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## TEACHER'S POLITENESS IN EFL CLASS

Ayfer Sülü

Inonu University, School of Foreign Languages

[ayfer.sulu@inonu.edu.tr](mailto:ayfer.sulu@inonu.edu.tr)

**Ayfer Sülü** works as an instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, İnönü University in Turkey. She graduated from ELT Department at Yıldız Technical University in 2008. She got her MA on Teaching English as a Foreign Language from Bilkent University. Her professional interests include Intercultural Communication, CEFR, and Corpus Linguistics.

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### Abstract

Politeness is considered to promote effective interaction between people. In the context of language teaching, it is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in classroom (Jiang, 2010). This study investigates an EFL classroom in terms of interaction between English learners and a native English speaking teacher. The aim of the study is to see whether the effects of politeness strategies differ when students and teacher do not share the same culture and native language. Two hours of classes were observed and tape-recorded by the researcher. The recordings were transcribed and analyzed by making use of related politeness strategies and functions of speech. Also, three randomly chosen students were interviewed after the class. The findings showed that politeness existed in that EFL classroom and it helped students to have positive feelings towards the lesson and motivated them to participate more in classes.

*Keywords:* politeness strategies, politeness theory, functions of speech

### 1. Introduction

Politeness is one of the basics of human interaction. For that reason, many researchers such as Leech, Brown and Levinson, and Austin and Searle focused on politeness in their studies and proposed different theories about politeness (as cited in Jiang, 2010). It is assumed that just like any other interaction, teacher-student interaction is also positively affected by politeness. In order to investigate teachers' politeness in an EFL classroom, Jiang (2010) carried out a study and found that "politeness enhances teaching, benefits the students, contributes to the effective interaction and friendly, lively atmosphere in an EFL classroom". (p.655) In her study, both the teacher and learners were Chinese with Chinese culture. However, it is possible that the results may differ if the study is repeated in a different context in which the teacher and the students do not share the same culture.

This study aims to investigate whether cultural and contextual differences in communication make any change in terms of politeness in class and its effects on the interaction between students and the teacher.

### 2. Related Theories

In this paper, Brown and Levinson's face theory and politeness strategy will be employed while analyzing the teacher's politeness in class. The functions of the teacher's speech will be categorized according to the classroom speech functions suggested by Jiang (2010).

#### 2.1. Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory

Politeness is defined as redressive action taken to counter-balance the disruptive effect of *face-threatening acts (FTAs)* (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) describe "face" as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects: negative face and positive face. Negative face is the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others. Positive face is the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others. Brown and Levinson (1987) also state that in human communication, either spoken or written, people tend to maintain one another's face continuously, and this tendency adds up to politeness. If

the hearers' need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected is violated by an act during conversation, they call these acts as "Face Threatening Acts" (FTAs). Brown and Levinson (1987, p.60) offer four politeness strategies in order to deal with these FTAs: "bald on record, negative politeness, positive politeness and off-record indirect".

*Bald on-record strategies* focus on clarity and efficiency, and does nothing to minimize threats to the hearer's "face" (e.g. I want some water). These strategies are similar to Grice's conversational maxims, which are 'maxim of quality (be sincere) , maxim of quantity (don't say less/more than required), maxim of relevance (be relevant), and maxim of manner (avoid ambiguity)' (Grice, 1989). *Positive politeness strategies* give importance to the hearers' face, minimize the potential threat of an FTA and the relationship is friendly (e.g. Is it ok for me to have some water?). Positive politeness could be defined as an involvement-based approach made by the speaker for understanding, approving of, and admiring the positive image of the hearer (Wagner, 2004). *Negative politeness* strategy recognizes the hearer's face, as well, but it also admits that you are in some way imposing on the hearer (e.g. I don't want to bother you but, would it be possible for me to have some water?). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness strategies are universally more preferred since it is safer to assure the addressee's peace and determination rather than the speaker's expressions of regard. However, some scholars such as Ho (1994), Lavandera (1988), Márquez Reiter (2000), Nwoye (1992), and Wagner (2004) do not support this assumption. According to these scholars, negative politeness does not have value over positive politeness. Reversely, positive politeness could be preferred more because of its avoidance-based, off-record verbal behaviour or other means of addressing face. The last strategy is *off-record indirect*. It is done in such a way that it is impossible to ascribe only one clear communicative intention to the act. The speaker leaves himself/herself 'out' by trying to avoid the direct FTA of asking for water (e.g. It's so hot, it makes you really thirsty). They are essentially indirect uses of language.

## 2.2. The Functions of Speech

Holmes (2008) gives six different categories for functions of speech: expressive, directive, referential, metalinguistic, poetic and phatic utterances. Utterances in each category have different functions in speech; however, it is important to remember that the meaning of language depends on its actual use, and may not exactly coincide with an utterance.

The interaction between the teacher and students is different from the usual interaction in daily life, and thus needs to be investigated under different categories. Jiang (2010) states that teachers have different roles in class, and suggests the following functions for classroom speech of teachers: instructional, motivational, evaluative, and managerial. In this paper, these roles of classroom speech will be investigated in terms of the politeness strategies used by the teacher.

## 3. Methodology

This is a qualitative study, and observation and interview were used for data collection. The participants were a 25-year old American teacher of English and 22 Turkish students of an English preparatory program at a university in Turkey. The teacher has been in Turkey for about 6 months and has not been familiar with Turkish culture before. Students were all at pre-intermediate level of English and they all have been taught by the teacher for nearly 5 months.

The interaction between the students and the teacher was observed and tape-recorded for two hours of class. After the observation, 3 randomly chosen students were asked for a group

interview in order to get a deeper insight into the results. All the data were transcribed and analyzed by making use of related politeness strategies and functions of speech.

#### 4. Data Analysis

In this study, any classroom speech that fostered the process of teaching and contributed to the interaction between teacher and students is regarded as politeness. In this part, the teacher's speech is categorized according to its functions and is analyzed by making use of politeness strategies mentioned above.

