affect the role allocated to the learner. Syllabi have been organized and sequenced around structures (Ellis, 2018), words (Mamaghani & Zolghadri, 2018), notions and functions (Sabbah, 2018), skills (Ellis, 2018), and tasks (Gilabert & Castellví, 2019). Making an informed decision about which syllabus to implement is heavily reliant on a previously administered needs analysis, which can scrutinize the target situation, i.e., what learners are required to do with language, as well as learning needs, i.e., how learners are best motivated to acquire the language and skills identified through the target situation analysis (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

2.1 Needs analysis: The preliminary step in syllabus designing to consider individual differences

Nunan (1989) defines needs analysis as a data collection process that includes "techniques and procedures for collecting information to be used in syllabus design" (p. 13). Furthermore, Sönmez (2019) defines needs analysis as the process of identifying and prioritizing the needs of a learner or group of learners for which a language is required. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) established needs

analysis by distinguishing between goal needs, which are what the learner has to do to learn, and "wants," which are the learners' perceptions of what their needs are. According to the authors, target needs include "necessities" that the learner should know in order to perform effectively in the target language setting, while "lacks" imply a need to know what the learner currently knows in order to determine which of the essentials the learner "lacks" (pp. 54-56).

Gürbüz (2013) defines syllabus design as a logical sequence of three major stages: (1) needs analysis, (2) content specification, and (3) syllabus structure. The most significant aspect of needs analysis is to examine the learners' needs, as each learner is unique and has a certain type of learning style. Therefore, great care is needed by syllabus designers as well as teachers to consider these differences among individuals while doing their duty.

2.2 Types of Syllabus Design

Different syllabi propose various ways in which learners must acquire the details of the content and apply them in real-life contexts. There is a plethora of syllabus types that might be used in teaching and learning situations. Syllabus types are classified into two superordinate categories: synthetic and analytic. In synthetic syllabi, design begins with the language elements that the course instructor will teach (grammar structures, vocabulary, collocations, sentence patterns, functions, etc.). In this type of syllabus, the learner's role is to synthesize the different parts of items that he or she has already learned separately (Alemnge, 2021). On the other hand, analytic syllabi take a more "global" and "holistic" approach to language learning (Fréchet et al., 2019). Language is not divided in analytic syllabi. Instead, it is employed to engage in communicative activities that mirror real-life interactions. In other words, the primary focus is on a single communicative aim. In analytic syllabi, learning is intended to occur concurrently with the development of learners' interlanguage systems, taking into account various learning styles and aptitudes. Here are six main types of syllabus design that were presented by Guarnieri (2015):

Structural (Formal) Syllabus: The content of language teaching is a collection of grammatical structures and forms. Examples include nouns, verbs, adjectives, statements, questions, subordinate clauses, and so on.

Notional/Functional Syllabus: As the name implies, the content of language teaching is a collection of the functions accomplished by language, as well as the concepts used to convey those functions. Functions include greeting, disputing, apologizing, and requesting, while concepts include size, age, color, and time.

Situational Syllabus: The goal of this type of syllabus is to place students in real or imagined target situations. A situation might involve several people engaged in an activity in a particular setting. Examples of situations include going to the dentist, complaining to the mayor, buying a movie ticket, and meeting a new person.

Skill-Based Syllabus: The content of language teaching is a set of specialized skills that can be demonstrated through language. Skills are the abilities required to operate within a language system. The primary goal of skill-based training is to acquire a particular language competence or skill. A

secondary goal could be to develop broader language competency, which would involve gaining knowledge while using language skills.

Task-Based Syllabus: Another approach to course design that uses the task as the unit of analysis is task-based language education (Gilbert & Malicka, 2022; Bula-Villalobos & Murillo-Miranda, 2019). As Ellis (2018) points out, the primary focus of this syllabus is on meaning and communication, where students are primarily “users” of language rather than just “learners.” Another important aspect of this type of syllabus is that the material is chosen in proportion to learner needs and the social situations in which learners seek to engage (Feez, 2002).

In a task-based syllabus, the instructional content consists of a collection of complex and purposeful tasks for students to perform while using a language. The tasks are characterized as activities aimed at developing second language skills. Tasks integrate language (and other) skills within specific language-use contexts. Task-based teaching differs from situation-based teaching in that the latter is product-oriented, while the former is process-oriented. Students can work on various language forms, functions, and skills in an individual and unpredictable manner while performing the tasks. Tasks that can be used for language learning can be generalized to any situation the learner may encounter. Some examples include applying for a job, speaking with a coworker, and receiving employment information over the phone.

Content-Based Syllabus: The primary goal is to teach subject matter using the language that the students are acquiring. Students can be divided into two groups: language learners and content learners. Language acquisition occurs alongside content learning, with the subject matter being central. Content-based language teaching focuses on the material, while task-based language teaching concentrates on the linguistic and cognitive processes involved in learning. An example of content-based language instruction might be a medical class taught in the students’ preferred language.

3. Learning Style

There are various definitions of learning styles. Learning styles are any tactics or mental behaviors used by students to learn in a certain educational circumstance or challenge (Cohen & Henry, 2019). Keffe (1982) defines learning styles as cognitive, emotional, and physiological characteristics that are reasonably constant indicators of how students perceive, interact with, and respond to their learning environment. Hassan et al. (2019) define learning styles as the educational conditions under which a learner is most likely to learn. As a result, it is predicted that each individual will have a distinct learning style. Similarly, Rasheed and Wahid (2021) believe that learning styles are the preferred techniques of learning adopted by all students in the classroom. They continued that everyone likes a different approach to learning information and that a learner can have multiple learning styles. The learning styles thesis states that people learn in a variety of ways. Any individual has academic or learning skills that are determined by a combination of inherited and environmental factors (Hart et al., 2021). These characteristics translate into preferences for learning and communicating visually, orally, spatially, and tactilely, which are referred to as learning styles.

Learners' preferred learning strategies vary according to their tastes, mental preparation, and physical condition in terms of sensory modalities. Identifying and implementing appropriate learning styles may play a crucial role in the selection of teaching methods, consequently improving education (Ariastuti & Wahyudin, 2022). There is widespread understanding that how people approach a learning environment influences their performance and achievement of learning outcomes (Nzesei, 2015). As every instructor realizes, no two pupils approach learning in the same manner. Some benefit more from visual imagery, while others prefer verbal explanations; some prefer to experiment and see what happens, while others prefer to think things through first; some reason sequentially, while others have a more holistic approach; some prefer concrete ("real-world") information, while others prefer abstract theories and symbolism, and so on (Barzegar & Tajalli, 2013).

The learning style concept is based on the works of Piaget, Allport, Guilford, and Thurstone. These thinkers were interested in various elements of individual differences and their relationship to intelligence (Keeffe, 1982). Accordingly, learning styles are rooted in the theory of individual differences. Normadhi et al. (2019) described "cognitive styles" to refer to how individuals perceive information and interact with their learning environment. However, some academics have used the phrase "learning styles" to describe what others refer to as cognitive styles. As a result, there should be a link between learning style and cognitive style and theory.

The phrase 'learning style' is frequently used in instructional settings to refer to cognitive types (Lwande et al., 2021). Curry (1983) made one of the most significant taxonomic and pedagogical contributions to the area. She positioned learning styles between learning preferences and cognitive styles in a layered "onion" model of individual difference components. As a result, learning styles, cognitive styles, and the theory of individual variations share many similarities and are inextricably linked. Baherimoghadam et al. (2021) also supported this view. They further asserted that a mixture of cognitive, emotional, and physiological features might suggest how a student can learn, which is generally defined as a learning style.

According to Taylor and Crocker (2022), normal differences among individuals can result in variances in how they like to learn and absorb information. Extraverts, for example, like to study in groups and collaborate on projects, whereas introverts prefer to work or study alone. Based on Kormos and Smith (2023), learning style can be used as a metaphor for assuming the range of individual differences in learning. Shamsuddin and Kaur (2020) pointed out that researchers in both educational psychology and the second language acquisition (SLA) field have concluded that different individuals approach learning differently, and the concept of "learning style" has been used to refer to these differences among learners.

Nowadays, one of the primary goals of foreign language learning is to raise awareness regarding students' personal or individual variations and their impact on the learning process and, more importantly, on learning outcomes. Furthermore, because various learner characteristics influence the process of language learning (Getie, 2020), modern language teaching and learning focuses on individual differences among learners.

