THE IMPACT OF DISCOURSE MARKER INSTRUCTION
ON WRITING IMPROVEMENT OF
IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

GHADER ASADZADIAN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

2017

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMNETS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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KUALA LUMPUR

2017

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the plausible impact of discourse marker (DM) instruction on its usage, and also on fluency, accuracy, and complexity improvement of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing. To this aim, among the two hundred fourth year English major learners in Dezful University, Iran, fifty of them who were in the intermediate level, based on the scoring system of the university, were chosen. They were divided into the experimental and control groups. The experimental group experienced a twenty-hour intervention period on function and usage of DMs through a process of explicit instruction (EI) and input flood (IF), during which they received direct corrective feedback (CF). The DM classification presented by Belles-Furtuno (2004), with some modifications to match the purpose of the current study, was selected to be taught to this group, including both micro and macro markers which can be applied in both sentential and supra-sentential levels. After intervention, both experimental and control groups were given a topic to write to elucidate if DM instruction could influence the use of these units. The results revealed that the experimental group used DMs more than the control group which means EI and IF, along with CF could have a positive impact on the use of these units. The next stage of the study was investigating the possible effect of EI and IF, with the help of CF, of DMs on fluency, accuracy, and complexity of writing. The experimental group was given topics prior to and following the intervention. To quantify the results the Wolfe-Quintero (1998) method was used. The data show that all the three components of writing improved after intervention, which suggest that DM instruction could enhance learners' writing in the three aspects. The findings can be used by teachers and syllabus designers to consider DM as one of the most crucial components in writing courses.

KESAN PENGAJARAN *DISCOURSE MARKER* KE ATAS PENINGKATAN

PENULISAN PELAJAR IRAN TAHAP PERTENGAHAN EFL

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan pengajaran *discourse marker* *(DM)* ke atas penggunaan, kelancaran, ketepatan, dan peningkatan kompleksiti penulisan pelajar pertengahan EFL Iran. Untuk tujuan ini, dari dua ratus pelajar pengkhususan Bahasa Inggeris tahun empat di Dezful University, Iran, dipilih di mana lima puluh pelajar ada ditahap pertengahan, berdasarkan sistem pengskoran Universiti tersebut. Mereka dibahagikan kepada dua kumpulan iaitu kumpulan eksperimen dan kawalan. Kumpulan eksperimen menjalani dua puluh jam intervensi berkenaan dengan fungsi dan penggunaan DMs melalui proses *explicit instruction* *(EI)* dan *input flood (IF)*, dengan cara penerimaan maklumbalas *direct corrective feedback (CF)*. Klasifikasi DM oleh Belles-Furtuno (2004) terpilih untuk diajar kepada kumpulan ini oleh sebab ianya mengandungi penanda mikro dan makro yang boleh diaplikasi dalam tahap *sentential* dan *supra-sentential*. Selepas intervensi, kedua-dua kumpulan eksperimen dan kawalan telah diberi satu topic penulisan untuk menjelaskan adakah pengajaran DMs mampu mempengaruhi penggunaan unit-unit tersebut. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kumpulan eksperimen menggunakan DMs dengan cara lebih terkawal; ini bermakna EI dan IF, dan juga CF boleh memberi impak positif dalam penggunaan unit-unit tersebut. Tahap kedua kajian menyelidik kemungkinan kesan EI dan IF, dengan bantuan CF, ke atas DM dari segi kelancaran, ketepatan, dan kompleksiti penulisan. Kumpulan eksperimen diberi topik-topik sebelum dan selepas intervensi. Untuk menjumlahkan dapatan kajian,

kaedah Wolfe-Quintero (1998) digunakan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa semua tiga komponen penulisan tersebut mengalami peningkatan selepas intervensi. Ini bermakna pengajaran DM boleh melonjakkan pencapaian penulisan pelajar dari segi tiga aspek tersebut. Dapatan kajian boleh digunakan oleh guru dan pereka silibus untuk mengambil kira DM sebagai sebahagian komponen yang paling penting dalam kursus penulisan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With special thanks to all who helped me in the process of my work, specially my

dear friend and supervisor Dr. Rashid who I owe to a lot.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

According to Hillocks (2005) writing has always played an important and undeniable role in the teaching process, especially in academic settings. It is considered as a demanding and sophisticated task requiring a high level of familiarity and awareness to enable people to express ideas through combination of words informative enough to the reader.

Having the aforementioned characteristics needs good ties in both sentential and supra-sentential levels of the language being produced (Belles-Fortuno, 2004). In an EFL context productive skills are not considered as the main focus of language education, because they do not require any production in real-life situation. Hence, these skills will always remain weak points of language learners and learners need to improve them.

Gabrielatos (2002) has defined two levels of writing: language and organization. The first stage, the language level, includes just the vocabulary and grammar. In other words, this level can be claimed as the 'micro level' of the writing during which the teacher tries to find the existing errors of vocabulary and grammar and teach them to solve the problems.

However, the second stage goes beyond this and matters of concern are the lay out, punctuation, and idea organization. The major part of the time in a writing course is devoted to correcting the first stage, while the second one is mostly ignored or given little attention to (Gabrielatos, 2002). As a result, a well-organized and well-connected writing cannot be expected to be produced by the students. Teaching

learners to produce coherent and well-connected writing cannot be achieved by mere focus on grammar and vocabulary.

Ideas and thoughts being transferred should be clear and well-organized to avoid the possibility of ambiguity. The connectives used to link the words, sentences, and paragraphs together should act like signboards which can guide the reader to the writer's purpose (De la Fuente, 2009). The goals can be achieved through a comprehensive knowledge of grammatical and semantic rules, and conventions and regulations of the target language. However, this knowledge cannot be considered as the only necessity for learners. They should be taught how to design the lay out and organize the ideas in a logical and smooth way (Gabrielatos, 2002).

One of the most crucial aids in this regard can be discourse marker (hereafter DMs). They can have both grammatical and semantic function. Different experts have viewed and defined DMs differently. Rahimi (2011) counted DMs as a crucial component of communicative competence. It means DMs can help speakers or writers to be fluent and meaningful in their production of language, in either oral or written form.

Schiffrin (1987) was one of those researchers who tried to establish the term 'discourse markers' in linguistic research. She first defined them as 'sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk'. Next, she tried to give a better and more elaborative definition and described DMs as proposing the contextual coordinates within which an utterance is produced and designed to be interpreted. Fuller (2003) noted that a particle can be counted as a DM only if two factors remain unchanged with removing it:

a)   The semantic relationship among elements which are connected by DMs must be there after removal.

b)   The utterance must remain grammatical after that. In other words, without the DMs, the grammaticality of the utterance must still be intact.

Richard and Schmidt (2002), with almost the same illustration, pinpointed that DMs connects two parts of discourse, but they have no contribution to the meaning of either. It is true that they work in both the grammar and meaning level of the message being transferred and they shape the speaker's or writer's mind, but it is a kind of contribution at the supra-sentential level and not at a sentential level.

Fraser (1996) called these markers 'pragmatic formative' and later he called them 'pragmatic markers' (1999). According to him DMs have a core meaning which can be enriched by the context and represent the relationship between the sentence which includes the DMs and the foregoing utterance. That is why Yule and Brown (1989) called them 'cohesive relations'.

Various researchers also have different terminologies for the term 'discourse markers'. Schourup (1999) used the term 'discourse particles' which has been used more commonly by researchers who work on other languages. He used the term 'Particle' because it is a 'syntactic term'; however, it cannot cover the variety of syntactic classes of the linguistic terms which are usually considered to be discourse markers. Another approach towards them sees discourse markers as particles (such as oh, like, and you know) that are used to direct or redirect the flow of conversation without adding any significant paraphrasable meaning to the discourse. Another frequent term used for discourse markers is 'pragmatic markers'. Researchers have justified this choice by saying that this label tries to suggest a relatively low degree of lexical specificity and a high degree of context-sensitivity (Andersen, 2001). He discards the term 'discourse marker' to prevent a confusion with Fraser's account, in which discourse markers are seen as a subtype of pragmatic markers signaling "a

sequential relationship between the current basic message and the previous discourse" (Fraser, 1996). This is, in fact, the function Andersen refers to as the textual function of pragmatic markers.

The abovementioned definitions and works on DMs show how important they can be and what an essential role they can play in presenting and designing written-form language performance. Therefore, working on them and teaching them explicitly seem to be influential in enhancing students' writing level.

As the study by Naghdipour (2016) revealed the view of education program in Iran is learning to write process in which genres and process of writing are not taken into account. In his work, he studied 21 teachers and 36 students in four levels of middle school, secondary school, university and private school. The results of his study revealed that the view towards writing ends in following a traditional and conventional method and looking at writing class as a learning session how to write not teaching them to write and learn through writing.

In instruction, according to Dekeyser (1995) explicit instruction (hereafter EI) involves informing learners about the target language structure and this can make them alert to the explicitly presented items and as a result can make them aware of the existence and usage of these units. Besides, a number of previous empirical works illustrate the positive effect of EI on enhancement of second language acquisition, as will be discussed in chapter two.

Teaching Writing in Iran

To answer the question that 'How teaching writing is influenced in Iran?', we need to consider the point that why writing is important for learners as generally every individual. Some factors need to be considered regarding this issue. First, there

is a global rise of written communication which was merely orally performed in the past. Second, mobile technologies and online forums make it possible for everybody to communicate in written form. Third, writing is a requirement for professional and academic aims, and also immigration.

However, what can be seen in education system of Iran and the outcome of the process and as teachers claim, writing is being overlooked due to various reasons. English instruction, in general, and writing in specific, is not well-supported due to some factors. Following the Islamic revolution in 1979, a cultural revolution took place which brought about several changes in education system in Iran.

Borjian (2013) stated that the consequence of this revolution was a strong conflict between the leftists who believed in liberal education program and particularly focusing the system of teaching English from the early stages of education and the conservatives or fundamentalists who were against freedom and openness of education system. They specifically believed in a localized version of English, not the international and global form of it. They believed that this international form of English cannot guard them against the cultural hegemony of the West and it may end in Secularism.

The strong influence that the fundamentalists had in formulating and designing plans, Borjian (2013) stated, ended in late start of English in the education curriculum. Nevertheless, Iranians have always shown a strong motivation to learn English, Riazi (2005) claimed. The motive has been stronger among the youth who try to have social access that can take place through learning the international language, English.

Some other institutional and practical issues can be the matter of concern among teachers, other than the above-mentioned ideological and cultural concerns.

English writing instructors do not have tendency to teach or work on writing due to not having the willingness to have extra load to work on, like correcting the papers after class.

Instead, they prefer to have private tutoring or overtime classes for a higher payment. Therefore, the corrective feedback is not done on the works, even if there is class work. Classes are mainly overcrowded and payment is low; besides, there is heavy teaching load which all make the process of the class complicated.

Another problem that influences teaching writing in Iran is the way language schools step into. Private language skills put their dominancy on speaking and introduce it as the main purpose of knowing a language. As a result, learners pay less attention to writing abilities and the process of teaching and learning writing is overshadowed.

Majorly, courses introduced in such schools include free discussion, conversation, and movie discussion. Hence, they try to expose learners with a huge amount of daily use of the language, which seem more attractive and applicable, at least in the basic and preliminary needs of learners. They are more attractive and easier to grasp by learners.

Some university lecturers blame language schools to motivate people to write the same way they talk or sometimes, they do not even have the tendency to write. While language schools blame universities are not being successful in the process of improving learners' communicative competence.

Context of the Study

The system of education in Iran consists of 3 major stages which are primary (5 years), junior high school (3 years), and high school (3 years); the last

year of education is considered as pre-university course which is practically fourth year of the high school period.

During the first 5 years of education, which is the primary stage, there is no English training. English is totally ignored in this period because it is believed that the learner is not fully prepared to be exposed to a new language and basic skills of education should be internalized through the mother tongue, so teaching English is delayed to the next stage.

The next stage is junior high school level which lasts three years. The first year of this period initiates familiarizing learners with English which is considered as a foreign language. The same system of teaching and learning is pursued all through the next three years of high school. During all the six years students are exposed to a huge number of new words and expressions, which they are expected to find the equivalents in their mother tongue, various types of grammar rules, which are expected to be formulized and memorized by the learners to be able to answer the final test questions, and a little bit of reading comprehension which is very limited in the aspect of language production and mostly students try to copy from the text. In other words, in Iran there is no creativity in the language learning process.

The final exam questions do not emphasize creativity. Hence, teachers do not bother to try any further. After passing the 6 years, students enter a one-year period named pre-university. The book prepared for this course has recently been changed to meet the needs of learners who are expected to be ready and well-equipped for university. Previously, in the 6 years of junior high and high school, students are taught under the Grammar Translation Method and a little bit of Audio-Lingual Method during chain drills or reading the conversations and changing roles, which are limited to class activities and have no role in the exam section at all.

The pre-university course, however, entails a huge change in the English education curriculum. During this one year period, the main focus of education is on reading comprehension and answering the related questions in a more creative way compared to previous years.

After finishing the pre-university course students pass a university entrance exam which is a comprehensive exam on all subjects taught in high school and the one-year pre-university course and students' knowledge is evaluated for acceptance at the university. In this exam English plays an important role, which is merely focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

The students who enter university have two options: they either choose English as their subject or select other subjects of interest. For those who pursue their education in other non-English courses, there are just 6 credits of English, 3 units of English for General purposes and 3 units of English for Specific Purposes, related to their field of study.

On the other hand, those who select English as their major at university undergo tight English program which requires them to read their textbooks in the target language, which they were never used to, and another serious problem can be the production of language in both spoken and written forms.

The learners who have been evaluated based on some limited skills are expected to produce language in both spoken and written forms. They pass some courses on basic and advanced grammar and also reading courses, during the first three semesters at university, and they are expected to be efficient in both speaking and writing skills which seems to be a tough task for learners, considering their limited background knowledge and experience. Therefore, it can be imagined how frustrating it can be for learners and instructors when it comes to the production

aspect of the language, especially the writing part which needs a high level of understanding of rules and their applications in a proper context. Besides, in university writing courses in Iran, students are taught some general frames and concepts of writing and more detailed components, such as how to connect sentences and ideas together (Moradan, 1995), are not included.

Statement of the Problem

According to The Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence in the U.S (2002), all systems of education, either EFL or ESL, are being planned with the purpose of guiding learners to reach the pinnacle of success which means being able to perform and comprehend the presented language thoroughly. Through this path students at risk of educational failure can achieve academic excellence. Learners can reach their target only if every single step is planned properly and all 4 language skills are included. In Iran, which is considered an EFL context, the main focus of the education curriculum, based on the Ministry of Education syllabus, is on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Reviewing the Junior High School and High School syllabus and the related table of content of the student book clearly unveils that production of language in either spoken or written forms is never the goal of the designed curriculum.

EFL learners in Iran have no chance to be in direct contact with authentic English out of the classroom setting. Hence, language skills are limited to the classroom and formal instruction which make it quite difficult for them to produce language. Productive skills always remain the hidden part of learners' knowledge, unless they are required to be performed. Speaking skill is barely needed because

Farsi is the dominant and required language of all events, including interviews, lectures or other professional activities.

On the other hand, writing skills are needed to write reports, essays, articles or other professional findings which are required to be explained and reported. Therefore, writing is considered to be more challenging and demanding than speaking. As a result of the deficiency in this skill, the researcher found Iran an appropriate setting to conduct the study.

As it can be seen in the education system in Iran, teaching English starts in year seven or second year of junior high school and it can be two to four hours a week. Afterwards, in year ten onwards, which is the first year of high school in Iran; they have a two-hour class under English subject. The absence of any kind of uncontrolled and free production of language is vivid in both speaking and writing aspects in Iran system of education.

After a period of focus on grammar-translation method and the system of education in Iran, students attend University Entrance Exam (Konkour) and do a test under English proficiency which is on grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension. The test is all multiple-choice questions. Hence, again students do not face any setting to do language production. The test includes 25 questions for General English or 70 questions for those who to major in English.

As those who want to major in English enter university, they have a specific schedule for their credits at university. Considering writing, the third semester they have a three-credit course in writing, to be exact in paragraph development. As for the fourth semester, they have some letter-writing courses and the fifth semester they have some topics of essay writing. This can vary depending on the branch of English they study in, for instance, Literature, Teaching or Linguistics. The content has been

there for over three decades. Unfortunately, majorly the same title of books have been taught to English-major students.

Main focus of the textbooks used in writing courses, third semester onwards, have their focus on paragraphs, letters, and essays. While the functions of different types of genres or the process of writing are ignored in the textbooks. The lecturers do not even focus on the concepts of genres, brainstorming, revising, collaborative writing, report writing or cover letters and application letters in their writing classes.

As a lecturer in Iran, whenever in different universities I asked different lecturers, they noted various problems including lack of time, heavy work load, and lack of proficiency of learners as the main reasons why they do not go through the concepts of genres or other writing activities beyond the grammatical levels in their writing classes.

Lecturers claim that English-major students enter the course without having basic necessary skills in writing, but also having huge problems producing sentences which are considered grammatical correct, meaningful and understandable. Students on the other hand face the problem of listening and following the teachers' lectures on how to write without being given the chance of producing writing or working on the learned material in classroom setting and collaborative atmosphere to find the chance to be corrected by the lecturer or the other students.

The methods through which students receive feedback under work may vary in the surface. However, they have one common feature. One way of corrective feedback is collecting the students' papers and checking them. Due to heavy workload and lack of time, however, the collected papers are not corrected or one out of many writings is corrected. Another way lecturers choose is students reading their writings aloud in which there is not enough focus on the text neither on the lecturer

side nor the other students. And finally, the strategy could be taking a paper of one student and copying or projecting it on the board and working on it together.

As can be seen above, the ways of correction come with lots of flaws. Besides, the focus is not on one form and due to lack of proficiency of learners, they are at risk of forgetting many corrections. Other than that one student's problem might not be the problem of others and the reverse.

The common feature that majorly all classroom settings have is the issues which are mainly focused on. The significant attention is classroom correction and feedback is given on grammatical levels and sentence levels. It can be due to two main reasons. Firstly, the students' prevalent errors in writing and secondly, the teachers' and instructors' tendency to teach grammar and focusing on sentence level as it is the case in previous years of education in Iran. Mostly, as I have worked in various universities, teachers and lecturers complain about learners' lack of knowledge in grammar rules and the complication this problem causes that stops them from going through global errors and focusing on genres and topic-related writings.

In non-English majors the setting is totally different. They study a two-credit course in general English which mostly includes reading comprehension, memorization of new words and at most answering some questions which are mostly drag and drop, mostly without any creativity. There is also a two-credit course on ESP which is technical textbooks on the subject of learners and mainly taught by master holders or PhD holders in teaching English. Due to majoring in EGP, they are not able to have the same concepts, the teachers and the learners. I am teaching ESP courses currently. The requirements are vocabulary memorization and at most answering some comprehension questions which come without any creativity.

The lacks in English education in different levels in Iran system of education lead the learners to private institutes. Those who want to overcome their deficiencies in English production have to attend such courses which many focus on productive skills. The aim of taking IELTS or TOEFL exams guides learners to these private centers.

However, again the main focus in those settings is on product-oriented classrooms when it comes to writing. I own a language center in Iran with more than 300 learners. The learners are majorly preparing for IELTS or TOEFL exams with the purpose of pursuing education or emigration. Therefore, they are guided to produce a piece of writing successfully. Hence, some patterns and clichés are given to them to memorize. All the system described above shows a huge complication in the system of education in Iran.

According to Alter and Adkins (2001, p. 493), "the writing deficiency of students today is clearly a systemic problem". In Iran, as an EFL setting, lack of attention to productive skills of writing and speaking is causing the problem. Writing is a necessary task for finding jobs, doing research and reporting results, and also pursuing education, however learners are not trained well to be capable of performing satisfactorily (Moradan, 1995). The systematic problem is due to the lack of information, while it is claimed that learners study English seven years before entering university and depending on their major pass some units during university education.

In the dichotomy of language and organization proposed by Gabrielatos (2002), the language part which is at the level of vocabulary and grammar used in sentences is thoroughly covered and evaluated in the Iran school curriculum as mentioned before. However, the organization layer which includes the general frame

and layout of writing and way of organizing ideas and putting them into a composition, are not taught and practiced because these are not in the final objective of the Educational Curriculum. Students, despite learning grammar points and gaining significant vocabulary, do not have a vivid picture of how to start, maintain and terminate their writing and how to connect their ideas to each other to elaborate properly and be understood (Albesher & Sabry, 2013). As a result, teaching how to arrange a writing piece and how to connect ideas seem necessary to aid learners in feeling more confident while writing.

To organize one's mind, it seems necessary to use organizational markers or discourse markers (DMs). Schiffrin (1987) described DMs as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk". Hence, for expressing thoughts DMs seem to be helpful. They can function as cohesive devices and ties to connect thoughts and ideas and show the sequence of events. Moreover, they function at a higher stage. Based on Carter (2007) DMs are defined as "intra-sentential and supra-sentential linguistic units which fulfill a largely non-propositional and connective function at the level of discourse".

The abovementioned complication reveals that there is a missing link in the writing process of EFL learners which does not allow them to write coherently and they tend to write short and choppy sentences (Albesher & Sabry, 2013). Besides, the crucial role DMs plays in the formation and design of written material in both language and organization stages is argued by various experts. Therefore, the question posed at this stage, would be: how can learners who suffer from the mentioned problem be aware of the way through which they can write more coherently? In other words, how can they write lengthier sentences and feel confident that sentences and ideas are well-connected?

Based on the studies by Trahey and White (1993), William and Evans (1998), and Hernandez (2008) in learning a new language, explicit instruction (EI) and input flood (IF) can potentially play an important role in enhancing learners' understanding of the presented material. The other concept which should be taken into consideration is the corrective feedback (CF) in the process of EI. As Ellis et al. (2008) argued, and to be discussed later in this study, direct CF can help learners find and correct their mistakes of the presented material more easily and confidently.

Hernandez (2008) worked on 2 groups, experimental and control, to reveal if EI and IF both together could be more influential than IF alone. The results declared that the control group who received no EI and no correction on their performance on DM use showed a lower level of language production and DM use in comparison to the experimental group who enjoyed both EL and FI.

The study by Hernandez (2008) and some others, which will be discussed in the second chapter, revealed that learners' awareness and explicit instruction, can play an important role in improving their awareness of the presented material and consequently help enhance their knowledge.

While reviewing the related literature, which will be elaborated on extensively in the second chapter, the researcher has found some important issues to be discussed:

1.   DMs have been tested in various skills of reading, listening, and speaking. However, little attention has been given to writing skill and the possible impact DMs could have on enhancing learners' writing ability. This problem can be more serious when an EFL atmosphere is considered, in which writing plays a very critical role, especially in academic settings, however it is not included in the educational syllabus, as discussed above.

2.   Teaching DMs is never considered as a part of the education curriculum in Iran and little work has been done on the explicit instruction of DMs and making learners aware through explicit instruction (EI) + input flood (IF) along with CF and its contribution to improving learner's writing ability. Hence, a study regarding the potential of this issue seems to be helpful and with strong pedagogical implication, if the influence could be shown positive.

The existence of control and experimental groups and the comparison of the results could reveal the possible effect of the intervention or instructional period on the writing-ability improvement. Besides, the pre-writing and post-writing activities can clearly depict the influence of DM instruction on fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the experimental group's writings. Fluency, accuracy, and complexity improvements in learners' writing can show that writing could improve, as writing is viewed in these three aspects (Wolf-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998).

Objectives of the Study

Particularly the study is assigned to:

1.   Examine whether DM Instruction, explicit instruction and input flood along with corrective feedback, can have positive impact on EFL learners in their use of Discourse Markers.

2.   Investigate the effect of DM instruction on fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the learners' writings with the help of comparison between learners' writing before and after DM instruction.

Research Questions

The present study is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in their use of DMs between the writings of the learners who receive explicit instruction along with input flood and corrective feedback on DMs and those who do not go through this intervention period?

2. Is there a significant difference in the experimental group in terms of fluency before and after the intervention?

3. Is there a significant difference in the experimental group in terms of accuracy before and after the intervention?

4. Is there a significant difference in the experimental group in terms of complexity of writing before and after the intervention?

Note: The intervention in these questions includes explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback.

Research Hypotheses

The present study tests the following hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between control and experimental groups in their DM use after intervention.

2. There is no significant difference in the experimental group in terms of fluency of their writing before and after the intervention.

3. There is no significant difference in the experimental group in terms of accuracy of their writing before and after the intervention.

4. There is no significant difference in the experimental group in terms of complexity of their writing before and after the intervention.

Note: The intervention in these hypotheses includes explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback.

Significance of the Study

As Jonson, Ruecker, Shapiro, and Tardy (2014) claimed, I believe that in spite of the global recognition of the impact of cross-cultural differences on the quality of teaching writing skill and the type of discourse being produced, it has not gained the attention of researchers as much as required and there is little work on context of teaching writing and second language writing dynamics.

As mentioned previously, many EFL contexts put emphasis on old and traditional pedagogical applications and practices. Therefore, analyzing setting of English writing instruction like Iran can have a significant impact on researches and practices in second language writing.

Based on the works of some researchers such as Lee and Coniam (2013) and Naghdipour and Koc (2015), English teachers, educational planners and experts can be informed through practices of new and novel views towards language writing findings to have a more realistic curricula and design, a more influential instructional plan to be able to meet the needs of learners in writing classes.

Besides, focusing on the work of some researchers such as Jonson, Ruecker, Shapiro, and Tardy (2014) can strongly influence the process of teaching writing to pay more attention to contextual factors, educational policies, and ideological policies to update the views towards writing classes and get out of the conventional views of product-oriented classes.

The importance of teaching writing and improving writing quality classes is a multi-dimensional issue which can benefit various groups of people dealing with it, including English major learners on one side and other professionals in other majors or those who require it on the other side.

English major students need writing skills to cope with their homework assignments, university projects and exams. On the other hand, non-English majors need it to write articles, apply for universities abroad, and get admission for pursuing their education. Considering the point that the medium of instruction in universities is the native language, Farsi, the importance of writing can be clarified more.

University lecturers also need it to write articles, attend international conferences and eventually get promotion. Finally, those with the dream of continuing a better life abroad need to apply for work visa and participate in IELTS tests, as Iran is considered as one of the top countries with 'brain drain' (WIPO, 2013).

This study focuses on writing in particular. Although studies have underlined the importance of writing and the huge impact it can have on the future life of learners, not been enough work has emerged on the ways of improving it through instructional procedures in the EFL setting. As mentioned previously, writing can be viewed in two levels of language and organization (Gabrielatos, 2002). The first level has been investigated because it is being taught explicitly. Hence, it is more noticeable. However, the second level which is related to the layout, unity of the writing and ways of organizing thoughts and ideas has not been surveyed as much as the previous one; hence learners who lack awareness of these aspects tend to produce short and choppy sentences (Moradan, 1995). Learners lack of awareness of DMs role and how these units can bring unity to the produced language (Albesher & Sabry, 2013). Most learners and teachers view language at the grammar and vocabulary level, while the general arrangement and frame of writing is ignored.

One of the most significant ways to make a writing piece seem more connected and united and understandable is by using DMs. The primary function of DMs is building a particular connection between the upcoming utterance and the immediate discourse context (Redeker, 1991). Although DMs plays an outstanding role in both micro and macro levels of sentences, these units have no certain place in the education curriculum and mostly learners are not made aware of their role and importance (Van Patten, 1996, 2004)

Therefore, the researcher is aiming to give a direct and explicit instruction of DMs with the help of IF and CF to the learners to check the possibility of use of these units in learners' writing after their awareness of the existence and role of DMs.

One of the most serious problems that Iranian EFL learners are facing is not being able to connect sentences properly while writing (Moradan, 1995). Hence, they tend to make short sentences to ensure a manageable process. In other words, one of the major problems that forces learners to make short and choppy sentences can be unawareness of DMs. The findings of the present study can be of much help in improving the level of learners' writing and can aid teachers to have a crystal clear path in guiding learners. It can shed light on one of the most serious complications Iranian learners are dealing with which is producing a coherent piece of writing which can be well-connected and understandable.

Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998) presented method of calculation for measuring fluency, accuracy, and complexity in two aspects of frequency and ratio. Applying the Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998) method of calculation, if explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback is proved to have positive effect on writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity, it can be of much help to course-planners and teachers to define clear way and also allocate

certain time for DM instruction and make learners aware of DMs to connect ideas and thoughts in their writings to overcome the problem with the layout and organization which Gabrielatos (2002) discussed.

The results of the current study can help learners, teachers and syllabus designers to put more emphasis on the role of both micro and macro markers to aid learners in enhancing their writing appropriately and coherently. The findings will provide pedagogical guidelines for teachers to optimize their students' writing skill.

Conceptual Definition

Discourse Markers. Carpenter and Just (1992) suggested that learners should go beyond the sentence level to be able to relate old information to the recently presented one. They claimed that the reader tries to integrate the new information with the ongoing text. Facilitating such a connection and integration can be successfully performed through finding a linking relation. The linking and connection can be explored in cohesive ties and DMs. Hence, the importance and significance of recognizing DMs can be emphasized.

Different classifications and definitions of DMs exist; this shows the important role they play in language. Some of those classifications were suggested by Halliday and Hassan (1976), Chaudron and Richards (1996), and Murphy and Candlin (1979) as illustrated in the following chapter along with a critical appraisal of each.

Fraser (1990) gives a wide range of DMs from coordinate conjunctions *and, or,* and *but* to less accepted interjections *well, oh* to verbs *look, see* and phrases like *to repeat*, *what I mean, overall*. One of the most recent and most comprehensive

views on DMs was given by Belles-Fortuño (2004), with modifications, who classified DMs to two groups of Micro-DMs and Macro-DMs:

Micro-markers

The following Table 1.1 gives the adopted micro-markers as listed by Belles-Fortuno (2004), with modifications to match the purpose of writing.

Table 1.1

Micro-markers Classification Model

Additional	Temporal	Causal	Contrast	Emphasis
Furthermore	afterwards	As a result	However	Absolutely
Moreover	Then	Therefore	In spite of	Certainly
In addition	Next	Because	Despite	Obviously
Besides	Eventually	Hence	Even so	Notably

In Belles-Fortuno's classification, in micro level, there was a category of segmentation, while I believe this section has no place in written language. Actually, I believe in written discourse all the other classifications are performing as ways through which a text is segmented in micro level. Hence, I removed this category from the table. The writer in 2007 in his article added a section to his category which is 'Additional' DMs. I believe it was the deficiency of micro DMs. Hence, I also applied it in my work.

In this categorization Belles-Fortuno allocated a column to 'Elicitation' which is not practically of much use in written aspect. In spoken view, there is an addressee who is required to respond the questions he is facing with. While in written discourse, in micro level, it rarely happens therefore I deleted this column from the classification which was originally applying to oral language.

Macro-markers

Table 1.2 displays the macro-markers as classified by Belles-Fortuno (2004), with modifications to match the purpose of writing.

Table 1.2

Macro-markers Classification Model

Starter	Elicitation	Accept	Attitudinal	Meta-statement	Conclusion
Firstly	What are the advantages of … ?	… is a generally accepted fact.	Confidentially	To highlight	To sum up
The second point is	The question the pups up is …	As obviously mentioned by scientists …	Basically	The most important of all	In conclusion
Initially	How about other influential factors?	Previous researches have evidently confessed that …	Undoubtedly	By all means	Briefly
As mentioned above	What are the conditions under which … ?	The study strongly supports the idea that …	admittedly	The climax of	In short

The classification by Belles-Fortuno (2004), with modifications, is applied in the current work due to noticing both aspects of micro or sentential level to help learners in connecting sentences and avoiding choppy and short forms, and macro or supra-sentential level to assist learners in connecting ideas and thoughts throughout the writing.

Writing Concept. Writing is considered an enjoyable and fulfilling activity which is the eventual goal of any academic education curriculum. In other words, it is likely to be counted as the dominant language mode in any education system to be evaluated (Creswell, 2002). However, unfortunately in the Iranian EFL system it has a very marginal role and includes little creativity.

In opposition to the education system in Iran which almost ignores the crucial role of writing, it seems to be the most important skill in the future life of the learners, especially those who continue their studies to higher degree. In higher levels of education, writing is the skill which is necessary to aid the learners to perform better and be more successful.

Several models of writing have been proposed, among which the one proposed by Hayes (1996) which considered both social and cognitive factors as the influential elements in the process of writing attracted the researcher's attention, because writing is a skill which can be affected by both factors.

Fluency, Accuracy, and Complexity. The three concepts that can have an enormous effect on the quality of writing are fluency, accuracy, and complexity. For the sake of minimizing mistakes and feeling secure, learners mostly try to shorten or simplify their writing (Taguchi, 2009). In case of shortening or simplifying their writing product, learners' writing might not be fluent, accurate, or complex enough.

Various linguistic levels, including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse, and pragmatics can be taken into account while thinking of fluency, accuracy, and complexity. The appropriate one for the current work was presented by Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998, p.5). According to what they

stated, fluency measures how rapidly and easily discourse moves are executed, accuracy deals with appropriateness of the discourse moves in the context, and complexity investigates have varied the discourse moves are.

Fluency is well defined in spoken language; it can also work for written language as well. A native speaker uses various strategies to make his writing fluent, like: Meta discourse markers, punctuations, micro and macro markers and the like. A non-native user of language might write something that grammatically makes sense, while a native user cannot comprehend it or does not use the same way of stating it. These strategies make writing more fluent.

Young (1994) stated that there are three types of comparisons when it comes to measuring aspects of language: comparison between developmental measures and proficiency measures in which developments of different proficiency levels are measured, comparison among proficiency measures in which the progress of different proficiency levels are compared, and comparison among developmental measures in which development of the same level participants is measured in a certain time period.

In the case of proficiency measures, there might be learners with various abilities in oral versus literate modalities. For measures of language development, there might be writers who are accurate but not fluent or fluent but non-accurate, or writers with complex syntax but with lack of lexical complexity or the reverse. (Hamp-Lyons, 2002).

The current study focuses on the developmental measures, not on complexity. Therefore, fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the writing are measured based on the indices related to developmental procedure. In other words, the process of changes is based on longitudinal aspect and all the three aspects are checked over a

period of time which includes before and after the intervention. As a result, developmental procedure is used to measure the three aspects in the process of developmental period.

Because the learners are all at intermediate proficiency level, it can be claimed that proficiency is not counted as a discriminating factor. As a result, the three factors of writing quality are considered in independently developmental level, due to the fact that all learners are in the same proficiency level. In this process of intervention the learners' concept about discourse markers and their functions is expected to change, and their writing quality is expected to improve because of using these units after intervention.

Explicit Instruction, Input Flood, and Corrective Feedback. Teaching explicitly can draw the learners' attention to the presented material and remind them of the items while performing (Hernandez, 2008). It can make them more conscious and aware of the subject being taught. The more reflective the learners are, the more efficient they can be.

According to Sinclair (2003), when learners have better control over what they are learning, they can get better results and can be more successful. The learners selected to go through the intervention process are intermediate level, hence they are expected to have a clear mind set and be able to properly apply what they are taught in the instructional process.