For analysis, teacher's speech is evaluated under four categories: instruction, motivation, classroom management and evaluation.

##### 4.1. Instruction

Instruction refers to teacher's academic instructions, answering students' academic questions, and giving supportive and corrective feedback (Jiang, 2010). Here are some examples of teacher's speech:

1. Today, we're gonna focus on a model debate, OK?
2. With your partner, I want you to discuss your favorite school subject and why? OK?
3. Discuss in English.
4. Yiğit, what is Kenan's favorite school subject?
5. Write your name on your sheet of paper.
6. You all will do the same thing.
7. You can read along with it if you want.
8. Ask him, say why?
9. Who wants to read?
10. Let's go over.
11. Listen, take notes, tell me the notes and then we will pick the picture.
12. You just have to argue your point.
13. If you have any questions, bring them to class, and I'll answer them. Ok?
14. If any of you want this PowerPoint, just e-mail me. Ok?
15. Do we know what a role model is?
16. Ok? We understand that?

Within Brown and Levinson's theory, when you speak to someone, you may orient yourself towards that individual's positive face, and employ positive politeness, which appeals to the hearer's desire to be liked and approved of. In sentences 1, 10, 15 and 16, one of the positive strategies—in-group marker is used, that is, the teacher includes himself in the learning process, which will shorten the distance from the students.

Sentences 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 12 appear in the form of imperative sentences. This is a direct strategy of politeness. In such kind of strategy, the request is expressed clearly through language forms. Among these forms, imperative sentences are the most commonly used ones, or other similar sentences like performatives (S3, S5, S8), obligation statements (S8, S12), want statements (S2, S6) could also be used. This usage can be classified as one of the negative politeness strategies.

In classroom, modals verbs such as shall, would, can, want etc. are often used to maintain the students' negative face. S7 shows such kind of a usage. S9 shows another strategy of negative politeness—conventional indirectness. Negative politeness is oriented towards a hearer's negative face, which appeals to the hearer's desire not to be impeded or put upon, to be left free to act as they choose.

Sentences 11, 13 and 14 appear to be very common sentences and they show another politeness strategy—bold on record. This type of strategy is commonly found with people who know each other very well, and very comfortable in their environment, such as close friends and family. Also in some situations like external factors constrain a person to speak very directly, for example, there is an emergency of some sort, or where there is a major time constraint or where there is some form of channel limitation.

#### **4.2. Motivation**

Motivation refers to illocutionary acts aimed at activating students such as their participation, academic questions, and initiative feedback (Jiang, 2010). The following sentences are among the ones which the teacher used frequently to motivate students.

1. I think all of you will do well and I think you'll like it. It should be fine.
2. You will be ok, you can do it.
3. OK, anybody else?
4. Bamboo is a plant and you should know the rest. That is the vocabulary of two weeks ago.
5. Ok, tell me some of the notes you took.
6. It will be great.
7. Here we go.

In sentences 3 and 5, “ok” is used as a filler to mitigate the expression. It can be said that only when the speaker is polite, mitigation exists. This can also be a kind of positive politeness strategy.

In sentence 7, one of the positive strategies—in-group marker is used, that is, the teacher includes himself in the learning process, which will shorten the distance from the students.

The teacher uttered sentences 1, 2, and 6 before some requests. It can be said that these sentences also mitigate the following request and motivate students. It is a kind of positive politeness strategy.

Sentence 4 contains one of the negative politeness strategies—impersonalizes speaker and hearer. Here, no specific student is mentioned, the teacher is activating all the students by maintaining the students' negative face.

#### **4.3. Evaluation**

Evaluation refers to teacher's positive and negative feedback which is very important to students. It can encourage as well as discourage the students. For that reason, politeness in evaluation is particularly important to both learning and teaching. The following sentences are the ones which the teacher used for evaluation.

1. Ok,
2. OK, good.
3. Good job!
4. Good, all right.
5. I saw everyone was writing. That's good.
6. A? 25. Great!
7. Very good.
8. Well, it is OK.

In all the sentences above, the teacher shows a positive politeness strategy. Sentences from 1 to 7 are praises. It's easily seen that in saying these sentences, the teacher is employing the positive politeness strategy, the approbation principle, agreement principle and sympathy principle to maintain the students' positive face. In the last sentence, though, the teacher is

being ambiguous by using “Well” to show indirectly that there’s something wrong with the student’s answers. And here, the tact principle and agreement principle is reflected.

#### **4.4. Management**

Management refers to discipline instructions, discipline directives (orders, requests, questions, and calls), procedural instructions, and procedural directives (Jiang, 2010). The following are examples of management sentences:

1. Cell phones? No cell phones, OK?
2. No dictionary. If I’m speaking, when I am speaking, no cell phones. Raise your hand.
3. Everyone writing. Ok?
4. Sssssh!
5. Don’t get the answers of each other. Wait.
6. Everybody. Take notes.
7. Please no talking, just listen.
8. No talking, just listen.
9. So, take a break.
10. Ok, let’s listen again.

In sentences from 1 to 6, the teacher uses bald-on-record strategy by ordering the students directly to maintain classroom order in the shortest possible time. In sentences 7 to 10, several politeness strategies are used together. First, imperative sentences of the direct politeness are used (S7, S8, S9); then, one of the positive politeness strategies—in group identity marker is used (S10). The purpose of teacher’s using this is to get the students’ understanding and cooperation.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Holmes (2008) states that even though we can say that in general interrogative and declarative sentences are more polite than imperatives, a great deal of politeness depends on intonation, tone of voice and context. According to her, an imperative sentence which is said gently may be far more polite than a thundered declarative sentence. The findings of this study also support Holmes’ (2008) comments on the topic. When the teacher’s speech in the class is observed, it can be said that the teacher used imperative sentences more than any other sentence type, which seems impolite in the first impression. However, when the students were interviewed about teacher’s politeness in the class, they all said that the teacher is very polite. From the observation as well, it can be concluded that even though most of the sentences were in imperative form, the teacher was acting as if he was one of the students and the students felt very relaxed all through the class. Therefore, from the analysis above, also from my observation and interview with the students, a conclusion can be drawn that politeness exists in this EFL class and it promotes the mutual understanding and harmonious relationship between teacher and students. Politeness also contributes to the effective interaction and friendly, lively atmosphere in an EFL classroom. From the findings, it could be said that cultural or contextual differences do not make any change in the effects of politeness in class.