Many models have been proposed for learning styles so far. Let's have a brief look at some of them. Grasha and Reichmann (2006) developed a learning style inventory to identify and categorize students' learning preferences as Avoidant, Dependent, Participant, Independent, Competitive, and Collaborative.

Reid (1995) classifies learning styles into six categories: visual, tactile, auditory, group, individual, and kinesthetic. Schellens and Valcke (2000) developed another instrument for assessing students' learning styles. They claimed that the demands of the learning environment might differ from the students' actual learning styles. They divide students' learning styles into five bipolar dimensions: auditory vs. visual, applied vs. conceptual, spatial vs. non-spatial, social vs. individual, and creative vs. pragmatic.

Another widely used instrument to measure learning styles is Fleming and Mills (1992)'s VARK model. VARK is an acronym for Visual (V), Auditory (A), Read/Write (R), and Kinesthetic (K) dimensions for assessing learning style preferences. A learning style inventory was developed by Felder and Silverman (1998). The model divides students' learning preferences into four dimensions: 1- Sensing or Intuitive; 2- Visual or Verbal; 3- Active or Reflective; and finally, 4- Sequential or Global.

Among these, David Kolb's (1984) Learning Style Inventory is of much greater importance to scientists. Therefore, the researcher places more emphasis on this one in this paper. According to David Kolb (1984), learning style is the consequence of inherited equipment, prior experience, and the needs of the current environment combining to form distinctive orientations that provide unequal emphasis on the four main learning modes proposed by experiential learning theory. David Kolb's (1981) Learning Style Inventory (LSI) is a well-known and widely used tool in this regard. Learners grade sentences based on four different learning styles. The LSI is one of the more challenging devices to comprehend. First, it is vital to understand these concepts.

- Abstract—The learner prefers to learn through symbols and thinking.
- Concrete—The learner prefers to learn through experiencing something such as touching.
- Active—The learner prefers to learn by manipulating or changing things through practical means.
- Reflective—The learner prefers to acquire knowledge through reflection and discussion.

The LSI scores show a preference for one of the four stages of a learning cycle:

- Concrete Experience (CE)—Learning from Feeling: learning from direct experience, relying more on feeling and collaborating with others.
- Reflective Observation (RO)— Learning by Watching and Listening: attentive observation, seeing situations from multiple viewpoints.
- Abstract Conceptualization (AC)—Learning by Thinking: analyzing, thinking about theories, ideas, and planning.

- Active Experimentation (AE)—Learning by Doing: enjoying actions and taking risks, getting to the bottom of things.

Since only one stage is not sufficient for a clear learning style, two scores should be combined to determine one's learning style (Kolb, 1981).

The preferred style has the highest combination score:

- Convergers—AC and AE: These learners prefer to make decisions regarding real-world problems and how to solve them.
- Divergers—CE and RO: These students prefer to see problems from a variety of perspectives. They have a vivid imagination and strong emotions.
- Assimilators—AC and RO: These learners enjoy abstract concepts and developing theoretical issues. They're logical and rational.
- Accommodators—CE and AE: These learners like actual actions, taking risks, working with others, and adapting.

Due to the popularity and widespread use of Kolb's model of learning style, this article considers individual differences in syllabus design based on this model.

3.1. Syllabus Design and Learning Style

The pedagogic reply to learning styles is to allow, in a settled way, for different language skills and content and to offer recommendations for variability in pacing—the speed at which learners can work through materials and instruction. In the same vein, Tomlinson (2011) states that materials should take into account different learning styles, which means that activities should be flexible and adaptable to all learning styles. For example, Stranks (2003) notes that exercises involving mental activity will not be appropriate for all learners. This implies that we should consider the students' learning styles while grading and sequencing projects.

Oflaz and Turunc (2012) conducted a study to examine how learning styles influence group work activities. The participants included a group of 5th-grade private school children from one of Istanbul's Bahcesehir K12 Schools, as well as 40 other Bahcesehir K12 Schools across Turkey. They were divided into two classes: A (21 pupils) and B (22 students). Students in Class A were given a Sensory Learning Style Test. The pupils had 10 hours of English every week. They were required to work in groups twice a week during their English courses. The findings showed that teachers can increase the effectiveness of their instruction by understanding their students' various learning styles and planning activities and tasks accordingly.

As stated by Verde and Valero (2021), there are some fundamental differences in learning modalities from person to person and, moreover, from one class to another. Teachers and, furthermore, syllabus designers must take these differences into account and adapt their instructional goals and methods to them. Knowing their students' learning styles gives them the opportunity to

categorize and modify their instruction, classroom grouping, and materials based on the levels and differences among their students.

4. Linking Syllabus Types and Learning Styles

As discussed, there are different kinds of syllabus types holding different and specific features that could be tailored to individuals' learning styles. The first type of learning style is the converger. As discussed, this type of learning style puts a sharp focus on practical ideas and finding solutions for real-world problems. This can be more connected with task-based, analytic, and process kinds of syllabus designs since these syllabuses have more to do with real-world activities and open-ended reasoning.

The second kind of learning style is the diverger. As this kind of learning style emphasizes viewing things from different angles and situations, one may come to the conclusion that it is more related to notional-functional, situational, and synthetic kinds of syllabus. The reason is that these syllabus types try to put students in different functions and situations as well.

Next is the assimilator type. As it has a logical form and needs to gain a plethora of information, it can be more related to structural, content-based, and skill-based kinds of syllabus types. These syllabus types have special grammatical forms and skills that are fixed, rational, and more abstract.

The last type is the accommodators. As they enjoy doing hands-on experiences and collaboration activities, they can be more connected with notional-functional, situational, task-based, synthetic, and process kinds of syllabus. The rationale is that these syllabus types focus on doing real-world activities and having group work discussions.

According to Ariastuti and Wahyudin (2022), learning styles are preferred ways of learning used by every individual. They continue that everyone prefers a special way to learn the information. So, learning styles are not the same for everyone. El-Sabagh (2021) states that learning style reflects our preferred manner of acquiring, using, and thinking about knowledge. Findings of researchers reveal that people learn more when they know their preferred learning style (Doyle, 2023; Gilbertson et al., 2022; Hassan et al., 2019).

Aelterman et al. (2019) emphasize the diversity of learning styles among students in recent years to see whether they can make a difference in students' achievement or not. According to them, some learning styles may only fit into particular teaching activities. Thus, this is a very important point that teachers and, moreover, syllabus designers should bear in mind while developing any kind of tasks or classroom activities. They should pay attention to various learning styles among students. Together, these studies and assumptions can provide important insights into the significant connections between syllabus design and learning styles. The literature review informs us that every individual has a unique learning style and that every task fits into a specific kind of learning style.

5. Conclusion

By considering students' individual differences, teachers and syllabus designers are expected to design tasks and activities that cover various tastes and learning styles. This suggests that they should

create learning experiences catering to a diverse range of preferences and learning styles among students. According to Nunan et al. (2000) and his theory of syllabus design, which includes task-based syllabi, a well-designed syllabus takes into account the unique characteristics and specific requirements of learners. By incorporating tasks and activities that align with students' individual differences and needs, educators can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment that supports diverse learning preferences and abilities. This learner-centered approach to syllabus design not only enhances student motivation and participation but also promotes effective learning outcomes tailored to the individual needs of students.

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Exploring the Relationships through SEM: How Personality Shapes Reading Willingness and Reading Comprehension

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KEY TERMS

Individual differences
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Structural Equation Modelling

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the interrelationships among willingness to read (WTR), personality types, and reading comprehension. To carry out this survey study, a total of 228 BA English major students were randomly selected through convenience sampling. For the measurement of the study variables, the Willingness to Read questionnaire, personality types inventory, as well as the reading section of the Preliminary English Test were employed. To test the hypothesized model, structural equation modeling was used. After confirming the hypothesized model, the researchers concluded that the proposed model had an acceptable fit with the empirical data. Based on the findings, it was concluded that willingness to read is a significant positive predictor of reading comprehension. Additionally, two direct positive and significant paths leading from the constructs of agreeableness and extroversion to learners' willingness to read were observed. Furthermore, the neuroticism construct was found to be a significant negative predictor of willingness to read. Based on the findings, teachers are advised to play an important role in establishing a supportive communicative environment in classes where reading is encouraged. This can be achieved through the implementation of suitable strategies and methods that take into consideration the learners' differences.