During the intervention period, students are given a comprehensive knowledge of DMs and their functions. They are also provided lots of examples and supplementary exercises to learn these units and the practical way of applying them which is considered as a flood of input presented to learners (IF) (Hernandez, 2008).

In the process of EI and IF, students face some problems and make some mistakes which are corrected by the teacher directly. In the CF process, the mistakes are underlined and corrected by the teacher to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding by learners. In other words, there is a process of EI+IF along with direct and focused CF (Ellis et al., 2008).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to Teaching Writing

The significant role of improving English skills as the major way and path of connectedness and communication among countries specially in the globalized world today and the crucial role this language plays as the major way of globalization in plurality of discourse communication, expansion, and development of English, in general, and producing writing as a solid way of connection in particular has gained wide recognition and acceptance.

Formal investigations in L2 writing began to emerge as a research venue in the 1950s and 1960s when international students first began to enroll in colleges and universities in substantial numbers in English-speaking countries. Over the past half century, the overarching goal of research on second language writing has been to create pedagogical models for teaching L2 writing.

These studies were mainly intended to develop new knowledge, based on empirical studies that could provide a theoretical and practical foundation for the teaching of L2 writing and teacher education. In the 1970s and 1980s, much in the methods and techniques for teaching L2 writing was derived from pedagogy in L1 composition. In later years, L2 writing instruction has striven to move away from composition studies at least to some extent (Frodesen, 2001; Hinkel, 2006). For past two or three decades, techniques prevalent in the teaching of L2 writing have sought to address an extensive array of issues that have traditionally represented major and minor foci of instruction modified to meet the needs of L2 learners specifically.

These techniques encompass generating ideas and producing L2 text, organizing ideas in keeping with L2 discourse conventions, planning and outlining, paragraph and text development, drafting, revising at the discourse and sentence levels, considerations of audience, lexical choice, precision, and vocabulary changes, dictionary uses, spelling, punctuation, editing, and error correction, as well as using computers for writing, grammar practice, and vocabulary development.

As a follow-up, learners usually receive instruction in paragraphing, discourse structuring and organization, sentence construction, vocabulary, narrative or argumentation conventions, cohesion development, revising, and editing, as well as linguistic aspects of texts (Silva & Brice, 2004). More recently, additional and innovative teaching techniques have also gained popularity, e.g., dialog journals, writing from sources, analyses of language uses in print and online media, examinations of language elements in model texts, such as those in academic disciplines or business writing, producing critiques or letters to express a point of view, or collaborative writing (Basturkmen& Lewis, 2002; Cotterall & Cohen, 2003; Myers, 2001).

While speaking and listening are natural and may not have to be learned, writing is not natural and it must be learned; in other words, someone has to teach you how to write (Martin, 2009). When we consider writing in an EFL classroom, we typically think of the instructor assigning a topic and specifying the length of the paragraph or essay.

This kind of activity is not usually welcomed by students who realize that writing is the most difficult of the four language skills, but practicing writing in class is a well-rounded EFL lesson. Murray (1980:11) has written that "man has a primitive need to write". However, it is not difficult to fathom writing as being

organically based; nor is it possible to believe that people try to satisfy their primitive need to write (Martin, 2009). Writing is disliked and avoided because it is frustrating. While speaking, we do not think of the grammaticality of the utterances, nor do we think about mechanics. The words are spoken and soon lost forever. Most writing, on the contrary, does not flow out smoothly. We write a few lines, reread them, scribble out one of the lines and move on. We are constantly checking for correctness.

Writing, in the mother tongue is painful for many students, but when it comes to writing in the second language, the students' hardship and pain are worsen (Gilmore, 2009). Writing is a complicated skill which involves the communication of language, feelings, individual experience, and personal thoughts. Despite many approaches to the teaching of writing like communicative language teaching, process-based approach, product-based approach, genre-based approach, solving EFL writing problems is difficult for both teachers and learners (Fallahzadeh & Shokrpour, 2008).

Writing is a way of talking without being interrupted (Ddeubel, 2009). Writing may not seem an easy task to do especially, nowadays when students do not have long attention spans and are more digital and visual learners. However, it is a vital skill that opens up a world of possibilities for any student. Writing allows communication, controlled and deliberate- POWERFUL, communication. So, trying to get students write more and better is a concern for most EFL teachers. They use various techniques to improve their writing mastery without paying due attention to the mental aspects of the endeavor.

Factors influencing the second language learning are partly linguistic and partly nonlinguistic. While linguistic goals focus on developing competence in the individual's ability to read, write, speak and understand the second language, non-

linguistic goals emphasize such aspects as improved understanding of the other community, desire to continue studying the language, an interest in learning the other language, etc. (Khany & Ghoreyshi, 2013).

In fact, one of the most important elements for SLA research to explain is the great individual variability second language learners obtain in their respective second languages. It has been frequently observed that different learners attain highly different levels of L2 proficiency even though the circumstances in which these learners acquire a target language are almost identical. Ellis (1985) has mentioned that the relationship between these individual variables and personality and language learning is a two way process i.e. if language learning can be influenced by an individual's personality, it could be said that the experience of learning a language and the exposure to it can also bring about some changes in his/her personality.

Scarcella & Oxford (1992) classify factors affecting writing as individual differences, motivation, attitude, authenticity, cultural and linguistic experiences, students' background knowledge and their writing practices which have tight internal relationships with their intentions and personal preferences. There is a general consensus among researchers that the most effective way to get insight into the learning process is to study the learners' motivation and attitude towards learning the language (MansouriNejad, et al. 2012; Zhang et al. 2013; Alavinia & Sameei, 2012).

It has been proved that learning a language is closely related to the attitudes towards the language and motivation to learn the language (Starks & Paltridge, 1996). EFL learners' attitudes towards writing and the motives they have towards the activity are partly transferred from their L2. However, it is generally believed that positive attitudes facilitates while negative attitude acts as a psychological barrier against learning (Dornyei & Csizer, 2002). Motivation to participate in writing

activities leads to self-confident communicators (Ebata, 2008). Moreover, it can instigate learners to continue the endeavor even after fulfilling the goal.

English writing instruction is an important part of college English teaching (Ddeubel, 2009). The reform of English writing instruction is an inevitable demand of the times as well as necessary means of promoting English writing instruction (Chen& Yan, 2010; Zhang &Luo, 2013). Writing has a strong practicality and applicability (Liu, 2007). Writing is mainly used by people to express their views and feelings to others (Hu, 2010). There are many factors that affect students' writing level, such as students' English level, native language writing ability, writing condition, task, and metacognitive ability (Wang, 2005).

Writing has always been emphasized as one of the skills of every language due to expanding learners' competency in a specific language. Besides, recently it has been credited owing to providing a situation for learners to expertise in a specific discipline which can academically help them communicate their thought, ideas, finding of their works and the like (Hyland, 2013; Ortega, 2012).

Oppositely, in many EFL contexts, as Reichelt (2009) mentioned, writing is viewed at in an out of date curricular policy and the prevalently used traditional pedagogical practices which are the main focus in writing classes. However, writing is globally recognized as a language skill which is considered multi-functional and credited in language teaching today.

Considering the context in which writing is taught and applied has recently been a matter of concern in some researchers' works. Some researchers like Al-Jarrah and Al-Ahmad (2013) and Cimasko and Reichelt (2011) have described the contextual forces and factors which can influence the quality of teaching writing process and also the type and quality of the discourse being introduced. In other

words, they tried to consider the writing products and teaching styles which should be considered in various contexts.

In the writing process learners make different types of mistakes, including: the content being transferred, the ideas, the vocabulary usage, or grammar functions. Teachers' feedback on the type of mistakes students make is the combination of two distinct realms of study: L2 writing and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The type of response the teacher gives to the students' mistakes is technically called error correction or Corrective Feedback (hereafter CF).

The effect of CF on writing improvement and making learners self-employed writers are the issues that researchers, such as: Chandler (2003) and Ferris (2006), tried to investigate. In these studies, as Leki, Cumming and Silva (2008) noted, the main focus has always been how CF can help enhance the editing and revising process.

Recently, however, the trend has changed to some higher expectation out of CF. As Bitchener and Knoch (2010a) and Ellis, Sheen, Murakami and Takashima (2008) argued, researchers are trying to find out how CF can help build up the inter-language to enable students to learn the language better and faster. The theory arises from what Ortega (2009) and Santos et al. (2010) mentioned as the writing-to-learn agenda, and inspires by the effect of CF on improving learners' accuracy in oral production in terms of the pre-test and post-test (Li, 2010; Lyster& Saito, 2010).

Views towards writing and teaching to write need to be modified. As Poon (2001) stated about writing classes in Hong Kong,

"Typically writing is taught based on a prescribed textbook in primary school. Most teachers simply stick to the textbook and adopt a very traditional method. A typical composition lesson goes as follows: the teacher teaches the class a

sample of writing in the unit, which usually consists of several sentences describing a person or an object. Then, with the help of some guiding questions, the teacher asks the class to do parallel writing, which means to write a similar text by changing simply the names, pronouns, numbers or some details of the original text. Finally, the students copy the answers to the guiding questions in their exercise book, and submit their composition."

It might be claimed that it is stated for primary school education and the view towards writing in the process of education changes from sentence-oriented composition to text-oriented composition and sometimes to reader-oriented one. However, many features of classroom setting, regarding writing classes stay intact. For instance, classroom setting is almost always text book oriented. In other words, learners follow the instructions in the text book. Then, they are asked to apply whatever they learn in the process of the class into their writing. It eventually ends in deductive form of learning, that is, learners are taught some new concepts, rules, structures and so forth and they are asked to apply them into a piece of writing. It ends in an uninspired and un-stimulating classroom atmosphere.

There are some revolutionary ideas and scenarios however. As Beard (2000b) stated,

"An overreliance on duplicated worksheets; an overreliance on a stimulus to inspire pupils to write without the necessary teaching in the form of modeling or other forms of scaffolding. In many schools, [there is a lack of] an appropriate balance between reading and writing. In three hundred literacy hours observed there was no shared writing in three-quarter of the lessons. Why pupils were being given opportunities to write in subjects other than English, the skills learned in literacy lessons were being insufficiently transferred to work in other subjects. More could be

done to use these lessons to teach the genre features of writing which are commonly used in other subjects."

And he adds,

"The use of duplicated worksheets may reflect a teaching approach in which pupils are allocated practice or small-scale tasks in writing, perhaps focused on a particular linguistic structure or other components of writing. The finding that such approaches are sometimes over-relied upon has been a recurrent one in English primary school inspection findings. As long ago as 1978, a survey of nationally representative sample of primary [in this case 7 to 11] schools reported that books of English exercises were used in nearly all classes of 9 and 11 years old (DES, 1978). The author the survey added that the use of such exercises do not necessarily help pupils to write fluently and with purpose [the exercises typically being short tasks, involving little authorship]."

The pattern in almost all writing classroom settings is the same. Majorly, the setting is sentence driven and textbook oriented and all suffer from lack of authorship. It literally means learners just try to learn the patterns and apply them. They do not copy, seemingly, and it sounds like making their own new textbook through learning new rules and words to substitute. Therefore, the two concepts of learning to write and writing to learn seem necessary to be discussed.

It seems that there is consensus among educationalists that writing is perhaps the most challenging of the four language skills for learners and it is believed that children think of writing as hard work (Abu Rass, 2001; Al-Alami, 2003; Khater, 2002; Yan, 2005). Richard & Renandya (2002) assure that writing is the most difficult task for L2 learners. This difficulty lies in both generating and organizing ideas. Translating these ideas into a readable text is a difficult task. Ddeubel (2009)

believed that difficulty of writing is due to the cognitive processes underlying the writing skills. These processes are difficult to measure. Therefore, it is highly recommended to provide repeated practice in writing.

Many educationalists (Brookes & Grundy, 1998; Hyland, 2003; Macaro, 2003) agree that writing has been a neglected skill as many linguists from De Saussure to Chomsky paid more attention to speaking skills. However, writing is an important language skill because it is a means of communication, it consolidates the learning of new structures of vocabulary and it is used to record experience (Silva and Brice, 2004); besides, writing is a means of self-assessment and getting feedback from the teacher.

Writing is used to shape and filter our ideas. It is a device of learning and education and involves students when they write because they use their eyes, hands and brains (Hinkel, 2006). Writing encourages thinking and learning, motivates communication, and makes thought available for reflection (Martin, 2009). When thoughts are written down, ideas can be examined, reconsidered, superseded, rearranged, and changed. The paramount importance of this indispensible skill is further stated by Olshtain (2001:207) "….. The skill of writing enjoys special status- it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to close or distant known or unknown readers". Wang (2005) stresses that writing enables teachers to provide the different learning opportunities for learners with different learning styles and needs.

Hence, some learners especially those who do not learn easily through oral practice alone, feel more secure and relaxed if they are allowed to read and write in target language. He believes that writing satisfies a psychological need as it is served

to provide learners with some tangible evidence that they are making progress in the language.

Writing is a crucial skill that enables people to express their feelings and thoughts. They use it to define themselves, clarify their knowledge and ideas, to understand the problems that may face them as well as to find solutions for such problems. What people learn about themselves and develop within themselves through writing can help them to realize their individual potential and to achieve potential goals (Martin, 2009).

Learning to write in English as a second language allows learners to put their thoughts on paper, sees their ideas in print, and shares them with others. Writing also enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences, and large chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce grammar and vocabulary they are learning in class. It helps to consolidate learning to render it available for use in other areas such as listening, speaking and reading (Liu, 2007).

Writing has been seen as essential, useful, integral and questionable part of any language syllabus (Frodesen, 2001). Learning to write supports students in learning the rules of usage; they learn to spell and to use appropriate grammar and conventions. Silva and Brice (2004) stated that writing in a foreign language helps learners to improve their grammatical, strategic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competences in target language. Also, when our students write, they have a chance to take risks and go beyond what they have just learnt to say. Moreover, when students write, they become very involved with the new language; the effort to express ideas and constant use of eye, hand, and brain is a unique way to reinforce learning.

In spite of the importance of writing, it is one of the most difficult language skills to master. Writing is generally regarded as a difficult skill and a complex task (Graham et al. 2007). This is often attributed to its inherently complex characteristics which according to Wall (1981:53) "range from mechanical control to creativity, with good grammar, knowledge of subject matter awareness of stylistic conventions and various mysterious factors in between".

Writing is a process through which writers explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. It is a difficult skill for native and nonnative speakers alike, for writers should balance multiple issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. Writing is especially difficult for nonnative speakers because they are expected to create written products that demonstrate mastery of all the aforementioned issues in a new language (Abu-Rass, 2001).

Martin (2009) assumes that the writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements. It requires the use of specific knowledge the writer has, the ability to discover and construct meanings, and the ability to put ideas down in writing using clear language (Olinghouse and Graham, 2009). Thus, writing is not an easy skill, or a natural process that just happens. Hu (2005) stated that writing skill is considered a complex skill since it requires the students to apply the appropriate cognitive, intellectual skills, verbal information and appropriate motivation.

Previous researchers proved that EFL students face some writing problems (Macaro, 2003; Yan, 2005). Those problems might hinder their ability to express themselves freely, as they are not interested in the topic that the teacher asks them to

write about (Yan, 2005). They cannot link sentences into a coherent paragraph, nor can they express their thought in a lucid and organized way.

El-Shafie (2006) stated that writing is the most difficult skill of all the language skills taught to EFL students and some sort of punishment for students. Students cannot develop their ideas when asked to write simple or compound sentences, and certain types of grammar mistakes dominate their writings (e.g. sentence structure, conjunctions, tenses, adverbs, adjectives, voice, prepositions, word-order, spelling, paragraph development, vocabulary choice, and punctuation).

Hinkel (2006) conducted a study to develop first year preparatory stage students' writing skills and their interest in English. He stated that students make many mistakes when they write and consider composition the most difficult task for them. So, he attempted to investigate the effectiveness of a program based on individualized activities in developing first prep pupils' writing skills and their interest in English.

Mohasseb (2009) conducted a study to determine student' writing problems, and to suggest guidelines for remedy. Findings of the study showed that students had problems at lower order skills (spelling, grammar, punctuation) and higher order skills (organization and unity).

In addition, research also identified that other reasons for the problems of lack of EFL writing skills are the insufficient teaching strategies followed by English language teachers in teaching composition (Wang, 2005), the absence of motivation to cover prewriting activities that can enable learners to collect enough ideas and information necessary for writing or the lack of due time and attention devoted to developing writing skills, and collecting negative attitudes towards writing activities (Cotterall & Cohen, 2003).

It has been found that most students are usually apprehensive toward writing activities, and writing instruction remains an area of low interest for those students (Yang, 2005; Liu, 2007). Besides, lack of suitable learning strategies in writing that does not suit the students' personalities, results in low motivation for students (Feng, et al. 2013). Jarvis (2000) asserts that many students do not enjoy writing because they feel that if they cannot do it correctly the first time then they will never get it.

According to Graham et al. (2007), writing attitudes affect writing achievement and writing competence. A student who has a positive writing attitude is more likely to plan writing actions, be more effortful, persevere despite challenges, set goals that will challenge him or herself, and believe in his or her own success (Bandura, 1995; Graham, 2006). Students with a more positive attitude will write more often than those with a more negative attitude. Further, those students with positive attitudes may decide to write even if they are not required to write. Students with negative attitudes, though, may choose to avoid writing tasks and put forth little effort when writing (Graham et al., 2007).

Yang and Chang (2005) suggested that students who are interested in writing are more likely to develop a better understanding of it, set writing goals, make use of various strategies, and seek feedback on their writing. According to Wang (2005), learners should be involved in their own learning. In order to help students devote their efforts to language, they should have a desire to learn. Therefore, a better understanding of how to develop a suitable learning strategy or authority tool to enhance students' writing interest and motivation is worth examining.

Mastering language skills should be at the heart of every educational program (Binder, Haughton & Bateman, 2002). How can we tell whether someone has truly mastered a language skill? What is the measureable indicator that a person really

knows how to do something? A lot of professionals have discussed the issue, but the one presented by Binder, Haughton & Bateman (2002) seems to be of paramount importance. In fact, we see many children and adults who can perform skills and demonstrate knowledge accurately enough- given unlimited time to do so; however, mastery in skills means doing the activity accurately under specified time constraint (Binder, Haughton & Bateman, 2002).

Writing is an active, productive skill and students who want to master it especially in a foreign language face multiple challenges (Zhang & Liu, 2013). While the fundamental goal of every language learning program should be achieving mastery over four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, true mastery over writing is very hard for EFL learners and they may face plenty of difficulties (Graham & Perin, 2007). Celce-Murcia (2001) believes that mastery to express one's ideas in writing in a second or foreign language with reasonable coherence and accuracy is a major achievement that even many native speakers of English never master.

Binder, Haughton and Bateman (2002) define true mastery as a combination of fluency and accuracy. In other words, the real difference in expert performers is that they behave both accurately and quickly, without hesitation. When it comes to language learning skills, true mastery in writing for example can be achieved through a combination of writing accurately i.e. the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences and fluency i.e. the learners' capacity to produce language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation. In fact, accuracy is the basis of fluency while fluency is a further improvement of a person's linguistic competence and a better revelation of his/her communicative competence (Skehan, 2009).

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According to Skehan (2009), two important aspects of performance in task-based contexts include accuracy in which the performer tries to make as few errors as possible, and fluency which is the rate of speech production. Since writing is seen as a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon involving a series of interrelated stages, attention to one aspect is likely to be at the expense of the other (Skehan, 2009). For example, L2 learners who are more concerned with the correctness of what is said might not pay attention to how something is said or vice versa. Therefore, L2 learners especially those at lower levels of proficiency, find it difficult to attend to meaning and form at the same time.

In helping students to master writing, teachers should teach students write fluently and accurately and instructions should provide students with tasks in which they can intensify their understanding of the relationships between words, phrases, clauses, and paragraphs with the help of their knowledge of how to write accurately and fluently (Martin, 2009).

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) define writing mastery as the capability of students in producing unity and coherent written words which results in a text to express their own ideas using appropriate vocabulary, grammar and other language skills through a certain process to create meaningful communication. That is why for ESL/EFL learners, mastery of writing is accounted as one of the contributing avenues to success in learning the language (Yan, 2005).

In fact, writing is a basic communication skill and a unique asset in the process of learning a language which is one of the most challenging skills for L2 learners to master.

Mastery in writing is not naturally acquired- it is learned as a set of practical and learned experiences (Naidu, 2007). Some studies have proved that language

skills are all related and writing can improve other language skills; therefore, achieving true mastery over writing is a necessity for language learners.

If we come to the idea that true mastery over writing is a combination of fluency and accuracy then we should acknowledge that fluency goes beyond mere accuracy to include the pace, or speed of performance. On a continuum from a total lack of measurable performance to mastery, 100% correct is only part of the way there. Fluency in language skills frees attention for application, creativity, and problem-solving- the higher order activities that make education valuable and fun (Binder, Haughton & Bateman, 2002).

Writing in a Cognitive View

Academic writing is a process of acquisition of academic vocabulary and discourse style which make writing a cognitively complex issue. Learning is a process through which the learners' skills are gradually developed and errors eliminated. Cognitive theory illustrates acquisition as a product of complex interaction of linguistics environments and the learner's internal mechanisms. McLaughlin (1988) states that to enhance mastery in L2 skills, learners shift these internal representations with the help of a gradual and continual restructuring.

Anderson's (1985) model of language production can be applied to both speaking and writing. This model can be divided into three stages,

First, the construction stage which is the part where the writer uses strategies such as brainstorming, mind-mapping or outlining to plan what is going to be written. In this stage, according to Chamot and O'Malley (1990) the writer uses various types and sources of knowledge, such as: sociolinguistics rules, discourse knowledge, and understanding of audience. And as Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)

have mentioned, the organization in both sentential and textual levels is very essential due to the role it has in communication of meaning and the quality of the writing product. For instance, not knowing how to organize a text or store the necessary and related information can cause a complication in the textual coherence.

Second, the stage of transformation is the level in which the writer through the process of composing or revising tries to transform the meanings and conceptual organizations into messages, with the help of applying language rules. As it goes into the composing stage of transformation, the writer tires to convert the information into meaningful sentences. The revision stage is considered a very demanding one according to Grabe and Kaplan (1996) as it involves not only evaluation, task definition, modification of text and strategy selection in writing plan, but also the student's ability to analyze and evaluate the received feedback on the writing.

The third and final stage, is named execution which is the physical process of producing the text. Chamot and O'Malley (1990) stated that the first two stages in this model are performing as "setting goals and searching memory for information, then using production systems to generate language in phrases or constituents" (p. 42). According to Snow (2001), through this model teaching approach that nurture development of language and content knowledge, practice in applying this knowledge, and strategy training that end in independent learning are being practiced.

Chamot and O'Malley (1990) have differentiated three learning strategies in order to enhance or facilitate language production:

a) Metacognitive, which is planning and monitoring the organization of written discourse to make sure to what extent the written text is appropriate to the demands of the task,

b) Cognitive, which is using and transferring the known linguistic or vocabulary knowledge to facilitate or use new tasks or vocabulary,

c) Socio-affective strategies which is revision with the help of cooperating with peers.

They claim that due to the hardships of writing and difficulty of the correction of all aspects together, learners selectively use the ones which are proceduralized and automatic.

Learners use various strategies in the learning process learning. They should be internalized and then can be used in different learning conditions. One of the strategies is the influence of affective states on the performance and cognition. For example, in a job interview or writing in a timed test condition affective states and emotions can influence the learners' achievement and performance. As Schumann (1998) claimed affective states may affect cognition in framing the problem and selecting processing strategies. He stated that when we need to judge about a situation or due to time limits or competing tasks we cannot use cognition properly, affective factors play an important role. Therefore, performance and results of the job of the learners are affected.

Language transfer, defined as the influence of similarities and differences between the learners' L1 and the target language (Odlin, 1989), is the other important strategy in writing which can lead to writing errors.

As Ellis (1994) argued, transfer can involve positive one known as facilitation, negative one known as error, and avoidance or over-use of target language. Selinker (1972) noted that behaviorists view transfer as the cause of errors, while cognitivists view it as a resource of inter-language development for learners.

Ellis (1994) stated that: "the L1 can have a direct effect on inter-language development by influencing the hypotheses that learners construct" (p. 342). McLaughlin (1988) claimed that the reason for error transfer to happen is: "learners lack the necessary information in the second language or the attention capacity to activate the appropriate second language routine. But such an account says little about why certain linguistic forms transfer and others do not" (p. 50).

Although L1 is not considered as the only cause of error at the structural level, because it is hard to distinguish between communication instances and language transfer in research studies, it can have its own effect and play an important role in L2 acquisition. For instance, when the writer is under pressure to achieve or synthesize the meaning (Widdowson, 1990) or when he is expected to generate ideas or describe details (Friedlander, 1990) he calls upon systematic resources from his native language.

However, according to Leki (1997) and Spack (1997) previously mentioned ideas end in lack of attention to writing styles and cultured stereotypes consequently; as Raimes (1998) has noted "the context, and purpose of their learning to write, or their age, race, class, gender, education, and prior experience" which are totally considered as social factors will be ignored, owing to erroneous predictions based on learners' L1 (p.143).

Having said that, based on Kern's (2000) opinion, studying "difference among epistemological rhetorical, and pedagogical traditions" and knowing the effect of language transfer can help uncover the reasons for some certain grammatical, syntactical, and rhetorical errors (p. 176).

The study by Ellis (1994) and Selinker (1972) revealed that inter-language is formed by input, L1 transfer, and communicative needs. In the classroom setting,

input and interaction play important roles in the writing process. Four broad areas are being focused in those researches: input frequency, the nature of comprehensible input, learner output in interaction, and the process of collaborative discourse construction for learners to be able to remove their writing errors and be able to form new syntactic and rhetorical forms in L2. Hence it is vital to be exposed to enough L2 authentic input with the help of the written texts, otherwise learners' errors will persist.

Considering the above mentioned studies the input that learners receive plays an important role in forming their interlanguage. Therefore, I decided to put input flooding process in the intervention course. During the process students would normally make some mistakes which need to be corrected to avoid the consequences in their writing product. As a result corrective feedback is required to help learners overcome the complications.

For many language learners, the primary source of input is inter-language talk or discourse. If oral or written interaction provides negotiating meaning, peer responses can be very useful (Pellettieri, 2000). Peer review classes or computer-mediated exchanges are avenues for learners to read and respond to each other's written products.

As Kern (2000) argued, the root of many errors in second language learners and their lower level of effectiveness in comparison to first language users can be lack of familiarity with structural, rhetorical, and cultural elements and conventions existing in the new language. Hence, familiarity with discourse markers in different levels can solve the problems of organizing a text and putting the ideas and thoughts in order to transfer the message.

In a study by Palata (1995) on the Spanish speakers living in America, it was revealed that their errors related to a multiplicity of factors, including the interference between the language and cultural norms. These writers found out that they were expected to change their Spanish writing style to an English one; as a result, they tried to make some changes such as creating another persona, or selecting an English name to replace their Spanish one. Through these modifications, they tried to be more immersed in the target language and culture.

In short, social and cognitive factors along with strategies selected by learners can work as significantly crucial elements in discovering the underlying reasons for occurrence of some errors in learners' writing. The ability to communicate in L2, or what is called learner's output, and the ability to express one's ideas effectively through building up a text are the factors that can involve in L2 writing as a complex process.

Some models have been reviewed by Roca DeLarios et al. (2002) in comprehensive critical reviews of L2 writing, which are as follows,

One of the most cited and widely used models is the one proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981). It has been revised by the two designers separately, following some criticism about it. Flower (1994) revised it with incorporating a social element, while Hayes (1996) included a socio-affective element and a new focus on working memory, also known as short-memory.

Another model is the Developing Model of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) included two strategies of knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming.

The next model is Levelt's (1989) model of speaking which was adopted by Van Wijk (1999) and also Hayes's (1996) and Kellog's (1996) models integrating

writing processes with a model of working memory are some of the other examples of writing model.

All of the presented models with different views toward writing look at language as a whole and illustrate the steps of writing process, as: planning, translating, formulating into language, and revising, which are all done under the control of a monitor and with considering the limitations of the working memory (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). However, the divergence in models has its roots in different views and conceptions in ignoring or reducing the importance of some processes or factors. The one discussed below is one of those models which illustrated two factors as the most influential elements in the process of writing fluency.

According to the Chenoweth and Hayes (2001) model of text production and fluency, which is adapted from Flower and Hayes (1980) and Hayes (1996), the effect of linguistic experience on writing fluency is mediated by the two factors of translator and reviser. In the fluency perspective, burst rate plays the most important role. The higher the numbers of bursts are, the faster the writing can be.

The model depicts four levels of processes for writing, namely: a) a proposer, b) a translator, c) a reviser, and d) a transcriber.

The first level which is proposer includes the pre-linguistic ideas and is related to the formation of ideas in the mind of the writer.

The second stage, the translator, is a level or path through which the proposed ideas are translated into a chain of vocabulary and grammar shapes appropriately.

As for the next stage, the reviser, the writer tries to evaluate and compare the proposed ideas and written language.

The transcriber is the final stage during which the writer converts the content of the articulatory buffer into written language.

To reach this, the researchers, Chenoweth and Hayes (2001), asked 13 students to write one essay in English (L1) and one essay in the foreign language being taught, either French or German, as L2. The findings showed that the rate of word usage in L1 was more than in L2 (17.2 vs. 10.75). Writing in L1, students had longer bursts of writing and more frequent revisions happened in L2 (26% vs. 13%). Writing in L1 included a higher percentage of the proposed new words in comparison to L2.

They claimed that the result was due to the translation and revision process. The more professional the power of the translator is, the bigger the size of the bursts can be. As learners become more knowledgeable and have more complex structures in mind, they can produce sentences more fluently, thus the production occurs faster and easier.

In contrast, less efficient writers put more time on their writing process; as they become more experienced in the process of language writing, their time spent on revision diminishes, not because of becoming less careful, but because their dominancy over the rules and regulations of the language increases. Therefore, there will be less violation in the process of language production.

Cumming and Riazi (2000) did a study in a Canadian university. Their research in that ESL atmosphere classroom was unsuccessful and they claimed the reason was not having a clear picture about how learners learn to write in a second language and how teaching can influence the process of writing.

Despite their unsatisfactory result in the study, their work can have a great impact on future studies. They actually worked on the effect of students'

background, classroom instruction, and process of learning on ESL learners' writing. They believed that there seems to be a connection between the students' background learning experiences and their current learning process. They also claimed that the heterogeneous setting in ESL atmosphere makes it a complicated model in comparison to the homogeneity which exists in the FL setting. This view of Cumming and Riazi (2000) seems to be an important guide for future study.

Another work by Sasaki (2002) divided writing into 6 stages as follows: global planning, local planning, thematic planning, rereading, rhetorical refining, and translating from L1 to L2. She is strongly against the dichotomy of skilled vs. unskilled writers. Moreover, she tries to emphasize the role of teaching and learning process. Her empirically-based model of writing was designed based on her study of 12 expert writers and 22 novice writers.

The findings of the research revealed that instruction could be influential on the writing process with dividing learners into 3 groups of expert writers, novice writers before the instruction and novice writer after the instruction. The findings also confirmed the different amount of time on global and local planning and also on rhetorical refining and translating from L1 to L2. She also emphasized on the important role of the awareness of different needs of learners in different stages of learning in curriculum planning.

All the above-mentioned ideas reveal that there always appears to be the necessity to work on some complementary contextual framework, and all experts have changed their frameworks to the view that the sole dependency on cognitive factors cannot lead to the goal. As a result, both social and cognitive elements should be taken into account.

Reading and writing, the former as a way of understanding and comprehending and the latter as a way of producing a language, have always been controversial issues in both ESL and EFL contexts. Writing as a production passage of language has been baffling both teachers and learners.

In a language teaching setting grammar and vocabulary are being worked on to the full degree, while the organization and arrangements of the ideas are often ignored. This problem can end in a produced language which seems incoherent in general in both sentential and supra-sentential levels. Sticking to the sentence level, language teachers in EFL setting seem not to be successful enough to guide learners to build up a cohesive text in which sentences are well-organized and paragraphs well-connected.

Writing is a comprehensively productive skill which requires a thorough knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and dominancy on the topic. However, it would not be enough to produce a totally understandable and smooth text. The writer's thoughts should be smoothly arranged to enable the reader to follow them and reach the destination which is a complete comprehension of what is being produced.

As Chastain (1990) noticed, even a conversation class cannot concentrate on mere speaking skills; writing activities should be included as well. Hence, teaching writing which is coherent and well-tailored is a necessity of any language class. The pedagogical implications of writing cannot be ignored or marginalized.

Mohan and Lo (1985) after analyzing ESL and EFL essays at the sentence level proposed that both positive and negative transfer may occur. ESL and EFL learners both show a developmental process considering problems with grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. It is the same as the obstacles on the way of monolinguals

acquiring their native language skills. However, development of discourse organization is counted as a gradual process which can be influenced by appropriate composition practice in the native language and gained educational experience and academic knowledge.

Based on Mohan and Lo (1985) other than the influence of negative transfer, which can cause problems in the learner's writing products, some other possible factors are to be considered as well, such as: (a) ignorance or unfamiliarity with the patterns and conventions of expository writing in L1 and L2 languages, (b) lack of knowledge or insufficient language skills for producing, articulating or expressing abstract ideas or complex structures, (c) lack of information about the components or ingredients of the topic being proposed, and (d) overemphasis on the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary level and turning a blind eye to the communication of ideas and thoughts.

The last mentioned factor seems to be the most serious one in a society of learners in Iran, because students in various courses are being exposed to a lot of texts, depending on the majors they are studying in. Besides, they are being taught the grammar rules and the vocabulary required to cover the proposed topic, while lack of unity between sentences and not having a coherent mind map seems to affect the learners.

Referring to the issue of negative transfer, it happens due to culture-specific rhetorical organization of the writer's native language. However, universal thinking patterns, which are in all writing conventions, can cause positive transfer. These structures and patterns are beyond the syntactic or grammatical level and can be considered as common components of cognition and language proficiency. In other

words, they can be viewed as a form of underlying structures of academic knowledge.

According to Jones (1979) and Wang (1991) memorizing the rhetorical patterns and preserving them as a part of knowledge are considered a value in the education system of the Chinese community. In other words, those who know and apply these rhetorical patterns are counted as knowledgeable and well-educated. Reversely, English rhetorical conventions value freedom and individualism in writing. They also value originality and creativity.

As has been stated previously, Within the past ten years or so there has been an increasing interest in the theoretical status of DMs, focusing on what they are, what they mean, and what function(s) they manifest, as well as how individual DMs such as *but* or *so* pattern.