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## AN INVESTIGATION OF SUPPORT MEASURES FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS IN EU COUNTRIES AND TURKEY\*

Hilal BÜYÜKGÖZE

Hacettepe University

hilal.buyukgoze@gmail.com

Yüksel KAVAK

Hacettepe University

kavak.yuksel@gmail.com

### Biodata

**Hilal Büyükgoze** is a research assistant at Hacettepe University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Sciences. She earned her master's degree in Educational Administration in 2014. She studies organizational behavior, teacher training programs, and educational planning.

**Yüksel Kavak** is a professor doctor at Hacettepe University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Sciences. His studies mainly focus on teacher training, educational planning, economics of education, and higher education.

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Hilal Büyükgöze

[hilal.buyukgoze@gmail.com](mailto:hilal.buyukgoze@gmail.com)

Yüksel Kavak

[kavak.yuksel@gmail.com](mailto:kavak.yuksel@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This paper investigates the support measures for beginning teachers, and elaborates on mentoring practices in European primary and secondary education institutions, and finally discusses induction practices in Turkey comparatively. The main findings of the research as follows: the common qualification for entry to teaching profession across Europe is a bachelor's degree which generally last between four and five years, however initial teacher education is usually not sufficient for new teachers as they may experience and encounter problems about teaching, assessing and managing the students. Therefore, in almost more than the half of the European countries a structured induction program is carried out or other support measures are provided for new teachers. Few countries do not organize these programs at national level but at the local level or in schools. The structured induction programs are considered as a compulsory phase ending with a kind of overall assessment in most countries, whereas in some of them it is optional. These induction programs last from several months to 2 years, but the widespread length is about one year. The types of support measures for beginning teachers have been found to be differed across Europe, and mentoring is the most common form among these measures. The implications for educational organizations and teaching is discussed further.

*Keywords:* teachers, support measures, mentoring, EU countries, teaching profession

### 1. Introduction

Recently, the need to deliver high quality teaching has become much more significant for most countries by a reason of the international tests carried out biennially and/or triennially such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), and of the international surveys which are conducted by OECD, IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement), World Bank, UNESCO, and UNDP (Eurydice, 2013).

However, countries that are not satisfied with the results of the aforementioned international student achievement tests have begun to examine and figure out the probable underlying reasons for the low or unexpected test scores or performance, as student success has been documented to associate with economic growth and social progress (Barro, 1999; Campante & Glaeser, 2009; Glaeser, Ponzetto, & Shleifer, 2007; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007; Pritchett & Viarengo, 2009). After detailed investigations and research, as one of the basic reasons of the current unfavorable view of the educational programs and systems in European Union member states and almost all over the world has been attributed to low teacher quality at global scale essentially (Buddin & Zamarro, 2008; Carey, 2004; Florida State University, 2010; Futernick, 2010; Hanushek, 2007, 2009; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Hanushek, 2011, 2012; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004; Haycock, & Crawford, 2008;

Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers, & Swanson, 2011; Jacob & Ludwig, 2009; Kennedy, 1992; Leigh & Mead, 2005; Long, 2011; Murnane & Phillips, 1991; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Simon & Johnson, 2013).

A large body of research have pointed to the fact that highly qualified teachers have direct or indirect positive impacts on student achievement and learning (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007; Buddin & Zamarro, 2008, p.1; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011; Ehrenberg & Brewer, 1995; Ferguson & Ladd, 1996; Kane & Staiger, 2008; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2004; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Indeed, the principal aim of the USA's highly well-known project entitled "*No Child Left Behind*" was also to support every classroom with high quality teachers. Similarly, it has been widely reported that less effective teachers may lead children not to reach their optimal potential during their education owing to the lack of sufficient efficient teaching and instruction (Taylor, Roehrig, Hensler, Connor, & Schatschneider, 2010).

In the same sense, research have documented that teachers with more years of experience and/or possession of better training expose to less discipline problems as they have higher levels of self-efficacy and confidence in themselves (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2006; Feng, 2005). Likewise, studies have demonstrated that there is a positive and significant interaction between teachers' undergraduate education institution's reputation and effectiveness of them (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007). However, some research findings have shown no or little association of undergraduate education institution attended with student achievement (Clotfelter et al., 2007; Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2006).

Correspondingly, Kane, Rockoff and Staiger (2006) investigated the possible relationship of teachers' undergraduate GPA (Grade Point Average) and their teaching performance, but no statistically significant interaction has been reported between these two variables. Some research have focused on the probable relationship between teachers' possession of a graduate degree (master's degree or doctoral degree) and student achievement, and a positive association has been reported between possessing a master's degree and students' mathematical performance (Betts, Zau, & Rice, 2003; Dee, 2004; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004).

Angrist and Lavy (2001) have examined the impacts of professional development of teachers on their productivity and effectiveness in Israeli context, and documented little relationship between those variables, however Jacob and Lefrger (2004) reported no significant relationship in relation to the impact of in service training on teacher effectiveness in the United States context. Picking up on that, Aaronson et al. (2007), and Betts et al. (2003) have found no significant interaction between teacher experience and student performance, however Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007)'s findings have shown a high positive correlation between years of experience a teacher have and student achievement. Yet, in some other studies, teachers' more years of experience and/or possession of certifications and diplomas have reported to have little impact on teachers' productivity (Goldhaber, 2002; Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2006; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005).