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1. Introduction

Individual learner characteristics such as personal attributes, backgrounds, and even beliefs are essential features in acquiring a language. These can impact language learning and may play a significant role in shaping their progress and success (Eddy, 2011; Li & Han, 2024). There are numerous dimensions of learner differences that are confirmed to be effective in the way students learn foreign languages, perform in a real language use situation, and finally achieve different levels of success (Habók & Magyar, 2020; Kormos & Smith, 2023). Dornyei (2005) states that individual differences (IDs)

are the most constant predictors of learning achievement. Among all the factors believed to be in the category of IDs, personality is counted as an organized part of the background "noise" in Second Language Acquisition (Dornyei, 2005) which entails the unique patterns of individuals (Revelle, 2007). Accordingly, in education, personality types have always been an essential area of research for pedagogics and educational psychologists (Godfrey & Koutsouris, 2024).

As for the required skills, reading plays a fundamental role in language teaching and learning generally (Chandra, 2021; Richards & Rodgers, 2014) to the extent that reading is regarded as the basis of all knowledge (Alderson, 2000). In settings where students need to read English materials related to their particular subject, reading skill makes an important contribution. More specifically, reading seems to be an essential skill in the attempt to gain different sources of knowledge at the university level (Knezevic & Halupka, 2015; Pretorius, 2002; Yilmaz, 2012,). Furthermore, reading has a large part in academic success (Lynam, et al., 2024). It is the only readily available source of exposure to the target language (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000), especially in foreign language teaching where students live in the non-English speaking contexts (Kheirzadeh & Tavakoli, 2012).

Considering the importance of the reading skill as well as personality as a human factor in language teaching and learning, several researchers have made attempts to study the relationships from different perspectives. According to some contemporary studies, there exists a correlation between personality types and reading comprehension ability (Sadeghi, et al., 2011; Safdarian, et al., 2014).

One of the vital factors that is correlated with reading is willingness to read (Anggraeni & Yuliana, 2024). To such an extent that, a learner without this cannot become a reader (Cambria, et al., 2010). According to Fletcher-Campbell, et al. (2009), skilled individual readers can extract meaning from printed text precisely and efficiently. As such, willingness to read (WTR), as a component of the willingness to communicate (WTC) construct, may represent the same psychological preparedness to use the L2 when there is an opportunity (Khajavy, et al., 2016). WTC has been examined by many second/foreign language investigators (e.g. Cao, 2011, 2014; Ghonsooly, et al., 2012; Khajavy, et al., 2016; Peng, 2015; Peng & Woodrow, 2010). Considering personality and WTC research, the literature suggests a significant relationship in a second language (Oz, 2014).

Also, in terms of the psychological context for WTC in English, it is believed that the Big Five personality factors, as the critical predicting elements, have an impact (Buljan & Mlačić, 2024; Oz, et al., 2015). The Big Five factors, including conscientiousness, neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience, are among the basic dimensions of personality, the main important ways in which individuals differ in their enduring emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles (McCrae & Costa, 1992). In education, personality types have always been an essential area of research for educators and educational psychologists alike (Mustoip, et al., 2024; Nirokar, et al., 2024; Safdarian, et al., 2014). While the important functions of personality traits and willingness to read in reading success are highlighted in the literature, there seems to be a lack of studies to find the personality and willingness to read predictors of reading success.

2. Literature Review

Research has emphasized the significance of individual differences in the context of second language acquisition (Doörnyei, 2005, 2006; Khajavy & Aghaee, 2024; Teng, 2024). Individual differences meaningfully affect human thinking and behaviour, and investigators have, therefore, proved the relationship between the variation in language learning outcomes and various learner characteristics (Hiver, et al., 2024; Dörnyei, 2005, 2006; Oz, 2014; Piniel, 2024) as well as achievements (Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006). The following sections entail the description of the study variables, including personality types, willingness to read, and reading comprehension.

2.1 Personality Types

In every field of study associated with human characteristics, personality is instrumental in determining the preference for one modality over another for performing an action (Cachero, et al., 2023; Coenen, et al., 2021; Ehrman & Dornyei, 1998).

The groundwork for the big factors goes back to the research by Allport and Odbert (1936). They gathered descriptions "to distinguish the behavior of one human being from that of another" (p.24) and offered some classifications, one of which was personality traits. Literature demonstrates that personality is linked to learning styles, and learning is often reliant on reading skills. Thus, it is reasonable to assume a relationship between personality and reading comprehension (Efendi, 2021; Gray, 1999; Husain, et al., 2024; Ulin, 2020). Additionally, many learners attribute their failure in reading tests to the difficulty of reading comprehension texts, but some reasons can be traced back to emotional variables, including personality, which is of utmost significance (Chou, 2021; Zaccoletti, et al., 2020).

Other researchers (Tupes & Christal, 1961) reevaluated the data gathered to establish the basis for a five-factor model of personality. The factors identified were agreeableness, emotional stability, dependability, surgency, and culture. Later, other investigators also provided support for the model (Norman, 1963; Smith, 1967; Hakel, 1974). Furthermore, Norman (1963) adapted the factors' names as conscientiousness, extraversion or surgency, culture (openness), emotional steadiness, and agreeableness, which were named the "Normans' Big Five." Other researchers confirmed the validity of the model (Norman & Goldberg, 1966). There are arguments about the terminology and the explanation of factors. Today, many researchers consider that there are five main personality traits.

Thus, the Big Five provides a useful classification of personality that predicts key life outcomes, such as achievement in school and work, physical and mental health, and social behavior (Furnham & Cheng, 2024; Nießen, et al., 2002; Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006). There are different variations of the Big Five. Two of these forms were defined and established by Goldberg (1981, 1990) and McCrae and Costa (1992). However, Goldberg's (1981, 1990) role is significant in defining the personality factors that are represented by different personality traits found in natural language. Goldberg's investigation in this area (1992) is of utmost importance due to its comprehensiveness. Goldberg labeled the factors in his model as intellect, agreeableness, emotional stability, surgency (extraversion), and conscientiousness. He also provided inventories (consisting of 50 and 100 items) to assess traits associated with the five factors. Not having reached an agreement on the five factors,

McCrae and Costa (1992) studied the prominent aspects of personality. Later, their research focused on examining the personality dimensions that were not clearly described. They named the five factors in their model as: Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism. The significant measurement of these five factors is the renamed NEO inventory by McCrae and Costa (1992), which evaluates different personality factors and traits. Since the 1990s, there has been a growing interest in understanding how personality impacts academic success, and a consensus has been reached in their definitions. The descriptions of the five factors are consistent with other scholars as follows:

Conscientiousness describes individuals as being "strong-willed, determined, reliable, competent, disciplined, organized, and responsible" (McCrae & Costa, 1996). Individuals with high scores in this aspect are reliable and accountable, while individuals with low scores are undependable and messy (Robbins, et al., 2009). Conscientious individuals may have a need for achievement (Thomas & Segal, 2006; Meyer, et al., 2024; Sparfeldt & Schwabe, 2024).

Extraversion defines people who are "outgoing, sociable, bold, energetic, assertive, active, and adventurous" (McCrae & Costa, 1996). An extrovert seeks excitement to experience positive feelings. Extraverts' sociability is a result of their sensitivity to reward (Chia & Tan, 2024). This implies that extraverts find social situations satisfying. Consequently, "they engage in more social behavior as a means of satisfying their reward need" (Thomas & Segal, 2006, p. 52).

Agreeable individuals are "flexible, cooperative, sympathetic, helpful, courteous, modest, and compliant" (McCrae & Costa, 1996). Those with a high level of agreeableness are perceived as helpful, trusting, and sincere, while those with low scores in this category are unpleasant and unfriendly (Parks, 2024; Robbins et al., 2009). Agreeable individuals may not always say yes and agree to everything (Bahri, et al., 2020)

Neurotic people are emotionally stable and can handle stress, while also not being impulsive (McCrae & Costa, 1996; Nilsen, et al., 2024). Characteristics associated with positive emotional stability include self-confidence and calmness, whereas being depressed, anxious, and worried are associated with a high negative score (Dong, et al., 2024; Karamitrou, et al., 2024; Robbins et al., 2009).

Openness to experience describes a person who is "aesthetic, imaginative, curious, sensitive, and eccentric" (McCrae & Costa, 1996). This category of personality focuses on an individual's range of interests. Accordingly, based on these descriptions, it is believed that all traits and features can be categorized under openness to experience (Shaver, 2024).