The first and the most detailed effort is that reported in Schiffrin (1987), who is concerned with elements which mark "sequentially-dependent units of discourse". She labels them 'discourse markers' and analyzes in detail the expressions *and*, *because*, *but*, *I mean*, *now*, *oh*, *or*, *so*, *then*, *well*, and *y'know* as they occur in unstructured interview conversations. Schiffrin suggests that DMs do not easily fit into a linguistic class. In fact, she goes so far as to suggest that paralinguistic features and non-verbal gestures are possible DMs. She writes that we should

"... try to find common characteristics of these items to delimit what

linguistic conditions allow an expression to be used as a marker. But such

an approach would require not only discovery of the shared

characteristics of an extremely diversified set of expressions, in English:

it would require analysis across a wide body of typologically diverse

language to discover what other linguistic resources are drawn upon for use as markers." (Schiffrin, 1987, p.328).

Nevertheless, she then sets forth some tentative suggestions similar to those suggested by Zwicky as to what constitutes a marker (ibid.):

"It has to be syntactically detachable from a sentence.

It has to be commonly used in initial position of an utterance.

It has to have a range of prosodic contours.

It has to be able to operate at both local and global levels of discourse.

It has to be able to operate on different planes of discourse."

Her primary interest is the ways in which DMs function to "add to discourse coherence" (1987, p.326). She maintains that coherence is "constructed through relations between adjacent units in discourse" (1987, p.24), and claims that there are five distinct and separate planes, each with its own type of coherence (1987, p.24-25):

"**Exchange Structure**, which reflects the mechanics of the conversational interchange (ethnomethodology) and shows the result of the participant turn-taking and how these alternations are related to each other;

Action Structure, which reflects the sequence of speech acts which occur within the discourse;

Ideational Structure, which reflects certain relationships between the ideas (propositions) found within the discourse, including cohesive relations, topic relations, and functional relations;

Participation Framework, which reflects the ways in which the speakers and hearers can relate to one another as well as orientation toward utterances; and

Information State, which reflects the ongoing organization and management of knowledge and metaknowledge as it evolves over the course of the discourse."

She then suggests that DMs typically provide contextual coordinates for an utterance by: (i) locating the utterance on one or more planes of talk of her discourse model (outlined above); (ii) indexing the utterances to the speaker, the hearer, or both; and (iii) indexing the utterances to prior and/or subsequent discourse. She sees DMs as serving an integrative function in discourse and thus contributing to discourse coherence. Schiffrin pointed out that some discourse markers relate only the semantic reality (the 'facts') of the two sentences while others, including so, may relate sentences on a logical (epistemic) level and/or a speech act (pragmatic) level. She wrote (1987):

"A fact-based causal relation between cause and result holds between idea unit, more precisely, between the event, state, and so on, which they encode. A knowledge-based causal relation holds when a speaker uses some piece(s) of information as a warrant for an inference (a hearer-inference). An action-based causal relation holds when a speaker presents a motive for an action being performed through talk- either his/her own action or an interlocutor's action."

Redeker (1991) provides a critique of Schiffrin (1987) and then proposes several significant revisions. She writes approvingly of the notion of core meaning for DMs (she calls DMs discourse operators), 4 suggesting that "the core meaning

should specify the marker's intrinsic contribution to the semantic representation that will constrain the contextual interpretation of the utterance" (Redeker, 1991, p.1164). She is concerned that the definition of DMs has not been adequately addressed and suggests that "what is needed is a clearer definition of the component of discourse coherence and a broader framework that embraces all connective expressions and is not restricted to an arbitrary selected subset" (1991, p.1167). She goes on to suggest that a discourse operator is:

"... a word or phrase ... that is uttered with the primary function of bringing to the listener's attention a particular kind of linkage of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context, An utterance in this definition is intonationally and structurally bounded, usually clausal unit." (1991, p.1168)

She then provides some examples of what are not DMs: clausal indicators of discourse structure (for example, let me tell you a story, as I said before, since this is so); deictic expressions as far as they are not used anaphorically (for example, now, here, today); anaphoric pronouns and noun phrases; and any expressions whose scope does not exhaust the utterance (1991, p.1168). The other part of Redeker's paper is more critical. After showing that nearly all of Schiffrin's 11 markers participate in all five planes, she concludes that Schiffrin's Information Structure and Participation Framework (see above) are not independent of the other three and thus should be incorporated into them. She writes:

"The cognitions and attitudes composing those two components concern individual utterances, while the building blocks on the other three planes are relational concepts. The speaker's information status and attitude should better be seen as contributing indirectly to coherence by

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motivating the speaker's choices at the pragmatic planes: markers

function in action or exchange structure by virtue of indicating or

predicting changes in the speaker's cognitions and attitudes." (Redeker,

1991, p.1169)

The result is a revised model of discourse coherence based on three

components: Ideational Structure and Rhetorical Structure (roughly equivalent to

Schiffrin's Ideational Structure and Action Structure, respectively), and a Sequential

Structure (roughly equivalent to an extended version of Schiffrin's Exchange

Structure). She emphasizes (not inconsistent with Schiffrin's position) that:

"any utterance ... in a discourse is then considered to always participate

in all three components, but one will usually dominate and suggest itself

as the more relevant linkage of this utterance to its context" (1991,

p.1170)

Redeker further argues for a definition of discourse coherence, independent of

DMs, "to allow for implicit coherence relations and for the simultaneous realization

of semantic and pragmatic coherence links, irrespective of their being signaled by a

DM" (1991, p.1168). She proposes the following model of discourse coherence. Two

discourse units are related:

(a) **Ideationally**, if their utterance in the given context entails the speaker's

commitment to the existence of that relation in the world the discourse describes. For

example, temporal sequence, elaboration, cause, reason, and consequence (Redeker,

1991, p.1168);

(b) **Rhetorically**, if the strongest relation is not between the propositions expressed

in the two units but between the illocutionary intentions they convey. For example,

antithesis, concession, evidence, justification, and conclusion (Redeker, 1991, p.1168);

(c) **Sequentially**, if there is a paratactic relation (transition between issues or topics) or hypotactic relation (those leading into or out of a commentary, correction, paraphrase, aside, digression, or interruption sentence) between only loosely related (or indirectly related adjacent discourse sentences (1168). "When two adjacent discourse units do not have any obvious ideational or rhetorical relation ... their relation is called sequential." (Redeker, 1990, p.369)

The third theoretical perspective is provided by Blakemore (1987, 1992), who works within the Relevance Theory framework (cf. Sperber and Wilson, 1986). She treats DMs as a type of Gricean conventional implicature, but rejects his analysis of a higher order speech act (Grice, 1989, p.362; Blakemore, 1992, p.148), and focuses on how DMs (she calls them "discourse connectives") impose constraints on implicatures. Blakemore proposes that DMs do not have a representational meaning the way Blakemore maintains that DMs should be analyzed as linguistically specified constraints on contexts and suggests that there are at least four ways in which information conveyed by an utterance can be relevant (1992, p.138-141): "It may allow the derivation of a contextual implication (e.g., so, therefore, too, also); It may strengthen an existing assumption, by providing better evidence for it (e.g. after all, moreover, furthermore); It may contradict as existing assumption (e.g. however, still nevertheless, but). It may specify the role of the utterance in the discourse (e.g., lexical expressions like boy and hypothesis do, but have only a procedural meaning, which consists of instructions about how to manipulate the conceptual representation of the utterance (Blakemore, 1992, 1995).

Applying correct grammar, syntax and vocabulary in the writing product with the presence of Chinese rhetorical functions is the outcome of utilizing cultural rhetorical patterns of Chinese learner's first language. Other than transferring cultural thoughts and patterns used in L1 to L2, the other developmental problems of discourse organization, such as: focusing on accuracy just at the syntax and grammar levels, are related to instructional factors.

Coherence in writing. Cohesion and coherence which are considered as two essential elements of good writing were first noticed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). Writing as one of the four basic language skills tests a person's ability to write correctly and coherently. Through this skill a person manifests how he can use the language correctly and how he expresses his ideas and thoughts coherently.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) initiated study on cohesion and coherence with their book Cohesion in English. They suggested that in any language cohesive devices are divided into reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion. These five main categories, as it was mentioned, created 'texture' which is the property of being a text. Several studies have worked on using these cohesive devices by native versus non-native users, among which Farncis (1989) and Hinkel (2001) can be named. The results of the majority of them showed that non-native speakers did not use a wide range of discourse markers as their native counterparts did. Even advanced non-native speaker writers did not use the wide range of these devices as native ones in her study , Hinkel (2001) claimed.

As mentioned above, the lack of usage of these elements could result in lack of unity to the writing and as mentioned by Khaled and Sabry (2013) learners do not have a clear picture of how to start, maintain, and terminate their writing and how to

connect their ideas. These complications and confusions of learners can be solved through a process of explicit instruction to make them more meaningful to learners. Besides, as mentioned above, explicit instruction can be flourished in process with the help of input flood and corrective feedback.

There have been three views towards discourse markers. The first one is the 'coherence model' (Schiffrin, 1987) which puts its focus on textual coherence rather than local context. According to Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999) four planes can be defined in the framework of discourse markers, which are 'exchange structure' like question and answer context, 'action structure' like speech acts, 'ideational structure' like semantic idea exchange, and 'participation framework' like the interaction between speaker and listener.

The second focus as Fraser (1999:936) noted is a 'grammatical-pragmatic perspective'. As he stated, discourse markers cannot be limited to textual coherence, as mentioned in the first focus. He credited markers to signal the user's intention in the preceding and following utterance.

Within the past few decades, there has been increasing attention in the theoretical status of discourse markers, focusing on what they are, what they mean and what functions they manifest. In order to have an understanding of the matter, and their function(s), the relevance-theoretic approach to discourse markers will be explained which has been developed by Sperber and Wilson (1995).

Relevance theory is a pragmatic model which has been trying to explain how speakers interpret utterances. It is based on a hypothesis of a cognitive nature about how human beings process linguistic information. This hypothesis tries to suggest that the mind's main processor is highly effective in handling the information because it is specifically oriented towards the search for relevance. The principle of

Relevance entitles the addressee to assume that an utterance comes with a guarantee of its own optimal relevance.

An interpretation is considered to be consistent with the presumption of optimal relevance if the speaker could rationally have intended to be optimally relevant to the hearer on that interpretation which entitles the addressee to expect a level of relevance which is high enough to justify attending to the stimulus, and which is the highest level of relevance the communicator was capable of achieving given means and goals in his or her mind.

It can be claimed that the most important contributions of relevance theory to linguistic research is the redefinition of the concept of context which includes not only information about the immediate context (also called physical context), but also a set of assumptions stored in memory and deductively accessible.

Traditionally, a description of the linguistic items of DMs has been the main research focus in the past twenty years. Schiffrin (1987) raised the importance of DMs in the 80s, and offered a coherence model which includes semantic, syntactic and discourse-organising level to investigate how DMs assist oral coherence (Archakis, 2001). A more pragmatic view later developed and emphasised more on the functional aspect that DMs work within and beyond the context.

Studies on DMs can be generally divided into two categories. The first category is a descriptive analysis of DMs in a particular language spoken by its native speakers. The second is about the acquisition of DMs of target language by non-native speakers. Nevertheless, the latter has been studied much less and is limited to second language learners (Müller, 2004; Carter and Fung, 2007).

In educational settings, DMs are found to have a positive role in classroom context as effective conversational endeavors (Othman, 2010). The studies on DMs

in teacher talk yet are under-researched (Carter and Fung, 2007). So far, little attention has been paid to the use and functions of DMs as one essential interactional factor in classroom teacher-student conversation. It is hence important to look at the previous works on DMs and particularly their relations to pedagogical purposes in classroom context.

Blakemore (1992, cited in Fraser, 1999) adopted Relevance Theory and claimed that these markers have 'procedural meaning' (P. 936). Blakemore (1992) believed that they are limited to specific contexts and referred to them as discourse connectives, segments' interrelation and discourse processing (Fung & Crater, 2007).

Similarly, Liu (2006) based on a study on a Chinese literature class, after a pragmatic analysis concluded that these markers have five basic textual functions, which are: connect, transfer, generalize, explain, and repair. Functions of discussion, emotion control, and social relationship adjustment are the three elements he believed discourse markers contribute to.

The third focus is Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) by Halliday and Hasan (1976). In their study they worked on words like *and*, *but*, *to sum up* and the like as sentence connectives and the roles they can play in semantic cohesion. As Schiffrin et al. (2003) mentioned discourse markers are effective cohesive devices that have different meanings and functions in segment organization. The work basically was on written texts then it put more lights on the importance of these units in meaning and function construction.

Research in the realm of discourse markers majorly focuses on syntactic-structural levels or pragmatic coherence. Other aspects such as: features, categorization and contexts are not worked on enough (Yu, 2008). I strongly believe that relating these units to their local context and even going beyond context level

can yield positive results. These units can help learners participate in class activities and learning can be more effective. Probing into the issue can lead to better achievements in meaningful learning.

According to Sanders and Spooren (2008) coherence, as one of the criteria for textuality, is the compulsory element of a well-organized text. In recent works, such as Sanders and Matt (2006), cognitive presentation of discourse is the element that brings organization to the text rather than the discourse itself. Coherence, as the cognitive presentation of the text, is the factor that makes the text unique to it through making connections.

Morphological structures make semantic connections understandable. Semantic connections are done between the parts of discourse, while morphological structures can affect semantic connections be more or less understood by reader or hearer. The cognitive structure of the text presented is related to the term coherence (Sanders & Spooren, 2008). They presented this connection in two ways:

  a. Referential coherence: Smaller units in the discourse are connected to the same cognitive referents. Pronouns, demonstrative adjectives, etc. are examples of these referents. This is described as cohesion in the literature (Halliday & Hassan, 1976, p.434). Example:

'I went out with Jo on Sunday. She looked awful.'

'she' clearly refers to 'Jo', which is an anaphoric connection.

  b. Relational coherence: the structure of coherence relation is directly exhibited through the presentation of discourse. Coherence relation includes the type of relation, such as temporal relationship. Example:

'While my mother was cleaning the floor, my brother was playing with his toys'.

'While' is clearly showing the relationship between the sentences. Halliday and Hassan (1976, p.23) argued that:

"The concept of cohesion can be usefully supplemented by that of register, since the two together effectively define a text. A text is a passage of discourse which is coherent in these two regards: it is coherent with respect to the context of situation and therefore consistent in register; and it is coherent with respect to itself, and therefore, cohesive. Neither of the two conditions is sufficient without the other, nor does the one by necessity entails the other. Just as one can construct passages which are beautifully cohesive but which fail as texts because they lack consistency of register- there is no continuity of meaning in relation to the situation. The hearer, or reader, reacts to both of these things in his judgment of texture".

Regarding that, it is to be noted that a text is considered coherent when two conditions are met: first; it must be consistent with the context which it is created in; second, it has cohesion, which is, cohesive devices are used properly to connect all parts in the text.

Van Dijk (1977, p. 95) also noted that "coherence is a semantic property of discourse, based on the interpretation of each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences". He illustrated two levels of discourse coherence: first, linear or sequential which he described as" coherence relations holding between propositions expressed by composite sentence and sequence of those sentences". Second, global coherence which is "of a more general nature, and characterizes a discourse as a whole or a larger fragment of a discourse. This concept of the global coherence is what he called "macrostructure" which is semantic presentation of discourse.

DeBeaugrande and Dressler (1981, P. 3) also mentioned seven standards of textuality. They claimed that any text needs these characteristics to be considered natural:

1. Intentionality

2. Acceptability

3. Informativity

4. Situationality

5. Intertextuality

6. Cohesion, and

7. Coherence

They defined a text as "a communicative occurance which meets seven standards of textuality". In their definition they described cohesion as "concerns the ways in which the components of the surface text, i.e. the actual words we have or see, are mutually connected within a sequence". As it is seen, their view towards cohesion was all about grammatical forms in a language. On the other hand, in their definition coherence "concerns the ways in which the components and relations which underline the surface text are mutually accessible and relevant".

Reviewing what was mentioned by different authors, it can be concluded that cohesion and coherence are two different levels of language which should be in discourse analysis. As far as cohesion deals with the surface structure of discourse, it is more obvious than coherence. Cohesion is a mean for reaching coherence. Coherence can be overt when it is superficial. It is easy to identify because it is related to the cohesive devices. It can also be covert which means it is about psychological, cognitive, and pragmatic devices. A coherent discourse needs both these factors together. Viewing discourse as a product means looking at the surface

of discourse. It is looking at the linguistic devices which are used to connect different parts of discourse, i.e. considering discourse a visible and observable thing. It is mainly focusing on linguistic realization of coherent relations which practically means paying little attention to non-linguistic factors.

While viewing discourse as a process is a dynamic view towards it, which takes pragmatic and psychological process into account, it focuses on non-linguistic factors. As Givon (1995, P. VII) noted: "coherence is not an internal property of a written or spoken text, (but) a property of what emerges during speech production and comprehension- the mentally presented text, and in particular the mental processes that partake in constructing that mental representation".

Relations in text can end in achieving coherence. In the literature, the idea is named under coherence relations, discourse relations, or conjunctive relations. Mann and Taboada (2006) stated that: "relations can be signaled by cue phrases (discourse markers or discourse particles), mood, tense, and aspect, or structural characteristics, such as adjacency pairs in conversation. Cue phrases have been the main object of study in the area of relation signaling. They have received different names: coherence markers, cue phrases, discourse connections, or discourse markers.

The existence of these cohesive ties and signals can help the reader or hearer to comprehend the presented material better and smoother. However, Taboada (2009) stated that: "It may be the case that all relations are indeed signaled, that is, they are all explicit. The challenge lies in finding what the particular signal is in each case. If people truly interpret different types of relations with relative ease they must be using signals to guide that interpretation. This leads to two different problems: establishing that relations are cognitively represented in the minds of hearers or

readers; and, if indeed relations are cognitively plausible, discovering the cues used to interpret them.

Learning to Write. The statement that writing is a complex task is always stated and it is a common cliché. Simultaneously, writing can be fun, which is when a learner is able to produce his own writing. The main purpose of a class and the major outcome is learning, as the final goal of all education settings. There, however, remains a question: To what extent it practically happens? What can be seen in all classrooms is a lot of exercises and practices which are worked on. Learners spend a huge amount of time reading and writing. Various exercises in textbooks are given to them. Finally, after doing exercises, there is some feedback and then students go to the next task. While there is no clear yardstick to measure if the main purpose which is 'learning' has practically has taken place. It needs to be more focused on.

The two underlying levels in the process of literacy program in practice should be taken into account. First, practice makes perfect. That is to say, practice should have its eye on the main and final target. When they have to learn to read, they have to read. When they have to learn to write, they have to write. Practice makes perfect is the rule when the two concepts of automaticity and fluency are the main targets.

To this aim, after the cornerstone and the basic components of thought, the requirement is integrating these elements and the required task should be integrated and executed fluently. The crucial issue which should be taken in mind is the separate views towards writing and learning to write. Writing in whatever form of essay, letter, summary or others, on the one hand, and learning to write in all different forms, on the other hand, have their own cognitive activities.

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The complexity of writing gets the students involve in the writing itself and focus on the final task of writing and achieve the goal. Considering this complex issue and focusing on sub-processes like translating the information to be transferred, checking and revising the results, and also some miner processes like language rules, grammar, spelling and the like do not allow the learners to learn much during practicing.

Opposite to what was noted above, some students try to learn through practicing process. They use it as an opportunity to learn as an active and reflective learner. They look at the writing process as learning to write task. They do all their efforts to expand their meta-cognitive and meta-communicative skills in writing process.

The aim of education, which is learning, forces us to make all students act the same. Practicing alone, due to what is mentioned, does not suffice. Learners should be able to be proficient language users, and to do dual-tasking which practically means to write and learn from their writing simultaneously. Therefore, majority of students try to put their focus on not only the writing activity but also the writing activities that could enhance the quality of learning outcome. In other words, writing plays a less dominant role in writing process, or better to say, it is less dominant. The dominancy is given to the final target of learning to write through the process of writing.

The second layer in literacy program is ' similarity of tasks'. The principle has a major problem. It does not consider a situation of changing. How can a learner apply something learned in the new situation? The principle notices that 'writing summaries should be learned through writing summaries'. Regarding this, modality should be discussed. Traditionally, it was the stereotype that reading can influence

the writing ability of learners. In other words, as students read more, they can learn different features and be aware of them. Then, they can apply them in writing products. Well, there is a critical question of whyness of the view.

The issue is looking at writing as a way of improving reading. When learners write and get familiar with the components of a text and learn through writing, they can apply the learned features in their reading, whenever face a text. Hence, the mode of the final task is deriving from the mode of the learning task. Whenever it is possible and practical the process of learning a task can support and serve the purpose of the final task.

As mentioned above writing and learning to write are two different processes. In learning process, the learner faces a lot of discomfort. Epstein (2001) illustrated it as,

"they also require study and willingness to examine the cultural-linguistic surroundings in which we find ourselves, an activity that is liable to produce a certain discomfort. This is, however, a fertile discomfort, as it is a means of stimulating learners about written texts and the frameworks that afford their construction. Simultaneously, it seems to me that this is a type of investment that promises a unique yield for each and every reader and writer- both teachers and learners."

Different stages of learning process come with different forms of cognitive discomfort. Alvarado, Vernon, and Zermeno (2005) worked on primary levels of language learners. They tried to work on punctuation of a text. They found out that it was a huge complication for the young kids to punctuate a text. It was true actually due to the fact that those age learners had no idea of the units which were supposed to be delimited. They actually had no knowledge of the writing system. They came

up with a new idea which was changing the position of a writer of a text, in this case, punctuating it, to a reflective reader of a text.

The purpose of reading by the pupils was not improving the ability to read, but to experience text problems. During this reading process a lot of goals are targeted at. First, they can learn how revise their text. They can frequently change their position from writer to reader and vice versa. This can lead to the second influence which is experiencing the effect of writing on the reader. They can figure out how a text can influence readers, and how readers decide about what the writer is trying to convey.

Another role which was defined as an exchange to a writer prior to writing was proposed by Britton (1971) which was viewing a participant as an observer. He stated that,

"As participants, we use language to interact with people and things and make the wheels of the world go round. As participants we use language to inform, instruct, persuade, plan, argue, and explain. Free from the demands of the worlds, as spectators we use language to create make believe play; do day dream; to related and to listen to experiences, gossips and tales; to read or write fiction, drama, and poetry (Britton, 1971 p.8)."

It is discussed that releasing learners from writing process and all its difficulties can help them be more attentive to learning about and from writing. When participants are put in the position of an observer instead of a writer, they become more receptive and connect better to the presented material which can aid them learn better and more effectively.

Geist (1989) viewed it as a movement from unconsciousness to semi-conscientiousness as follows,

" The unreflected, causal and random use of imitation we practice all the time is uncontrolled, e.g., it often becomes an imitation of the 'ends', and not of the 'means', as Dewey formulates it and imitation thus losses its element of analysis, 'close observation and judicious selection' which makes it 'an intelligent act' (Dewey, 1916 p.42). The potential in imitation I want to activate is precisely the semi-conscious analytical component of observation and selection. In its semi-consciousness, it provides access to funds of techniques which are commonly shared, but which are too subtle, too varied, too contextually determined to be formulated in common rules or in instructions.

Viewing writers as observers first can help them in procedural facilitation. It means they learn to incorporate goals within the writing process. They are taught to decompose the task, to balance between idea generation and text production. Coordination of all the process of writing is the goal not the last product. It is the difference between two views towards the produced text which are process-oriented versus product-oriented views.

Another strategy in learning to write is focusing on writing as a complicated task as it is generally believed. The reason why is somehow vivid. Writing process includes a lot of various cognitive activities which can be as generating appropriate content and organizing it into a text, then producing the text and finally revising it. All these processes as interactive issues can make it really tough for a writer to produce an appropriate text.

As it can be noted, the mentioned cognitively interactive process of producing a text is a meaning-creating process rather than an instrumental process which ends in conveying meaning. Hence, the content of a writing can be viewed a scaffold in the process of writing.

Garate and Melero (2000) stated,

"It is our firm belief that learning to present arguments is difficult but that it helps to build up complex linguistic and cognitive abilities and leads to pupils' having more tolerant attitudes, thereby, giving citizens a more enlightened moral code."

They also pinpointed,

"To compensate for this complexity, we gave the pupils an important piece of help: a series of cards which, as a whole, represent the external argumentative scheme, and which are directed more towards conceptualization processes rather than those of textualization."

The content mentioned and focused on in this stage is far away from the frozen contents. It is a creative content and language which focuses on teacher-led classroom discussions. Group writing and scaffolding are the two components being considered in this content generation.

Writing in a Social View

In the process of learning, both social and cognitive factors can play their own significant roles. According to a research by McGroarty (1996) it is revealed that positive attitudes, concrete goals and motivation can be reinforced by achieving the predetermined goals, while failure or lack of success can end in strengthening negative attitude and lack of motivation. Both direct and indirect measures confirm the results of research.

Besides, through exploring social factors, it can be clarified that whatever the reasons for some sort of obstacle to learning could be, problems such as different rates of L2 learning, different proficiency abilities in skills (for example conversation

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ability versus writing ability), and different final proficiency of the second language can be detected in a survey in social skills (Ellis, 1994).

For instance, although ESL learners might have a totally negative attitude towards learning how to write in academic settings, because of the professional and financial commitment to graduate from English-speaking universities, they have a strong external motivation to learn and improve their writing skill to be able to gain their purpose.

Gardner (1985) presented a socio-educational model in which the role of social factors in language education is emphasized. In this model four aspects of L2 learning are being introduced: the first one is the social and cultural milieu. It determines beliefs about language and culture being taught. The second factor is the setting in which learning is taking place. The language contexts can be either formal or informal. The third element to be noted is individual differences. These can be related to motivation and language aptitude. The last item in Gardner's model is learning outcomes.

Regarding the model, two kinds of motivation can be illustrated. The first one is integrative motivation, which is the desire of learner to learn the language to be able to integrate in the community of the native language users. It can be a factor when the language is being learned in isolation from the community in which the language is being used. The second one is instrumental motivation, which depicts the role of external factors and incentive to encourage learners to achieve their goals. It can be found in those whose purpose of learning a language is pre-determined, such as getting a job or writing a dissertation or article. This factor can be influential when the learner is in the community of L2 speakers.

However, some researchers, such as Bialystok and Hakuta (1994) hold the idea that the abovementioned factors cannot make much difference in the process of language learning, but their influence can be revealed in providing a more positive setting to flourish language learning (p.140).

Johnne Myles (2002) stated that learners' attention, motivation, attitudes, and goals can clearly define why some learners are more successful in learning writing, compared to others. She claims that in her writing courses she always asks learners to fill out some personal information form about the reasons they participate in such courses and the result of the survey shows that most students do not like to be in a writing class, while speaking and conversation classes attract them more.

She believes that students might enjoy doing some writing activities like writing e-mail, but problems such as starting, finding suitable words, and developing ideas can limit them. According to her, if there is an overall interest in the target language (integrative motivation) and parental, social, and instrumental motivation (external motivation) can be provided, learners can show a higher improvement in writing.

Teachers' awareness of the kind of instrumental motivation for students who attend a writing course is very effective in the learning process. For instance, for EAP learners the main objective would be writing a research paper for publication in an English-speaking journal or writing a report for a multinational company. Hence, this group of learners is not motivated in writing stories or poetry. Or those whose purpose is writing project reports or memos would not be interested in learning how to write a standard essay.

This is why Carson (2001) noted that if learners find writing tasks useless, they may approach them carelessly, and it may cause inattention to errors,

monitoring, and rhetorical concerns. However, highly motivated students can accept any sort of writing task.

A common complaint of L2 learners is not having enough interaction with native speakers of the target language and even if they find this chance they cannot interact with them as much as expected.

On the other hand, they mostly converse with students whose language is the same as theirs; as a result, their development of L2 can slow down in all skills. It is the instructor's responsibility to provide the learners with incentives and opportunities to interact with native speakers. If learners are given the chance to integrate into the L2, they can have a positive attitude and also a higher proficiency level, and these have a positive impact on their writing skill.

It should be taken into account that the abovementioned claim cannot be interpreted as: the more contact the learners have with L2 native users, the higher their language acquisition can be. Interaction is the key of success. Instructors often ask EAP learners to read text, attend academically related lectures, and work with those learners whose native language is the target language being taught. However, if the learners do not understand the text or lectures, or actively engage in the study session, there will be little effect of all the recommended activities on the learners' progress.

Writing from a social perspective can be viewed as a production in various contexts. The context can be an L1 setting, SL setting or FL atmosphere. As it is the matter of concern in this view towards writing, whatever a writer produces and the genre of writing is a social and context-related issue and can be influenced directly by the setting within which the text is being produced. Bizzell (1982) and Nystrand

(1982, 1986, 1989) are two of the early supporters of the mentioned view towards writing.

Those researchers who worked on social aspect in L1 or SL mostly followed the theoretical frameworks from Halliday (1978), Bakhtin (1981), Vygotsky (1962, 1978), Freire (1985, 1994), and Freire and Macedo (1987).

Heath's (1983) ethnographic study in three different communities in an American town is a work done in the L1 setting. Scribner and Cole (1981) among the Vai is another example. A model developed by Chapelle, Grabe , and Berns (1993) in which cognitive, social, and textural aspects of writing were considered was the foundation of the study by Grabe and Kaplan (1996) within which both conceptualization of language use (context, situation, participants, setting, task, text, topic) and psycholinguistic component of the verbal working memory (internal goal setting, verbal processing, internal processing output), which are the components of the cognitive models, are taken into account.

The authors claim that their proposed model because it considered a wider range of concerns discussed by other applied linguistics and considered social, cognitive and textual aspects which are more comprehensive as compared to L1 composition researchers, covered issues rarely considered in other models.

Kern (2000) proposed a literacy-based framework for FL study. He tried to bring some novelty into the view towards text and go far beyond the teaching of communication. In the Hallidayan view it was the term 'meaning resources' which was used to define transferring the meaning, however, in this new way the term 'design of meaning' has replaced it. The design, in this approach, is not a simple transfer but a holistic view of construction of meaning in communicative acts. In his

model and definition Kern (2000) tried to adapt with the fast change of global demographic and technological conditions.

In the definition of the 'available designs', he illustrated a continuum of linguistics resources on the one side and schematic resources on the other side of the continuum. By linguistics resources, he meant writing systems, vocabulary, grammar, and cohesion conventions. A combination of the available designs and the procedural knowledge can produce new designs.

In his approach he considered writing a combination of socio-cultural issue and cognitive act. For the former one he cited Bell's (1995) autobiographical illustration of her own experience in learning Chinese, and for the latter one Leki's (1995) experience of learning to write academic English with the help of the learnt strategies in secondary school in France. Therefore, in this process writing is considered as contextually appropriate practices through which genre study seems necessary.

In writing pedagogies that follow a process-oriented approach, there are views on the interaction of linguistic structures and mental operations which are both considered in a psycholinguistic perspective. As Zamel (1983, P.165) noted in this view writing is characterized as a "non-linear exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning."

For composing a piece of writing, the models in first language writing have proposed different cognitive writing models that writers engage in. There also are some hypotheses which are proposed to illustrate how the cognitive processes are affected by long term and working memory capacity. For instance, Flower and Hayes's (1980, 1981) described the process as planning, translating and revising.

During these processes, as they defined the monitor function provides the access to the learners' long term memory and functions as a meta-cognitive editor that defines the interaction among processes. The writer's knowledge which is saves in his long term memory is what defines to what extent the strategies could be effective.

Becker (2006, p.31) claimed that expert writers who have a "large repository of past experiences stored in their long term memory … can implement rapid interplay of conscious and automatic processes … without overloading either their working or long term memory capacity."

In Kellogg's (1996) model, the processes are defined as formulating, executing, and monitoring. All the three mentioned processes are orchestrated during their act of combining in working memory. Formulating is this model is defined as the writer's resort to short term memory for planning and translating conceptual ideas and rhetorical goals into text.

The writer in this step retrieves ideas and knowledge to build a new text. Execution comes after formulation. It includes text production in different ways. The last step, monitory is after the text is produced. It actually includes the act of reading, reviewing and editing texts in order to evaluate and revise it.

The above-mentioned processes are performed simultaneously and depend on the writer's level of expertise and they can affect the capacity of working memory. Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) expanded what was proposed by Kellogg (1996) and claimed that two main factors can influence working memory within the cognition of writing processes.

The first one is the knowledge of writer about the writing topic, or the presence of information relating to the topic which is related to the information and background of writer. The second one is the writer's ability to activate appropriate

and related linguistic resources and rhetorical strategies. The proposed model was explained by Becker (2006, p.35) as follows:

"being more familiar with topic data enables writer to more easily select ideas from long term memory and organize them into an effective structure; the results in less working memory capacity being expanded on planning and translating process. Expanding linguistic resources enables writers to become more fluent, since their selection of lexical and syntactical structures becomes more automatic, while increasing the range of rhetorical strategies allows writers to construct texts that address overall goals more quickly again because their increased knowledge frees up working memory space."

As mentioned above, the issues being discussed are exploring the working memory of the writer and focusing on the formation of the writing. Some researchers like Kormos (2011) and Ong and Zahy (2010) attempted to pose a different issue which is the task complexity. Kormos (2011, p.15) discussed,

"the planning of the content of the written text and/or the linguistic encoding of the content". She explained it because "complex tasks are complex both in terms of planning and linguistic formulation". When a writer faces a task with a complicated content issue, it, of course, requires some more complicated background data. Hence, not considering the content of the presented task, it can be difficult to formulate a piece of writing.

As a result, from the models by Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) and also the mentioned one above, it can be deducted that to write a text appropriately familiarity with the topic and the genre of the topic and also the task type play significant roles in formulating and composing writing.

Familiarity of the writer with the task, genre, and topic can enable writer to choose ideas easily with less engagement of working memory to formulate and translate. When working memory is freed up, it can be easier for writers to retrieve linguistic resources and to do the assigned task.

Genre Studies. The concept of genre is a complex mixture of the internal relationships the personal and idiosyncratic role of the reader and also the socio-cultural conventions which connect the reader and the text to each other.

While reading and writing with different learning populations are the matter of concern, the concept of genre which can include a wide and heterogeneous background comes into play and it may be approved as a fruitful and handy illustration of the connection between the writer, writing, and the reader, who belong to that specific population.

The relationship between the text on one side and those who read and write it on the other side is a complex and convoluted one which can be comprehended through the concept of genre. This is one of the concepts of writing which can be felt intuitively and also recognized inadvertently in a text, although, it can be studied and learned formally. In other words, activating and examining non-formulated and tacit knowledge (Caspi, 1985) that the reader has never been taught but it may be unveiled through the writing process is an event which genre makes possible to take place.

Genre as an ever-changing socio-cultural phenomenon is a way of shaping readers and showing the way to writers (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993). Due to the fact that the reader and writer belong to a specific class of society and as a result they follow a certain genre, this concept defines an internal compass which guides and paves the way for both parties.

Each genre has its own unique and specific qualities which allow it to be socially and culturally classified into a specific group and class of society (Martin, 1989). Therefore, it can be the assumption that novice learners and newcomers into a subject can get a better concept of genre through intensive writing and writing practices and analyses.

Reader are directed and guided with the aid of genres. They are provided scenarios for organizing thoughts, events, and process of writing. Therefore, readers and writers are directed alike. For instance, a history text and a fairy tale have different genres through which both readers and writers are guided. As Bakhtin (1985) mentioned, genre can help readers anticipate what is coming with invoking expectations of them due to organizing what is read as a certain construct.