Further, early childhood education teachers have been found to have significant long term impacts on children (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011). Accordingly, the merit-based programs implemented in low and middle income countries have been reported to generate positive impacts on student performance (Duflo, Hanna, & Ryan, 2008; Glewwe, Ilias, & Kremer, 2010; Rau & Contreras, 2009).

This broadening empirical knowledge on teacher quality, productivity, and effectiveness has attracted professionals' attention, and gained importance leading them to emphasize on

the potential of analyzing diverse teacher training practices to better understand and then assess relevant dimensions of teaching profession (Eurydice, 2013, p.11; Rotherham, 2011). Likewise, this paper also intends to portray the contemporary practices in some aspects of European teacher education and its supplementary measures to succeed in training high quality teachers concerning the higher standards of today's systems.

### 1.1. Aim of the study

The current paper originally provides a framework for analyzing and then assessing teacher training programs and policies practiced in education systems of the European Union member states and in Turkey in order to figure out the conceptual view of their recent practices. The paper has the main objective of providing a lens through which educational researchers, stake-holders, educational administrators, teachers, and the other relevant partners may have the chance of diagnosing the problematic and contradictory issues in teacher training and follow-up practices in Turkish system in comparison with the EU members' case.

Similarly, the essential aim of the present paper is providing a conceptual framework of the initial teacher education for primary and secondary education level, induction programs for new entrant teachers, the status and the length of these programs, types of support measures for novice teachers (if any), and mentoring implementations in the EU and Turkey comparatively.

## 2. Method

In line with the aim and the intended framework of the research, this study has adopted a qualitative approach holistically (Balçı, 2005). Accordingly, document analysis was utilized in the current paper as a qualitative research method (Bowen, 2009). Documents can also function as data sources in qualitative research (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). In this form of qualitative research, documents are illustrated by the analyst to express and make sense of a particular assessment topic.

Document analysis is generally known as a method which commonly used by historians, anthropologists, and linguists. However, sociologists and psychologists have already made use of it by contributing to the improvement of critical theories in these domains. Therefore, documents are significant data sources which are to be utilized efficiently in qualitative studies. In such studies, researchers can obtain the necessary information without feeling any needs of making observations or interviews (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2003). In this respect, document analysis may provide favor to the researcher in terms of time, energy and money saving.

The three prominent types of documents as Merriam (1998, p. 112) stated are: (1) public records, (2) personal documents, and (3) physical evidence. *Public records* generally cover official and ongoing records of an institute's activities (e.g., mission statements, annual reports, policy manuals, strategic plan). *Personal documents* include "first-person accounts that describe an individual's actions, experiences, and beliefs" (e.g., emails, social media posts, blogs, incident reports, reflections). *Physical evidence* consist of "physical objects found within the study setting" (e.g., flyers, agendas, posters, Paisley & Reeves, 2001, p. 493).

In accordance with these, "public records" of various organizations, concerning the main aim of the study, have been investigated in scope of this study. The documents included were annual reports, thematic reports, international organizations' websites (e.g., OECD, World Bank, UNESCO, YÖK, MoNE, and Eurydice), policy statements of European governments, and the websites of the Ministry of Education. The records and reports examined in the

current study obtained from international organizations' official websites were chosen intendedly, as “creating interconnected societies, intercultural dialogue and collective ability to understand and assess changes through education, scientific research and sharing of knowledge (UNESCO)” occupies a broad room in their agenda. Accordingly, these organizations conduct worldwide studies to gather knowledge and statistical information on both teaching and learning to compare and improve the current educational implementations and systems all over the world. The results obtained after the detailed examination of those reports and scientific publications are presented under the main titles of “initial teacher education”, “induction programs”, “other types of support measures” and “mentoring”, sequentially.

### **3. Initial Teacher Education**

The European Union as a political body has 28 member countries currently, and Turkey is a candidate country for the Union. In this section, initial teacher education practices carried out both at primary and secondary education levels will be presented for those 28 countries, and Turkey.

#### **3.1. Pre-Primary and Primary Education Level**

The most common and minimum qualification sought in entry to the teaching profession across Europe, especially at pre-primary level, is a bachelor's degree which generally lasts between three to five years. However, while pre-primary teachers of France, Italy and Portugal are required to have master's degree at ISCED 0 level (pre-primary education), teachers working at pre-primary level in Austria, Malta, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Germany are not required to possess an undergraduate degree, a post-secondary education diploma is sufficient for these countries in relation to pre-primary teaching. At primary level, in countries like Czech Republic, Germany, France, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Estonia, Slovakia, Finland, and Sweden, teachers usually have master's level degrees.

At early childhood education and primary levels across Europe, the concurrent model of initial teacher education program is mostly implemented. In concurrent models, prospective teachers receive the general and the professional component of their program from the very beginning of their education. In Turkey, the only available model of teacher education for primary level is the concurrent model.

#### **3.2. Secondary Education Level**

At lower and upper secondary levels, teachers usually have a bachelor's or a master's level degree. In many of the EU countries, upper secondary teachers generally possess a master's degree. Though Ireland, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, and the United Kingdom do not need teachers to have master's degree, and teachers spend more time on professional training in their initial education than the other countries of the union (Eurydice, 2012; 2013, p. 38).

The newly designed and revised teacher education programs of many member countries combine professional training and the other aspects of the program to acquire a closely linked and integrated degree offering the professional component of the program after completion of the general component (Eurydice, 2013, p. 25) which is called a “consecutive model”. While the concurrent model is the only available model implemented at secondary education level

in Belgium, Germany, Slovakia, Denmark and Turkey, the consecutive model is available for Estonia, Cyprus, Hungary, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Luxembourg. Whereas, some countries adopt both models in teacher training.

However, initial teacher education is usually not sufficient for new teachers as they may experience and encounter problems about teaching, assessing and managing the students. Concerning these, induction programs organized and offered for new entrants will be investigated in the following section.