2.2 Willingness to Read

In the present study, Willingness to Read is a construct of WTC (Khajavy, et al., 2016). According to McIntyre and his colleagues WTR is readiness to read a text given the choice and opportunity (Khajavy, et al., 2016). Despite all the commonalities such as the 'readiness to start a behavior', WTR and WTC can be different in that one is productive while the other is receptive. Thus, the sources of willingness for communication which may mean speaking can be different from that of reading (Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017).

Though WTR is believed to be influential in the learning process as a substantial part of our learning is dependent on our reading (Borsipour Golkhatmi, et al., 2020), there is not much research on it. Among few studies done in the area, Khajavy and Ghonsooli (2017) focusing on possible selves and self-confidence highlight that “L2 learning experience, ideal L2 self, and communication confidence positively and significantly predicted WTR, and L2 learning experience was the strongest predictor of WTR” (p.1). While WTR can be a construct of WTC, a pyramid construct of L2 WTC comprises both characteristic and situational aspects (MacIntyre, et al., 1998; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2010). These aspects incorporate different psychological, contextual, and linguistic variables. Consequently, as a personality attribute there might exist some correspondence between personality types as traits and this construct.

2.3 Reading Comprehension

Reading is considered as one of the most essential academic skills (Devi & Suroto, 2024). In spite of the prominence of reading, it is a problematic area for many students. And this seems true even if the learners have an extensive linguistic knowledge; consequently, it might be suggested that there are some other factors involved in the process of reading comprehension (Bagheri & Faghih, 2012). Reading comprehension as an unrestricted foundation of information has been one of the significant elements in second/foreign language tests. It also contributes to both educational and professional life of many learners (Alfassi, 2004; AlKialbi, 2015; Zhang, 2008). This skill is described as the practice of constructing meaning by using a variety of intricate procedures that include language, word understanding, word familiarity, and fluency (Allen & McNamara, 2020; Cain, et al., 2004; Fang, 2023; Nuzzaci, et al., 2020).

Second language (L2) reading is a multifaceted intricate process in that it engages the interaction of a wide range of elements (Kushki & Nassaji, 2024; Lane & Kennedy, 2024). As a result, though most of the reviews on L2 reading investigation start with an effort to answer the question ‘what is reading’, almost all of them continue to state that it is such a multifaceted notion that no description of reading, which is obviously stated, empirically supported and hypothetically unquestionable, has been presented (e.g. Aebersold, & Field, 1997; Alderson, 2000; Bernhardt, 1991; Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Grabe (2009) asserts that a correct description of reading will require to explain what fluent readers do when they read, what processes are employed by them, and how these procedures work together to make a general concept of reading. By considering that no single statement could confine the difficulty of reading, Grabe (2009) notes that, reading could be conjured as a multifaceted arrangement of procedures – procedures that are speedy, professional, interactive, tactical, flexible, evaluative, decisive, comprehending, learning, and linguistic (p. 14). Reading researchers carry out different studies to clarify how the reader and the text elements interrelate and how this interaction leads in reading comprehension to pave the way for the conceptualization of numerous reading models, each focusing on different features of reading (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2023; Minaabad & Khoshkholgh, 2012).

A student with skill may be proficient, but lacking the willingness, cannot become a reader (Cambria, et al., 2010). It is her/his will influence that governs whether she reads extensively and

regularly and grows into a student who appreciates and benefits literacy. Therefore, motivation is considered as the other half of reading (Cambria et al, 2010; Mason, et al., 2023; Talwar, et al., 2023; van der Sande, et al., 2023).

There is currently a growing concentration on the active role of readers in the reading process. It is the reader who employs the knowledge to comprehend texts. One important aspect that a reader brings to the text is reading strategies. According to Duffy (1993), such strategies help readers deal with challenges when trying to derive meaning from texts. Readers use such strategies to enhance their comprehension and address any difficulties they might face (Vahdat et al., 2016). Moreover, reading comprehension is defined as the capacity to decide how and where to utilize reading resources efficiently in order to achieve the reading goal in a given comprehension situation (Wagner & Sternberg, 1987; Knoll, 2000). This highlights the significance of individual differences as well as the personality traits of the readers.

2.4 The Proposed Model of the Study

Reading comprehension is a fundamental factor in language skill and has a basic significance in academic places (Yilmaz, 2012). Considering personality as another important factor in learning a language, it seems that the relationship between these two has been untouched in this context.

However, much of the research on WTC is focused on speaking (Ghonsooly, et al., 2012; Khajavy et al. 2016; Oz, et al., 2015; Peng & Woodrow, 2010). Still, WTC is not limited merely to speaking, and it comprises other skills as well, including reading (MacIntyre, et al. 1998; MacIntyre, 2007; Khajavy et al, 2016). It is conceivable that a student may be willing to speak in English, but not to read in English (Khajavy et al, 2016). While most of the research has focused on WTC (e.g. Baghaei, 2013, Ghoonsoly, Khajavy & Asadpour, 2012), few studies have examined the relationship of WTR with personality types and reading comprehension.

To propose the hypothesized model for the present study, a careful review of the literature was done. According to Byrne (2010), model specification is based on the knowledge of the theory, empirical research or both of them. Thus, for the present study, the justification for this model's specification is mostly based on the previous studies on WTR and personality type. A review of the recent studies demonstrates that personality types and reading comprehension are correlated with each other (Husain, et al., 2024; Sadeghi et al, 2011; Safdarian et al, 2014; Samosir, et al., 2023). Also, a relationship between some dominants of the personality types and willingness to read is reported (Cardenas Canto, et al., 2023; Khajavy, et al., 2016).

This study involves seven latent variables, each consisting of observed variables. It was assumed that five types of personality and the level of WTR predict the learners' reading scores. The following figure (Figure 1) demonstrates the proposed model of the present study.

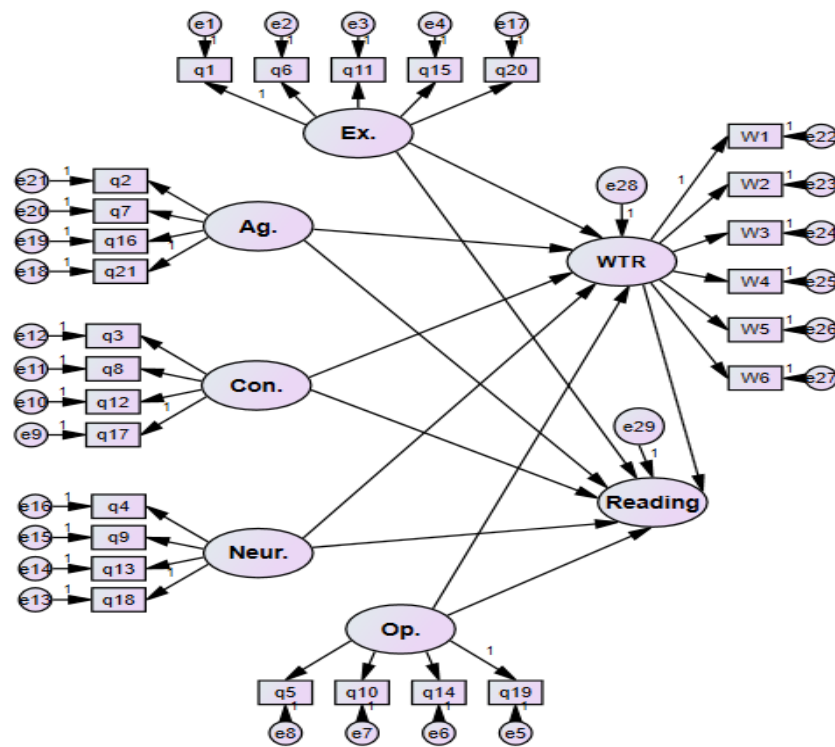


Figure 1 The proposed model of the study

Note: Ex. =Extroversion, Ag. =Agreeableness, Con. =Conscientiousness, Neur. =Neuroticism, Op=Openness to Experience, and WTR= Willingness to read.

3. Methodology

The current study was a cross-sectional survey. It is the most general type of survey design that is applied in education (Creswell, 2012). To test the proposed model, structural equation modelling (SEM) was run. SEM as a robust statistical procedure combines factor analysis and regression. A key benefit of SEM over multiple regression is incorporating the latent variables. Thus, each latent variable is characterized by multiple observed variables (Khajavy et al., 2016).