A genre as a vast ideological process includes variety of socio-cultural fields, such as classroom discourse and psycho-analytic discourse. Readers and writers act in an ever-changing social environment and learn to form a dialog which is shaped between them in a generic form. Genre, starting from the very beginning of the opening words of expression, connect individuals perceiving and understanding the words of interlocutors which can be verbal or written (Bakhtin, 1985).

Martin (1989) claimed that genre is generally relating to texts and materials specifying to a certain group and it is learned and examined in that certain group. As a result a genre is considered a beneficial phenomenon which on one hand is a general framework that includes various text types, for instance, history, science, sports and the like. On the other hand, it is created for a certain group and, therefore, its existence partially disappears. This way it creates a new genre, however, it still is created by those of the first phase (Epstein-Jannai, 2001).

Hence, it can be concluded that the concept of genre has two main aspects which define not only the text type but also the process and path through which a text is shaped and produced. Genre is an agreed framework through which a text is shaped and some specific social and cultural goals in a specific field or area that is created. In this regard, some certain linguistic tools are applied. As Cope and Kalantzis (1993) stated possibility of stimulating an examination ways of creating the meaning as a kind of social exchange is provided by genre.

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A writer uses lots of cohesive devices to make his writing more fluent and comprehensible. Knowing the type of discourse community the writer is writing in can determine the genre of writing it should be. Unfortunately, students in Iran are not made aware of the differences that exist in discourse communities in their BA, MA and PhD studies. Therefore, this unawareness might develop along students' lives and when they are in the position of academic writing and they are supposed to write fluently, accurately and comprehensibly, they face such problems.

Hyland (2002) talked about Generic Structure Potential which means each genre is a combination of obligatory and optional terms. He believed that it is obligatory in general frame and optional in some available choices. The principle of choice carries two levels: a) textural which is in lexico-grammatical level, b) ideological which is in the social meaning level. The latter one means what is accepted and in which society. Some look at it as a holistic view in one society, for instance: one psychology genre for all psychologists' society, while others look at it as an intrapersonal phenomenon which means the genre for each person is different.

Genre studies play an important and outstanding role in writing research; however, they do not build models of the writing process and basically they are considered as product-oriented rather than process-oriented(Hyland, 2002).

Hyland (2002) defined 3 approaches to genre study:

1.   Work based on the Hallidayan Systemic Functional view of language such as that applied in the Australian school system for L1 and SL writers (Christie, 1998; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Martin, 2000), wherein genre is defined as a staged, goal-oriented social process involving the interaction of participants using language in a conventional, step-wise structure;

2.   Work within an ESP perspective such as that of Bhatia (1993) relating to law and business, or Connor and Mauranen (1999) in an academic context, wherein genre comprises a class of communicative events linked by shared purposes recognized by members of a discourse community (Swales, 1990, p. 45-47). The purposes are the rationale of the genre, and help to shape how it is structured and the choices of content and style it makes available.

3.   Work within the 'New Rhetoric' perspective such as that of Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) wherein genres are "systems of complex literate activity constructed through typified actions" (Bazerman, 1994) and are studied using ethnographic approaches.

Among those abovementioned approaches just the second one is applicable in L2 pedagogy and appears in the ESP context, for example: Flowerdew (1993); and Weber (2001).

Writing skill can be learned and practiced through experience; in other words it is not a naturally acquired skill, and a formal set of instructions in formal settings or other environment is necessary. Writing is a composing activity which can be in

the form of telling or retelling events or pieces of information, as can be seen in narratives or description. The second possibility is expository or argumentative writing which is transforming information into new texts.

According to Omaggio Hadley (1993) writing can be viewed as a continuum which has the more formal or mechanical aspects of writing down on one end and the more complex act of composing ideas on the other end. When it comes to L2 writing, the act of composing ideas together faces a more complicated issue which creates problems for learners in academic context.

Transforming and reworking on the information seem to be more complex than simply writing as telling or retelling events. Academic writing includes composing, developing, and analyzing ideas which is "a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text" (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Students writing in their L2 need to learn proficiency in the use of L2 as well as writing strategies, techniques and skills.

Tasks in Writing versus Speaking

Communicative approach with its main objective as claimed by Celce-murcia, Dormyei, and Thurrell (1997, p.149) "to develop the learners' ability to take part in spontaneous and meaningful communication in different contexts with different people on different topics for different purposes" have been the core issue in language teaching. Task-based instruction which categorizes language teaching in different tasks has been the main approach in this framework.

Hence, components, characteristics, typology and implementation of tasks have been in the center attention in recent studies. Except for a few works (e.g. Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Ishikawa, 2006; Ong & Zhay, 2010) there have been few studies

working on how task characteristics influence foreign language learners' written output. Besides, the differences between writing and speech in the aspect of linguistic output need to be more focused on. Studying the differences between written and spoken tasks in the aspect of the type of language they generate and the way they attract the learners' attention to specific aspects of linguistic form can be of importance for various parties.

Researchers of this field of study can focus on it and conduct various studies and come to valuable results and conclusions. On the other hand, language teachers and test designers can benefit it in the way they ask students to use or avoid some specific tasks in written and spoken format.

Halliday (2002, p.350) claimed that,

"speech and writing will appear, then, as different ways of meaning: speech as spun out, flowing, choreographic, oriented towards events (doing, happening, sensing, saying, being), process-like intricate, with meanings related serially; writing as dense, structured, crystalline, oriented towards things (entities, objectified processes), product-like, tight, with meanings related as components."

Therefore, the major difference between the two skills of writing and speaking are in terms of language use and psycholinguistic processes. What was discussed by Halliday above was complemented by Ravid and Tolchinsky (2002) which is categorizing three main dimensions for the nature of speaking and writing.

The first difference was defined by Tannen (1982) which was the presence of audience in speaking. In spoken form of language the audience is present and receives the produced language which is created, but in written discourse, there is no audience to receive the language while it is formulated and created. Therefore, it can be noted that written works need to be more coherent and less context dependent.

Second difference between the two skills is about the syntactic difference between the spoken and written languages. In the latter one, as Chafe (1982) stated the usage of nominalization, participles, co-joined phrases and sequenced prepositional phrases and compliment, relative, and adverbial clauses are more. While in the former one, the speaker considers matching speaking to the abilities of the listener and message is processed in the real time context. Cohesion in speech is grammatically marked and para-linguistically featured, which is due to presence of listener while lexical means are used to bring cohesion to writing (Tannen, 1982).

The third noticeable difference between the two skills is what was mentioned as the control of writers over their product by Ravid and Tolchinsky (2002, p.426). They noted that writers show a higher degree of control over the written product because "writing usually takes longer than talking, and because the stable and usually accessible written text permits writers to view the text as a whole, while the ephemeral nature of spoken language leaves a tight window for processing.

After discussing the language use para-linguistic mechanisms also need to be discussed. Speech production includes four major and important processes (Levelt, 1989), which occur in order as follows. First, conceptualization which is planning what you want to say. Second, formulation which includes the grammatical, lexical and phonological encoding of the message. Third, articulation which is the stage of producing speech sounds. The final stage that is self-monitoring which includes checking correctness and appropriateness of the language.

The reason why speech production for first-language users is smooth and fast is, according to Levelt (1989, p.22), only the first stage requires attention. The other stages are done automatically. While as for non-balanced bilinguals or less proficient second language users formulation and articulation are more time consuming and

require conscious attention, which does not allow speaker to have processing which can be done parallel.

One of the most outstanding models of writing was suggested by Kellogg (1996) in which three processes are interactive and incursive were produced. Formulation can cover the two concepts of conceptualization and formulation for spoken language. In this stage, the content is planned and the ideas are translated into words.

In the planning stage, the writer retrieves ideas from the long term memory and organizes them into coherent order. In the translation stage, ideas are put into words which include retrieval of lexical items, syntactic encoding of clauses and sentences and finally making the components cohesively related.

The next stage is execution which is simply creating a hand-written or tight text which is done through motor movement. The final stage is monitoring. During this process the text is revised for any possible mismatches and making sure that the produced text appropriately and adequately expresses the writer's intention.

The model suggested above is recognized as being done consecutively; however, it can, just as speaking, enjoy parallel processing. For instance, planning and translation might happen together because both are under the umbrella picture of conceptualization. Hence, encoding concepts and putting them in linguistic form might happen simultaneously.

As Slobin (1996, p.75) discussed for speaking,

"There is a special kind of thinking that is intimately tight to language- namely, the thinking that is carried out, online, in the process of speaking". The type of language being used can influence the encoding process significantly and finally result in putting them into linguistic form. Another possibility of parallel processing can be in

the execution stage in which writers might plan the writing or type ideas and/or monitor the output of the language at the same time.

After discussing all these in two aspects of lexical means as noted by Tannen (1982) and psycholinguistic process as discussed by Kellogg (1996), there is a stage of applying cohesion into a text in which the writer needs to use cohesive ties in lexical which is both linguistic and also para-linguistic aspects of the language. Here is when DMs in both aspects of sentential or micro and supra-sentential or macro level come into play.

What was mentioned in this part shows that the major components and procedures in language production in both spoken and written forms are almost the same, such as conceptualization of content, linguistic encoding, execution, and monitoring. In both processes, as mentioned previously, speakers and writers need to make the concept of the language produced, then finding the linguistic form for language production is required, afterwards the language is performed and finally the produced language is monitored to match with the ideas and thoughts to make sure they are conveying what they are supposed to.

Oppositely, in psycholinguistic view point there are differences in mechanisms of the two modalities. One major difference is speaking is a linear process that takes place under time pressure. The speaker has to limit in production. Whereas, writing, as seen above, is a recursive process which is not limited by time. The writer can plan, linguistically encode, produce, and finally revise it in a cyclic process. In other words, writers have time span between conceptualizing their message and encoding it in linguistic form. The second one, as Ravid and Tolchinsky (2002) mentioned is the pre-task planning time. Practically, writers have time to plan their time before starting to write.

As writing modality is not in the constraint of time and writers have the chance to do pre-task planning and monitoring time is more after finishing language production, Adams (2006) claimed that the syntactic structure required can be applied more attentively and, therefore, with more contribution. In this context, learners are given the chance to be more assured of applying the required material. Explicitly learned material can, hence, be better tested in writing with more chance of application.

Models of L1 and L2 writing

According to Kutz, Gorden, and Zarnet (1993, p. 30), the views toward academic literacy often confuse or disorient students especially those who bring the conventions that oppose those of the academic world they are entering. It happens owing to the fact that setting arrangements and structure of the two languages are different. Another source of the problem can be the mental concepts or structures they have to represent the knowledge of things, situations or event-schemata. As Kern (2000) has truly mentioned knowing how to write a "summary" or "analysis" in Spanish or Mandarin does not guarantee being able to do the same in English.

Hence, all educational, social, and cultural experiences of students' native language should be taken into consideration by the educators who are defining the appropriate and well-organized instruction to reach the target of writing literacy in academic setting.

The above-mentioned experiences include knowledge of appropriate genres (Johns, 1995; Swales, 1990), distinct cultural and instructional socialization (Coleman, 1996; Holliday, 1997; Valdes, 1995), familiarity with writing topics (Shen, 1998), and textual issues or commonly known as contrastive rhetoric, which

are rhetorical and cultural preferences to organize information and build arguments (Cai, 1999; Kaplan, 1987; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1996; Leki, 1997).

L1 research has significantly influenced research on L2 writing. However, strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically L1 and L2 writings are different (Silva, 1993), L2 writing instruction is directly influenced by L1 writing models.

The first model of writing presented by Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981) focuses on what writers do to deal with the rhetorical problem and examines the potential problems through composing process. According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p.116) considering two groups of skilled and less-skilled writers the emphasis in this model is on the students' ability and strategic knowledge to transform information to meet rhetorically constrained purposes.

However, as Swales (1990) has noted, writing "should not be viewed solely as an individually-oriented, inner-directed cognitive process, but as much as an acquired response to discourse conversations used within particular committees" (p.4). Hence, the importance of social factors is being considered.

Moreover, in this model problem-solving activity is divided into two categories: the first one considers, the audience, topic, and assignment called a rhetorical situation, and the second one involves with the reader, the writer's persona, the construction of meaning, and the production of the formal text labeled the writer's own goal.

Flower (1990) considered the interaction of context and cognition with analyzing the academic task of reading-to-write. They examined the role of metacognitive awareness in both acts of students' predesigned and preset goals and strategies they use in organizing their ideas.

"Conceptualizing this transition as a social/cognitive act of entering a discourse emphasizes both problem-solving effort of a students' learning to negotiate a new situation and the role the situation will play in what is learned" (Flower et al., 1990, p. 222).

The transition in the above statement is the entrance to the new society which has its own conversations, expectations, and formulaic expressions particular to the discourse. Later, in Flower's (1994) social-cognitive writing theory, it was proposed that through negotiated interaction with real audience expectations, such as in peer group responses, writing skills can be learned and used properly.

According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996) through socio-cognitive writing model learners will be capable of participating in transactions with their own texts and others' texts as well. Arising "readerly" sensitivity can be done by guiding the students towards a conscious awareness of how their work will be interpreted by an audience (Kern, 2000).

Another model was proposed by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) in which they revealed two models of writing, knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming, as the fundamental difference between skilled and less skilled writers. In the first model of writing, which is knowledge-telling model, the writer uses the topical and genre cues to retrieve content from memory. While the second model or the knowledge-transforming model involves more reflective problem-solving analysis and goal setting.

The researcher's work with graduate students unveiled that the students "generated goals for their compositions and engaged in problem solving, involving structure and gist as well as verbatim representations" (p.354) knowledge-transforming model involves goals that can be achieved through the composing

process, which does not depend on memories and emotions and on external assistance of teacher, and the purposeful achievement of those goals. This model discusses the idea of multiple processing, which includes writing tasks that differ in processing complexity.

In Bereiter and Scardamalia's viewpoint schooling system cannot impact writing positively due to telling students what to do continually and as a result causing a passive cognition. They believe learners should follow their spontaneous and sudden impulses and interests. They also believe in dialectical process to resolve content and rhetorical problems. They claim if students are not given enough chance to practice knowledge-transforming skills, performing them should be a big challenge for the learners.

Although both of the above-mentioned models have been of much help as theoretical basis in both L1 and L2 writing instruction, there are some components which are inappropriate in an L2 context. As kern (2000) claimed social-cultural factors are cross-cultural differences and are not considered as influential factors in Flower's model. Moreover, L2 learners need more instruction about the language, and their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar is limited. Therefore, it can directly influence their language production. However, factors related to improvements of the learners' language proficiency are being ignored in these models. Oppositely, the models main focus is on the familiarity with the conversations of expository discourse (Kogen, 1986, p. 25).

On the other hand, the models can be helpful in the writing process by incorporating pre-writing activities such as collaborative brainstorming, choice of personally, meaningful topics, strategy instruction, which considers what writers do as they write, in the stage of composing, drafting, revising, and editing, multiple

drafts and peer-group editing. Profound attention to writing process can end in classroom interaction and engage learners in analyzing and commenting on a variety of texts.

In a research by Silva (1993), on how L2 writers revise their work, it was revealed that the performed revision was at the superficial level. The research also showed that, even if they did, the main focus was on correcting grammar mistakes.

According to Sasaki and Hirose (1996) high ability in writing L1 can be transferred to L2, which means skilled L1 writers have the chance to surpass others in L2 writing as well. Those with difficulty in L1 writing may not have a repertoire of strategies; hence, L2 writing may be difficult for them. These findings can help in EAP writing courses for those whose skills are not high enough or those who have not had the chance of writing knowledge transforming tasks in their L1.

To summarize, the social context for writing, along with cognitive efforts of the writer should combine to build social-cognitive theories. However, the instruction in L2 is totally different from L1 theories and subsequent model of instruction in that L2 writing includes generating meaningful text in an L2.

Therefore, to reach the target in L2 pedagogy and have a more effective model, necessitates more teacher involvement. Besides, the instructor needs to have a thorough understanding of L2 social and cognitive factors in the writing process owing to the salient factors in the writing process, and the salient effect they have on the development of L2 writing.

Theoretical Framework and Models of writing

Illustrating pedagogical framework for either SL or FL writing necessitates structuring a theoretical framework upon which this pedagogy can be established.

The undeniable fact is SL and FL models are both social and cognitive models. According to Cumming (1989) lack of ability of a comprehensive theory of writing is another problem to be considered. Among the available ones, very few are designed to "account comprehensively for complexities of educational circumstances" (Cumming &Riazi, 2000).

Flower and Hayes's (1980) model included 3 components:

- 'The Writer's Long Term Memory' which has three knowledge areas

- 'Task Environment' which comprises all that is outside of the writer and can influence the performance

- 'General Writing Process' which has 3 major stages of planning, translating, and reviewing
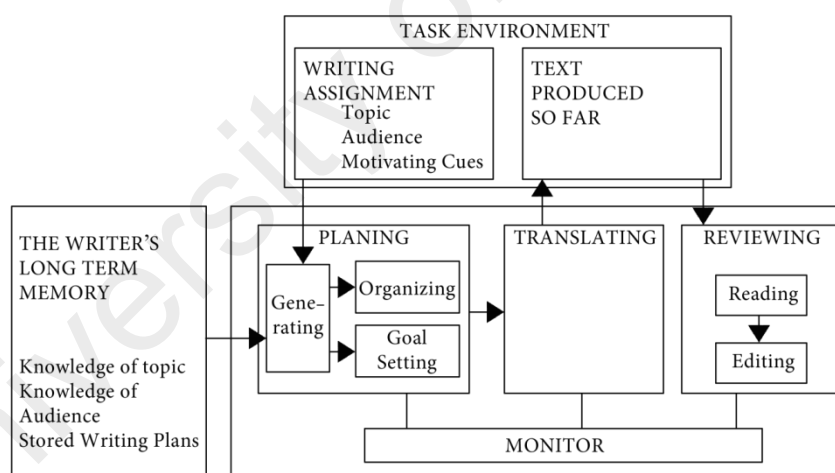
Figure 2.1. Flower and Hayes's model, adapted from Flower and Hayes (1980). Copyright © 1980 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) models are 2 types at the two extremes which start with one and end in the other.

The Knowledge Telling strategy has 3 components:

- 'The Mental Representation of Assignment' helps the writer comprehend the topic and leads the whole writing activity.

- 'Content Knowledge' and 'Discourse Knowledge' parts are the second piece.

- The former is the knowledge about the topic and the latter is the text and linguistic concern.
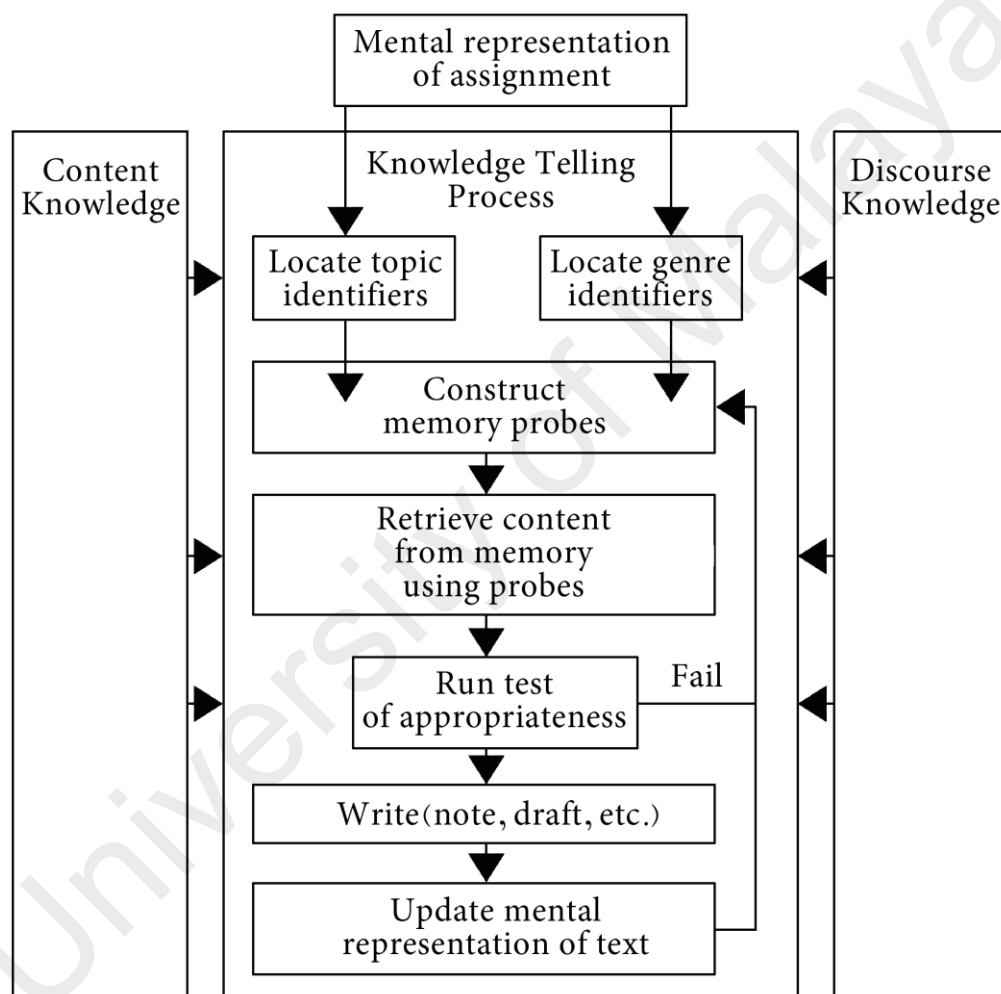
Figure 2.2. Knowledge Telling Strategy, adapted from Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987). Copyright © 1987 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- 'Knowledge Telling Process' includes seven operations, the first two try to identify the topic and its type, then the third and fourth stages try to explore

for the related data and retrieve it, the fifth stage is on testing the aptness of the result of the probe with the topic; if yes it goes to the next stage which is writing and drafting, the final stage is updating all the retrieved ideas and writing with the topic and local control of the writing activity.

- The knowledge Transforming Strategy is in accord with more expert writers. The main difference between the two above models is the complex problem solving system between the Mental Representation Assignment and Knowledge Telling Process. It has 3 components:

- The Mental Representation Component, allowing the writer to understand writing interactions.

- Long Term Memory factors which are Content Knowledge (what to tell) and Discourse Knowledge (how and to whom to tell).

- The problem solving component helps writers to organize their minds, relate the topics, reach the objective, and find the means to reach the goals.
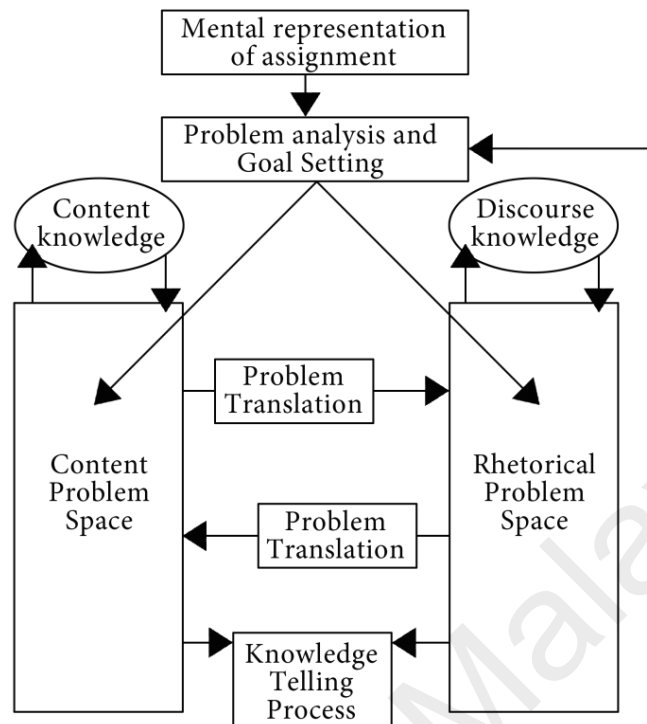
Figure 2.3. Knowledge Transforming Strategy, adapted from Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987). Copyright © 1987 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Flower and Hayes's model was criticized by different researchers. Hartley (1991) criticized it for being fully descriptive, not considering group work, not being sufficiently specified, and not considering individual differences, such as styles, emotions and gender differences. Others, such as: Kintsch (1987) and Kemper (1987) also wrote some criticism on this model which was almost revolving around what Hartley classified.

As a result Hayes (1996) presented a new model to address almost all the previously mentioned shortcomings. In this new model, which the author names 'individuo-environmental model' two main dimensions are included: the individual and the task environment.

The individual dimension comprises of, a) the writer's cognitive process which covers reflection, to transform some pieces of knowledge in other pieces of knowledge, text production, to elaborate on the text, and text interpretation, to (re)read the already written text and to proceed to a comprehension activity of that text, b) motivation and affect which hold the goals of writer's beliefs and attitudes, the cost of the writing investment, and the writer's engagement in a long-term task (predisposition), c) long-term memory which contains the type of text (Genre Knowledge), the addressee of the text (Audience knowledge), the linguistic components necessary for the text (Linguistic knowledge), the area of the content of the text (Topic Knowledge), the procedures to control the effective realization of the text production (Task Schemas), d) the last piece of the puzzle of individual section is about working memory which holds phonological, visuo/spatial, and semantic elements. The last element is particularly used in translating or formulating the text conceptual content. With its place in the center of all the components, working memory functions as the connection of all the other elements, according to the author.

The environmental dimension is the second part of this model. It includes the social environment which are the addressee and the other possible partner(s) of the writer and the physical environment which are the produced text and the nature of the used medium, either handwriting or typewriting.
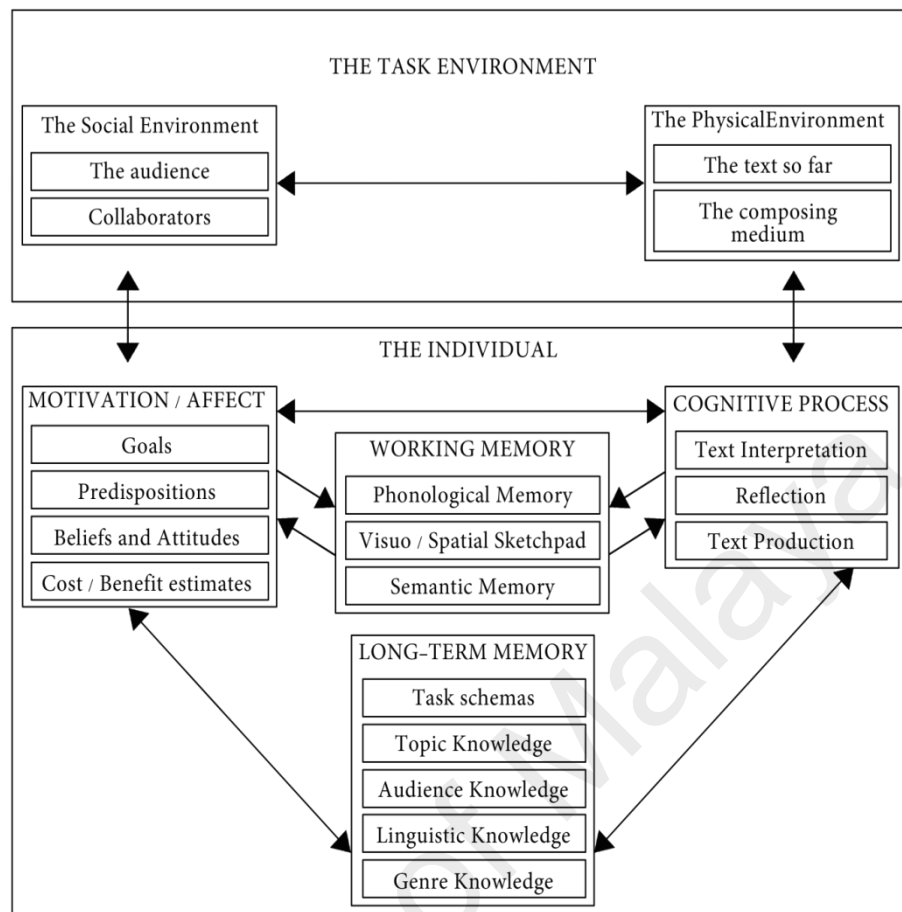
Figure 2.4. The new model of Hayes, adapted from Hayes (1996). Copyright © 1996 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

The model by Hayes (1996), which shows both social and cognitive views, is the one I selected as the framework of my research. It is a revised model of what was presented by Flower and Hayes (1980) and including social-environmental factors.

As the process is considered a developmental process, goals, believes, and attitudes of the writer towards the use of DMs change in the process of intervention, which practically means in the intervention course the participants are given the data required to assist them reach the point that using DMs correctly can have a positive impact on their writing ability. But the current research has nothing to do with the

elements of predisposition, Costs and Benefits. Hence they have no place in the framework designed in this research.

As for the cognitive process, the term Reflection used by Hayes (1996) includes the way ideas and pieces of knowledge are being connected. It is exactly what I am trying to influence on in the intervention process. Saying Reflection, Hayes meant that what strategies the writer chooses to connect thoughts and ideas. In other words, the ways and strategies through which a writer can guide the reader to the destination he has illustrated. Technically it is the goal I want to reach.

Another component of the same category is the text interpretation which is the reviewing process to determine the content and linguistic coherency. The mentioned coherency is manipulated in the modality of the transcription which is all handwritten form in this research; hence, it has no role in the current work.

Among the five factors mentioned by Hayes (1996) in the model, Linguistic Knowledge which is the awareness of DMs and their functions and Task Schemas which are the procedures to guide and control the realization of text production are the two items considered in this study.

The central part which is the working memory consists of three components among which the Semantic Meaning is used with teaching DMs as semantic operators.

The second section of Hayes's (1996) model is the Task Environment part. In the social environment, there is an interaction between the teacher and the students and among the students as well in the classroom setting. This interaction can improve the quality of learning. In the intervention period, the addressee is the teacher who provides the material and removes the barriers to learning.

All in all, I have made the necessary changes and adaptations in the previously illustrated model and I have come to the framework as follows:
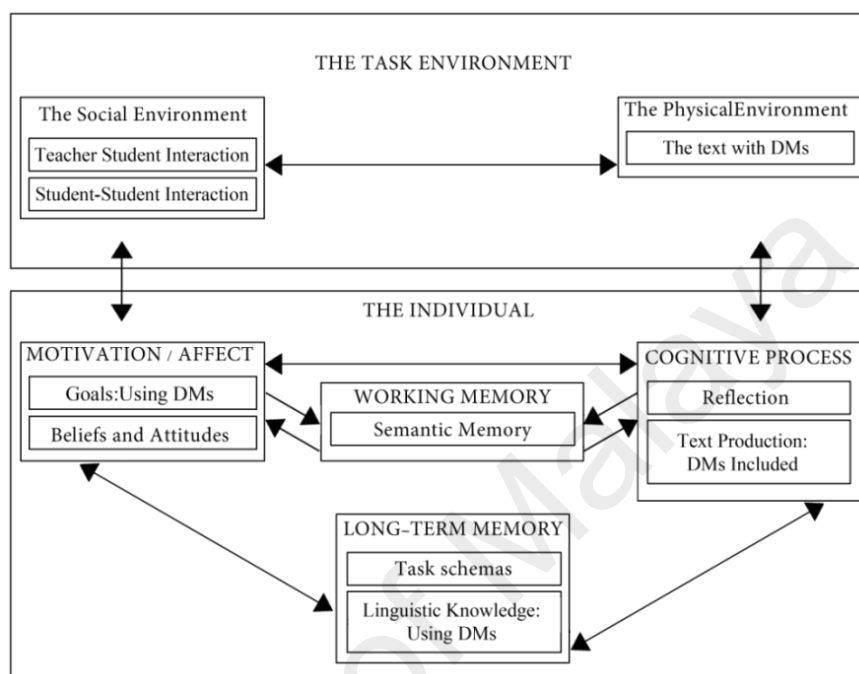
Figure 2.5. The framework in the current study

The components of the modified framework are as follows:

- The social environment includes interactions among students and between teachers and students. During explicit instruction an input flood there is interaction in the classroom setting. This interaction can influence students' learning significantly. And during the corrective feedback process students have interaction and there is also teacher-student interaction.

- As for the physical environment the body of the text with discourse marker is included.

- Using DMs by learners after instruction an increasing the three aspects of fluency, accuracy, and complexity are the goals.

- During the instruction program views of learners towards DMs and their functions are tried to change. Therefore, their writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity can increase.

- One view towards DMs is working as semantic operators; hence they can be viewed as a factor to improve semantic memory.

- The procedure of text production in the current work is based on realization of the use and function of DMs which is considered as task schema.

- DM awareness and using them which are being tested before and after the intervention are some aspects of testing the participants' linguistic knowledge.

- Reflection presents the ways ideas are being connected which is obviously related to the role of DMs in discourse.

- Text production is supposedly different before and after intervention process in the use of DMs by participants which can also influence fluency, accuracy, and complexity of their writing.

Accuracy, Fluency, and Complexity in Writing

After analyzing the use of cohesive vocabulary, Crossley and McNamara (2009) claimed that L2 writers make use of cohesive vocabulary less than L1 writers. Hence, the text produced by an L2 writer is less readable, comprehensible, and coherent comparing to the one by an L1 writer. L2 writers' texts are, therefore, more context-dependent, less abstract, and less ambiguous.

Writing as one of the four language skills is necessary for language learners to obtain for their own goals and purposes. Accuracy and obtaining rules and grammar of English is one way to improve this skill (Yang & Chang, 2005).

According to Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics by Richards & Schmidt (2002) accuracy is: "The ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently". Studies of second language learner writing have used various measures of linguistic accuracy (which can include morphological, syntactic and lexical accuracy) to answer a variety of research questions. Writing pedagogy currently emphasizes the writing process and idea generation: it has placed less emphasis on getting students to write error-free sentences (Graham & Perin, 2007).

According to Longman Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics by Richards and Schmidt (2002) fluency is: "a level of proficiency in communication which includes: a) the ability to produce written/spoken language with ease, b) the ability to speak/write with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary and grammar, c) the ability to communicate ideas effectively, d) the ability to produce continuous speech or text without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication". Fluency is employed constantly to describe a very high standard of capability in learners of English as a foreign or second language. The task of becoming fluent as an English language learner is two-fold: one must know a precise definition of what fluency truly means as well as be aware of educational paths that lead to this prestigious goal. The Oxford Dictionary definitions of words, explains fluency as: "the ability to speak or write a particular foreign language easily and accurately." One can broadly interpret such a term as essentially the ability to understand the language and be understood in an English speaking country with minimal misunderstanding. Such a skill entails a significant grasp of English grammatical constructs, many of which are nuanced and filled with exceptions, as well as an accent that does not impede comprehension

when communicating with native speakers. Fluency is a skill attainable to most if not all committed English language students.