#### **4. Induction Programs**

Induction program is defined as ‘a structured phase of support given to beginning teachers after finishing the formal program of initial teacher education at the start of their first contract as a teacher in school’ (Eurydice, 2013, p. 40). Across the union, particular induction programs are held at local or school levels and/or national level. This section elaborates on these programs and their structures.

##### **4.1. National/ Local or School Level**

In almost more than the half of the European Union countries, a fixed induction program is implemented or diverse support measures are supported for new entrants of teaching profession. These programs are generally carried out at different levels or with various organizational designs and plans.

Germany, France, Estonia, Slovenia, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom have national induction programs for new teachers at ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) 0, 1, 2, and 3 levels. However, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, and Finland do not implement any induction programs at national level for beginning teachers (Eurydice, 2013, p. 42). Few countries do not organize these programs at national level but at the local level or in schools (e.g. Belgium).

##### **4.2. Status and Length of the Induction Programs**

The structured induction programs are considered as a compulsory phase ending with a kind of overall assessment in most countries. Ireland, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom apply compulsory induction phase for their new teachers in the education system (Europedia official website). Accordingly, in a number of states in order to obtain a permanent contract, beginning teachers have to complete an induction program as a probationary period which lasts minimum 2 months and maximum 24 months. For instance, that probation period lasts at least 2 months in Spain, 8 months in Poland, 12 months in Portugal, 12 months in Austria, and 24 months in Denmark. Whereas these kind of programs are in optional status for beginning teachers in Greece, Slovenia and Scotland (the United Kingdom).

The length of the programs applied across the EU differs. Slovenia offers a program that lasts between 6 to 10 months, whereas Cyprus applies an 8-month-program for new entrants of teaching profession. Most of the member countries of the union such as Denmark, Greece, France, Italy, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom, offer one-year-

program as an induction period. However, Lithuania and Malta implement the longest program which lasts 2 years (European Commission, 2010).

Accordingly, though the completion of a probation period does not guarantee a permanent position, it has a fixed period of implementation in several countries. While Denmark applies a 3-month-of-probation; Malta, Italy and Sweden apply a 12-month-of-probation; Greece, Cyprus, and Luxembourg apply a 24-month-of-probation, and lastly Hungary implements a 36 months of probation period for new entrants of teaching profession as fixed programs (Eurydice, 2012; 2013, p. 40).

### **4.3. Induction in Turkey**

In Turkey, a national structured induction program that consists of basic training, preparatory training, and probationary period, is conducted concerning the regulation of MoNE on training of candidate civil servants (1995). The main objective of the “basic training” period of the induction program has been documented as “giving information to the candidate civil servants on the basic characteristics of the civil servants” (1995, item no 10). The basic training section of the program consists of “the knowledge of the Republic of Turkey’s Constitution, the structure of the state, civil servants law, corresponding rules and filing methods, preservation of the property of the state and austerity measures, public relations, privacy and the significance of privacy, revolution history, national security knowledge and Turkish grammar rules” (MEB, 1995, item no 11).

The essential aim of the preparatory training has been stated as “to be able to provide necessary information and skills which are needed to convey the duties of their assigned position, and support them orienting their position” (MEB, 1995, item no 13). The preparatory training section of the induction program consists of “the introduction of the structure of the ministry, the duties of the ministry, the relevant legislations in relation to the ministry, and the relations of the ministry with other institutions; issues about the duties of the candidate civil servant and the other issues to be favored by the Central Administrative Board on Education” (MEB, 1995, item no 14).

The major aim of the probationary period has been publicized as “to get candidate civil servants experienced by practicing the theoretical knowledge that has been taught during the preparatory training phase, the other information about their position and duties, and the skills gained during the aforementioned phase” (MEB, 1995, item no 24). The probationary period of the induction program consists of “the correspondence and filing rules, the maintenance of the tools and the vehicles that have been given under the responsibility of the candidate civil servant, the knowledge of the relevant legislation concerning his/her domain and applying to them, internal relations, environmental relations, superior-subordinate relationships, human relations, privacy degrees, the preservation of the secret or private documents, observations, research and investigations related to his/her duties, the security and protection measures, transparency in practice, effective usage of time and sources, and the other relevant issues” (MEB, 1995, item no 25).

This probationary period is carried out in company with a mentor teacher under the responsibility of the superintendent of the candidate civil servant’s unit. In case of the failure of the candidate, the particular phase which the candidate has failed is repeated for once, and the candidates are not allowed to pass an upper phase without being successful in a certain phase. After all these phases completed, the candidacy process of a novice teacher cannot last

less than a year or more than 2 years. In consequence of the assessment of the novice teacher's probationary phase's result, a successful novice teacher is recommended to be promoted as a civil servant to the relevant unit in the Provincial Directorate of National Education.

However, a change has been made in 2014 in the Basic Law of National Education numbered 6528. It has been stated that the novice teachers will be able to have the right to enter both the written and the verbal examinations if they work at least one year actively, and then be successful in the performance evaluation. The ones who have not been qualified to enter to the written and verbal exams, and the ones who have been unsuccessful in those exams will be discharged from civil servant status permanently.

The related literature on the current induction program has pointed to the fact that the support measures provided for novice teachers are quiet limited, and the personal and organizational socialization of them is one of the aspects neglected in the present programs (Garip, 2009; Korkmaz, 1999; Okumuş & Biber, 2011; Özkan, 2004; Öztürk, 2008). Similarly, Özönay (2004) has reported that the available induction programs do not meet the necessities of the novice teachers; the usage of proper instruction methods and techniques, and the usage of suitable tools and equipment are not enough, novice teachers cannot attend the classes of their mentor teachers regularly, and the educational inspectors cannot provide sufficient guidance for those new entrants.