3.1 Participants and Setting

The target population for the present study included BA TEFL majoring students in Iran. purposeful convenience procedure was employed to collect data. The 228 samples included both females and males from different universities. The age range of the participants was between 18 and 25. However, it needs to be mentioned that 350 questionnaires and reading tests were distributed among the students and 228 questionnaires and tests were returned by the participants (122 questionnaires were not returned) which means that based on the return rate formula calculation the return rate was 65.14% for this study.

3.2 Instrumentation

To measure the students' willingness to read, Khajav et al (2016) WTR questionnaire was adapted. It is a six-item questionnaire comprising of 6-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (never) to six (always). The internal reliability of this instrument is reported as 0.86. The validity of the WTR questionnaire was reported by Khajavy et al. (2016).

To determine the students' personality type, Khormae's 2014 inventory was used. It includes 21 items concerning the five domains of the personality encompassing extraversion, agreeableness, openness, neuroticism, and conscientiousness. Every domain is assessed through four items, except for the extraversion that is assessed by five items. The reported internal consistencies of these subscales were as follows based on Khormae (2014): extraversion ($=.80$), agreeableness ($=.79$), openness ($=.87$), conscientiousness ($=.72$), and neuroticism ($=.88$). Each item was based on the participants' views on a five-point Likert scale including disagree, slightly disagree, neutral, slightly agree and agree. The validity of the five-factor personality type questionnaire was reported by Khormae (2014).

To assess the students' reading comprehension ability, the reading section of the standard PET was used. This test includes 35 items each of which carries one mark. It has five sections; the first section includes five items which are multiple choice and the second part has five items and there are letters from A to H which have to be matched with the numbers of items. The third part has 10 items based on the true/false format. The last part includes five items which are multiple choice. This test measured the level and knowledge of the students in reading.

4. Data Analysis

In order to investigate the structural relationships, the proposed model as illustrated in Figure 1, was assessed through Amos 24. A number of fit indices were analyzed to conclude the adequacy of the model fit. To do so the chi-square must not be significant and also the ratio of chi-square to degree of freedom should be below 2 or 3. Moreover, the Normed Fit Index (NFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), as well as Comparative Fit Index (CFI) should all exceed a threshold of .90. Furthermore, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) must preferably be around .06 or .07 as stated by Schreiber et al. (2006).

Some modifications were made to the model as some measurement models had no data adequacy. Accordingly, two non-significant paths were removed. Error terms of two agreeableness items (2 and 7) were correlated because each pair of these items referred to the same content. The Goodness of fit indices before and after modification can be seen in Table 1.

As is demonstrated in Table 1, the chi-square value (1450.11), the chi-square/df ratio (3.03), GFI (.90), CFI (.90), and RMSEA (.08), lie within the acceptable fit thresholds. Therefore, it can be concluded that the suggested model aligned well with the empirical data.

Table 1

Goodness of Fit Indices

	X2	df	X2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable fit			<3	>.90	>.90	<.08
Model	1450.11	478	3.03	.89	.88	.08
Revised model	1380.15	462	2.98	.92	.90	.07

Figure 2 is a demonstration of the strength of the causal relationships between the variables. The relationships are found based on the standardized estimates (beta coefficients (β)) as obtained through the analysis of standardized independent variables. The magnitude of the coefficients reveals the association between independent variables and the dependent variable. This shows the predictive power of the independent variable. Also, it shows the effect size. It needs to be mentioned that a higher magnitude of the standardized estimate confirms a stronger correlation and predictive power. The schematic representation that follows (Figure 2) highlights the relationships among personality type, willingness to read, and reading comprehension scores.

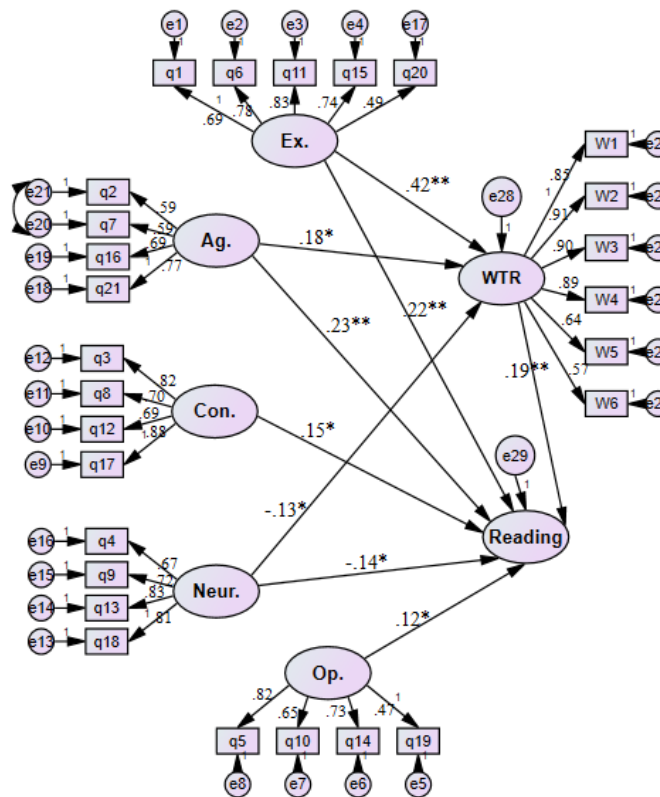


Figure 2 The representation of the relationships among variables

Note: Ex. =Extroversion, Ag. =Agreeableness, Con. =Conscientiousness, Neur. =Neuroticism, Op.=Openness to Experience, and WTR= Willingness to read.

To answer the first research question concerning the possible relationship between willingness to read and reading comprehension scores, SEM was conducted. As indicated in Figure 2, willingness to read is a positive significant predictor of their reading comprehension scores ($\beta = .19$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, Pearson correlation analysis indicate that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between learners' willingness to read and their reading comprehension scores. Table 2 summarizes the results of correlational analysis.

Table 2

Correlation between students' WTR and reading comprehension scores

		Reading
WTR	Pearson Correlation	.35**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	228

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

As Table 2 depicts, there is a moderate positive significant relationship between learners' willingness to read and their reading comprehension scores ($r = .35$, $p < .01$).

To answer the second research question concerning the possible relationship between willingness to read and personality type, the results of SEM revealed two direct positive and significant paths leading from agreeableness ($\beta = .18$, $p < 0.01$) and extroversion ($\beta = .42$, $p < 0.01$) to learners' willingness to read. Besides, neuroticism was a significant negative predictor of willingness to read ($\beta = -.13$, $p < 0.05$). However, no significant path was found between openness ($\beta = .12$, $p = .211$), conciseness ($\beta = .15$, $p = .137$) and willingness to read ($\beta = .19$, $p < 0.05$). The non-significant paths (from openness and conciseness to WTR) were deleted.

Additionally, Pearson correlation analysis indicated that WTR correlated positively and moderately with two sub-factors of personality types. Table 3 presents the statistical results.

Table 3

Correlation between students' willingness to read and personality type

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extroversion	1.00					
2. Agreeableness	.35**	1.00				
3. Conscientiousness	.15*	.15*	1.00			

4. Neuroticism	-.32**	-.25**	-.10	1.00		
5. Openness to Experience	.34**	.29**	.30**	-.20**	1.00	
6. WTR	.49**	.26**	.09	-.22**	.10	1.00

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

As Table 3 illustrates, among the five sub-factors of personality types, Extroversion has the highest correlation ($r=.49, p<.01$). In addition, there is a weak positive and significant relationship between Agreeableness and WTR ($r=.35, p<.01$), and a weak negative significant relationship between Neuroticism and WTR ($r=-.32, p<.01$). However, there is no significant relationship between Conscientiousness ($r=.15, p=.110$), Openness to Experience ($r=.34, p<.01$), and WTR.

To answer the last research question concerning the possible relationship between reading scores and personality type, again SEM was conducted. As indicated in Figure 2, all the five sub-factors of personality type, except Neuroticism, are positive significant predictors of the reading scores: Extroversion ($\beta= .22, p<0.01$), Agreeableness ($\beta= .23, p<0.01$), Conscientiousness ($\beta= .15, p<0.05$), Neuroticism ($\beta= -.14, p<0.05$), and Openness to Experience ($\beta= .12, p<0.05$). Table 4 displays the results of correlation.