The various definitions proposed for writing fluency may have resulted from the different indicators used for measuring it. Various fluency measures have been developed; however, these measures are of two types: product-based measures depending on written texts regardless of how they were produced and process-based measures drawing upon the online observation of writers' composing processes. In the studies performed by Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998) and Graham and Perin (2007) fluency refers to the amount of production and has been operationalized as either (a) the number of words per minute in timed writing tasks or (b) the number of words per T-unit. Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998:29) argued that T-unit length is a better measure of fluency because research has shown that it consistently increases "in a linear relationship to proficiency level across studies regardless of task, target language, significance of results, or how proficiency was defined".

Many L1/L2 writing process studies measured writing fluency in terms of composing rate (Chenoweth and Hayes, 2000; Hatasa & Soeda, 2000) i.e. the number of words written per minute obtained through dividing the text quantity by the time spent writing. Other reported measures of writing fluency include holistic scoring of the text (Ballator, Farnum & Kaplan, 1999), number of words and T-units (Skehan, 2009), number of correctly spelled words written, number of sentences written, and number of letter sequences (Rosenthal, 2007). Hayes (2001) pointed out that the length of the newly proposed text for writing, or the length of the burst in their terms, is main contributor of writer's fluency, measured by the composing rate. Another aspect of writing fluency referred to in writing process research is producing text in larger chunks. Richards and Schmidt (2002) refers to her twelfth grader

participants' fluency by contrasting fluent writing that can be observed when sentences are written in groups or chunks to non-fluent writing occurring when each sentence is produced in isolation. Similar remarks were made by Kelly (1986) whose proficient writers produced their texts in larger chunks, and by Wang (2005) about how the length of the chunks written by her participants to clarify the flow of their writing.

As Skehan (1996, 1998) mentioned, the ultimate goal of learners in the process of language learning is achieving native-like ability. To reach this aim, the three aspects of a language that need to be worked one which are fluency, accuracy, and complexity are required to be strengthened. Improving the three mentioned aspects can help learners approach their goal. The focus of fluency is on primacy of meaning, while complexity and accuracy are concerned with the form (Foster & Skehan, 2001).

Skehan (1996) defined accuracy as "a learner's capacity to handle whatever level of inter-language complexity she has currently attained". The stage and elaboration of the underlying inter-language system is what he stated in relation to complexity. He also described fluency as "concerns the learner's capacity to mobilize inter-language system to communicate meaning in real time".

One of the measures of linguistic or grammatical accuracy called holistic scale is proposed by Hamp-Lyons & Henning (1991) which used a holistic scale to assess linguistic or grammatical accuracy as one component among others in a composition rating scale. They tested a composition scale designed to assess communicative writing ability across different writing tasks. They wanted to ascertain the reliability and validity of various traits. They rated essays on 7 traits on a scale of 0 to 9 in each category which included: 9: the writer has no errors of

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vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar, 8: the writer has no significant errors of vocabulary, punctuation, or grammar, 7: the writer is aware of but not troubled by occasional errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar, 6: the writer is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling or grammar, but only occasionally, 5: the writer is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar that intrude frequently, 4: the writer find the control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and grammar inadequately, 3: the writer is aware of primarily gross inadequacies of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and grammar, 2: the writer sees no evidence of control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar, 1: a true writer has produced assessable strings of English writing, 0: this rating should be used only when a candidate did not attend or attempt this part of the test in any way.

The next set of studies evaluated accuracy by counting the number of error-free T-units and/or error-free clauses (Robb et al., 1986). They tried to use a more objective measure than the previous ones. This measure does not take into account the severity of the error nor the number of errors within one T-unit. In quest for measuring EFL learners' accuracy, Fischer (1984) measured accuracy by counting the number of errors as opposed to counting the number of error-free units. He discussed the development of a test of written communicative competence for learners of French. He set up a social situation that called for a written response. He then had the responses rated for Degree of Pertinence and Communicative Value, Clarity of Expression and Level of Syntactic Complexity, and Grammar. The measure used was a ratio of number of errors to the number of clauses.

One of the controversial issues concerning the three aspects which can influence the quality of writing could most probably be the tradeoff effect, which Skehan (1996) described as a competition among fluency, accuracy, and complexity

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due to limited attentional capacity of second language users. Skehan (1996) argued the complication as a cause to prioritize an aspect due to limited processing capacity of learners. He proposed that the conflict is between accuracy and fluency, while Wendel (1997) claimed this tradeoff involves fluency and accuracy.

Regarding the abovementioned claim, Barkhuizen and Ellis (2005) suggested "elaborated language" which can be described at two levels: first, cutting-edge development of the learner's language, which is not yet thoroughly automatic. And second, learner's full preparedness to utilize an extensive range of linguistic structures. They pinpointed that when learners are producing more fluent language, they are prioritizing meaning over form which practically means fluency over accuracy.

According to Foster and Skehan (1996) and Skehan (2009), the fluency of the writings was measured according to the number of dysfluencies i.e. the total number of words a participant reformulated (crossed out and checked) divided by the total number of words produced. In the study done by Wigglesworth and Storch (2009), fluency was measured in terms of the average number of words, T-units and clauses per text. A T-unit is defined as an independent clause and all its attached or embedded dependent clauses. Clauses included dependent and independent ones.

In a study by Foster and Skehan (1996), accuracy measures were gathered in accordance with the number of error-free clauses- the percentage of clauses that did not contain any errors. All errors of syntax, morphology, and lexical choice were considered. Lexical errors are defined as errors in lexical form or collocation. In an intensive literature review, Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) measured the accuracy by global units expressed in terms of the proportion of error-free T-units to all T-units and error-free clauses to all clauses. Both proportions were expressed as

percentages. Global measures were selected based on Skehan and Foster's (1996) argument that global units represent a more realistic measure of accuracy. Errors in lexis were included only when the word used obscured meaning. The errors in spelling and punctuation were ignored.

In a study by Naoko Taguchi (2009) it was revealed that instruction on some grammatical chunks as constituents of discourse could result in complexity improvement of the participants' spoken language, but as for the fluency part there was no significant change in their oral production.

This pilot study was done on twenty two subjects who registered for a Japanese course in the U.S. It was revealed that after instruction the complexity of their structures could improve and they could produce a higher number and range of grammatical chunks. However, the intervention could have no significant influence on their fluency. It might be in accordance with what Skehan (1996) discussed. The learners might have used the instruction on the chunks to produce more complex sentences, instead of focusing on fluency.

Three types of calculation can be used to measure the three quality measurement procedures. The first one is frequency which is simply counting the number of words, clauses or T-units in writing to come up with a frequency number. The second is a ratio measure. In this measuring system presence of one type of unit is expressed as the percentage of another type, or one type is divided by the total number of comparable units. The third type is an index based on a formula that produces a numerical score.

In the realm of developmental measures for calculating fluency, accuracy, and complexity, there can be three methods of calculation as follows (Wolf-Quintro, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998):

The first way is calculating a feature, structure, or unit through a simple frequency count. For instance, for coming to a frequency score the writer counts the number of words, clauses, or T-units. Owing to depending on other external factors such as the allocated time or the nature of the task, frequency measures are not very strongly dependable.

Placing some conceptual limits like rewriting a passage or describing a picture, or temporal limits like time limit on a composition, however, can increase the value of this system of measurement.

The second method of calculation is using ratio which is considered a more valid way. In this procedure the presence of one type of unit is considered as the representative of the percentage of another type of unit, or one type of unit is divided by the total number of comparable units, for instance error-free units per total number of units of the same type.

The ratio can be used for various purposes, for example the length of the given unit (e.g., words per clause, sentence, or T-unit), the rate of accuracy within a given unit (e.g., errors or error-free units per clause, sentence, or T-unit), or the complexity of a given unit (e.g. clauses per T-unit, or T-unit per sentences).

The third type of calculation which produces numerical scores is index based on a formula. The indices are used in the condition that either the features under study are a weighted hierarchy of complexity (e.g., Flahive & Snow, 1980; Perkins, 1983), or the researcher tries to use a more complex formula to calculate a score (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 1992).

In a study by Asghari, Bonyadi, and Salimi (2014) on sixty English learners in a language institute in Iran it was revealed that form-focused instruction could enhance the learners' accuracy.

In this study sixty learners were randomly chosen, and divided into high and low groups. The two groups were also divided into two sub-groups. In each sub-group one was the experimental and the other was the control group. The results showed that the experimental group in the high main group could show a much more significant improvement of their accuracy after being treated on form-focused instruction, comparing to the other three sub-groups.

Ellis and Yuan (2004) worked on the effect of planning on writing narratives of ESL writers. They designed the three types of planning which include: pre-task planning, on-pressured on-line planning, and no planning. The experiment was done on forty-two Chinese learners.

The results of the study revealed that pre-task planning could have its effect on greater fluency and syntactic variety, while unpressured on-line planning could significantly improve the accuracy of the learners' writing.

These results unveil that both tasks could be of help, the first one in a better formulation, and the second one in a better monitoring manner. The third task, however, put all fluency, accuracy, and complexity in trouble, which practically means learners, had problems with formulating, executing, and monitoring under pressure.

In an almost similar study by Barati, Ketabi and Piri (2012) in an Iranian setting it was revealed that fluency could improve significantly with pre-task planning, they defined pre-task planning as a factor that learners are in a brainstorming situation prior to starting writing. On the other hand, accuracy and complexity did not show a significant change with per-task planning. They also claimed that on-line along with pre-task planning and even on-line planning alone could have little influence on narrative writing of the forty-five EFL learners in their research. Therefore, they

claimed that planning in whatever way can have significant influence on fluency of writing, not other aspects.

DMs and their Definitions

There have been various definitions and meanings of discourse markers that make it complicated that what type of words should be called DMs and in different studies there have been different overlapping labels on them. Among the labeled terms some are: sentence connectives, sematic conjunctions, cue phrases, discourse connectives, discourse-deictic items, discourse operators, discourse particles, filters, markers of pragmatic structure, parenthetical phrases, phatic connectives, pragmatic connectives, pragmatic expressions, pragmatic formatives, pragmatic markers, pragmatic operators, pragmatic particles, pragmatic function words, reaction markers, so on and so forth.

There are certain invisible rules that govern interaction and are applied by native speakers without noticing. Native speakers use certain units of talk naturally in their oral discourse in order to make the speech more coherent and understandable. Crystal (1988; cited in Asik & Cephe, 2013, p.144) referred to discourse markers as the 'oil which helps us perform the complex task of spontaneous speech production and interaction smoothly and efficiently'. Speakers use verbal or non-verbal means to guide their listeners to understand and interpret their new contributions in the conversation, discourse markers are verbal items that play a very important role in this intention.

Schiffrin (1987; cited in Lenk, 1998, p.247) defined discourse markers as 'sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk' that signal relationship between immediately adjacent 'units of talk' and which thus have a coherence

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building function on a local coherence level. Redeker (1991; cited in Lenk, 1998, p.246) defined discourse markers (discourse operators) as 'a word or a phrase that is uttered with the primary function of bringing to the listener's attention a particular kind of linkage of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse text'.

Schourup (1999, p.230-232) summarized the main characteristics of the discourse markers. Three characteristics are necessarily attributes of discourse markers: connectivity, 'discourse markers are addressed as items that signal relationships between units of talk; optionality, 'discourse markers are claimed to be optional (but no redundant) in two ways: syntactically (the removal of a discourse marker does not alter grammatically of its host sentence) and semantically (discourse markers does not enlarge the possibilities for semantic relationship between the elements they associate)'; and non-truth conditionality, 'discourse markers do not affect the truth conditions of the prepositions expressed by an utterance'.

Other less consistent characteristics of the discourse markers by Schourup (1999, p.232-234) as: weak clause association, 'discourse markers occur either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it; initiality, 'discourse markers prototypically introduce the discourse segments they mark'; orality, 'most forms claimed to be discourse markers occur primarily in speech'; multi-categoriality, 'discourse markers are heterogeneous with respect to morpho-syntactic categorization'. According to Andersen et al. (1999, p.1), research into the field of discourse markers has mainly been focused on their textual uses in adult speech, analyzing how people: '(1) create coherence and structures within a discourse by coordinating speech acts, turns, and propositional content; (2) provide feedback from listeners about whether a prior utterance has been understood or not, and whether

they agree or disagree; and (3) signal production problems on the part of the speaker'.

Andersen et al. (1999) examines the use of discourse markers as markers of the social relationships between interlocutors. By making a comparison between the findings about the acquisition of discourse markers in English, French and Spanish, this demonstrates the linguistic similarities in the way children learn to use the discourse markers, both to convey social meaning and to manipulate the social situation where power relationships are not pre-established.

Trillo (2002) studies the phenomenon of "pragmatic fossilization" referred to as an inappropriate use of certain forms at the pragmatic level of communication, one of the main problems non-native speakers have in their process of learning English as a foreign language. The study compares the use of certain discourse markers in Spanish non-native speakers of English with the use that native speakers of English make with the same structures. The findings reveal the limited use of discourse markers and some pragmatic errors committed by the non-native speakers. The author attributes the errors to inadequate pragmatic resources in the learning process and to unnatural teaching environments.

Studies that investigate pragmatic markers often focus more on the interactional aspects between the participants that are expressed through the use of particles. One of the most prominent functions of discourse markers, however, is to signal the kinds of relations a speaker perceives between different parts of the discourse. According to Nunan (1991), writing is not only the process the writer uses to put words to paper but also the resulting product of that process. This process and product are also conditioned by the purpose and place of writing (its audience and genre).

Writing in a second language is further complicated by issues of proficiency in the target language, first language literacy, and differences in culture and rhetorical approach to the text. Instruction in writing can effectively improve student proficiency in a number of key areas. With the status of English as an international language and the expansion in the use of English, an increasing number of second language learners are engaged in academic pursuits that require them to write compositions.

One interesting area of investigation in second language writing is to see how DMs are tackled by non-native writers of English in compositions. Theoretically, discourse markers (DMs) are a class of verbal and non-verbal devices which provide contextual coordination for ongoing talk (Schiffrin, 1987). They help writers provide writing which is effective and satisfactory. Within the past fifteen years or so there has been an increasing interest in the theoretical status of discourse markers, focusing on what they are, what they mean, and what functions they manifest in texts.

Fraser (1999) proposes that discourse markers are conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases that connect two sentences or clauses together. Redeker (1991) suggests that discourse markers link not only contiguous sentences, but the current sentence or utterance with its immediate context. DMs have been investigated in classroom oral discourse (Hays, 1992), informal settings (Lee, 1999; Muller, 2004; Trillo, 2002), reading (Abdullah Zadeh, 2006; Jalilifar & Alipour, 2007), lectures (Dailey-O'Cain, 2000; Perez & Macia, 2002), academic genres (Abdi, 2002; Blagojevic, 2003; Bunton, 1999; Longo, 1994; Mauranen, 1993; Ventola & Mauranen, 1993), and student writings (Connor, 1984; Field & Yip, 1992; Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1995; Johns, 1984; Johnson, 1992; Karasi, 1994; Norment,

1994; Steffensen & Cheng, 1996). These studies have targeted their use patterns of frequencies (Lenk, 1997:2).

Johns (1984) analyzed English essays by tertiary-level teachers following Halliday and Hasan's (1976) model. In a similar study Connor (1984) compared six essays written by English native and ESL students, following Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework. Field and Yip (1992) compared 67 Hong Kong students with 29 Australian students writing on an argumentative topic. Johnson (1992) analyzed 20 expository essays in Malay, 20 essays in English By the same group of Malay students, and 20 essays in English by native speakers. Karasi (1994) analyzed 135 expository essays by Singapore secondary students.

Norment (1994) studied 30 Chinese college students writing in Chinese and English on both expository and narrative topics following Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework. Intraprawat and Steffensen (1995) analyzed the DMs in persuasive essays by ESL university students. And Steffensen and Cheng (1996) analyzed texts written by students who worked on the propositional content of their essays and were taught using a process approach and students who concentrated on the pragmatic functions of DMs by enjoying direct teaching of DMs.

Results have shown that conjuncts were overused and lexical cohesion was moderately used by native speakers (Johns, 1984), that non-native students of English used more conjunctions than Australian students did, and they usually put all conjunctions at the beginning of the sentence (Field & Yip, 1992), that there was a difference between text types in the use of cohesive devices (Norment, 1994), that differences between essays that received good ratings and essays that received poor ratings were found in the number of words, T-units, and density of DMs (Intraprawat & Steffensen, 1995), and that students receiving direct instruction on DMs used them

more effectively and also became more sensitive to their readers' needs thereby making global changes that improved their papers (Steffensen & Cheng, 1996). The results of some studies were also contradictory.

For example, while Connor (1984), Johnson (1992), and Karasi (1994) found no discrimination between native and ESL students in the frequency of ties, Norment (1994) discovered a correlation in the frequency of ties and the quality of writing. Results of the above studies, in general, suggest that language learners underutilize DMs (compared with native speaker use) especially for their pragmatic functions.

Carter and Fung (2007) also defined DMs as "intra-sentential or supra-sentential linguistic units which fulfill a largely non-propositional and connective function at the level of discourse" (p. 411).

They analyzed the production of discourse markers in language classroom settings using data from both English as a foreign language learners and native English speakers. The results showed that non-native speakers used a considerably lower number of discourse markers than the English speakers and that the diversity of these forms in non-native speakers is very limited. The authors proposed a pedagogical model which includes the learning of discourse markers 'in order to facilitate more successful overall language use and at the very least for reception purposes'.

Furthermore, Swain (2005) translated DMs in a more simplistic words saying: "Some words and expression are used to show how discourse is counted. They can show the connection between what a speaker is saying and what has already been said or what is going to be said; they can indicate what speakers think about what they are saying or what others have said".

Rahimi (2011) pointed out that DMs constitutes an essential component of communicative competence. That is to say these units help writers or speakers produce a more meaningful and understandable discourse in English. Muller (2005, p. 20) argued that "there is a general argument that DM contributes to the pragmatic meaning of utterances and thus play an important role in pragmatic competence of the speakers". Schiffrin (2006) studied both written and spoken discourse, though her emphasis on oral DMs were more than on written ones. She defined a number of characteristics for what is recognized as DM.

She stated that a DM has to:

    a)   Be syntactically detachable from the sentence.

    b)   Be commonly used in the initial position of an utterance.

    c)   Be able to operate at both local and global levels of discourse.

    d)   Be able to operate on different plans of discourse.

    e)   Have a range of prosodic contours.

Fraser (1990) postulated that as DMs is detachable and removable, they have no role in proposition meaning or grammaticality. They make a powerful contribution between what speakers have said, what commitment has made based on the basic message conveyed by the current utterance and prior discourse. Then Fraser (1996, 1999) looked at DMs from a pragmatic view which was on the function they had in the context which was negotiated by the discourse interlocutors in the context-related clues. DMs have different functions depending on the context.

Lam (2009) stated that discourse markers help non-native language learners to use the language in a closer way to native speakers and that they attain "nativeness" in their discourse. The feeling of being involved in the culture of the target language helps learners to feel comfortable using the language.

As stated by Fraser (1999) and Schourup (1999), DMs are defined as linguistic pragmatic items which have three different functions:

1) They signal transition points within a discourse.

2) They give information concerning the segmentation and operation of discourse.

3) They illustrate the structure of discourse.

In another picture being depicted of DMs by Louwerse and Mitchell (2003, p. 199), they are being looked at as cohesive elements which enable participants in a special context to create a clear and well-connected mental representation of what they are aiming to convey to each other. The required knowledge of the usage of these connectors can assist the participants to be more successful in performing the needed task.

DMs are being looked at from different views. One view looks at DMs as conjunctions, particles, and modifiers (Balogh, 2000; Haspelmath, 2000; Kugler, 2000a).Another view defines them as a separate category of their own (Kugler, 2000b). Besides, the various pragmatic uses of the same form of linguistic items may be discussed together or separately, depending on the view about DMs and how broad they are being looked at. According to Fraser (1999) DMs can be looked at as broad as pragmatic markers or they might be defined as a subclass of them.

Schiffrin can be considered as one of the most influential figures who founded 'discourse markers' as a terminology in linguistic research. Her preliminary definition of DMs as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" (Schiffrin, 1987) has grabbed the greatest attention today. Later, she presented a new definition of these linguistic terms as "proposing the contextual coordinates within which an utterance is produced and designed to be interpreted".

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Redeker, following Schiffrin's view, defined them as "a word or phrase- for instance, a conjunction, adverbial, comment clause, or interjection- that is stated with the primary function of bringing to the listeners' attention, a particular kind of linkage of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context" (Redeker, 1991). As a result, she called them "discourse operators".

Redeker (1991) introduced three components for discourse coherence: Ideational Structure, Rhetorical Structure, and Sequential Structure. She stated that "any utterance in a discourse is then considered to always participate in all three components, but one will usually dominate and suggest itself as the more relevant linkage of this utterance to its context". She also agreed with Schiffrin's notion of 'core meaning' of DMs and expanded this proposal that "the core meaning should specify the marker's intrinsic contribution to the semantic representation that will control the contextual interpretation of the utterance".

Reviewing the literature of DMs reveal that they are a functional group whose members have a heterogeneous origin. They may be from various word classes, such as adverbs, conjunctions, verbs, and the like, or from different linguistic structures, like lexemes, phrases, etc., or may even be non-verbal (Marko, 2005, 2006; Schiffrin, 1987).

The possibility of DM occurrence in spoken discourse is very high, while they can be found with lower rate in written genres, as well (Der, 2006; Schiffrin, 2001, p. 55). A study by Louwerse and Mitchell (2003) showed that DMs used in spoken discourse almost ten times more than in written discourse.

Fraser (1990) defined a group of words and expressions which he called 'pragmatic formative' first but later he named 'pragmatic markers' (1996). They are the words and expressions which are the umbrella term which can cover DMs, as a

subclass. According to Fraser DMs have two main factors: a) the core meaning which DMs carry can be adorned by the context; b) they signal the connection the user is willing to build between the statements that DMs are located in and the other sentence.

Defining DMs' properties Fraser (2004) argued three separate functions of DMs being used which are: syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. He pointed out five distinct syntactic categories as follows:

a)   Coordinate Conjunctions: *and, but, or, so, yet, etc*.

b)   Subordinate Conjunctions: *after, although, as, as far as, as if, as long as, assuming that, if, immediately, etc.*

c)   Adverbials: *anyway, besides, consequently, furthermore, still, however, then, etc.*

d)   Prepositional Phrases: *above all, after all, as a consequence, as a conclusion, in fact, in general, in contrast, etc.*

e)   Prepositions: *despite, in spite of, instead of, rather, than, etc.*

The syntactic categorization has sometimes come in handy, but in some cases including when alternative forms, especially in spoken language, come into play, they fail to act properly. Hence, Fraser proposed the four sematic classifications as follows:

a)   Contrastive Markers: *but, alternatively, although, contrariwise, contrary to expectations, conversely, despite, even so, however, in spite of, in comparison, in contrast, instead of, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the other hand, on the contrary, rather, than, regardless of, still, though, whereas, yet, etc.*

b)   Elaborative Markers: *and, above all, also, alternatively, analogously,*

besides, by the same token, correspondingly, equally, for example, for instance, furthermore, in addition, in other words, in particular, likewise, more accurately, more importantly, more precisely, more to the point, moreover, on that basis, on top it all, or, likewise, rather, similarly, that is to say, etc.

c) Implicative Markers: *So, after all, all things considered, as a conclusion,*

as a consequence, as a result, because, consequently, for this/that reason, hence, it follows that, accordingly, in any case, on this/that condition, on these/those grounds, then, therefore, thus, etc.

d) Temporal Markers: *then, as soon as, before, eventually, finally, first, immediately, after wards, meantime, meanwhile, originally, second, subsequently, when, etc.*

Reviewing the two above divisions clarifies that in the majority of cases they are fruitful, but sometimes they seem to be too broad and some of the units seem to fall into two categories; therefore, they cause confusion. Regarding this, the illocutionary meaning and force that is conveyed in the pragmatic views can influence their functions.

Following Sweetser (1990) Fraser also stated that the units which are syntactically conjunctions are pragmatically ambiguous. As a result, he defined three distinct domains to which DMs can apply:

a) Semantic/Propositional Content: *I am tired, so I am resting.* In this situation fact in S1 justifies the conclusion in S2.

b) Epistemic/Logical Content: *I am tired, so I must go home.* In this context knowledge in S1 justifies the conclusion in S2.

c)   Speech act/Pragmatic Content: *I am tired, so stop asking me to work.*

In this setting report in S1 justifies the request in S2?

Blakemore (1987) called DMs 'discourse connectives' and believed that the most effective way that they can influence the language is putting linguistic limitations on cognitive context. She stated that DMs are "expressions that constrain the interpretation of the utterances which contain them by virtue of the inferential connections they express". Hence, it can be concluded that using DMs can be a way of limiting the receiver's interpretation of the presented message.

Agreeing with Fraser and Schiffrin's proposal on the 'core meaning' and 'procedural meaning' of DMs, Blakemore (1992, p. 138-141) stated that these units need to be analyzed as linguistically specified constraints; hence, she clarified four ways in which a DM can be used by an utterance to make the information conveyed relevant.

a)   It may allow the derivation of a contextual implication, for example: *therefore, too, also.*

b)   It may strengthen an existing assumption, by providing better evidence for it, for example: *after all, moreover, furthermore.*

c)   It may contradict an existing assumption, for example: *however, still, nevertheless, but.*

d)   It may specify the role of the utterance in the discourse, for example: *anyway, incidentally, by the way, finally.*

All the above mentioned ideas clarify different scholars' views about DMs and their categorizations. However, reviewing them can vividly show that DMs, in spite of variety of categories, carry some certain specifications. For instance, they are

all from the classes of conjunctions, adverbials, prepositional phrases, and other syntactic categories. Moreover, they are employed to make the transferred massage smoother and more understandable. What is more, they have no semantic and grammatical role in the sentence, so removing them does not damage the general accuracy of the sentences.

Carter and Fung (2007) performed their study on native speakers, a corpus of spoken British English and non-native speakers, natural transcripts of recordings in Hong Kong. Their study on functional paradigm of discourse markers led to categorizing these units into interpersonal, referential, structural and cognitive. Learners employ them to organize their speech, both native and non-native ones. They aid learners in both discourse development and management.

In the previous categorization, as can be seen, interpersonal function focuses on filling up the gap of social distance and showing agreeing attitude. Referential one works as sentence connector to link the two sentences together. The structural level mainly focuses on signaling turn-taking and topic-shifting. Finally, they can have cognitive focus which can show thinking process in utterance construction.

Studying discourse markers used by teachers in classroom setting, Liu (2006) defined five major textual functions for them which are: connect, transfer, generalize, explain, and repair. In a study on Chinese literature class, he concluded that discourse markers have the function of emotion control, discussion, and adjustment of social relationship. Yu (2008) also stated that using discourse markers appropriately can improve the quality and effectiveness of classroom setting. Walsh (2006) defined classroom setting a 'dynamic' context in which teachers, learners, discourses and learning materials interact with each other. Discourse markers can help the flow of conversation, which is the medium of classroom discourse. He also

stated that these units, used by EFL teachers, assist to realize certain pedagogical objectives in EFL classroom lesson plan. They are used in interaction to remove the obstacles on the way of social distance among participants, and decrease understanding difficulties. As it can be noted these units play social and educational roles in classroom setting.

Attributes of DMs

The First Functional View. DMs have various characterizations among which weak clause association, initiality, orality, and multi-categoriality can be named. But these features are not regarded as criteria for DM status. The three main features of DMs, which are consistently considered, are as follows:

Connectivity. As Richard and Schmidt (2002) mentioned, DMs connects two parts of discourse, but have no contribution to the meaning of either. In many researchers' views, it is one of the most crucial roles of DMs, but it is conceived in different ways. In an almost similar way to the previous idea, Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999) defined them as connectives which relate two textual units; therefore, they contribute to inter-utterance coherence. In their point of view these items signal boundaries between verbal activities and imply relationship between two textual units.

However, Blakemore (1987) noted that DMs can play the role of connecting the host utterance not only to the linguistic co-text, but also to the context in a wider sense. He exemplified his idea through the usage of *SO* in the following conversational contexts:

(1)

A: *You take the first turning on the left.*

B: *So we don't go pass the university.*

(2)

C: [Seeing someone return home with parcels]

- So you've spent all your money.

As it can be seen in both contexts *SO* is used to show the person's conclusion, where, in the second example, the conclusion is being made on the state of affairs, without necessitating the first person to say anything.

Optionality. Applying or avoiding DMs is a matter of option which means, as mentioned above, in two different views of grammatical and semantic aspects DMs plays no significant role.

If DMs are omitted, the grammaticality of the sentence would not be disrupted. Besides, the sentence without these elements can carry the meaning. The following example shows the expressed claim clearly:

(3) *My colleagues will be working their weekend, while I will be visiting my family.*

(4) *My colleagues will be working this weekend. I will be visiting my family.*

As can be seen, the existence of the DMs display the proposition expressed, as two sentences oppose each other, however, it does not create that opposition between the two sentences.

Non-truth Conditionality. Another aspect of these units is having no contribution to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed by an utterance (Hansen, 1997). As Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999) mentioned, DMs have a 'core meaning'. Fraser also believed that their meaning is procedural and not conceptual. What he stated practically means they bring no meaning or condition to the sentence. Fraser (1996) also claimed that DMs do not influence the truth-conditions of sentences, but he approved the idea that truth-conditions pertain to mental representations not to sentences.

Kempson (1986) argued that: "truth-theoretic content is defined solely with respect to propositional forms of the language of inference".

All the above-mentioned claims can be exemplified through the following sentences:

(5) *As you know, there are different animal species in Australia.*

(6) *Happily, my son left the room.*

Removing *'As you know'* from the beginning of sentences does not change the truth-condition of the utterance, while in sentence 6 omitting *'Happily'* damages the truth-condition of the utterance. That is why 'DMs' and 'content words' can be distinguished through the truth-conditionality effect on the utterance.

The Second Functional View. Discourse markers can help us as language speakers/writers get the attention of our interlocutors. They can also help us convey our intended meaning more effectively through restricting the contextual assumptions available to our hearer and guiding his/her interpretation process.

It can be claimed that the use of discourse markers can reduce the cognitive load imposed on the hearer in processing information, improve the emotional quality

of communication, and help in maintaining mutual interaction. Richards and Schmidt (2002) define discourse markers as "expressions that typically connect two segments of discourse but do not contribute to the meaning of either". More precisely Fraser (1999) describes discourse markers as a class of lexical expressions.

These lexical expressions have been investigated under various labels, including discourse markers, discourse connectives, discourse operators, pragmatic connectives, sentence connectives, and cue phrases. In most cases, discourse markers are syntactically independent: that is, removing a marker from a sentence still leaves the sentence structure intact. Discourse markers are more common in informal speech than in most forms of writing.

In spite of the various explanations given in various studies for the choice of a specific term, there is generally no agreement as to which linguistic items are to be considered discourse markers or pragmatic particles or any other term used. Investigation of the literature has shown that few of the features listed are defining criteria. Rather these features are descriptive of the group of linguistic items the respective author has in mind; in addition, they are supplied with a range of hedges, tentative expressions and modifying adverbs such as 'tend to', 'typically', 'mostly', etc. These features are as follows: 1.no single word class, 2.phonological features, 3.syntactic position, 3.syntactic position, 4.syntactic independence and grammatical optionality, 5.lack of semantic content, 6.orality, and 7.mutlifunctionality (Muller, 2005, p.5-7).

1. No Single Word Class

The problem of placing discourse markers within a traditional word class is a feature which is supported in several research papers.

2. Phonological Features

Discourse markers have some prosodic contours like tonic stress and followed by a pause, phonological reduction. However, most researchers do not pay heavy attention to phonological features when they try to define discourse markers.

3. Syntactic position

Discourse markers often occupy a specific position within the discourse, they are often seen at the beginning of a discourse unit. However, there is not as much agreement as to what this discourse unit might be. It is often said that pragmatic markers are restricted to sentence-initial position. Discourse markers are inserts which tend to be seen at the beginning of a turn or utterance. However, it has been found that pragmatic expressions, like I Mean and You Know, which are treated as discourse markers were more frequent in the middle of sentences.

4. Syntactic independence and grammatical optionality

According to syntactic independence, it is claimed that the absence of the discourse marker does not render a sentence ungrammatical and/or unintelligible. That is, even if the marker occurs within a sentence, it is not tied to the sentence structure but remains outside the syntactic structure. Optionality concerns well-formed grammatical sentence, and not its pragmatic role. Optionality seems to be a very important feature of English discourse markers.

5. Lack of semantic content

Lack of semantic content, syntactic and phonological features are vital characteristics of discourse markers. In addition to or instead of talking about the meaning of the marker itself, researchers believe that markers do not add to the informational or propositional content of the utterance which contains the marker. However, Andersen (2001, p.40) warns that:

"Non-propositionality is only partly a valid criterion, because some pragmatic markers can be seen to have truth-conditional implications. […] I argue that some pragmatic markers affect the propositional meaning of utterances, though not necessarily as conceptual constituents of propositions but as constraints on the interpretational procedure. "

6. Orality

The distinction between the oral and the written medium has been rejected as a defining criterion. Most discourse marker studies are still based on speech data, and most forms claimed to discourse markers occur primarily in speech. Thus, it seems that few researchers are interested in linguistic items which could be called discourse markers on other grounds, but which occur mainly in written language (Fraser, 1998, 1999).

Discourse markers (words like 'however', 'although' and 'Nevertheless') are referred to more commonly as 'linking words' and 'linking phrases', or 'sentence connectors'. They may be described as the 'glue' that binds together a piece of 'writing, making the different parts of the text 'stick together'. They are used less frequently in speech, unless the speech is very formal.

7. Multifunctionality

As Jucker and Ziv (1998b, p.4) noted:

"Whether a specific linguistic element is monofunctional or polyfunctional is not a useful criterion in deciding whether it is a discourse marker or not because of the obvious analytical vicious circularity it entails. Many studies actually set out to argue explicitly for the monofunctionality or polyfunctionality of specific markers, thus nullifying this as a valid criterion."

Oppositely, some other researchers like Lenk (1998, p.50) with the example of 'summing up' claimed that some DMs always carry the same meaning.

Without sufficient discourse markers in a piece of writing, a text would not seem logically constructed and the connections between the different sentences and paragraphs would not be obvious.

Care must also be taken, however, to avoid over-use of discourse markers. Using too many of them, or using them unnecessarily, can make a piece of writing sound too heavy and 'artificial'. They are important, but must only be used when necessary.

Classifications of DMs

Reviewing the Literature. There have been several categories of DMs by different experts. The most outstanding ones are as follows:

Chaudron and Richards (1986) proposed a distinction between micro-markers, which indicate the link between sentences and help the listener or reader have enough time to process the segments in a piece of writing or a lecture, so they help bottom-up processing, and macro-markers, which signal the macro-structure of a lecture through highlighting major information so they help top-down processing. The most serious problem with the arrangement of micro-markers is that it considers just the semantic relations across discourse and other domains are ignored. As for the macro-markers, the classification did not distinguish any semantic features even. It included some signals and meta-statements about the major proposition (see Appendix A for Micro and Macro Markers).

The second categorization was the work of Morell (2001) that was mostly done on the lecture style DMs. She divided them into micro-and macro-markers but

with the division of interactive and non-interactive ones. This arrangement carries the gaps and lacks of the previously mentioned ones (see Appendix A for Interactive and Non-Interactive Markers).