Accordingly, Ayvaz-Düzyol (2012) and Ekiz (2006) have stated that the needs of the novice teachers and the curriculum's objectives are contradictory, the methods applied and the equipment available are rather limited, and the reliability and the validity of the examinations are not sufficient. Likewise, Çimen (2010) has found that the educational inspectors working at primary level are not qualified enough to implement the induction programs for the beginning teachers, and the school heads have lack of information on the contribution of the induction program to the teacher qualifications.

In accordance with these findings, Yıldırım (2010), and Balkar and Şahin (2015) have documented that the education programs of the novice teachers are insufficient in relation to its aims, content and the methods and the techniques implemented within the program, and the assessment and the evaluation of the program have been found to be subjective. Further, the current induction program applied to the new entrants of the teaching profession has been claimed not to have the required flexibility to meet the potential or spontaneous needs or demands of the novice teachers.

In order to provide substantial contribution to the preparation period of the novice teachers, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey first studied on, then published a supplementary book for the new entrant teachers in 2010 which was entitled as 'Hosgeldin Öğretmenim [Welcome, my teacher]' to help them get prepared for the formal evaluation after having finished the program (MEB, 2010). However, it thus appears that the current induction program needs a comprehensive and system-wide revision based on empirical research findings and the opinions of the practitioners of the program.

## **5. Types of Support Measures for Novice Teachers**

Some other support measures are provided for fresh teaching professionals with the intent of "(1) improving teaching performance, (2) increasing the retention of promising beginning

teachers, (3) promoting the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers, (4) satisfying mandated requirements for induction and/or licensure, and (5) transmitting the culture of the system to new entrants” (Huling-Austin, 1990, cited in Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 3). However, the types of support measures provided in the first year of new teachers vary across Europe. Eurydice (2012 & 2013, p. 41) classifies these measures as below:

- Regular meetings for the discussion of progress or problems,
- Assistance with the planning and assessment of lessons,
- Mentoring,
- Participation in other teachers’ class activities and/or classroom observation,
- Special compulsory training,
- Visits to other schools/resource centers,
- Decided at school level,
- Induction program in place.

Based on this classification, the most widespread form of support measures appear to be (1) mentoring, (2) assistance in lesson planning to the novice teacher, and (3) regular meetings, sequentially. Mentoring seems to be preferred especially at ISCED 2 and 3 levels compared to ISCED 1 level all around the Europe.

Further, Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000, p. 4-5) specify types of support as follows:

- Personal and emotional support,
- Task or problem focused support,
- Critical reflection on teaching practice.

They also go into detail and itemize specific support strategies entitled as “low-intensity support strategies” and “high-intensity support strategies”. Low-intensity supports are commonly low-cost, less frequent, and short-term strategies which include “orienting new teachers, matching beginning and veteran teachers, adjusting working conditions, and promoting collegial collaboration”. Whereas, high-intensity supports are relatively costlier, more frequent, and long-term strategies such as “selecting and training effective support providers, providing release time, mini-courses addressing common challenges, and examining the evidence of their teaching practice” (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 6-10). It is clear that countries can create and shape their programs equipped with valuable and efficient strategies, based on their beginning teachers’ needs, and the challenges they may encounter in the first year of their professional career.

## 6. Mentoring

Due to the fact that beginning teachers are new to the profession, they may encounter problems and often need extra support in various aspects of their teaching experience. Although most of the EU countries offer national or local level induction programs, many of them provide individualized support measures to help novice teachers succeed in dealing with difficulties that they may face in the early years of their professional career.

Mentoring seems to be the most common support form among these measures. It is generally defined as ‘an experienced teacher with a significant period of service is appointed

to take responsibility for newly qualified teachers' in Eurydice (2013). Greece, Spain, Latvia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, and Slovenia are among the countries that support mentoring for new entrants both at primary and secondary levels (Europedia; Eurydice, 2013, p. 41). However, Denmark only provides this measure at secondary level, while Belgium offers it only at primary level of education.

Moreover, the French and Flemish communities in Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, and Lithuania lead the new entrants to several activities according to the needs of the new teacher. The activities that the beginning teacher is to participate in is decided at school level. Picking up to that, a number of member states (e.g. Estonia, Ireland, France, Cyprus, Italy, Romania, and Hungary) prefer to train their novice teachers on-the-job, namely instructing and practicing at the school of the candidate teacher.

## **7. Discussion**

Overall, it is clear that most of the EU countries concentrate on improving the quality of their teachers and prospective teachers through some legal regulations and particular strategies in line with their governmental policies. Correspondingly, they have begun to focus on specific aspects of their teacher training process such as initial education of teachers, induction programs and its efficiency, and other types of support measures provided to new entrants (Rotherham, 2011).

Turkey employs a concurrent model in teacher education for years. A majority of European countries carry out consecutive model in initial teacher training. In consecutive model, as mentioned above, the professional component of the program is delivered after completion of the general component (Musset, 2010; Yusuf, 2010). Indeed, during the restructuring attempts in higher education, the consecutive model has become valid since 1997 reforms in Secondary Mathematics and Science Education Departments only (Kavak & Atanur Baskan, 2009). The graduates, faculty staff, and the views' of the relevant parties of the consecutive model should be assessed and then analyzed in terms of its advantages and disadvantages (Creeemers, 2005).

Turkey also provides a compulsory induction program to the new entrants at national level for one year (MEB 1995, item no 16). However, specific or extra support measures are not provided within the current system yet. Therefore, some strategies carried out abroad successfully can be adapted to Turkish induction phase (Burgaz & Büyükgöze, 2015). For example, in New Zealand, teacher centers serving at regional level gather new teachers to workshops once or twice so as to meet with new ones and orient themselves, voice their views on problematic issues, and receive valuable advice from experienced experts. In the same sense, as in Japan, teachers may be requested to prepare and perform "the best possible lesson" to their class while being assessed by their colleagues (Padilla, Riley, & Bryan, 1999). In this way, beginning teachers may receive valuable critics on their teaching from their experienced colleagues, and learn to control their excitement. Therefore, it can be recommended that the types and quantity of the activities presented to novice teachers should be increased and developed in relation to the needs of the teachers and the schools in Turkey at all levels of education.