Table 4

Correlation between students' reading score and personality type

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extroversion	1.00					
2. Agreeableness	.35**	1.00				
3. Conscientiousness	.15*	.156*	1.00			
4. Neuroticism	-.32**	-.25**	-.104	1.00		
5. Openness to Experience	.34**	.29**	.30**	-.20**	1.00	
6. Reading score	.35**	.35**	.19*	-.25**	.17*	1.00

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

As the data in Table 4 shows, among the five sub-factors of personality types, Extroversion has the highest correlation ($r=.35, p<.01$) with the reading score. In addition, there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between Agreeableness and reading score ($r=.35, p<.01$), and a weak positive significant relationship between Conscientiousness ($r=.15, p<.05$), Openness to

Experience ($r=34$, $p<.05$) and reading score. However, a negative significant relationship between Neuroticism and reading scores can be observed ($r=-.32$, $p=.000$).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study findings confirmed a moderate positive significant relationship between EFL learners' willingness to read and their reading comprehension scores. Other researchers (Cambria et al, 2010; Mason, et al., 2023; Talwar, et al., 2023; van der Sande, et al., 2023) have also highlighted this fact in the literature related to the reading skill. Among the five sub factors of personality types, the highest correlation was found between extroversion and willingness to read. This finding is in line with Omidvari, et al., (2016) and Nurianfar, et al. (2014). Moreover, Brown (1973) had stated that perhaps a correlation could be observed between extroversion and reading comprehension.

In addition, there were weak positive and significant relationships between agreeableness and WTR, and a weak negative significant relationship was found between neuroticism and WTR. However, no significant relationships were found among conscientiousness, openness, and WTR. Among the five sub factors of personality types, the highest correlation existed between extroversion and reading. Also, a moderate positive and significant relationship was between agreeableness and reading score, and weak positive significant relationships were between conscientiousness, openness and reading score. However, a negative significant relationship was between neuroticism and reading score. A moderate significant positive relationship was found among extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and WTR. In addition, there was a slight correlation between neuroticism and WTR. Neuroticism negatively correlated with WTR. Furthermore, all types of personalities, except for neuroticism, as well as reading comprehension showed a positive significant relationship with WTR.

Similar findings are reported by other researchers. During 1970s, Millot and Cranney (1976) conducted a study to observe the associations between personality type and learning style in relation to reading comprehension. The conclusions demonstrated that there was a significant relationship among these variables. On the other hand, Busch (1982) in a study employing the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire observed a significant correlation between the participants' introversion personality type preference and their reading performance.

Personality as an imperative individual difference that directs behavior and donates to the social forms of viewpoint, performance, and emotion should be considered by both teachers and language learners (Phares, 1991). Accordingly, teachers have an important role in establishing a supportive communicative environment in class that encourages reading. It is significant that teachers attend to the dominant personality types of the learners while they decide to apply their classroom techniques, strategies, and approaches. By means of suitable strategies and methods, considering the learner' differences, teachers can generate and improve learners' WTR and reading comprehension. By conducting classroom activities which call for more enthusiasm, collaboration, imagination, and responsibility teachers can trigger WTR and reading comprehension in extrovert, open, and thorough learners. Likewise, the learners' anxiety as a fundamental feature of neuroticism should be reduced through providing a more comforting classroom situation in which their chance for reading is improved because the lack of practice in reading can deter learners from recognizing

themselves to be proficient and knowledgeable readers of English and it enhances anxiety among learners which can in turn reduce their WTC. By considering individual differences in learners, teachers can understand which learners are less willing to read, as an instance an anxious person who is not willing to read, and by considering these factors, teachers can support the improvement and encouragement or find a technique to aid the unwilling students.

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Building Teacher Immunity: Predictive Role of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy in Iranian Female EFL Teachers

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Teacher Immunity
Female EFL Teachers
Interview

ABSTRACT

Teacher Immunity, Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence are key factors that influence the performance of EFL instructors. This research was a survey study which investigated the relationship between self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and teacher immunity among female EFL teachers. The research also explored whether instructors' self-efficacy and emotional intelligence can predict their teacher immunity. This study involved a convenience sample of 211 female EFL teachers from Iranian EFL contexts. The participants were chosen from different English Language Institutes. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 28. The findings indicated a positive relationship between instructors' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity, as well as a positive relationship between self-efficacy and teacher immunity among female EFL teachers. Furthermore, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of EFL teachers can predict their teacher immunity in educational contexts. The findings of the study suggest that enhancing self-efficacy and emotional intelligence among female EFL teachers can foster their teacher immunity in educational contexts.

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1. Introduction

Teacher Immunity can be considered as one of the essential features that can affect EFL teachers' well-being in educational contexts. Many factors can affect teacher immunity (e.g., low income, employers' greed, and personal issues), and numerous research studies have been conducted to investigate these factors (Namaziandost & Heydarnejad, 2023; Wang, Derakhshan, & Azari Noughabi, 2023; Sariçoban & Kirmizi, 2021; Tonguç, 2024). Self-efficacy and Emotional Intelligence are pivotal

for EFL teachers, influencing their performance in classroom contexts. Many experts and research scholars consider Self-efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, and Teacher Immunity as fundamental factors (Darmawati, 2024; Saad et al., 2024; Abiodullah & Aslam, 2020; Wray, Sharma, & Subban, 2022; Fackler et al., 2021; Burić & Kim, 2020) in these educational contexts.

According to Hassanpour Souderjani et al. (2021), teacher immunity is developed through the emotional, psychological, and cognitive performance of EFL teachers in foreign language contexts. Furthermore, many studies have focused on factors predicting teacher immunity (Rahimpour et al., 2020; Beyranvand & Mohammadi, 2021; Gooran et al., 2023). Based on these predictors, language teacher education programs should consider these factors and raise EFL teachers' awareness of language teacher immunity (Rahmati et al., 2019) to enhance the quality of education. Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy are considered two main factors that affect teachers' performance in educational contexts (Wang, 2022). Noughabi et al. (2020) highlighted that the immunity of language teachers is closely associated with their autonomy, engagement, and overall emotional well-being. A deficiency in autonomy can hinder both innovation and reflective practices typically observed in teachers with strong teacher immunity (Hiver, 2017).

In Iranian EFL contexts, female teachers face various challenges that impact their professional well-being. A crucial issue is the lack of attention given to the teacher immunity and emotional intelligence of EFL instructors (Aminoleslami, 2021). Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in teachers' ability to understand and manage their own emotional feelings and to helpfully respond to the emotions of their students (Wang, 2022). Insufficient emotional intelligence may hinder female EFL teachers' ability to create a positive learning environment, subsequently decreasing student engagement and academic achievement. Thus, there is a need to investigate the emotional intelligence of female EFL teachers in Iranian EFL contexts and explore its impact on their teaching practices and EFL students' learning outcomes.

Another significant concern is the lack of self-efficacy in the teaching abilities of female EFL teachers (Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019). Self-efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs in their capacities to successfully fulfill teaching tasks and positively influence student learning (Perera & John, 2020). Low levels of self-efficacy among female EFL teachers can impede their motivation, confidence, and overall job satisfaction (Leshya, 2017). Therefore, examining the self-efficacy and emotional intelligence levels of female EFL teachers in Iranian EFL contexts is vital, along with determining how these variables relate to their teacher immunity. Addressing these issues can improve support mechanisms to enhance female EFL teachers' well-being and overall effectiveness in Iranian EFL contexts.

In the Iranian EFL context, various studies (e.g., Haseli et al., 2018; Namaziandost, Heydarnejad, & Rezai, 2023; Hesabi, 2020; Hassanpour, Heidari & Hosseinpour, 2021) have explored factors affecting language teacher immunity among EFL teachers. These instructors often cite the large number of unemployed educated EFL teachers, employers' greed, low income, and the low value of English education in Iranian society as primary reasons for weakened teacher immunity.

In recent years, the significance of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence has gained considerable attention. Many researchers have investigated these aspects in second/foreign language contexts (e.g., Amiri, 2020; García-Álvarez, Hernández-Lalinde, & Cobo-Rendón, 2021; Wen et al., 2020). As female EFL teachers encounter myriad demands, expectations, and stressors, examining the predictive role of Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy in determining teacher immunity is crucial

for educational policy. While the literature has extensively examined individual components of teacher well-being, a comprehensive investigation of Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy as predictors of teacher immunity remains a scholarly gap. This study aimed to bridge this gap by investigating the potential predictive power of EFL female teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy on their teacher immunity.