Another categorization proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2004) considered micro-and macro-markers as well (see Appendix A for Micro and Macro Markers).

Teaching DMs and Previous Studies. Recent studies within the last two decades, analyze discourse markers which includes what has been termed 'discourse connective', 'discourse particle', among others. This term has occupied a large space in the literature on pragmatics. Discourse markers have been investigated in several studies from a variety of perspectives like: signaling 'a sequential relationship' between utterances (Fraser, 1990; Fraser, 1999), as marking discourse coherence (Schiffrin, 1987; Lenk, 1998), and from a relevance-theoretic point of view (Andersen, 2001; Blakemore, 2002; Blass, 1990).

In some studies, discourse markers have been analyzed with regard to gender (Erman, 1992) and in bilingual contexts (Goss and Salmons, 2000). However, there is a general consensus among various research studies that discourse markers contribute to the pragmatic meaning of utterances and therefore they play important roles in the pragmatic competence of the speaker/writer. DMs are expressions such as those used in the following sequences:

a. A: I like him. B: So, you think you'll ask him out then.

b. John can't go. And Mary can't go either.

c. Will you go? Furthermore, will you represent the class there?

d. Sue left very late. But she arrived on time.

e. I think it will fly. After all, we built it right.

During the past ten years, the study of DMs has turned into a growth industry in linguistics, with dozens of articles appearing yearly. Unfortunately, the term has different meanings for different groups of researchers which have been mentioned previously. In his 1983 book entitled Pragmatics, Levinson considered DMs as a class worthy of study on its own merits, although he did not give it a name. He suggested that:

> "... there are many words and phrases in English, and no doubt most languages, that indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse. Examples are utterance-initial usages of but, therefore, in conclusion, to the contrary, still, however, anyway, well, besides, actually, all in all, so, after all, and so on. It is generally conceded that such words have at least a component of meaning that resists truth-conditional treatment ... what they seem to do is indicate, often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse." (Levinson, 1983, p.87-88)

Levinson, also, did not pursue DMs beyond these brief comments. Zwicky expressed an interest in DMs as a class when he wrote:

> "Within the great collection of things that have been labeled 'particles', we find at least one grammatically significant class of items, in English and in languages generally. These have been variously termed 'discourse particles' and 'interjections'; here I will call them 'discourse markers' ... On the grounds of distribution, prosody, and meaning, discourse markers can be seen to form a class. But like the 'particles' discussed ... they are independent words rather than critics ..." (Zwicky, 1985, p.303)

Zwicky does not provide supporting evidence that what he holds to be discourse markers form a class, but he does state that DMs must be separated from other function words, that they frequently occur at the beginning of sentences to continue the conversation, and that they are prosodically independent, being both accented and prosodically separated from their surrounding context by pauses, intonation breaks, or both. He adds that they are usually monomorphemic but can be morphologically complex, and are syntactically insulated from the rest of the sentence in which they occur and form no sort of unit with adjacent words: "Discourse markers ALL have the latter, pragmatic functions [e.g. the role of relating the current utterance with larger discourse] rather than the former, narrowly semantic, ones" [e.g. indicating sentence type] (Zwicky, 1985, p.303-304).

As Schiffrin (1987) stated, awareness of DMs plays an important role in understanding discourse and information progress. Therefore, language teachers should be aware of finding strategies to use DMs in their language teaching process and provide an atmosphere for learners to learn and understand the necessity applying these units in their language.

Unfortunately, as crystal clear in the teaching atmosphere, teachers are not aware of the importance of DMs and have no clear strategy for teaching them. In addition, text books do not provide the condition to do so, as well. As a result, it makes teaching and learning DMs a complicated task for both teachers and learners.

Having said that, some materials developers nowadays are trying intemperately to include DMs in the material they design and suggest teachers to use them interchangeably.

Yoshimi (2001) focused on using Japanese discourse markers and did the study on experiential and control groups. The results revealed that the experimental

group after a period on explicit instruction and corrective feedback performed significantly better on their use of these markers comparing to control one. Quantitative analysis of the results showed that explicit instruction and corrective feedback could positively influence experimental group's usage of these units. Also Hernemdez (2008) focused on explicit instruction and input flood together in one group and input flood alone in another group. The results showed that the combination of the two elements could be more effective and could make learners more aware of using discourse markers.

Hellerman and Vergum (2007) investigated the interaction between 17 adult English learners with no previous formal instruction in the language in class, in order to discover the use of certain discourse markers which were not explicitly taught. The results demonstrate that few learners used discourse markers in their discourse, only those who were more acculturated to English culture. The findings suggest that language and culture must be taught together in English as a Foreign Language classroom.

In a study by Alipour and Jalilifar (2007) on explicit instruction of meta-discourse markers and teaching them on reading of EFL learners' reading skill, it was revealed that form-focused instruction of these units could have positive influence on reading comprehension of the students. In their study they selected 90 pre-intermediate students and divided them into two groups. One group received instruction on meta-discourse markers, while the other did not. The results revealed that the one with explicit instruction outperformed the other one.

As de la Fuente (2009) pointed out, instructional materials do not have the sufficient approaches to attract learners' attention to DMs. Three main reasons have

been mentioned by different researchers to justify the cause to make DMs difficult to teach, which are as follows:

1. The first reason is based on Van Patten's (1985) view that argued lack of predominance or low communicative value as the cause of the feeling that these units might not seem very crucial to teach. Therefore, he stated, learners do not take them seriously in the learning process.

2. The second reason is based on Andersen's (1990) view that claimed there is a pre-assumption by language learners that each DM has one specific meaning and function, while it is not the case: DMs are multifunctional. In other words, each DM in a specific context might have some certain function.

3. The third reason is the learners' presupposition that DMs should be placed in the initial position, while they may practically be situated in the initial, middle, or final position of a sentence (Van Patten, 1996, 2004). DMs in the initial position, therefore, attract more attention and seem to be more important to language learners, comparing to the other two posts in the sentence.

A review of the literature of DMs demonstrates the essential role they play in different skills of language process. Some of the prominent ones are as follows:

According to Arapoff (1968), based on a word count by Ernest Horn, it was revealed that approximately 50 out of the 1000 most commonly used words in written English were sentence connectors. As can be seen, it just included the one word connectors. Absolutely, if the words or idiomatic DMs, such as: *of course, in addition, or as a matter of fact* were also included, the proposition would be much higher than this, other than single word DMs, like *otherwise, thus, or therefore*. As she proposed "just the fact that such words occur frequently makes them worth studying".

Another study by Moradan (1995) shed lights on the importance of DMs in writing and also the role of instruction and arising consciousness of students on application of DMs. He found that explicit instruction of DMs and the appropriate use of these units by learners in their writing can improve their usage. In addition, as he stated, comparison of DMs in the learners' first language and English could significantly help them. Consequently, he suggested the explicit instruction of DMs to be involved in the process of teaching to facilitate the learning process.

The study by Warsi (2001) on the use of contrastive DMs demonstrated that native subjects used DMs frequently, while some advanced Russian subjects used them in a range of functions, but some others used them in a limited range of functions. The reason might be unawareness or uncertainty of their function by those learners in some special ways.

The use of discourse markers by the experimental group in the study by Alipour and Jalilifar (2007) reveals that learners might not be aware of the role of these units in improvement of quality of their writing in the aspects of fluency, accuracy and complexity. Therefore, bringing discourse markers to the learners' consciousness seems necessary to let them be aware of these crucial devices. Instruction with its main focus on output raises learners' consciousness.

Besides, it can motivate learners to be more accurate while they attend to meaning, as noted by Cadierno and VanPatten (1993). To this end, teachers might need to focus on explicit instruction of these units, with a clear planning. For instance, each category of discourse markers can be taught separately and with enough practices and corrective feedback. And finally they should be given some exercises to practice production of these units in their own writings. In other words,

free writing tasks can have effect on grasping of that specific category. This process can be followed for all the categories of discourse markers.

In a study by Zhao (2013) on usage of discourse markers in spoken language, it was revealed that Chinese learners are not aware of the importance of these units in constructing textual units. He believed in explicit instruction under the framework of Relevance Theory to help learners. He claimed that with the help of these units learners are able to go through the process of managing a successful speech with preliminary organizing information and then passing through producing utterances and finally leading the hearer to the final goal of interpretation of utterances in discourse. Discourse markers, as he claimed, can help learners' comprehension with minimum cost of processing effort.

Research by Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007) on the efficacy of DMs disclosed that DMs are very necessary for improving quality of listening comprehension. In this work, two versions of the same listening part were presented to two groups of students. One group was listening to the original text with DMs, but the other group to the manipulated form, with DMs extracted and omitted. The result showed that existence of DMs could help a lot in enhancing the learners' listening comprehension.

Three groups of speakers, including: native, Japanese, and Chinese, were tested by Ying (2006) in the use of DMs. The results showed that there is a considerable difference among the three groups in their tendency to use DMs. Besides, various kinds of DMs' misuse were explored in the essay by non-native speakers.

Fuller (2003a) studied the use of discourse markers by two groups of native and non-native speakers of English from two aspects of interviews and

conversations. Results of her study revealed that native speakers use these elements more than non-native users do. She also found out that just in the case of using 'you know' non-native users apply it more than native ones. Hence, she concluded that non-native users tend to have a formulaic view towards learning, and subsequently using these markers. Moreover, she believed that non-native users do not show variety of usage in various contexts when the role of speakers change which practically means they lack the ability of adapting the use of discourse markers with the context on which they are being used.

Regarding Fuller's (2003a) finding of the comparative study of native and proficient non-native language learners on their use of discourse markers and the results of the study which revealed that those proficient non-native users did not show the ability of showing differences across different contexts when discourse markers were used to show the changing of role and position of the speaker, the same might be true on case of writing. The potential complication on writing might be the insufficient ability non-native writers to apply various forms of discourse markers to transfer the ideas smoothly throughout the text. Which an explicit instruction of texts might enable them to overcome the obstacle and make them aware of variety of functions of different discourse makers which can be used to transfer thoughts and ideas smoothly and meaningfully.

In a study by Carter and Jones (2012) on explicit instruction of discourse markers with applying two methods of instruction- Interaction- Induction (III) and Present- Practice- Produce (PPP), it was showed that the students under PPP and III instruction of discourse markers could outperform better in usage of these units in the immediate post-test. It substantiates the claim made for the impact of explicit teaching methodologies (Norris & Ortega, 2000, 2001). In their work, in which 36

Chinese learners were recruited into 3 groups, the group which received PPP outperformed the other group which received III in their use of discourse markers.

In a different study by Bahrami (1992) the effect of DMs on Reading Comprehension of learners was tested. A text was selected and two versions of it were developed with inserting 26 and 48 DMs into them. The three versions were given to three groups of learners with the same learning ability. The result showed that the group with the highest number of DMs available outperformed the other 2 groups in their comprehension of reading, which unveils the importance of DMs in enhancing reading comprehension.

In almost the same way, two other researchers, Akbarian (1998) and Degand et al. (1999), studied the influence of DMs on reading comprehension by providing two sets of texts, one original and one manipulated with DMs eliminated. The results were in accordance with the previous study and the group exposed to DMs outperformed the other one, which again confirms the effect of DMs on reading comprehension improvement.

Hyland (2004) mentioned that meta-discourse resources are of great value at higher levels of writing and also meaningful and appropriate to a particular disciplinary community. One of the reasons of the above-mentioned phenomenon is lack of mastery of norms and conventions of academic writing genre, and more specifically article writing on Persian writers' side.

Innajih (2007) studied the effect of DM awareness on reading comprehension of two groups. The first group, the experimental one, received a three-month course on the function of DMs, while the second group, the control, did not receive any instruction. After the instruction on the experimental group, they were tested again. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the

control which shows the effect of DM awareness can help to improve reading comprehension ability.

Martinez (2004) worked on the frequency of DMs being utilized by Spanish undergraduates. The results unveiled that elaborative markers were the most commonly used markers followed by contrastive markers. He also found that the more markers used by the writer, the higher the quality of the composition can be.

A study by Jalilifar (2008) on the effect of DMs on the quality of descriptive composition showed that, as in the previous study, elaborative markers were the most commonly used ones and they were followed by inferential, contrastive, causative, and topic-related markers. The second point of the study was the more DMs being used, the higher the quality of writing and the more coherent the writing could be.

A research on contrastive marker usage by Chinese and Japanese English users was done by Jiajin (2009b). The results revealed that the users of these certain markers limited their usage of DMs to those they were certain about and familiar to them. In the author's view point the learners did not use variety of markers because they were not being taught properly by their instructors and lacked adequate knowledge. In some cases, the use of DMs was a direct translation from the learners' L1.

Parvaresh and Nemati (2008) studied the effect of meta-discourse markers on reading comprehension of students in both English and Persian. Two types of texts, with and without markers, were given to the students in two languages. Results revealed that learners performed better in texts with meta-discourse markers in both languages.

A study by Dastjerdi and Shirazi (2010) investigated the effect of meta-discourse instruction on Iranian students' writing performance. 94 students majoring

English literature in Isfahan university were tested. The design was pretest/posttest experimental and control group. After six successive sessions of instructional period on meta-discourse markers, it was unveiled that experimental group could outperform the control one which means the explicit instruction could significantly increase learners' awareness of these units.

In a study by Hashemi, Khodabakhshzede, and Shirvan (2012) on the effect of meta-discourse markers on listening comprehension of intermediate and advanced level students, it was revealed that after consciousness raising of learners, they could perform better in their listening. 120 students were divided into 4 groups, 2 groups intermediate levels, and 2 groups advanced levels. Each level was divided into two again, one experimental and one control.

Two versions of monologues with and without discourse markers were given to the students. After that the experimental group passed through a period of consciousness-raising, and it was shown that after that period, the learners' performance enhanced significantly. The researchers claimed that after consciousness-raising period both groups of learners in experimental group could outperform the control group, which as they claimed, is due to lack of awareness of the function of these units.

A study by Seyed Ali Rezvani Kalajahi (2012) on 45 Iranian EFL teachers showed that the teachers had average level of awareness of the presence and role of DMs. Considering their tendency to teach these units, they were reluctant to use and teach them in their instruction period. He claimed that it is unclear why they evaded these linguistic items. He also noted that in a similar study by Carter and Fung (2007) on a group of teachers, their attitude was, oppositely, positive towards teaching and using these units.

Asik (2013) investigated non-native English speakers' production of discourse markers and their occurrences using the target language in comparison with those used by native speakers. The results showed that non-native speakers of English use a very limited number of discourse markers in their discourse and that variety within that limited number is also very restricted. The study highlights the importance of raising awareness in non-native speakers in their discourse and advice about the importance of teaching these language forms in the language classroom.

A study by Ayman Sabry Daif-Allah and Khaled Albesher (2013) on 50 preparatory year program Saudi learners who were 18-year-old EFL learners revealed that these learners overused additive DMs which were the ones they were sure of, while causative, contrastive, and illustrative ones were employed in lower rates, respectively. They believed that learners mostly used the DMs they were certain of and due to not being able to use a wide number of DMs, they made mostly short and simple sentences. They also found a direct relationship between the learners' scores and the use of DMs. In other words, the more DMs being employed by the writer, the higher the score can be.

Based on a study by Jainfeng Zhang (2012) on 120 Chinese learners who were non-English majors, it was revealed that DM awareness could have a significant influence on their listening comprehension. In this study, a group received instruction on DMs but the control group was not taught. The results illustrated that the experimental group's results outweighed the control one, which means instruction on the learners' awareness of DMs and their roles improved listening comprehension.

In a study by Dabaghi, Khorvash, and Tavakoli (2010) on the effect of meta-discourse awareness on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners, it was revealed that this awareness could improve their reading ability. The research was

done on 80 Iranian EFL learners. Results showed that the experimental group which received instruction on both interpersonal and textual meta-discourse markers could outperform the control group in the reading comprehension post-test.

Todd Hernandez (2011) studied the effect of EI+IF versus IF alone on DMs on all English-speaking adults registering in a four-semester college Spanish course. His study revealed that EI+IF and IF alone could help learners improve their speaking with the help of DMs. Based on the findings of the two experimental groups, one EI+IF but the other one IF alone, he claimed that presence of IF alone could be enough for improving the learners' speaking ability. He stated that there was not a significant difference between the two groups in the experiment.

A quasi-experimental study by Allami and Serijfard (2012) on sixty IELTS level students showed that direct instruction of engagement markers could enhance writings. The students were divided into two groups of experimental and control. The experimental group received direct instruction on the use of engagement markers in writing while the control one did not. Results revealed that experimental group showed a significant improvement in the quality and effectiveness of their writing.

Yaghoubi and Ardestani (2014) studied the effect of explicit and implicit instruction of meta-discourse markers on writing skill of learners in a pretest/posttest experimental and control group. The findings unveiled that the female learners on the experimental group (45) showed positive impact of performance in writing, comparing to the control one (45).

A study on the effect of meta-discourse instruction on EFL major' reading comprehension and on their reader-friendly writing by Hassanein (2016) revealed that a significant improvement in their reading comprehension of the experimental group could be noticed. Also their writing could be more reader-friendly, compared

to the control group. Based on the study, the researcher recommended that explicit teaching of meta-discourse markers should be integrated into EFL majors' curricula.

A contrastive study on transitional markers was done by Badeleh and Elahi (2013). In this study two groups of writings of native speakers (15) and Persian writers (15) were viewed. The results revealed that the category of contrast and purpose were more used by native speakers, and comparison and similarity markers were used equally. The other categories of addition, result, place, example, summary, and emphasis were more used in the ELT articles written by Persian article writers. In addition, the researchers after using inferential statistics claimed that there was a significant difference in the use of transitional markers in the two groups of articles.

A qualitative study by Haris and Yunus (2013) revealed that students' misuse and overuse of DMs could be an obstacle on the way of writing; moreover, teachers' interview unveiled that they did not have a clear picture of these units and their function in writing. The study was done on 30 intermediate level learners in Malaysia. The results showed that they misused DMs in their writings and overused some markers to make sure that the sentences are connected. In this study the researchers also interviewed 4 teachers in the same school and the results revealed that the teachers themselves had no idea of the importance of these units, hence they did not emphasize on using them. As a result, the researchers concluded that teachers are required to be informed and consequently learners need to be taught to use these vital elements in their essay writings optimally and properly.

Modhish (2012) investigated the answer to two questions: (1) what are the DMs frequently used by EFL learners? , and (2) is there a direct relationship between the use of DMs and the writing quality of EFL learners? He performed his study in Yemen and analyzed 50 essays of Yemeni learners.

The results revealed that elaborative markers followed by inferential, contrastive, causative, and topic related markers were the DMs which were frequently used by the learners. As for the second question, he found that there is no positive correlation between DMs use and quality of writing. However, topic related DMs could enhance the quality of writing.

Implicit Instruction

Based on usage-based theories, learning constructions take place when communication engagement happens. According to these theories, memories of utterances in language use background and abstraction of rules and regulations in them can form an individual's competence.

De-Saussurian views which return to around one hundred years back are the corner stone of these assumptions:

1-   Linguistic signs arise from the dynamic interactions of thought and sound-from patterns of usage: "everything depends on relations. … words as used in discourse, strung together one after another, enter into relations based on the linear character of languages … combinations based on sequentiality may be called syntagmas. … outside of the context of discourse, words having something [meaningful] in common are associated together in memory. This kind of connection between words is a quite different order. It is not based on linear sequence. It is a connection in the brain. Such connections are part of that accumulated store which is the form the language takes in an individual's brain. We shall call these associative relations" (De-Saussure, 1916, p.120-121).

2-   Linguistic structure emerges from patterns of usage that are automatically memorized by individual speakers and these representations are associations

collaborate in subsequent language processing: "the whole set of phonetic and conceptual differences which constitute a language are thus the product of two kinds of comparison, associative and syntagmatic. Groups of both kinds are, in large part, established by the language. This set of habitual relations is what constitutes linguistic structure and determines how the language functions …." (p.126). "any [linguistic] creation must be preceded by an unconscious comparison of the material deposited in the storehouse of language where productive forms are arranged according to their relations" De-Saussure, 1916, 164).

3-   Regular schematic structures are frequency-weighted abstractions across concrete patterns of like-types. "to the language not to speech, must be attributed all types of syntagmas constructed on regular patterns, … such types will not exist unless sufficiently numerous examples do, in deed, occur" (p.120-121). "abstract entities are based ultimately upon concrete entities. No grammatical abstraction is possible unless it has a foundation in the form of some series of material elements, and these are the elements one must come back to finally" (De-Saussure, 1916, p.137).

The above-mentioned factors have been confirmed to be applicable even though they were proposed a century ago. Usage frequency is a crucial factor in psychological and psycholinguistic aspects of language processing. Hence, learning can happen more easily and language can be learned more fluently through exemplifications and high frequency forms (Ellis, 2002; Gries & Divjuk, 2012b).

Considering usage-based language acquisition and implicit/explicit learning distinction to issues can be proposed. First, there must be specific mechanisms that tally the frequency of occurrence of linguistic forms during language usage. "These psycholinguistic demonstrations that frequency/sensitivity pervades all aspects of

language processing have profound implications for theories of language acquisition: language learning is exemplar based. The evidence reviewed here suggests that the knowledge underlying fluent use of language is not grammar in the sense of abstract rules or structure, but it is rather a huge collection of memories of previously experienced utterances. These exemplars are linked with like-kinds being related in such a way that they resonate as abstract linguistic categories, schema and prototypes. Linguistic regularities emerge as central tendencies in the conspiracy of the data base of memories for utterances"(N.C.Ellis, 2002, p.166).

Second, regarding the role of conscientiousness during language use we are conscious of communicating rather than counting. We naturally communicate and acquire frequency of language elements, map and notice transitional dependencies. When we read or listen we never count or match phonotactic sequences or during speaking, we never count the relative frequencies of units of the language or any other aspects relating to association statistic.

Although our language processing system must be sensitive to all these factors relating to language process, there should be a natural way through which these elements are acquired. These aspects are related to implicit learning of language. "The mechanism underlying such unconscious counting is to be found in the plasticity of synoptic connections rather than abacuses or registers, but it is counting nevertheless" (Ellis, 2002, p.146).

Much of what is being considered in implicit learning is on artificial grammar and these experiments show that the underlying patterns of sequential dependency can be acquired automatically from related experience of sequential behavior. In the aspect of comprehension and production, several works have been done recently

which investigated learners' sensitivity to sequential statistics which can provide them with implicit learning.

For instance, Hilpert (2008) worked on syntactic context and phonetic processing of native speakers. It was a work on phonetic categorization and phonetic processing and revealed that verbs of emotion were producing more psycholinguistic reaction. Like the verb 'cry' was occurring seventy three times while 'try' happened just eleven times in causative statements. Hence, 'make me cry' was more commonly used and more formulaic than 'make me try' in native speakers.

Another example of the work which was on implicitness of learning in native speakers was performed by Durrant and Doherty (2010). They studied collocations primed the processing of the second word. It was revealed that highly frequent and high frequency associated collocations were of significant priming. To exemplify among the first word of low- (e.g. famous saying), middle- (recent figures), high frequency (foreign debt) and high frequency and psychologically associated collocations (e.g. state agent), native speakers primed the highly frequent and high frequency associated collocations.

In sentence processing, as well as the above review, it can be noted that such sequential processing is demonstrated to produce much sensitivity. For instance, in the work by Reali and Chrstiansen (2007) object relative clauses are being influenced by chunk frequency. The embedded pronoun-verb combinations are easier to process when they are formed by a frequent combination than a less frequent one. They made example of 'The person who I met distracted the lawyer.' In this example, 'I liked' or 'I met' are processed easier compared to 'I distrusted' or 'I phoned'. It is due to the frequency of the former group in comparison to the latter one.

Another study in natives again revealed that one exposure was enough for them to keep the particular wording, used to express something, in mind. The study by Gurevich, Johnson, and Goldberg (2010) adult native speakers with only one chance of exposure and without any prior warning could recognize sentences that they exposed to. Participants could reproduce the sentences they heard after a six-day delay, even though they were not asked to keep things in mind or recall what they had heard.

All the above-mentioned examples and many others are implicitly working on native speakers. Then, the question remained unanswered is, 'what about second language learners who are exposed to learning in artificial setting of the classroom? How this frequency of utterances is going to come in hand?' all the studies above and many other works bring about same limits of explicit language learning which are described.

The Limits of Implicit Instruction. There have always been a controversial issue on the extent to which second language learning could end in success and in the past thirty years the initiation of controversy can be entitled to work by Schmidt (1990) that claimed second language acquisition through implicit instruction alone is limited in its success. Here the two terminologies which need to be considered are 'input' which is defined as the available target language which is presented and 'intake' which is illustrated as the amount of input that has the chance to find its way in and learner can apply in their language use (Corder, 1967).

Perdue (1993) worked on 40 adults who learned the language of social environment and through everyday conversation. 'Basic Variety' is the way their language use was described. All learners used the target language; they learned more

words than the structures. They also were not capable of complexifying their language which means they used simple utterances and one-third of the exposed language was fossilized. Hence, it can be claimed that naturalistic second language learning is much less successful than first language acquisition.

As described by Klein (1998, p. 544-545) "there is no functional morphology. By far most lexical items correspond to nouns, verbs and adverbs; closed-class items, in particular determiners, subordinating elements and prepositions are rare if present at all". "note that there is no functional inflection whatsoever. No tense, no aspect, no mood, no agreement, no ease-marking, no gender assignment; nor are there, for example, any expletive elements".

At the first look, the view that major source of the problem of language learning might be the wrong view of educators, educational planners and finally, teachers might seem too much of claim but I personally wander it might be a factor to consider that, for instance, the reason why majorly Iranian learners suffer from not being able to produce language after years of 'input receiving'.

The question that how it happens that years of input can easily be eliminated and the 'input' cannot change to 'intake' is what is answered in L2 literature. Pattern recognition unit is never tallying for low salient and less important issues. Hence, implicit encounter for L2 setting can easily be forgotten. 'Learned attention' is what was proposed by N.C. Ellis (2006b) that illustrates how input is not changing to intake.

'Learned attention' is a key concept in contemporary associative and connectionist theories. Due to the system the language is automatized with a huge exposure to the first language and reproducing production of L1 becomes automatic and unconscious. The fast adaptation to the first language, as Kuhl (2004) noted is

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impressive and amazing. The frequently heard and used language forms form out ambient language which become a part of our linguistic knowledge. The words and morphemes are produced more rapidly as time passes. The heard and read material becomes shortened and less salient in daily use. L1 reader or hearer automatically recognizes them and the comprehension is top-down which means he uses the acquired knowledge from the exposure to comprehend the material. It is done with expectation driven means which means L1 reader or hearer knows what to expect. However, L2 user of the language cannot go through the mental and psychological process of L1 user mentioned above. Those low-salient clues which L1 users can easily perceive, analyze, and understand are almost impossible or at least confusing to the L2 user, especially to more complicated materials in which there are more important and more reliable clues which need the participant to analyze and conclude in top-down process and expectation driven procedure.

The limitation of L2 learning and L1 success are originating from the same source. The learning principles which put obstacles on the way of L2 formation are problems of intake such as: interference, salience, overshadowing, or blocking (N.C. Ellis, 2006b). In the obstacle of blocking cues are present in the input but analyzing and comprehending them by the L2 user is the problem.

The research by N.C. Ellis et al. (2013) revealed the dynamic learning process as the underlying factor in this regard. However, the effect of transfer suggested by Lado (1957, p.57) should always be taken into account as an important factor which can be influential. The transfer which was later by James (1980) reviewed in contrastive analysis can be constructive or destructive. All experiences leave a trace in the memory and all these are facilitating or inhibiting the process of language learning.

Explicit Instruction

The effect of explicit instruction (hereafter EI) is becoming more vivid in both researchers' work and empirical studies. Some researchers, including: Dekeyser (1995), Schmidt (1990, 2001), Alanen (1995), and De Graaff (1997), claimed that EI, which is defined as giving learners enough explicit knowledge and information about the target language structure during the learning process, facilitates learning the second language. As investigated by Alanen (1995) four groups were categorized and taught.

Control, textual enhancement, explicitly instructed, and explicitly instructed group with textual enhancement were the four grouped learners in the experiment. The result revealed that the group enjoying EI outperformed the other groups, and the result of the control group and the group with just textual enhancement did not show a significant difference.

Regarding EI, quite a lot of work has been done to prove its efficacy on facilitating learners' learning process. In a survey by De Graaff (1997) after making two groups of control and experimental, 27 items were being explicitly presented to the experimental group along with lots of meaning-based activities and performed structured exercises, while the control group just received the activities and exercises without the needed instruction. The outcome showed that the former group could be much more successful than the latter one, which confirmed the effect of EI.

In a study by Yoshimi (2001) the use of Japanese discourse markers was tested with the help of a combination of EI, communicative practice, and feedback taking. The experimental group which included 5 learners received explicit information on the function and use of discourse markers, had exposure to the use of target structures with native speaker models, had the chance to communicate

practically, and received feedback, while the control group did not receive any EI. The results illustrated a very positive impact of the use of discourse markers for the former group and the condition gave them the chance to gain the necessary cohesion, coherence, and organization.

In contrast some studies certified the reverse, which means EI has no influence on the language learning process. Rosa and O'Neill (1999) tested the possible effect of EI on Spanish unreal conditional sentences. The results did not show a significant difference between the two, control and experiment, groups. Relying on the results, the authors concluded that EI could have no effect on improving language acquisition, even if it is combined with the task-essential and meaningful exercises. Some other researchers following this view towards EI are Benati (2004); Farley (2004); Wong (2004); and Sanz and Morgan-short (2004).

Another concept which has attracted the researchers' attention is Input Flood (hereafter IF) which has found its meaning through a combination of: Frequency Hypothesis by Hatch and Wanger-Gough (1976), Gass (1997) and Noticing Hypothesis by Schmidt (1990, 2001). As Wong (2005) noted, in IF learners are taught a target item along with plenty of varied and numerous examples which provide the learners with the ability of noticing and acquiring the target form.

Except for a few researchers, such as Reinders and Ellis (2009) who believed in IF as the sole factor to enhance language acquisition, the majority of researchers in this realm have claimed that IF along with EI can be much more productive than IF alone.

In the investigation by Reinders and Ellis (2009) a group received both EI and IF and another group was given only IF. The results did not show a significant difference between the two groups. It unveils that there is no significance in teaching

explicitly, according to the authors. In contrast, the majority of the other authors believe that EI+IF can be more fruitful, including: Trahey and White (1993); White (1998); and Williams and Evans (1998).

Being inspired with the idea of EI and IF, Hernandez (2008) explored the use of DM in describing past events. Nineteen Spanish undergraduates were divided into two groups. The control group (n = 9) did not receive EI on the use and function of DM, but a flood of input and the increase in the number of discourse markers in communicative skills, without receiving feedback from their instructor. However, the experimental group (n = 10) received the necessary EI on the use of DMs and were given the opportunity to produce and be corrected. The outcome was significantly different to the benefit of the learners who received EI+IF, the experimental group.

According to Ellis (2002, p.145), "to the extent that language processing is based on frequency and probabilistic knowledge, language learning is implicit learning. This does not deny the importance of noticing (Schmidt, 1990) in the initial registration of a pattern recognition unit, nor does it deny the role for explicit instruction. Language acquisition can be speeded up by explicit instruction. The last 20 years of empirical investigation into the effectiveness of L2 instruction demonstrate that focused L2 instruction results in large target-oriented games that explicit type of instruction is more effective than the implicit type, and that the effectiveness of L2 instruction is durable." In L2 acquisition explicit instruction is unavoidable and it is the fact that the potential of implicit instruction ending in language mastery is limited by 'learned attention'.

In two general cases, the requirement for additional attention is necessary to make it possible to build up the relevant associations and eventually language learning takes place: firstly, as Schmidt (2001) noted, in the case of lack of

perceptual salience of linguistic form and not being noticed by learners; Secondly, in the situation that unfamiliarity with L2 semantic or pragmatic concepts to be mapped on to L2 forms. As it is done in L1 acquisition, all the additional biases of L1 need to be taken into account to optimize induction.

The outcome of the experimental and quasi-experimental research on the effectiveness of instruction and the salience role of feedback on error in the process of language learning revealed that the target of the process can be gained substantially in form-focused L2 instruction and also explicit instruction could show much more effectiveness as compared with implicit instruction. Finally, the effectiveness and impact of L2 instruction when it is done explicitly is far more than implicit instruction. To name a few works done by Spada and Tomita (2010), Ellis (2008) and Spada (2011) can be mentioned. In form-focused instruction learners' explicit, conscious processing are recruited and as a result they find the chance to be more attentive to the novel L2 construction and unitized form-function bindings can be consolidated (N.C. Ellis, 2005).

The interface through which explicit knowledge of form-meaning associations has effect on implicit way of learning a language was reviewed in instructional, psychological, epistemological, social, and neurological aspects by Ellis (2005, p. 305) and he claimed, "The interface is dynamic: it happens transiently during conscious processing, but the influence upon implicit cognition endures thereafter.

The primary conscious involvement in L2 acquisition is the explicit learning involved in the initial registration of pattern recognizers for constructions that are then tuned and integrated into the system by implicit learning during subsequent input processing. Neural systems in the pre-frontal cortex involve in working

memory provide attentional selection, perceptual integration and the unification of conscientiousness. Neural systems in the hippocampus then bind these disparate cortical representations into unitary episodic representations. These are the mechanisms by which Schmidt's (1990) noticing help solve Quine's (1960) problem of referential indeterminacy. Explicit memories can also guide the conscious building of novel linguistic utterances through processes of analogy. Formulas, slot and frame patterns, drills and declarative pedagogical grammar rules all contribute to the conscious creation of utterances whose subsequent usage promotes implicit learning and proceduraliztion. Flawed output can prompt focused feedback by the way of recasts that present learners with psycholinguistic data ready for explicit analysis".

Implicit versus Explicit Instruction

Considering all the issues discussed above which showed the effectiveness of explicit instruction over implicit one, when it comes to learning, as N.C. Ellis and Larsen-Freeman (2009b) discussed, complex adaptive system of interactions within and across form and function goes far beyond to be derived from implicit or explicit learning alone. Therefore, it can be claimed that the patterns latent within form and function in language usage and interactions of both implicit and explicit language learning can be considered as the origins of language systematicity. Beside all levels of language learning neurobiology of language learning, synchronic usage and diachronic language change are what arise from the mentioned interaction between conscious or explicit and unconscious or implicit learning processes.

The neurobiology of language learning reveals that there is an interface that connects all the units of brain executing implicit and explicit language learning. Neuropsychologist Luria (1973) in his review of the three functional units of brain

which are the units for regulating tone or waking, the unit for obtaining, processing, and storing information and the unit for programming, formulating, and verifying mental activities claimed that it is a huge mistake to imagine these units work independently in their activity: "each form of conscious activity is always a complex functional system and take place through the combined working of all the three units work concertedly, and it only by studying their interactions when each unit makes its own specific contribution, that an insight can obtained into the nature of the cerebral mechanisms of mental activity" (p.99-101).