## 8. Conclusion

The empirical research findings on education shows that education may enable an increase in the quality of education in general, and in student achievement in a more narrow sense, and teacher quality, productivity and the strategies, methods and techniques applied may make a difference in maintaining the sustainability of the high performance. A broad body of research point out that the inequalities in teacher quality may generate significant and permanent differences on student performance.

It appears that the primary factor and the focal point in designing an educational environment to be effective on students' academic development and achievement, is teachers and teacher quality (Kavak et al., 2009, p. 367). Therefore, to obtain data-based-on-empirical-research has been gaining importance in order to determine the teacher qualification from which the differences among students regarding their academic performance originates, and to decide on the strategies, methods, and techniques to enable teachers gain these particular qualifications. However, the improvement of the quality of the current teachers in the system and the prospective teachers in the education faculties cannot be a short-term policy and come up with intended results easily (Lewin, 2004). A focused coordination and collaboration among relevant parties are needed to succeed in the process. What is more, support measures to be taken so as to improve teacher quality should be accompanied with the measures to improve school conditions, curriculums, technological equipment, physical infrastructure, and the quantity of the support staff serving in schools. Such an extensive project would also cultivate the process of evidence based educational policy making.

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<http://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/106/117>

## THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' GENDER DIFFERENCES ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Doğa OKTAN

Dr. Fazıl Küçük Faculty of Education, European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus  
[doktan@eul.edu.tr](mailto:doktan@eul.edu.tr)

Çağda KIVANÇ ÇAĞANAĞA

Dr. Fazıl Küçük Faculty of Education, European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus  
[ckivanc@eul.edu.tr](mailto:ckivanc@eul.edu.tr)

Biodata(s):

**Doğa Oktan** graduated from the Near East University in 2010 from the Departments of English Literature and Public Relations. She worked in International Deulcom Center. She studied in Wolverhampton University on public relations and media. In 2014 she started to work in European University of Lefke. She is currently doing her MA on English Language Teaching. Her interests are adult education and crisis management.

**Çağda Kıvanç Çağanağa** worked as a lecturer in European University of Lefke (EUL) between 1997-2005. Since 2005, she has taught in the department of English Language Teaching in the same University. She has two master degrees; one on ELT and one on International Relations. She finished her Phd in the faculty of education at Girne American University. She had various administrative duties in EUL. She has publications on ESP, teacher training, and classroom management.

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## THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' GENDER DIFFERENCES ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Doğa OKTAN  
[doktan@eul.edu.tr](mailto:doktan@eul.edu.tr)

Çağda KIVANÇ ÇAĞANAĞA  
[ckivanc@eul.edu.tr](mailto:ckivanc@eul.edu.tr)

### Abstract

Teachers perceive classroom management as one of the most crucial and enduring aspects in education. This study aims to explore impacts of female and male teachers on classroom management at European University of Lefke. The study also intends to investigate the differences between the classroom management strategies of an experienced female EFL teacher and an experienced male EFL teacher. Qualitative method was used for data collection and data analysis. Reflected reports were required from a male and a female teacher. Also, semi-structured interviews were conducted to the same male and female teachers. Results indicate that there is no significant difference on the classroom management according to the genders of the teachers.

*Key words:* Gender, classroom management, male teachers, female teachers

### 1.Introduction

Gender is the matter of characteristics referring to, and differentiating between masculinity and femininity. According to the context, these characteristics can involve biological sex, sex-based social structures or gender identity. It is stated that "Gender is determined socially; it is the societal meaning assigned to male and female. Each society emphasizes particular roles that each sex should play, although there is wide latitude in acceptable behaviours for each gender" (H. Biber, S. and Carger, G. L., 2000).

This is why, the gender roles of teachers may also influence their way of education including their roles in society. The impact of gender is very obvious, especially in developing countries. Allana, A., Asad N. and Sherali, Y. (2010) explained this as "In the developing world's context such as Pakistan where women are marginalized, gender concerns are very relevant and extremely significant. Social norms, believes, values, behaviours, mindsets, policies, processes etc. all disclose gross discrimination against women". However, recently, there are some efforts in order to decrease this inequality especially for the education system. As teacher's role is very important for students, they try to stop this discrimination between male and female teachers in the society. UNESCO (2009) stated that "Teachers and educators influence the gender roles of their students thus impacting their educational outcomes. When considering Education for All (EFA) goal 5, which aimed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and now aims to achieve gender equality by 2015, it should be realized that teachers are a critical force for meeting the goal". As we can see, there is a great improvement in developed countries. However, unfortunately, this situation is not the same in developing countries, as it was mentioned before.

Therefore, this study aims to research the impact of teachers' gender on classroom management. Classroom management is the first and basic step of the training management.

Class is a place where students and teachers can be face to face. Behaviours of the students can change according to this classroom environment. Therefore, all the primary sources of the education such as student, teacher, programs and sources are in the classroom. Consequently, the quality of training education is largely depended on the quality of the classroom management. Classroom management is a challenge that many teachers regularly face. Hence, teachers must be ready to respond the demanding requirement of whether they are perfectly able to address classroom training. As classroom management is one of the most crucial areas in education, many experienced researchers have examined the classroom management. However, many research studies show that there are various aspects of classroom management. According to many researchers such as Weinstein and MacNaughton, organization, physical arrangement, behavioural considerations, instructional strategies and social climate are the main classroom management procedures.

### **1.1. Important Classroom Management Procedures**

As it is mentioned before, organization is one of the most crucial parts of classroom management. Classroom organization focuses on the materials and activities for an effective teaching. Effective teachers must be able to organize a safe classroom environment for their students. They strategically provide directions for clear strategies, clear assignments, clearly posted assignments, indicated homework assignments written on the board, pre-prepared materials, efficiently distributed materials, plan for interruptions and unexpected events, and well planned time.