Immunity can be defined as the state of resistance against negative influences, with roots in the Latin term "immunis" (Chiappelli & Liu, 2000, quoted in Hiver, 2016). It serves as a defense mechanism, safeguarding individuals from harmful effects in their environment. Similarly, "teacher immunity" describes how educators, particularly language teachers, establish defenses to mitigate disturbances that threaten their motivation and professional identity (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017). Teacher immunity theory, also referred to as Educator Immunity, is a legal concept that protects teachers from personal liability for actions undertaken during their professional duties.

Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to identify, monitor, and regulate one's own emotions and those of others, differentiating between different emotions and aptly labeling them (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). It embodies a range of skills and aptitudes that facilitate the management of emotions (Drigas & Sideraki, 2021).

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their competence to accomplish specific tasks or perform necessary behaviors to achieve performance goals (Bandura, 1977). According to Zhi et al. (2024), self-efficacy is essential for individuals to succeed in completing tasks and finding fulfillment in their work, influencing both cognitive and emotional states.

In a study conducted by Khazaenezhad and Davoudinasab (2022), the relationship between the personality types of Iranian EFL teachers and their teacher immunity was examined using a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data were collected from a random sample of 50 participants (19 male and 31 female teachers) across various language institutes in Iran through two teacher immunity questionnaires. The qualitative phase included phone interviews with eight EFL teachers to gather detailed insights about instructor immunity. The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between personality types and aspects of teacher immunity, highlighting resilience and self-efficacy as the most dominant factors.

Moreover, a recent study by Zhi et al. (2024) explored the role of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in EFL teachers' technology adoption. In this quantitative study, 214 Chinese teachers of English as a foreign language provided responses via three questionnaires, with results indicating that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy predicted 89% and 63% of the variations in technology adoption, respectively, as revealed through structural equation modeling (SEM) and regression analysis. The study offered insights and implications for educators' understanding of instructional technology and emotions.

Additionally, research conducted by Ye et al. (2024) examined how teaching experience, self-efficacy, and emotional competence interact to influence preschool teachers' performance. Using a quantitative methodology, data were sourced from preschool instructors in Zhejiang province, China, grounded in Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy and Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory. Significant findings illustrated that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between instructors' performance and emotional competence, with teaching experience reducing emotional competence's

impact on self-efficacy but not affecting the connection between teaching effectiveness and self-efficacy.

Lastly, Arlsan and Almacioğlu (2024) investigated how pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' teaching immunity is influenced by their reflections on teaching practices, also considering whether the facets of pre-service instructors' teaching immunity change over time. This study involved six EFL pre-service instructors from a Turkish public university, gathering data through semi-structured interviews and reflection sheets completed during instruction. The analysis yielded results indicating that reflection on teaching practices enhances teachers' awareness of their instructional methods, emotional dimensions, and professional growth.

Exploring the relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence in relation to teacher immunity can offer important insights into female EFL teachers' resilience, well-being and teacher immunity. Consequently, this study aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Is there any significant relationship between Iranian female EFL teachers' Emotional Intelligence and their Teacher Immunity?

RQ2: Can Emotional Intelligence predict Teacher Immunity?

RQ3: Is there any significant relationship between Iranian female EFL teachers' Self-efficacy and their Teacher Immunity?

RQ4: Can Self-efficacy predict Teacher Immunity?

2. Methodology

The current study had a survey design. According to Dörnyei (2007), "Survey studies aim at describing the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group" (p.101). Survey research is a non-experimental research design in which the participants' attitudes, opinions, and behaviors are questioned (Ary et al., 2018; Hatch, & Lazaraton, 1991). At the survey phase of the study, the participants included female EFL teachers from language institutes. The EFL instructors were asked to fill out three questionnaires (i.e., Emotional Intelligence questionnaire, Self-efficacy questionnaire and Teacher Immunity questionnaire).

2.1 Participants and Setting

In the current study, for the survey stage, 211 participants were chosen from different English language institutes. The participants were all female EFL teachers from different Iranian cities (e.g., Urmia, Tabriz, Tehran, Karaj and Sanandaj) and the EFL teachers were native speakers of Azeri, Persian, Kurdish. These female EFL teachers had at least two years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language in different institutes. They held English classes (e.g., basic classes, elementary classes, intermediate and advanced level classes). The participants had B.A or M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Inexperienced female teachers who did not have teaching experience and male EFL teachers were not chosen for this study. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 28. Table 1 summarized the female EFL teachers' characteristics.

Table 1*Demographic Background of the Participants*

No. of teachers	211
Age	19-28 years old
Gender	Female
Mother tongue	Azeri, Persian, Kurdish
Academic field	B.A and M.A in TEFL

2.2 Instrumentation

In the current study, Correlational and Regression Analyses were used for the prediction purposes and elucidating relationship between the research variables. Also, after gathering the raw data, Statistical Package for the Social and Sciences (SPSS) was used to quantify data at this phase of the study. Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and Teacher Immunity questionnaires were utilized for the purposes of the survey phase of the research.

2.2.1 Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

The researchers adopted the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES), which was created and validated by Sherer, et al., (1982), to measure the general self-efficacy of the female EFL teachers. There are fifteen items on the self-report GSES questionnaire in this study. Based on a Likert scale, overall self-efficacy is scored as follows: one to five points are given (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5). With regard to the reliability scale, the results of Cronbach's alpha revealed a 0.83 coefficient.

2.2.2 Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

The researchers adopted EI Questionnaire based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) original model of emotional intelligence, the Assessing Emotions Scale is also known in certain publications as the Emotional Intelligence Scale, the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test, or the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale. According to this concept, emotional intelligence is comprised of the following: expressing emotion, evaluating emotion in oneself and others, controlling emotion in oneself and others, and applying emotion to problem-solving. overall Emotional Intelligence is scored as follows: one to five points are given (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5). The reliability of the Emotional Intelligence questionnaire was estimated through Cronbach's alpha formula and the alpha turned out 0.81.

2.2.3 Teacher Immunity Questionnaire

The educator immunity questionnaire created by Hiver (2017) was utilized for collecting the data required for the quantitative portion of the current investigation. There were 39 Likert-scale items in this questionnaire. Seven points were created for the possibilities in order to elicit the opinions of the participants. The order in this questionnaire was Strongly disagree, Rather disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Rather agree, Strongly agree. Furthermore, concerning the reliability of the teacher immunity questionnaire, the results of Cronbach's alpha indicated a coefficient of 0.85.

2.3 Procedure

In this survey study, as the female EFL teachers were from different Iranian cities, soft copies of the questionnaires were sent via E-mail because data would be gathered from many participants within a short period of time. Completion of the questionnaire would take approximately 30 minutes and the participants were requested to mail back the answers to the questionnaires within one week. Also, Google Docs was created to collaborate data from the participants who could not mail back their answers. Female EFL teachers could easily answer the questions through Google Docs and when EFL instructors answered the questionnaires, their answers were mailed to the researchers by Google Docs. As this study focused on female EFL teachers, some of demographic information about teachers such as gender, age and years of teaching English language, university majors included in the first page of the questionnaires. These data were used to answer to the research questions and hypotheses of the study at the quantitative stage. The study commenced in May 2024 and concluded in June.

3. Data Analysis

In order to investigate female EFL teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy as predictors of their Teacher Immunity, various types of statistical analyses were run. At survey phase of the study, Correlational and Regression analyses were used for the prediction purposes and elucidating relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and Teacher Immunity. The obtained data was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.1 Descriptive Results

Table 2 shows the descriptive indexes of teachers' emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and their teacher immunity.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of the Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and Immunity

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	St.D	Skewness	Kurtosis
Emotional intelligence	211	2.64	3.88	3.26	.24	.17	-.25
Self-efficacy	211	1.93	3.47	2.68	.22	.35	.80
Teacher immunity	211	2.77	4.83	3.50	.38	.78	.83

Table 2 shows the mean for variables including emotional intelligence (3.26), self-efficacy (2.68), and teacher immunity (3.50).

Additionally, the results of descriptive statistics regarding the shape of normal distribution of data for all variables are reported in Table 2. Skewness and Kurtosis values should be within the range ± 2 to accept the shape of normal distribution of data. According to Table 2, all skewness and Kurtosis values located in range between ± 2 . Therefore, the shapes of data distribution for all variables are normal.