The mechanisms by which the brain interfaces implicit and explicit memory systems involved in visual, auditory or emotive processing which are all sensory ones and on the other side declarative, analogue, perceptual or procedural memories which are in different modes are illustrated in Global Workspace Theory (Baars, 1988) and the research into Neural Correlates of Consciousness (NCC) (Koch, 2004). For instance, language is responsible for visual representation of the world and the speech system is a set of organs that was meant for breathing, eating, and simple vocalization. However, they work together to produce and illuminate a picture for the listener which can be created by memory of events that sensory and perceptual systems of brain can integrate.

Language used by natives in conversation is influenced by both conscious and unconscious processes (Garrod & Pickering, 2004). As N.C. Ellis (2008c) noted "the cognitive processes which compute symbolic constructions are embodied, attentionally-and socially- gated, conscious, dialogic, interactive, situated and cultured" (p.36).

People and language in any point of human life are inseparable. They create, work with, complete, and change with each other. There also is a mutual connection

between language and cognition. Language attracts the focus of attention of the listener to the world. Language use, change, acquisition and structure are inseparable.

All the mentioned factors also play role in language structure and how it changes. As Ellis (2008a) stated, "The limited end-state typical of adult second language learners results from dynamic cycles of language use, language change, language perception, and language learning in the interactions of members of language communities. In summary, the major processes are: 1-usage leads to change: high frequency use of grammatical functors causes their phonological erosion and homonymy. 2- change affects perception: phonologically reduced cues are hard to perceive. 3- perception affects learning: low salience cues are difficult to learn, as are harmonious/polysemous constructions because of low contingency of their form-function association. 4- learning affects usage: (i) where language is predominantly learned naturalistically by adults without any form-focus, a typical result is a Basic Variety of interlanguage, low in grammatical complexity but reasonably communicatively effective. Because usage leads to change, maximum contact language learned naturalistically can thus simplify and lose grammatical intricacies. Alternatively, (ii) where there are efforts promoting formal accuracy, the attractor state of the Basic Variety can be escaped by means of dialectic forces, form-focused attention and explicit learning. Such influences promote language maintenance" (N.C. Ellis, 2008a, p. 232).

Corrective Feedback in Instruction

Error correction can be helpful in a language learning process for the following reasons:

Differences between L1 and L2 Acquisition. The traditional pedagogical view towards language learning was mainly focusing on instruction in the form of isolated linguistic features and grammar rules. It has been replaced by a more naturalistic view towards language teaching since the early 1970s. Since then, language has been taught as presentation of Comprehensive Input (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985) to the learners, and the procedure of language acquisition has been given a more naturalistic view which means implicit and incidental learning (Krashen & Terrell. 1983; Long, 1985; Skehan, 1998) are the pieces of the puzzle of the new approach which has been labeled Communicative Approach.

Inspired by communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1971), communicative approach followers believe that learners' skills can be improved through engagement with ample comprehensive input and they can use L2 in their communication realistically and meaningfully. This approach believes in the automatic emergence of grammatical competence (Karshen, 1981, 1982, 1985; Schwartz, 1993), and linguistic information can be understood with the help of the linguistic information in the communicative context.

According to Doughty (2003), nowadays the view of language learning is not fully the same as the above-mentioned approach, because experts believe that L1 and L2 are not the instance of the same phenomenon. Lyster (2007), after studying learners trying to learn French in Canada, found that they failed to achieve the native-like competence; however, they were being given the chance of facing the comprehensible input as much as needed and being immersed into the language. The type and amount of input was helpful for them to gain the native-like perceptive skills and fluency, but the needed grammatical competence could not be gained.

To help learners progress toward the required well-formed structures, educators need to have an eye on including linguistic forms into the teaching material. However, a full attention to acquiring a native-like proficiency will end in a meaning based approach to language learning (Ellis, 2005; Long, 2000; Skehan & Foster, 2001). As Revez (2007) noted, "comprehension may occur in the absence of acquiring linguistic knowledge", so it can be concluded that opportunity for language production cannot aid learners to go beyond strategic and semantic processing.

Ways CF Assists Learners. The two main paths through which CF can help are as follows:

Focus on From. Long (2000, p. 185) named this consideration 'Focus-on-Form' which he believed can briefly draw the learners' attention to linguistic elements and can be triggered by students' comprehension or production problems. Doughty (2003) claimed that not having this process in the instructional program can end in a slower, more difficult and less successful language learning experience. Moreover, as Lyster (2007) mentioned, transfer-appropriateness is very crucial in teaching linguistic rules. That is, grammar rules should be taught in accordance with the communicative skills being used. As he said "the kind of cognitive processing that occurs while performing learning tasks should ideally resemble the kind of processing involved during communicative language use" (p. 43). In other words, decontextualized grammar is of no value, because it cannot be transferred appropriately.

CF is one of the ways to use focus-on-form instruction (Ellis, 2005). With the help of CF in the writing process, teachers can draw learners' attention to the

mistakes and during an intervention period remove them. Whereas, in the other form of production, which is spoken language, CF does not seem to be fruitful because of interrupting the learners and as a result cutting the communicating flow. As Polio, Fleck, and Leder (1998) noticed, in the spoken aspect of language, the instruction period should be delayed and feedback should be given after finishing communication of meaning.

Noticing Hypothesis. According to Svalberg (2007) noticing is a combination of two essential cognitive notions of attention and awareness. Schmidt's (1990, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis clearly states that conscious attention is necessary to convert input into intake. As Schmidt (2001) noticed "a mismatch or gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce, as well as between what they produce and what the target language speakers produce" can be revealed through careful attention (p. 6). Schmidt and Frota (1986) named it 'cognitive comprehension'.

Orally provided CF has effect on correcting learners' mistakes, but it cannot be as effective as the written form (Adams, 2003). Both modalities are aiming at removing students' mistakes and noticing the mismatch between the target language and the learners' inter-language system. However, in oral CF, learners' attention resources are limited (Schmidt, 2001). Hence, in writing, the learners are given the chance and they have enough time and cognitive resources, as Sheen (2010a) noted, to notice the gap in their inter-language.

The next effect of CF can be detected through the 'Output Hypothesis' by Swain (1985, 1995). Previously, output was considered as nothing but a product of already acquired L2 competence (Krashen, 1985). However, Swain's view has

changed the previous opinion to the fact that output is a valuable source for acquisition. Swain noted three functions of learners' output. First, target language grammar can be tested through output. Second, inter-language development can occur through metalinguistic reflection. Third, learners' attention can be attracted to the gaps in their inter-language system. Ellis (2003) and Skehan (1998) belong to the group of researchers who followed Swain's (1985, 1995) Output Hypothesis.

As Swain (1995) pinpointed, "if students are given insufficient feedback or no feedback regarding the extent to which their messages have successfully (accurately, appropriately, and coherently) been conveyed, output might not serve these roles" (p. 98). Similarly Han (2002) claimed that:

"While the focus is on meaning, there is a limit to how much an L2 learner can examine the sufficiency of the linguistic resources he owns. Also, even if the learner consciously recognizes at that point what he lacks, there is no guarantee, for various reasons, that he will subsequently be able to tone himself in for a solution in the future input, or even if is, he may not be able to tell whether what he sees as the potential solution is actually the correct solution. Rather, external feedback, I shall argue, may significantly facilitate the fulfillment of the noticing function" (p. 18).

Output Hypothesis is an important cognitive theoretical strand that provides valuable insight to probe in second language and foreign language writing. It reviews the importance of task and their impact and also linguistic performance dimension of the language. Swain (1985, 1995) proposed Output Hypothesis, later in (2005, p.471) the writer mentioned, "the act of producing language (spoken or written) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning". In his

book, the writer explains (p.473), language learning through output that was mentioned occurs when learners are "pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately".

There have been three functioned introduced for the output. First function as Lapkin (1995, p.373) noted that "triggers cognitive processes that have been implicated in second language learning- ones in which learners generate linguistic knowledge which is new for them, or which consolidate their current existing knowledge". This is called the noticing function which is used when learners want to express ideas or are in a situation of production of a concept which they do not have any idea how to express their thoughts in a comprehensible way. Second is the testing hypothesis which is related to testing of new rule by the learners to express their communicative intent for the first time as a trial run for new rules. The last function proposed by Swain (1985) claims that second language learning can occur by using language to reflect on the produced language by the learner which is called meta-linguistic function of the output.

Cumming (1990, p.483) explained that "learners' efforts to produce comprehensible output in second language in tasks like written composition may prompt them to use cognitive processes integral to their acquisition of the language." These claims are the results of some seminal studies by researchers, although, Output Hypothesis has not been widely applied to writing. As Manchon (2011, p.73) noted control of learners over linguistic knowledge and producing new linguistic form could eventually be the results of the "problem-solving nature inherit to the act of composing".

Opposition to CF in L2 Instruction. These are some arguments in which some researchers (Krashen, 1985; Schwartz, 1993; Truscott, 1996) claimed that CF is not only unnecessary or ineffective, but also harmful. Some experts (Truscott, 1996) believe that the teacher's ability to give the feedback and learners' willingness to receive it put a question mark on the practicality of CF. While some other researchers look at it from rhetorical view.

The first view is explicit or declarative knowledge, which includes the conscious awareness of rules of the language and applying them, as Ellis (2004) mentioned, versus implicit or procedural knowledge, which is easily accessible even in online language use and it is unconscious and non-verbalizable.

Krashen (1982) claimed that explicit knowledge plays its role just in editing and revising, but not in an online classroom procedure. Besides, CF is considered to influence explicit knowledge; hence, it cannot be influential. However, a study by Yuan and Ellis (2003) revealed that if learners are given time to plan their writing production, explicit knowledge can aid them to be more accurate and successful.

The second view is the naturalistic L2 environment which can cause developmental readiness. Corder (1967) interpreted this phenomenon as a source which can provide learning mechanism for each individual learner to learn in a naturally internal order not in a way which a teacher imposes to them or syllabus requires them to act.

Pienemann's (1989, p. 57) Teachability or Learnability Hypothesis also followed the theory that learners have a level of learning which develops through time and if the presented material goes beyond it, it cannot be learnt. Therefore, CF was expected to be matched with the level of the learners. However, later Truscott

(1996) concluded that this way of matching and alignment is impossible, so error correction and CF cannot be feasible.

The third view goes even beyond the doubt on the practicality of CF, but claims that it can be harmful, due to a) Truscott's (1996, 2004) claims that CF wastes the teacher's and students' time and energy on an activity which can easily be deleted and replaced by some other beneficial activities like extra writing, b) CF can end in a conservative view towards complexity and selecting simplicity for the sake of accuracy (Skehan, 1998). While as Robinson (2003, 2005) claimed complexity and accuracy are not two sides of the same coin. They can be closely connected and even can act as complementary to each other.

Generally, CF as a growing trend in the field of writing has its own advocates. These advocates believe that CF may have different forms and may vary in different aspects, including: explicitness, focus, the person providing it, the medium, and the like. Considering all aspects, the two main dichotomies that should be given a special attention to are as follows:

The first view is focused versus unfocused CF which is a dichotomy related to the comprehensiveness of the correction. In the former some special aspects are being selected and corrected, for instance: verb forms only. While the latter is considered as a comprehensive method of correction, which means the teacher corrects all errors in learners' writing.

Ellis et al. (2008), as advocates of focused CF, stated that noticing and understanding are essential to correcting errors. They believe that if learners are focused on one special type of error, they can get a better result and be more prosperous than scattering their minds in different ways. Sheen (2007) and Bitchener (2008) claimed that due to the limited processing capacity focused CF can be much

more influential than an unfocused one. They believed that if the correction includes a broad range of features, it can cause a cognitive overload which can disturb the writing correction process.

On the other hand, the advocates of unfocused CF are of the idea that focusing on some types of errors and ignoring the rest might confuse learners and the main purpose of teaching how to write, which is leading learners to accuracy might be hard to achieve (Ferris, 2010). Furthermore, as Bruton (2009) noted, the focused form of CF is more teaching grammatical correctness than focus-on-form job. Hence, the learner might not be able to apply the corrected forms into a novel context.

The second view is direct versus indirect CF which is a dichotomy distinguished by the learners' involvement. In direct CF, the teacher indicates the error and provides the learner with the correct form and gives the accurate form directly. While in the indirect CF, the error is just indicated and the correction part is left for the learner to decide on the correct form. The indication can be done by underlining or coding the error.

Bitchener and Knoch (2010a) claimed that indirect CF can lead to a great success because it "requires pupils to engage in guided learning and problem-solving and, as a result, promotes the type of reflection that is more likely to foster long-term acquisition" (p. 415). Ferris (1995) also claimed that in this type of correction learners can experience a deeper form of language processing because of self-editing their own writing. Therefore, in a long-term learning it can have a greater impact on learners.

In contrast, Chandler (2003), and other advocates of direct CF, believe that with the indirect one the complex structures cannot be corrected and learners can never make sure that their hypothesized corrections are the exact and accurate ones.

While in the direct form with the provided correct form the learner can identify their mistake and see the correct form of it.

A third group believes both types of CF can be helpful depending on some intervening factors. According to Ellis et al. (2008) factors such as the teacher's target, the type of error to be corrected, the learners' proficiency level, or the type of knowledge the teacher is willing to transfer can influence the selected method.

Regarding CF as a part of the instructional period poses the question of which and what type of errors are to be corrected. Various proposals have been contributing to this issue. Corder (1967) argued about errors and mistakes. Errors, which he called systematic inaccuracies, should be corrected but not mistakes. Later, Burt (1975) illustrated global and local errors. He claimed that global errors interrupt the comprehensibility of the transferred message so should be corrected, but not the local ones. Then Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985) in spite of rejecting the effect of CF in language acquisition stated CF can help in removing simple portable features. Eventually, Ferris (1999, 2002) distinguished between treatable and untreatable errors. She suggested that CF should aim at treatable inaccuracies which are patterned and rule-governed and not untreatable ones which are idiosyncratic and non-idiomatic.

In spite of what was claimed that affects the complexity level of language usage and can lead to using a simplified language, few studies have been confirming this theory. The claim by Truscott (1996, 2004) arguing that the negative influence of CF on writing diverts time and energy away from other aspects of the writing system which can be more productive have been rejected by many researchers, including: Van- Beuningen et al. (2008), Sheen et al. (2009), and Van Beuningen et al. (in press). They all found no difference in the result of control and experimental groups.

Moreover, allocated time to CF could have a better effect than the effort to write more.

All in all, CF, based on the growing evidence, can have a positive impact on improving the learning potential of students in a writing classroom. The findings show that learners can benefit from the correction done on their previous writings while producing new texts. Besides, some theories that claim CF to be a 'pseudo-learning' or to have a short-term influence which remains explicit are to be refuted.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As declared in Chapter One the objectives of the current research is to investigate the influence of explicit instruction of DMs with the help of input flood and corrective feedback on Iranian EFL learners' use of DMs in their writing, and also the possible impact of DMs explicit instruction, with IF and CF, on enhancement of writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity of intermediate level learners.

The reason why I chose explicit instruction and corrective feedback is these units are not taught separately in the process of teaching and therefore there is not enough focus on them. I felt that if they are specifically focused on, it might have a stronger influence. In the process of teaching discourse markers explicitly, learners needed variety of examples and exercise activities to fully comprehend how and where they are used and the usage of these units were required to be exemplified to facilitate the process of learning these units. Therefore, input flooding was selected as the second strategy in the process of teaching.

While learning new materials, making mistakes is inevitable. In the process of teaching and learning, students may face some confusion in the usage of the learnt material. Therefore, they need some help in this process. The first level of help can be in the student-student relationship. While they are doing exercise they can work in pairs or groups to remove the obstacle. When the exercise and activities are done in the class scale, this is the teacher who handles the process and manages the

complications. As a result, a period of corrective feedback was added to the teaching process to enrich the learners' understanding.

The literature review in Chapter Two stated that several studies on the presence of DMs and their effect on enhancing various skills of learners in language learning have been done. However, little work has been done on the possible impact of explicit instruction on the way students apply DMs in their writings, and also the probable embellishment of their writings with the help of these units. Moreover, very few researchers have ever focused on the probability of DM instruction influence on fluency, accuracy, and complexity of learners' writings.

Hence, the current study was trying to fill the gaps left in the previous works and clarify that DMs should be a part of the puzzle of the language teaching process and they are necessary to be taught separately and explicitly.

The target to be achieved in this chapter would be elucidating the methodology through which the researcher was going to find the answer to the proposed hypotheses. It sketches the population of the study, research design, instrumentation, sampling, and methods of data collection and data analysis.

Participants

The learners taking part in the current study were all the EFL learners majoring in English at Dezful University, Khuzestan, Iran. Among the two hundred fourth year students fifty of whom who fall into the intermediate level, were chosen based on the scoring system of the university results of the past three years of their studies. The selected students were both male and female, and they were divided into two groups, control and experimental groups.

Besides that, the learners were well-informed about the purpose of the research to make them sure that the results would not be considered as a judgment for any of their courses. The purpose was to assure the participants that the results would be confidential and to the benefit of the researcher and would not be announced to the Central Office or any of their instructors.

The control and experimental groups were of the same proficiency levels. To this aim, the grouping of the fifty students into the two groups was done based on the alphabetic order of their names to avoid partiality, which was going to be explained subsequently.

Research Design

The study was conducted to find the effect of intervention period, EI+IF along with CF, on the use of DMs and consequently the impact of DM instruction on writing enhancement regarding fluency, accuracy, and complexity of Iranian EFL Intermediate Level learners.

Quasi-experimental design was adopted for this study because it required non-randomized, experimental and control groups and also having the intervention or treatment period which was done on the experimental group. Hence, the plausible causal relationship between the two types of variables, dependent and independent, was being investigated by the researcher.

The aim was to increase the external validity of the research which enables the results to be expanded and generalized to the large-scale society. Selection was not done randomly due to the quasi-experimental design.

The internal validity of the study can be questionable due to non-randomized system. To overcome this problem, the division of the two groups was

done based on the alphabetic order of the participants' names to avoid the effects of contamination bias. The participants' names were listed and the first 25 formed the experimental group and the second 25 members of the list formed the control.

The control group was exposed to no treatment of micro- and macro-markers. However, the experimental group was taught explicitly and given instruction on DMs based on the classification of micro and macro DMs by Belles-Fortuno (2004), illustrated in chapter two, along with a wide range of IF on DMs, appendix part two, to make learners fully aware of the usage and function of DMs. In the process of EI and IF, learners face some problems and make mistakes which were being underlined and corrected by the teacher directly, direct CF, which focuses on DMs and their function and use to reinforce the DM application and also assure both teacher and learners that the problems with DMs were solved.

A post-test only design was accepted in this quasi-experiment by the researcher, owing to the fact that the control group, which includes the same number of participants with the experimental one, was picked out to demonstrate that the change was only because of the influence and manipulation of independent variables which were the intervention period and the learners' level on the experimental group. In other words, to show that the results of the enhancement being noticed in the experimental group was due to the presence of the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. It practically means the intervention period, if proves to be true, was the only element which could influence the learners to improve their writing skill in fluency, accuracy, and complexity aspects.

For the next step the name of students were listed and divided two equal groups. Then there was a twenty-hour explicit instruction along with input flood and corrective feedback on the experimental group, while the control group received no

instruction. Next, a topic was given to them to write about. After writing the topic, the writing of the two groups was compared to calculate the impact of instruction on the usage of discourse markers in the two groups.

To measure fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the learners' writing a topic was given to the experimental group before the intervention course. They wrote about the topic in forty minutes. After the intervention on DMs, they were given another topic to write about. Then the two topics were compared based on Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998) measuring methods.

I used Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998) measuring methods in my work due to the fact that T-units are considered as the base unit of calculation. T-units can cover two or three phrases or clauses. Hence, they can illustrate a better image of discourse. The ways of calculation in both frequency and ratio aspect can justify my work. Phrases and clauses are small segments of discourse that measure linguistic elements. However, T-units are components that can trace communicative factors of a text.

As for the intervention course there was a twenty-hour course on explicit instruction of DMs. The whole course took five weeks during which the learners were given a comprehensive view on usage and function of DMs with a lot of examples and exercise activities in pairs or in groups and then, in case of facing problems, the teacher helped them in using correct DMs.

Measuring fluency, accuracy, and complexity was based on Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998) as follows,

- Fluency in frequency aspect was measured based on the number of words. In ratio aspect it was calculated based in the number of words in T-units, W/T.

- Measuring accuracy in frequency aspect was done based on the number of correct connectors which means the number of connectors which were used correctly. In ratio, it was computed on the basis of formula by Evola et al. (1980) which was the number of correct usage of connectors minus the number of wrong ones divided by the number of words.

- The final computed aspect was complexity. It was measured as the previous feature in frequency aspect which means the number of correct connectors of all types. In ratio, it was measured based on the number of T-units per sentences.

The process of measuring the three components is illustrated in the following:

* Fluency (frequency)	number of words / number of words in T-unit	* Fluency (ratio)	T-unit length or number of words per T-unit
*Accuracy (frequency)	correct connectors	*Accuracy (ratio)	correct connectors per words / error formula1 (Evolta et al, 1980) / $\frac{\text{number of correct conn.} - \text{number of wrong conn.}}{\text{number of words}}$
*Complexity (frequency)	number of connectors of all types	*Complexity (ratio)	number of T-units per sentences

In this study, the independent variables are the intervention period, and the learners' level, which is intermediate. The dependent variables are students' use of DMs and fluency, accuracy, and complexity improvement of the learners' writing. The independent variables were manipulated to define their effect on the dependent ones.

Instrumentation

Student Selection. The selection was done based on the data on the previous results of learners' performance which was taken from the Central Office. The mean average was used as a pre-test to select the required intermediate learners. The data were collected form the Central Office, and then the students were ranked from high to low. The students who could achieve eighty to a hundred percent of the total score based on the results from the Central Office were in the high group, those who could fall between sixty to seventy nine percent were in the intermediate group, the required one, and the low group included the ones scoring below sixty percent.

DM Instruction. In the current study, the influence of instruction of DMs on writing enhancement of learners was inspected. Hence, the researcher needs to be assured that they were fully taught and students could comprehensively grasp the usage of DMs. The DM models selected to be taught were based on the classifications presented by Belles-Fortuno (2004), on micro- and macro-markers.

Belles-Fortuno's (2004) classification was designed for oral discourse markers; therefore, the way DMs categorized was kept with the same headings, except for a few changes to match the purpose of DM usage in writing for the current study, and the two categories of micro and macro markers. Since I meant DMs which could cover micro and macro levels, in other words sentential and supra-sentential levels, I chose the same classifications. However the sub-headings were changed to server the writing purpose.

After preparing the classifications, students were taught the use and function of DMs. The teacher, who was hired for the purpose of teaching, was given the

layout of the DMs based on the categorized presented by Belles-Fortuno (2004) and the changes of the sub headings and was asked to teach the items explicitly.

By teaching explicitly I mean with the focus on the DMs and giving various examples and exercise activities on them and providing participants with different examples and giving them classroom activities to do in pairs or in groups. Also asking them to make examples of each category and giving them the chance to listen to others, interact with them and discuss on the correct example of DMs to be use in blanks. For instance,

………… Mark had worked hard; he could never afford an expensive car.

The above sentence was given to the participants and they were asked to fill in the blank with the appropriate DM. Students worked in pairs and tried to find the suitable DM and they wrote their answers. Then they worked on it in their teams and tried to convince each other. The next step, the teacher gave the correct answer and described the reason why there should be a contrast DM in the blank. It is considered as the corrective feedback period.

Afterwards the learners were given several examples of DMs in the same category and they were asked to work on them at home and they were given some extra activities to work on. Then the teacher started working on another type of exercise like a cloze passage. For instance,

Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics. ………………., gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. ………………., it is suitable for jewelry, coins and ornamental purposes. Gold never needs to be polished and will remain beautiful forever. ………………., a Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was minted twenty-three centuries ago. ……………………………………… its usefulness to industry and

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science. ………………………., it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications. The most recent use of gold is in astronauts' suits. Astronauts wear gold plated heat shields for protection outside the spaceship. …………………., gold is treasured not only for its beauty., but also for its utility.

After working on the exercise and answering the questions, the teacher answered the exercise to make the students sure of the correct answer. Then more practices were given to the students to work on at home as extensive exercises. Afterwards, another form of exercise was given to the learners. A sentence was given to them and there were four options. The learners were asked to choose the correct answer based on the context. For instance,

……………. I fired at the leopard, he shook my arm.

   a) As   b) Since

   b) Because   d) for

The students were given time to work on the exercise to work in pairs or in groups and then the teacher answered the question and provided the students with several examples to assist them get a clear picture of the usage and function of DMs. After that, the learners were given extensive exercises to work on at home.

Macro markers were also worked on comprehensively. Some scrambled paragraphs were given to the students and they were asked to put them in the correct order. With the help of such exercises, the learners were aided to understand the importance of using macro markers to guide the reader to have a better understanding of the material being transferred. For instance,

In summary, numerous benefits flow from teaching a foreign language from kindergarten. The child will most likely grow up to thank those who made such a learning experience possible.

According to a famous saying, the limits of my language are the limits of my world. Indeed, the ability to speak several languages is considered one of the hallmarks of a cultured person. From this perspective, foreign language instruction should begin as early as possible in order to achieve near-native fluency. The reasons behind this approach are intellectual, social and professional.

Professionally, by learning a foreign language in kindergarten, the child expands his/her future career horizons. In today's increasingly globalized world, bilingual and multilingual individuals are in high demand. The child who achieves this fluency naturally and easily at a young age already has an edge over others in the job market.

Socially, learning a foreign language enables the young child to enter a wider cultural world. By learning to speak, think and understand a different language, the child develops greater cross-cultural awareness. This critical ability enables the child to make friends with, identify with and empathize with others who speak the additional language.

Intellectually, learning a foreign language at a young age enables children to develop their brain. At this age, children's minds are like sponges and their capacities are limitless. They have less inhibition or biases against learning different subjects. They can learn one, two or three languages without confusion; it would only serve to expand their minds. Therefore, it is ideal to start teaching a foreign language in kindergarten.

Afterwards, the students were given some time to put the scrambled paragraphs in the correct order based on the macro discourse markers applied in the text. Then, the teacher provided them with the correct answers and gave them some more activities to do and extensive exercises to work on at home.

The researcher was not involved in the teaching process. However, both the researcher and instructor decided on the type(s) of activities being performed in class. This was done to avoid any deviation in the process and remove the probable obstacles. The researcher acted as the observer of the process.

Post-writing. After the intervention period, post-writing was administered to evaluate the writing of the two groups to compare the experimental group with the control one to observe the plausible effect of instruction of DMs on the learners' writing skill. Moreover, there were prewriting and post writing activities for the experimental group to check the potential impact of DM awareness on fluency, accuracy, and complexity improvements of the experimental group's writing. All the writing topics were selected from task2 IELTS sample tests which are all standardized topics and can positively serve the purpose of the researcher. The purpose was to give some essay type questions to the learners to write. Since IELTS is an internationally recognized test, the topics for writing were selected from this source.

Experimental Procedure

In this section, the process of data collection for the entire research is blue-printed. It was done in 11 separate phases which are illustrated in Table 1.

In phase one, the permission for conducting the research was obtained by the researcher. A letter of request was written to the administration office of English Department and research objective was described.

In phase two, a total number of two hundred fourth year EFL learners were recruited to participate in this study.

In phase three, the data of the total number of participants was collected from the Central Office and they were ranked based on the scoring system of the university to select the required population.

In phase four, 50 learners who could fall in the intermediate group based on their scores were selected to be as the researcher's sample society for the current study.

In phase five, the 50 selected learners were divided into two groups of experimental and control, 25 in each group.

In phase six, the group which was selected as the experimental one was given a topic (IELTS sample) to write as their pre-writing. It was done in a time limit of 40 minutes, which is the standard time limit of task two ILETS writing test, to check the fluency, accuracy, and complexity of their writing before the intervention period.

In phase seven, the intervention started and the experimental group was being trained on different types of DMs and their functions. The teaching period would be 20 hours which lasted 5 weeks, which means 4 hours each week. During this process, the learners were being familiarized with DMs by the instructor's help

who is an experienced teacher in EFL teaching and the whole process was supervised and observed by the researcher to avoid any presumable deviation from the goals of the research. The materials meant to be taught and the type of IF and EI and corrective feedback process were being discussed between the researcher and teacher.

In phase eight, the experimental group was given a topic (IELTS sample) to write in the same time limit to check the fluency, accuracy, and complexity of their writings after the intervention period to observe if DM awareness could influence these factors.

In phase nine, the result of the pre-writing and post-writing of the experimental group were compared to check if DM instruction could influence their writings fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

In phase ten, both experimental and control group take part in a writing test and wrote the same topic which was selected from the IELTS sample tests. These tests are globally recognized and considered as a standardized test.

In phase eleven, the two writings of the control and experimental groups were checked and the number of DMs was counted to realize if there was a significant difference between the performances of both groups and consequently if the instructional period could possibly improve and enhance the writing ability of the experimental group, compared to the control one.

Table 3.1

Experimental Procedure

	Experimental Procedure	**Rationale**
Phase 1	Asking for permission from the administrative office of English Department to conduct the research.	To meet the needs of the educational research
Phase 2	200 learners were recruited.	To avoid the potential deviation from the population with the help of a large society (Cresswell, 2000)
Phase 3	The data was collected from the central office.	To select the representative sample
Phase 4	50 intermediate learners were selected.	To make two equal groups for the study
Phase 5	The selected learners were divided into 2 groups.	To test the efficacy DM instruction on writing enhancement
Phase 6	A pre-writing topic was given.	To test the pre-writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity
Phase 7	The experimental group was instructed.	To illustrate the plausible difference between the two groups
Phase 8	The experimental group was given a topic.	To test the post-writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity
Phase 9	Pre- writing and post-writing results were compared.	To test the effect of DMs on fluency, accuracy, and complexity
Phase 10	Both groups were given the same topic.	To collect the solid document of the whole sample population
Phase 11	The writings of the two groups were checked.	To compare the usage of DMs and conclude about the efficacy of the intervention period
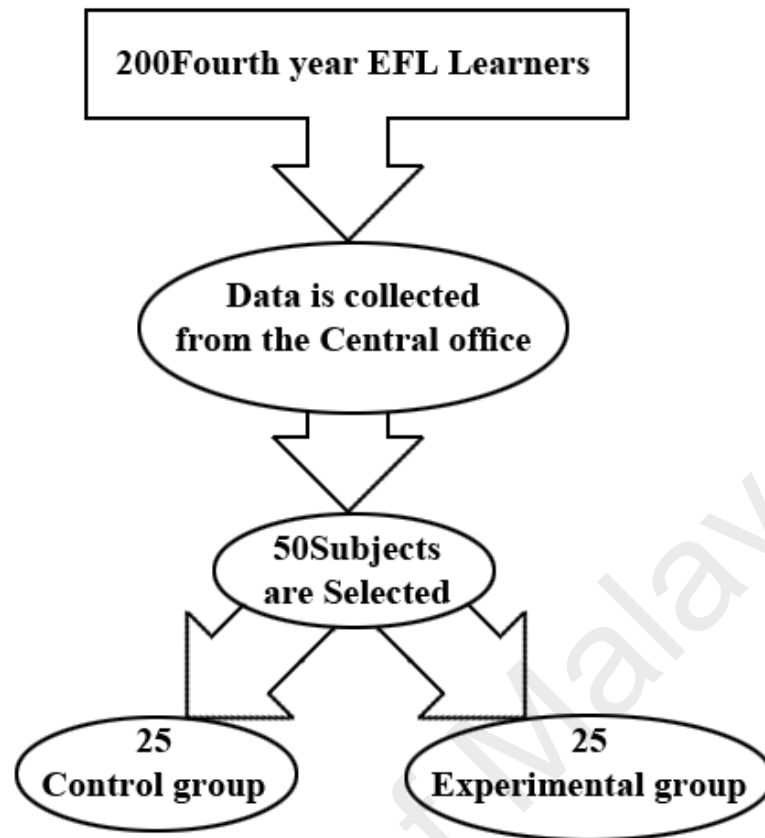
Figure 3.1. Layout of Participants' Selection

Intervention Procedure

After the required data for selecting subjects with the intermediate scores were collected from the Central Office, the learners were divided into two groups, with each group comprising 25 students. The experimental group passed through a period of instructions on DMs, as illustrated previously. The total intervention course was twenty hours, which was done in a five-week time span. Each week the experimental group, twenty five members, was taught some certain categorize of micro and macro DMs with various examples and extensive exercises which were done at home, as explained previously, However, the twenty five members of the control group were not only not trained but also not informed of being in the control group due to avoiding the confounding effects, and the probability of being curious

to follow the procedure of the events. Their names were being kept and the researcher keeps a record of their files for being invited to the final post-writing session. It is to be noted that the researcher plays his role as the observer of the process and he does not get involved in the teaching process.

For the experimental group a formal class schedule is designed and the procedure is as follows:

Discourse Marker Introduction. After appointing the experimental group the role of the instructor started. He introduced the two types of micro- and macro-markers categorized by Belles-Fortuno (2004). And students got familiar with how they are performed and categorized, and why some are assigned to the micro and others to the macro group, as explained before.

At this stage the teacher described DMs, why they are called DMs and gave a comprehensive knowledge of the background of DMs in applied linguistics, as clarified earlier. If the study by Zhao (2013) can show that discourse markers can influence the addressee to have better understanding what the speaker means and can help him interpret the speech better, so why not applying the same units to guide readers and why not trying explicit instruction in classroom setting to enhance learners' awareness of what is being written. Therefore, it strikes me that explicit instruction of these units can make writers aware of the usage on one side and help readers have better understanding and smoother comprehension of the written text on the other side.

EI and IF. The next stage of the intervention process was EI during which the instructor taught DMs explicitly and explained the function of DMs through contextualization. Along with Yoshimi (2001), who worked on a control and experimental group on the use of DMs in conversation and the results, revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control one in their communication skills, I believe that EI on DMs might have a positive influence on enhancing the learners' use of DMs and writing ability. During this period, the instructor, with researchers' consultation, taught DMs and their use and focused on these units explicitly, starting with micro-markers and how to connect sentences to avoid making choppy and short sentences and continuing with macro-markers to connect ideas and thoughts to write more smoothly.

The picture that a writer has about the language he is writing can be influenced by other scholars' writings as inspiring models or general and familiar instructions given by professors in is educational can be due to the illustrated pictures in the education of EFL learners. In a study by Badeleh and Elahi (2013), it was revealed that Iranian learners are not willing to use transitional markers, they prefer passive voice instead, and they claimed that it could be due to their previous instruction either in English or in their mother language or it can be because of their educational background. In the current study, the participants used discourse markers after instruction more. It can be due to the mentioned matters. Not receiving instruction explicitly can influence learners' use of these units. It can also be because of not using them in the learners' native language. Cultural background can also play a significant role. As Mauranen (1993, p.1) stated a "significant intercultural variation in rhetorical preference of writers" can always cause a difference in the work of native and non-native writers.

Besides, as Ellis and Reinders (2009) claimed, IF can work as a sole factor in pulling up the learner's level, and also Hernandez (2008) believed in the combination of IF and EI to be more influential, in the current work I added a period of IF during which the teacher provided learners with various exercises about DMs (see appendix part two), to work on and through these exercises learners were given the chance to put their understanding and learning of DMs into practice with various examples. Subsequently, they were given extensive exercises to work on at home. Trusting this, I have put both EI and IF in the intervention process.

In the study by Conter and Jones (2012), a delayed test did not show significant difference which was shown in the post-test. It may open the way for critics to claim that explicit instruction cannot play an important role in improvement of learners understanding. As Dekeyser (2007b; 295) claimed that "good practice consists of activities that make students process form-meaning link". Therefore, if exercises and practices are designed in a way that students are given enough time to find that link, learning process and explicit teaching can result in better understanding and produce a long-lasting effect.

Ortega (2007, p.182-184) suggested that focus on form practices and meaningful exercises can result in a better completion of a task. If learners are placed in a native context and they are given the chance of enough practice in real-life condition where they can practice what they learn, the learned matter can consolidate (Dekeyser, 2007c, p.218-219). He also suggests once they are in a real context "the most crucial intervention is to give them assignments that force them to interact meaningfully with native speakers and overcome their fear of speaking" (Dekeyser, 2007c, p.218).

CF. Considering CF, I selected what Ellis (2008), Bitchener (2008), and Sheen (2007) have named focused CF. They believed, and I also in the current study, due to limited capacity of learners and teaching one task at a time, focused CF can be much more fruitful compared to the unfocused one.

Moreover, the type of correction on the students' feedback in this study was the direct CF, not the indirect one. As Chandler (2003) proposed, I also agree, just noticing which part of the sentence needs correction or elaboration cannot be a very successful way because neither the teacher nor the learner can be assured of the accuracy of the supposedly corrected form by the learners.

As a result, I decided to require the instructor to find the mistakes or errors on DMs, and try to remove the obstacle to pave the way for the learners to help the both sides be ascertained of the accuracy of the process. Literally, the CF process was a focused one, on DMs only, and it was done directly, the teacher corrected the learners whenever mistakes were made.

Considering the two studies by Yoshimi (2001) and Hernandez (2008) and putting the elements which come with explicit instruction triggered the idea of applying them together could possibly impact better learning and enhancing learners understanding of usage of discourse markers. Considering explicit instruction as the main activity and putting input flood and corrective feedback as activities to fill the gap of not having access to native context as Dekeyser (2007b, p.295) mentioned could be the missing link through which meaningful exercises and focus on form practices that Ortega (2007, p.182-184) noted. Therefore, I decided to add the two reinforcing elements of input flood and corrective feedback to assist learners have more tangible experience of what is instructed explicitly.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The process of the current study was to explore the effect of DM instruction on their usage and consequently improving the writing quality of learners in the three aspects of fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

To this aim, the reports on the quantitative analysis of the data from the learners' writing products are being discussed in this chapter to reach the answers to the research questions.

The results section in this chapter is divided into four parts to illustrate all the accumulated data from the participants ' writings. The discussion section, following the results, is also categorized into four divisions to discuss all the related issues and shed more light on the reasons behind the presented results, and also relate the current findings to the previously performed studies.

Research Question 1

Is there a significant difference between the writings of the learners who receive instruction on DMs and those who do not go through such intervention period in their use of DMs?

To answer this question, the experimental group was taught a comprehensive knowledge of DMs and their usage, while the control group was not. After the intervention period, they were both given a topic to write about. The next step was counting the number of DMs being used by both control and experimental groups

and the mean, standard deviation, and an independent *t*-test value were calculated. The results are illustrated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Results for Comparing Experimental Group and Control Group Use of DMs

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
Experimental	25	9.34	1.6	10.53	48	0.001
Control	25	5.24	1.09			

As illustrated in Table 4.1, there is a significant difference between the calculated mean of the control group (5.24) with the standard deviation of 1.09, and the experimental group (9.34) with the standard deviation of 1.6.

Based on the result of independent *t*-test between the two groups (10.53) and the degree of freedom (48) the calculated *p* value ($p < .001$), the significance levels shows that the experimental group used DMs more than the control. In other words, there is a significant difference between the experimental group and control group in their use of DMs, which show that DM instruction could help the experimental group learners' use DMs more, compared to the control.

Research Question 2

Is there a significant difference within the experimental group in terms of fluency before and after the intervention?

To answer this question the experimental group is given a topic, illustrated before, to write before the intervention period and after this period is given another topic to observe the plausible change in the fluency of their writing due to the instruction on DMs.

Fluency is calculated based on Wolf-Quintero (1998) in two aspects of frequency (table 4.2.) and ratio (table 4.3.). In this study, frequency is calculated based on the number of words in T-units and ratio is the number of words per T-units which are both considered as developmental process. The calculated mean, standard deviation, and dependent *t*-test are as illustrated in the following Tables 4.2 and 4.3:

Table 4.2

Results for Fluency (Frequency)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	188.06	6.71	140.12	24	0.001
Post- Writing	208.18	11.17			

Table 4.3

Results for Fluency (Ratio)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	10.85	0.74	72.43	24	0.001
Post- Writing	11.47	0.81			

As shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3, there is a significant difference between the means before and after the instruction which rise from 188.06 to 208.18 for the frequency and 10.85 to 11.47 for the ratio. Considering standard deviation in the two tables, increasing from 6.71 to 11.17 and 0.74 to 0.81 for the frequency and ratio respectively, also show a significant upward change.

Based on the results of the independent t-test before and after the intervention, 140.12 for frequency and 72.43 for ratio, with the degree of freedom (24) the calculated p value (p < .001), the significance levels shows that after the intervention period, fluency of the experimental group increased significantly in both

frequency and ratio aspects. In other words teaching DMs could enhance the learners' writing fluency.

Research Question 3

Is there a significant difference within the experimental group in terms of accuracy before and after the intervention?

The same procedure for the previous question is applied to the current one as well. Pre writing and post writing results are being considered to reach the required destination. The two aspects of frequency and ratio, which are depicted in tables 4.4 and 4.5 respectively, are used. To quantify the findings for these two aspects Wolfe-Quintero (1998) way of calculation is used.

Accuracy in the frequency aspect is calculated by the number of correct connectors utilized by the experimental group before and after instruction. Accuracy in the ratio aspect is calculated based on the formula by Evolta et al. (1980) which is the following formula:

Number of correct connectors - number of wrong connectors

Number of words

The two calculations are on the basis of developmental process. The calculated mean, standard deviation, and dependent T-test are as illustrated below:

Table 4.4

Results for Accuracy (Frequency)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	4.78	0.85	27.95	24	0.001
Post- Writing	9.02	1.74			

Table 4.5

Results for Accuracy (Ratio)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	0.022	0.003	34.08	24	0.001
Post- Writing	0.036	0.007			

Table 4.4 shows that the mean in frequency aspect changed from 4.78 to 9.02 after intervention and standard deviation from 0.85 to 1.78. It shows that there is an upward trend in the results.

The result of the independent t-test (27.95) with the degree of freedom (24), the calculated p value (p<0.001), the significance levels shows that after intervention, accuracy of the learners' writing increased significantly in frequency aspect.

Besides, as shown in Table 4.5 in the ratio aspect the mean changed from 0.022 to 0.036 and the standard deviation from 0.003 to 0.007, before and after the instruction.

The results of the independent t-test (34.08) with the degree of freedom (24), and the *p* value ($p < .001$), the significance levels clarifies that the learners' writings showed an increase in their ratio aspect.

In brief, teaching DMs could enhance the learners' writing accuracy after instruction; in other words learners used these units to write more accurately.

Research Question 4

Is there a significant difference in within the experimental group in terms of complexity before and after the instruction?

Following the same procedure, for calculating complexity two aspects of frequency and ratio were considered which can be seen in tables 4.6 and 4.7. To this

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end, pre-writing and post-writing of the learners were investigated, as in the previous two questions about the experimental group. The method of calculation is based on Wolfe-Quintero (1998).

Based on Wolfe-Quintero (1998) complexity in the frequency aspect is calculated by the number of connectors of all types much as in accuracy. Hence, the results would be the same, while complexity in ratio aspect is calculated by the number of T-units per sentences in pre-writing and post-writing of students. The calculations are based on developmental process. The results for mean, standard deviation, and independent *t*-test are illustrated in Table 4.6:

Table 4.6

Results for Complexity (Frequency)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	4.78	0.85	27.95	24	0.001
Post- Writing	9.02	1.74			

Table 4.7

Results for Complexity (Ratio)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.
Pre-Writing	1.06	0.05	91.79	24	0.001
Post- Writing	1.29	1.07			

As depicted in Table 4.6 the calculated mean and standard deviation in frequency aspect in pre writing are 4.78 and 0.85 respectively. While after intervention the mean rises to 9.02 and the standard deviation to 1.74, both of which show a significant increase.

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The result of the independent t-test (27.95) with the degree of freedom (24), the calculated p value ($p < 0.001$), and the significance levels shows that after intervention complexity level in frequency aspect had a significant increase. In other words, the intervention period could increase learners' writing complexity. Table 4.7 shows that in ratio aspect the mean changed from 1.06 to 1.29 and the standard deviation from 0.05 before to 1.07 after intervention. It reveals that there is a significant difference in these two measures before and after instruction.

As for the independent T-test with the value of 34.08, the degree of freedom (24), and the p value ($p < .001$), the significance level shows that learners' writing experienced a significant improvement after the intervention.

In sum, it can be claimed the findings of the current study clarify that in both aspects of frequency and ratio; learners' complexity of writing was enhanced which practically means the instruction period could be beneficial for learners' writing complexity.

Discussions

Research Question 1. The intervention in the current study was on DMs, their functions and usages in various sentences. And the ways micro and macro markers help learners improve the quality of their writing by enabling more coherent structures in both sentential and supra-sentential levels were taught to them. DMs can be used to connect their thoughts better and transfer their ideas easier. Therefore, the possible impact of teaching DMs on using them was investigated.

Following Ellis et al. (2008), focused CF was chosen for this study, because if learners are more focused on one aspect or a certain kind of structure, they can be more successful. And the results of the research show that it is correct. The

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experimental group by focusing on DMs could outperform the control group in their use of DMs.

During the instructional period, the teacher was using direct CF which means she was attempting to find the learners ' errors and also give the correct form of the DMs which were required through various examples and structures. The results of this study, along with Chandler (2003), can prove that direct CF can be extremely effective in improving students' learning, owing to the improvement of the experimental group in their use of these units.

The results of the current study are against what Truscott (2004) claimed. He noticed that CF has negative influence on learners' writing performance. He argued that the time and energy that teachers and learners put on CF can be allocated to more beneficial activities, such as giving more writing tasks to learners. He even goes further with noticing that CF can be helpful for errors which "are relatively simple and can be treated as discrete items rather than integral parts of a complex system" (Truscott, 2007, p. 258).

In 2007, he performed a study in which he used a small sample and excluded many studies for variety of reasons to reach the same conclusion. His purpose was updating his previously mentioned claim in that quantitative study. However, the results of the current study show the positive impact of focused CF on learners' use of DMs in writing.

Along with Dekeyser (1995) and De Graaff (1997), I believe that EI, on DMs in the current study, can help learners enhance their understanding of the presented material. Relying on this belief, I tried to arrange an atmosphere for learners to be explicitly taught on DMs as text organizers at both sentential and supra-sentential levels.

In a survey by De Graaff (1997), 27 items were taught to the experimental group, while the control group just received some activities and exercises. The results revealed that the experimental group could be much more successful than the control. The results confirmed great impact of EI on learning. The results of the current study also show that EI could enhance the experimental group's understanding and use of DMs.

Yashimi (2001) worked on the use of Japanese DMs with the help of communicative practice and feedback taking for the experimental group, while the control group received no instruction, and the results showed that the experimental group was significantly successful in using DMs comparing to the control one; in this study the results clarify that EI+IF could help the experimental group be outstandingly successful in using these items.

Hernandez (2008) worked on the effect of using EI+IF on describing past events with the help of DMs. In his study the experimental group (n = 10) received EI +IF and the necessary correction on the use of DMs, with enough exercises. While the control group (n = 9) was exposed to a flood of input without receiving instruction, being corrected or taught on these units. The results illustrated the use and understanding of DMs by the experimental group was significantly different from the control. In the current study, instruction was done explicitly and the material was taught with various examples and exercise activities relating to DMs and their usage (IF). There was a period of correcting students' sentences (CF). The results showed that EI+IF along with CF could have positive impact on students' use of DMs in their writing.

Dabaghi, Khorvash, and Tavakoli (2010) worked on the effect of DM instruction and raising learners' awareness of these units for their reading

comprehension. The study was done on 90 Iranian learners in a pre-test post-test design which unveiled that in their post-test the learners could outperform their pre-test which showed that DM awareness could improve their comprehension. In this study DM awareness and teaching them explicitly are also showing an influential impact on improving learners' writing.

Haris and Yunus (2013) studied 30 intermediate-level learners and concluded that they use some DMs more than others; in other words overuse them, because they are sure about their function. Besides they concluded that overusing or misusing DMs could be an obstacle to writing. Regarding this, DMs were taught explicitly and various examples and exercise activities were provided for the learners in the current study to ensure the learners' awareness of these units. Moreover, the study by Haris and Yunus (2013) unveiled that teachers did not have a clear picture of these units.

The results of the current work confirm this claim, since the experimental group performed better in the use of DMs, comparing to the control one, which shows control groups' lack of knowledge about the presence and function of DMs. Therefore, they avoided using them.

Research Question 2. In a study by Saito and Lyster (2010) on Japanese learners' speaking, it was revealed that form-focused CF could enhance participants' speaking skill. In this study, the researchers studied 167 Japanese students in four groups. Two groups received CF, one group enjoyed peer interaction and the last group was the control group.

The results of the study showed that the group in which there was peer interaction could perform better in fluency aspect of their spoken language, while the

two groups with form-focused CF could outperform the control group in both fluency and accuracy aspects.

As the results of the studies By Ellis (2008) and Bitchener (2008) on written corrective feedback also unveiled, the current work showed that form-focused corrective feedback could enhance learners' fluency.

The results of this study reveal that learners' had not been taught on DMs properly, owing to the fact that they could outperform in their post writing in fluency aspect which shows that teachers' lack of awareness of the use and importance of DMs could have been the root of the complication. Similarly, Rezvani (2012) performed a study on Iranian teachers. The results suggested that teachers were moderately aware of the importance and role of DMs. Therefore, it can be concluded that DMs are necessary to be taught explicitly.

Albesher and Sabry (2013) studied writings of fifty Saudi learners in Qassim University and found that students overused the DMs they knew and wrote in choppy and immature manner due to not using DMs. Besides they claimed that to improve writing fluency, DMs should be taught. Findings of this study also confirm their claim. After receiving instruction on DMs learner writing fluency could improve; in other words teaching these units explicitly could enhance learners' writing in fluency aspect.

In contrast, Taguchi (2009) showed that learners utilized instruction on DMs to improve their writing fluency. Taguchi (2009) conducted a research on twenty-two subjects who registered for a Japanese course in the US. The results revealed that they improved in complexity of their speech, while the results of their fluency did not show a significant change.

The twenty-two subjects were taught some grammatical chunks. After the intervention, they were tested and the results declared that the participants used the presented knowledge to monitor their language and enhance complexity of their speech, but not fluency.

Hence, Taguchi (2009) claimed that learners used the instructed material to enhance complexity and monitoring power, while it could not have impact on their fluency. The results of his work are in accordance with what Skehan (1996) claimed that due to learners' limited capacity, they cannot use the presented material to improve fluency of language. While the results of the current study clarified that, contrary to what they argued, learners' fluency could improve significantly after intervention, which practically means they used the presented material to enhance their fluency. That is to say, explicit instruction could have positive impact on enhancing writing in fluency aspect.

Research Question 3. Skehan (1996) defined accuracy as the ability of learners to apply the inter language complexity received. Likewise, in the current work; accuracy of writing product of learners is discussed based on DM usage before and after instruction. The results show a significant change which practically means learners' writing accuracy could improve owing to interventional period on DMs. This suggests that learners were capable of applying the received information.

The current work was focusing on DMs as items which could possibly enhance learners' writing. Therefore, it is considered as a form-focused intervention, and results are in accordance with the study by Asghari, Bonyadi, and Salimi (2014) which revealed that instruction with focusing on a certain form could improve learners' writing accuracy.

Their study on sixty Iranian learners in two high and low groups, each with one experimental and one control group, concluded that after intervention, the experimental groups could outperform the control groups in their writing accuracy. Similarly, the current work showed that the experimental group could improve in accuracy after the instruction, compared to their performance before receiving explicit instruction.

In the current study, DMs were the focus of the intervention period which made it a direct corrective feedback that focused on these units only, and the results revealed that the focus could lead to enhancing learners' writing accuracy which confirms the study by Ahmadi-Azad (2014) which was done on fifty-four per-intermediate Iranian learners. In this study the researcher labeled CF as coded and un-coded ones by which she meant direct and indirect CF. The results after the instructional period on 10 kinds of errors, which were the main focus for the coded group, illustrated that direct or coded feedback could result in improving accuracy in learners' writing, while the indirect or un-coded one could not play the same role and could not produce significant change in the learners' writing accuracy.

In the current work, during the intervention period, the learners were discussing and working collaboratively and trying to use the appropriate DMs and get help from others and also their teacher. Hence it could be considered a collaborative work with instruction and observation of the teacher who was giving the necessary help on these units' usage and function.

The results showed that writing accuracy could increase consequently. The study by Jafari (2012) on sixty Iranian EFL learners revealed that a collaborative work on writing could improve writing accuracy of learners, which is in accordance with the results of the current study. She attempted to provide the learners in the

experimental group with a collaborative atmosphere, while the control group did not enjoy the same setting. Eventually, the findings revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control one in applying error-free T-units, which she interpreted as the positive impact of collaboration of learners on accuracy improvement. Correspondingly, findings of the current work confirm her results that with the help of collaboration accuracy of writing could improve. However, collaboration was not the sole key factor in this study.

Research Question 4. According to Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim (1998, p. 5), complexity aspect can be measured by discourse moves and variety of discourse moves used. They calculated complexity in frequency aspect based on the number of connectors used, and the ratio aspect based on the number of T-units. Considering these measurements, the participants in the current study could improve their writing complexity in both frequency and ratio aspects. It literally means explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback could positively influence the participants' complexity of writing.

Truscott (2004, 2007) illustrated a very negative picture of CF in the process of language teaching. He claimed that CF can have a negative impact on learners as it can make them conservative language users. They are at risk of damaging complexity of their language due to assuring themselves of being accurate.

The results of the current work revealed that participants did not sacrifice any aspect of their language for the sake of the other. According to Robinson (2003, 2005) CF can improve both accuracy and complexity of learners' writing skill.

Learners in the current work showed a significant change in their writing accuracy. Moreover, they presented a more complex text, which is in accordance

with Robinson's belief that accuracy and complexity can be considered as two sides of a coin, they can be kind of complementary to each other which practically means the presence of accuracy cannot necessitate elimination of complexity. Considering the results of the current study, if learners are provided with enough input while being taught, they do not necessarily need to simplify their writing product to be assured of the accuracy of their work, as claimed by Truscott.

Taguchi (2009) worked on the effect of explicit instruction of some grammatical chunks to a group of Japanese students to check complexity enhancement. His work on twenty-two subjects revealed that as a result of teaching the grammatical chunks with lots of examples which literally means input flooding, learners' complexity of speech could increase. The current work was having its focus of writing skill. It was unveiled that explicit instruction of DMs could enhance learners' writing skill. Therefore, explicit instruction along with input flood could not only increase learners' speaking, but also have positive effect on learners' writing skill.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Introduction

The current work was set to explore the answer to the question whether discourse marker instruction and input flood along with corrective feedback can help Iranian intermediate EFL learners to use these units more in their writing. The study has also sought to clarify whether DM instruction and use of these units can enhance fluency, accuracy, and complexity of learners' writing after the intervention course comparing to their writing before this course.

Considering writing in both cognitive and social views led to choosing Hayes's (1996) model of writing as theoretical framework in which both the aforementioned aspects were taken into account. In this model cognitive factors were introduced as "the individual", while social factors were presented as "the task environment". The components of the framework proposed by Heyes (1996) in two main categories of "the individual" or the cognitive aspect and "the task environment" or the social aspect are in accordance with looking at writing process in a socio-cognitive view.

Stating writing as a socio-cognitive process had the influence to direct the intervention to serve the two views, which practically means the learners who attended the instructional program were given the chance to interact with the teacher and work in a group. Besides, they were given some exercises and extensive problem-solving and functional activities to work on and rehearse at home.

Results of the comparison between experimental and control groups (Table 4.1) revealed that explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback could have positive impact on the experimental group's use of DMs.

Furthermore, the findings on fluency in both frequency (table 4.2) and ratio (table 4.3), accuracy in frequency aspect (table 4.4) and ratio one (table 4.5), and finally complexity in frequency view (table 4.6) and ratio (table 4.7) showed that the experimental group could improve fluency, accuracy, and complexity after instruction, comparing to the results before this period.

The following section, after stating the research questions, gives a brief review of the results; after that it continues by discussing the pedagogical and theoretical implications of the study, followed by describing limitations and giving recommendations for further studies. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

Research Questions and Brief Discussions

This study was assigned to answer 4 questions which are being discussed into two main categories:

1. Is there a significant difference between the writings of the learners who receive instruction on DMs and those who do not go through such intervention period in their use of DMs?

The findings of the study (Table 4.1) revealed that teaching DMs could help the experimental group to use these units more than the control one. The results can be interpreted as if DMs is taught as separate units and some certain time is allocated to teaching these units, students' awareness increases and they consequently use these essential units more. As a result, they can be capable of making longer sentences and bringing a higher sense of unity to their writing.

As Niu (2009) and Adams (2006) noted in writing modality due to not being curbed by time constraints, writers have a better chance of applying the acquired material during pre-task planning and after production of their language in monitoring stage. The results of the current study show that after explicit instruction of DMs, writers could apply the learned features in their writing products and in could end in fluency, accuracy and complexity improvement of their writing.

As the view proposed by Britton (1972) and followed by others which looked at a participant as an observer prior to becoming a writer, in the current work, I gave them a process of observing the authentic language through EI and adding IF. They observed the use of DMs and then they composed the language. Afterwards, they were asked to write. It shows that shifting the role of participants as observers of the language could end in producing a better structure as they used DMs more by the experimental group comparing to control group.

As stated before, lack of awareness and also lack of confidence about correctness of these units can lead to not using a wide variety of DMs or using a few repeated ones for the sake of being ensured of accuracy of usage.

For instance, a writer in the control group wrote sentences as follows,

Some people might say that places of culture should be run like a business. The cost to the heritage of the country is too great and they should be free to all.

While a writer in the experimental group expressed his idea, after the intervention course, as follows,

Although some people argue killing animals for research and food is ethical, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that this is not the case, and, therefore, steps must be taken to improve the rights of animals.

As in can be seen, in the second example the writer used DMs for connecting the sentences together. Hence, explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback ended in using DMs more by the experimental group comparing to the control group.

In accordance with what Asik's (2013) work revealed Iranian Intermediate learners use limited number of DMs in their writing. Before EI+IF along with CF the number of DMs used by participants was significantly lower than after the intervention course. Therefore, it shows the importance of teaching DMs explicitly.

2. Is there a significant difference within the experimental group in terms of fluency, accuracy, and complexity before and after the intervention?

Comparing the results of the experimental group before and after the intervention period with the help of the Wolfe-Quintero (1998) method of calculation in two views of frequency and ratio revealed that in the three aspects fluency (table 4.2 and 4.3), accuracy (tables 4.4 and 4.5), and complexity (table 4.6 and 4.7) the experimental group improved significantly.

As mentioned by Alvardo, Veron, and Zermeno (   ), in the process of learning to write which is prior to writing itself, one of the roles a writer can have is being a reflective reader to overcome the complication of how to transfer the message and how it is being understood by the reader. In the current work after a period of input flooding which is actually letting the writer read examples of how DMs are applied in a text.

After familiarizing the participants with DMs, they are given a chance to practice them and finally, use them in their writing. The results of the current work in both aspects of DM use by the experimental group and enhancing fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the writing after intervention formulates the view that playing the

role of a reader could have positive impact. Therefore, giving learners the chance to read prior to asking them to write, which is considered as the input flood in the current work, can have a positive impact on learners.

For instance, a student wrote two separate sentences like,

Educators believe using computers in classroom setting can help learners. Many learners use computers to improve their learning.

After instruction and getting familiar with DMs, the same concept was written like,

Educators believe using computers in classroom setting can help learners. Therefore, many learners use computers to improve their learning.

As it can be seen above, the writer of second concept used a connector to link the two sentences together, while previously he did not do it. Using "*Therefore*" helps the reader to comprehend the type of connection between the two statements. Furthermore, it avoids making separate and unrelated sentences which may confuse the reader or result in misunderstanding the ideas.

Another example of macro-markers can be noticed in the following example,

The impact the online social media has had on each individual has clear advantages. People from different countries are brought together, through sites like Facebook. Before the development of technology and social networking sites, people rarely had the chance to meet or communicate with anyone outside their immediate circle or community. Facebook has social groups which offer individuals a chance to meet and participate in discussions with people who share common interests.

The effect that Facebook and other social networking sites have had on societies and local communities can only be seen as negative. People do not take

part in their social community. They are choosing to take more interest in people online. People within local community are no longer forming close and supportive relationships. So society is becoming more fragmented. People spend more time online people have never met face to face.

After intervention, the learners with clear familiarization with DMs, through EI+IF along with CF, used DMs extensively in both micro and macro levels. The above paragraphs were written as follows,

Regarding individuals, the impact the online social media has had on each individual has clear advantages. Firstly, people from different countries are brought together, through such sites as Facebook, whereas before the development of technology and social networking sites, people rarely had the chance to meet or communicate with anyone outside their immediate circle or community. Secondly, Facebook also has social groups which offer individuals a chance to meet and participate in discussions with people who share common interests.

On the other hand, the effect that Facebook and other social networking sites have had on societies and local communities can only be seen as negative. Rather than individual people taking part in their social community, they are instead choosing to take more interest in people online. Consequently, people within local community are no longer forming close and supportive relationships. Furthermore, society as a whole is becoming increasingly more fragmented as people spend more time online people have never met face to face.

As it can be seen, in the second section there are connections in ideas and the ways through which ideas are related are more smoothly connected. Hence, the reader can easily follow the lines. In some parts like the use of "*rather than*" the

writer connected the two sentences which were written separately in the previous part before the intervention.

Hence, it can be inferred that DM instruction along with input flood and corrective feedback can not only improve the usage of DMs and encourage learners to use them more, but also enhance quality of their writing in the three aspects of frequency, accuracy, and complexity. It practically means DMs should be considered as one of the main components which can play an outstanding role in improving writing quality.

Besides, they could enhance writing fluency, accuracy and complexity which again confirm the idea that they could be helped by giving the chance of being an observer prior to starting the writing process. The abovementioned view toward writers derives from looking at writing as a process-oriented phenomenon rather than a product-oriented one. As an observer, a participant is given the chance to decompose the language and be more aware of the procedural process which can end in procedural facilitation. As a result, viewing language as a process-oriented task seems to be more fruitful and end in more solid results.

Universities in Iran, mostly look at writing as a product-oriented process which can make problem for learners. When learners are not familiarized with the specific society they are writing to, they cannot achieve the purpose of their writing. As Hyland (2004) mentioned, meta-discourse resources are of great value to be taught to learners at higher levels.

The same way, as mentioned above, writing appropriately and meaningfully to the genre of a particular disciplinary community is an issue which is taught in genre studies. Hence, familiarizing participants with genres in which they are writing and connectors, either micro or macro, which can guide the readers illustrate a better

picture of what they are attempting to convey can facilitate the writing process for the writer and consequently can help the reader's comprehension of the written discourse.

As mentioned by Johnson, Ruecker, Shapiro, and Tardy (2014), the little work with the view on cross-contextual differences, however, the influence of these factors are proved, does not provide the necessary factors to improve the quality of writing classes. Using outdated strategies and pedagogical policies can end in product-oriented view towards language.

The main focus of such atmospheres is on grammatical functions of the language. Hence, the text itself and appropriateness are not considered. While in the current study, it is revealed that providing the learners with sentential and supra-sentential elements could end in fluency, accuracy and complexity improvement. The results confirm the claim that writing classes need to alter and views towards conversational classes need to modify.

As the study by Carter and Jones (2012) revealed Present-Practice-Produce group outperformed the other groups. In their work, I define 'Present' as explicit instruction, 'Practice' as input flood, and 'Produce' as corrective feedback. As the results of my study showed, after explicit instruction of DMs along with input flood and corrective feedback could end in better fluency, accuracy and complexity of the participants.

Pedagogical and Theoretical Implications

The current study was designed to view writing in two aspects of cognitive and social, based on the theoretical framework presented by Hayes (1996) and the modified form of the very same presented framework (see p. 48).

As it is focused on, teachers should consider teaching writing a socio-cognitive phenomenon in which environment, setting and intervention on one side, and mental process, memory and cognition on the other side can play a role. In other words, focusing on one of the two aspects and ignoring or underestimating the other can result in not achieving the predetermined objective which is writing enhancement of learners.

The findings of this study provide important insight into the impact of teaching DMs and raising learners' awareness through explicit instruction and input flood along with corrective feedback on using DMs (Table 4.1).

It is revealed that teaching DMs explicitly and input flood along with corrective feedback can be influential in consciousness-raising of learners and end in their usage of these units in their writings. It can also be concluded that not using DMs is not due to underestimating them or not counting on them as essential by learners, but it is owing to not being aware of the usage and role of DMs or not being sure of how to use and what to use DMs for.

Obviously, the learners' tendency to use these units after instruction can be a sign of uncertainty of accurate use of these units. Moreover, lack of knowledge could be taken as the reason for learners not utilizing them, because DMs are abundantly used after intervention.

Teaching DMs separately and consequently expecting improvement in learners' writing can take place in classroom setting, due to the results of the current study. Therefore, if DMs are instructed explicitly with the help of enough input flood and corrective feedback; teachers can expect more unity and cohesiveness in their learners' writing and enhanced quality of their writing as well.

Hence teachers, in their teaching process, and educational planners and syllabus designers, in their planning and designing appropriate curriculum, especially in the writing aspect, can definitely benefit from the results of the current research to be assured of the significant role that DMs can play in teaching writing and to what extent they can come in handy in writing improvement of learners.

It can be concluded, from the results of the current study, that DMs influences more than the sentence level. In other words, DMs should be taught in both aspects of micro and macro levels; they should be considered as elements which can have a significant impact at both sentential and supra-sentential levels. As it can be seen in section 5.2 learners can use them to show the relationship and the way two sentences are connected. Besides, they can bring the sense of writing to the whole text with connecting paragraphs and ideas to each other. As a result transferring what the writer has in mind to the reader can be done easier.

Provided that these elements are well-organized and exercises are well-designed, learners can benefit from them to write better, more confidently and more coherently, and put their thoughts into frames more easily. Hence, teachers need to be more conscious while teaching them.

As mentioned before, teaching writing can assist both English-majored and non-English-majored people. Therefore, improving writing quality in different genres can help different people in various professions and with different purposes. Shown in the current study, quality of writing in all fluency, accuracy and complexity aspects could improve with the help of DMs. Hence, they can be considered as one of the major components in English writing teaching courses to help all those who are anticipating such outcome.

As the study by Naghdipour (2016) revealed viewing writing class as a learning to write process cannot be a fruitful way and cannot aid learners to be proficient writers. It ends in focusing on grammar level and not going beyond the sentence. Hence, the existence of global errors in writing is inevitable. In the process of the current study with the focus on DMs and giving the chance to learners to write and learn from their own writing revealed that their writing fluency, accuracy and complexity could improve. Hence, the view towards writing classes needs to alter to have more efficient writer students.

I believe learning a language in a native atmosphere would be a rewarding experience. However, it could not mean that learning is to be in a native atmosphere. Giving learners enough exercises to internalize the use and function of the instructed material and involving them with real-life activities, also drawing their attention through noticing activities and doing correction through giving feedbacks to them are also consolidation of the material through various exercises and repetition of what is being taught of the target form can result in deeper understanding to fill the gap of not having access to native atmosphere. As the results of the current study revealed fluency, accuracy, and complexity of writing could improve through a process of EI+IF along with CF.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Study

The current study investigated the plausible impact of DM instruction on usage of these units and the effect these units can have on enhancing fluency, accuracy, and complexity of learners' writing. This study has some implications for future researches.

Some of the most outstanding recommendations are as follows:

- In the current work DMs are taught explicitly. Therefore, there is an explicit instruction along with input flood and also there is corrective feedback on learners' answers or their produced sentences. Hence, as some researchers claimed, explicit instruction of DMs alone might yield the same results without input flood. To claim so, they are required to be tested separately to enable a researcher to claim if the combination can be more influential or EI alone can have the same effect. As a result, there is place of research to seek for the answer.

- The current study focused on intermediate level learners, while other levels, high or low, might possibly show a different attitude toward DM instruction. Hence, studies on other levels can be replicated to find out whether they yield the same results or other levels of learners perform differently. The usage and understanding of these units might directly be dependent on the learners who are being exposed to these elements. Investigating other levels of learners can shed more light on this question.

- Learning can be a gender or an age limited factor, while in this research they were not considered as control variables; hence they might have impact on the type or number of DMs being used. For instance, males might use some categories of DMs, while females might pick others. Age can be an influential factor as well. Further studies can be more focusing on taking these two variables into account and checking the plausible impact they can have on the process of teaching DMs.

- The results of the current work were based on all classes of DMs, without classifying their usage to investigate which types of DMs are used more after instruction and which types less. Therefore, replicating this study while considering different categories of DMs and their usage after intervention can clarify if learners

have the tendency to apply some certain types of DMs more than others or they are used equally.

- This study attempted to investigate the impact of DM instruction on improvement of writing as a productive skill. Speaking, the other productive skill can also be tested to find out if DMs can have the same impact on that skill or they just enhance the writing product of learners. If it can be proved that DMs can enhance all aspects of fluency, accuracy, and complexity of learners' speaking, as revealed in writing, it can be claimed that DM awareness has a significant effect on productive skills in general.

- The time period for intervention in this study was 20 hours in 5 weeks. It was designed to be manageable with the university schedule and designed not to conflict with the learners' time table. The work can be replicated over a longer time span and with longer hours of instruction to achieve better results and to avoid any stress and anxiety for teacher and learners.

- The research was conducted in an EFL atmosphere, considering the fact that the only medium of instruction was English. It can be replicated in an ESL atmosphere to test whether the same results could be obtained or ESL learners show different attitude towards DMs.

Conclusion

The results of the study suggest that DM instruction along with input flood and corrective feedback could significantly influence their usage in writing as a socio-cognitive skill. In other words, more learners' awareness of DMs can result in more usage of these units. Besides, utilizing DMs can enhance fluency, accuracy, and complexity of learners' writing. To conclude, explicit instruction of DMs and

input flood along with corrective feedback seem necessary to improve learners' writing.

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