In order to the first research question on the relationship between female EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity, Pearson correlation coefficient was carried out. The results of correlation coefficient are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlation Results for Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Immunity

Teacher immunity	Emotional intelligence		
	Pearson Correlation	.48**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	60	

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

As illustrated in Table 3, Pearson correlation shows that there was a significant positive relationship between female EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity ($p = 0.001$, $r = 0.48$).

Thus, the first research question was answered ($p < 0.05$). So, it means that as the female EFL teachers have more emotional intelligence, they have more teacher immunity. In the present study, the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher immunity was examined using a simple linear regression model. A dataset encompassing 211 female teachers was analyzed, correlating emotional intelligence to teacher immunity values. The average emotional intelligence score within the sample was 3.26 years ($SD = .24$), and the average teacher immunity was 3.50 ($SD = .38$). The results of correlation coefficient, basic descriptive statistics and regression coefficients are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Simple Linear Regression Results Predicting Teachers' Immunity

Predictors	r	β	SR	t	P	R ²
Intercept (model)	-	1.06	.31	3.42	0.001	0.22 %
Emotional Intelligence	.48**	0.75	0.09	7.94	0.001	

Table 4. shows that The simple linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant model ($F(1, 209) = 63.11$, $p < .001$), with an adjusted R² of 0.22. This finding suggests that emotional intelligence accounts for approximately 22% of the variance in teacher immunity among the female EFL teachers.

Furthermore, the regression coefficient for emotional intelligence was found to be 0.75, with a standard error of 0.09. This indicates that for each additional one unit of emotional intelligence score, there is an average increase of 0.75 units in teacher immunity. This positive relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher immunity was found to be statistically significant ($t(209) = 7.94$, $p < .001$), affirming the predictive power of emotional intelligence and teacher immunity. So, it means that the teachers' emotional intelligence can significantly predict their Teacher Immunity. In order to investigate the third research null hypothesis on the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their teacher immunity, Pearson correlation coefficient was carried out. The results of correlation coefficient are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Correlation results for Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Teacher Immunity

		Self-efficacy
Teacher immunity	Pearson Correlation	.38**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	60

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

As illustrated in Table 5, Pearson correlation shows that there was a significant positive relationship between female EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their teacher immunity ($p = 0.001$, $r = 0.38$). Thus, it means that as the female EFL teachers have more self-efficacy, they have more teacher immunity.

In the present study, the predictive relationship between female EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their teacher immunity was examined using a simple linear regression model. A dataset encompassing 211 female EFL teachers was analyzed, correlating self-efficacy to teacher immunity values. The average self-efficacy score within the sample was 2.68 years ($SD = .22$), and the average teacher immunity was 3.50 ($SD = .38$). The results of correlation coefficient, basic descriptive statistics and regression coefficients are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Simple Linear Regression Results Predicting Teachers' Immunity

Predictors	r	β	SR	t	P	R ²
Intercept (model)	-	1.72	.29	5.82	0.001	0.14 %
Self-efficacy	.48**	0.66	0.11	6.04	0.001	

Table 6, shows that The simple linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant model ($F(1, 209) = 36.51$, $p < .001$), with an adjusted R² of 0.14. This finding suggests that self-efficacy accounts for approximately 14% of the variance in teacher immunity among the female teachers.

Further, the regression coefficient for self-efficacy was found to be 0.66, with a standard error of 0.11. This indicates that for each additional one unit of self-efficacy score, there is an average

increase of 0.66 units in teacher immunity. This positive relationship between self-efficacy and teacher immunity was found to be statistically significant ($t(209) = 6.04, p < .001$), affirming the predictive power of self-efficacy and teacher immunity.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study revealed that emotional intelligence among female EFL teachers correlated positively with their teacher immunity. In other words, there was a positive relationship between EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity in educational settings. Additionally, emotional intelligence could be predictive of teacher immunity in these EFL contexts for female EFL instructors. Regarding other studies on the same issue, Rezapoor and Mohammadzadeh (2024) concluded in their study that there is a positive relationship between EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity. Furthermore, their research highlighted a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and resilience among EFL teachers in educational settings.

This study's findings indicated a positive correlation between the self-efficacy of female EFL teachers and their teacher immunity in educational settings. Additionally, the research found that the self-efficacy levels of female EFL teachers could predict their teacher immunity. As to other related studies which investigated the same issue, Khazaenezhad and Davoudinasab (2022) concluded that there is a positive relationship between different aspects of teacher immunity and personality traits. Furthermore, teachers' self-efficacy and conscientiousness emerged as the most prevalent facets of both teacher immunity and personality types. For this study, 50 participants (19 male and 31 female) through random sampling were chosen from different Iranian EFL institutes. In another study, Noughabi, et al., (2020) concluded that autonomy, emotions, and engagement might play crucial roles in predicting language teachers' immunity. Particularly, the results highlighted that teacher autonomy was the most influential factor in explaining teachers' immunity of experienced in-service English as a foreign language teacher. Other researchers such as Jalili et al. (2023) and Arlsan and Almacioğlu (2024) have also presented the same findings.

This study aimed to investigate how the self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of female EFL teachers related to their immunity in EFL classrooms. The study also sought to investigate whether self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of female EFL instructors could predict their teacher immunity. To achieve the purpose of survey phase of this study, three instruments (three questionnaires) were distributed among 211 female EFL teachers through using Google Docs and the participants' E-mail addresses. The participants were chosen through convenience sampling from Iranian EFL contexts.

To realize the relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of Iranian female EFL instructors with their teacher immunity Pearson Correlation Coefficient was carried out (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, to examine whether self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of Iranian female EFL teachers could predict their teacher immunity Simple Linear Regression was used (Ary, et al., 2018). The results of the current study revealed that there was a positive relationship between female EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity. Also, there was a positive relationship between female EFL educators' self-efficacy and their teacher immunity. As well, the present study revealed that female EFL teachers' emotional intelligence could predict their teacher immunity. Additionally, EFL instructors' self-efficacy could predict their teacher immunity.

Teachers need to take into account the significant role of their self-efficacy as a predictor of their teacher immunity. In EFL classes in particular, teachers' self-efficacy is very important since it affects their resilience and their capacity to deal with the demands of language education. Teachers who possess a strong sense of self-efficacy are able to maintain confidence in their abilities to positively influence students learning outcomes in the face of challenges and setbacks (Lesha, 2017). Teachers who have confidence in their abilities are able to withstand the difficulties that come with teaching English language, as it acts as a safeguard against stress or burnout and enhances EFL teachers' immunity (Khazaenezhad, & Davoudinasab, 2022). Teachers who possess self-awareness in their abilities to teach English as a foreign language are able to control classrooms, modify teaching methods, and keep students motivated, all of which contribute to creating a more favorable learning environment.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence of teachers plays a critical role in EFL educational contexts and affects EFL instructors' teacher immunity. A teacher with strong emotional intelligence is able to both comprehend and effectively control their own emotions, as well as sympathize with their students. A friendly and conducive learning environment can be helpful for EFL learners as teachers can use their persuasion techniques to engage students with English language. Also, teachers with high emotional intelligence can manage classrooms well, and adapt their teaching plans to fit the requirements of varied learners. Strong emotional intelligence helps EFL teachers become more resilient to stressors or failures and aid the female EFL educators to improve their overall teacher immunity.

The present study, like many other research endeavor, was constrained by numerous delimitations set by the researchers to enhance the study's validity and reliability. In the present study the EFL teachers were reluctant to fill the three questionnaires carefully and 25 of them were discarded from the data. The last delimitation of the study was the fact that the researchers excluded the female EFL teachers' English language proficiency level from this research. The reason behind this decision was the assumption that the teachers who had BA and MA in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) were chosen for the study and thus were assumed to be almost at advanced level of proficiency. However, language proficiency can be included by future studies.

Further studies are required to investigate the impact of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and teacher immunity on EFL teachers within their educational settings, as these factors hold significant importance for EFL instructors. Also, it is suggested that findings of this study be employed to predict EFL instructors' teacher immunity in EFL classes. Furthermore, the main focus of the current study was only on female EFL teachers and how their self-efficacy can affect their teacher immunity. However, it is recommended that other researchers explore how English as a foreign language (EFL) learners can impact the teacher immunity of these EFL instructors.

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