In addition, students spend much of their time in classrooms. Rooms that increase students' motivation make students' happier to be there. Therefore, for an effective classroom management, only walls and books are not enough. Teacher must be able to present an inviting environment that provides a positive interaction. Generally, physical arrangement is related with the temperature of the classroom, comfortable lighting, students' physically comfortable atmosphere, interest of classroom, use of bulletin board and wall space, visible presentation of instruction, placement of desks and furniture, minimum distractions, being free from high traffic areas, to be able to access frequently used materials in the classroom (Quinn et al., 2000; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995).

Behavioural issues are another important part of teaching. In a classroom there can be many types of students such as disruptive students, students without books or homework, without pencil, without notebook, students who need to make up work or even students with special need etc. Managing all these behavioural issues is related with classroom management. For this reason, teacher must think about routines, procedures, interactions and the discipline in the classroom. Also, according to Kyle, P (2004) "the more teachers share with students the discipline strategies and their purpose and rationale, the more effectively the students will learn responsible behaviours". That is why, all the behaviours are related to classroom management. To sum up, behaviours of both teachers and students are part of the classroom management. As another important aspect of classroom management, instructional strategies are the methods teachers use during their teaching process. Instructional strategies help to activate students' curiosity and engage students' learning. Through instructional strategies teachers enable learning effectively, increase motivation and help successful classroom management.

Building a fruitful social climate is also one of the most critical classroom management strategies. Teachers need to be good at it if they wish to build a classroom with a highly valued learning capacity. If teacher's social climate is to be successful, that environment has to be positive and vibrant. Successful learning can not show up in a negative social climate in a classroom.

## **1.2. The Impact of Teachers' Gender on Classroom Management**

Even though several studies have been carried out in order to investigate the link between teachers' sexual category and classroom management, there are only few studies about the impact of teachers' gender on classroom management. For this reason, it remains ambiguous that in which ways classroom management methods of female teachers are stronger, and in which ones male teachers are superior. As a result, contrasting most studies, this study seeks the link between gender and classroom management methods of EFL teachers. In addition, as it was stated above, existing studies on the subject of the relationship between teachers' gender and classroom management are controversial: Some of the studies state that there isn't any link between teachers' gender and their classroom management methods, and some of them suppose that there is a relationship. For example, Robert V. Bullough Jr. (2015) claimed that there are some differences between male and female teachers on classroom management. However, similarities between two genders are more. Although this study focused on young learners, not to university students; it still gives some clues about this research question. The same study also shows that gender doesn't have an impact on classroom management because teaching is not about gender; it is more about teachers' motivation and the power of context. Similarly, Rahimi, M. Asadollahi, F. (2012) believe that gender doesn't have any relation to classroom management. In this study, Iranian female and male teachers were examined and it was found that there isn't any difference between male and female teachers. Even, these researchers went further and explained that their study has disapproved studies of Martin & Yin (1997) and Martin Yin (2003) about male teachers' behaviours which are supposed to be more controlled, authoritarian, rigid, impersonal, assertive and aggressive than female teachers. On the other hand, Nejati, Hassani and Sahrapour (2014) found out that female teachers are better at instructional strategies while males are better at student engagement. They explained their findings as "it was revealed males and females did not differ as far as classroom management was considered. However, they differed in terms of student engagement and instructional strategies; male teachers were better at student engagement, while female teachers were better at instructional strategies".

In conclusion, as it is mentioned above, there isn't much study on this topic. This is why, this study aimed to answer the subsequent issue: Is there an important relationship between gender and classroom management of Cypriot EFL teachers at the European University of Lefke?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Context and Participants**

This study aimed to find out experienced male and female teachers' use of classroom management strategies for the EFL classes. By using qualitative research, the study intended to answer the question; "what are the differences between experienced male and female teachers classroom management strategies and truths in this field?". As it is mentioned before, qualitative research is preferred for this study. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) described that "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self".

To elaborate, this study focused on how two experienced male and female teachers are reflected their classroom management strategies to the EFL classrooms in relation to organization, physical arrangement, behavioural considerations, instructional strategies and social climate in classrooms. The participants Jane and John were chosen for a purpose. Both

of the teachers are experienced and working as English instructors at Preparatory School of European University of Lefke. The two teachers, Jane and John, are described as effective and experienced both by their students and colleagues.

### **2.1. Jane's Personal Information**

Jane, a 26 year-old married, was born into a traditional Turkish Cypriot family. When she was born in London and grew up in London as a native English speaker. When she was 17 Years old, she moved back to Cyprus and studied English teaching at European University of Lefke. She has directly started to work at the same university as an English Instructor at Preparatory School. Now, it has been nearly 6 years that she is working at the same university as an English Language Instructor. She holds a BA and a MA Diploma from the field English Language Teaching

### **2.2. John's Personal Information**

John was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 1977 from a Turkish Cypriot mother and a Turkish Cypriot father, born and bred in North Cyprus. He is married and has a daughter and a son. He was graduated from the University of Lefke in 1998 from the department of English Language Teaching, and he has been working for the same University since 2004. He has mainly taught English as a Specific Purpose (ESP) and he has recently been teaching Academic English at EUL. He holds a BA and a MA Diploma from the field English Language Teaching, and currently his PHD studies are in progress.

### **2.3. Data Collection Methods**

Because of teachers' work, school and personal schedules, data was collected within 5 hours teaching period in the spring semester of Preparatory School of European University of Lefke. For both participants, it was the end of their second semesters. Jane normally has 5 hours teaching everyday while John has 6 hours.

Reflective reports were used in this study. It was quite important because "reflective writing provides an opportunity for you to gain further insights from your work through deeper reflection on your experiences, and through further consideration of other perspectives from people and theory. Through reflection we can we can deepen the learning from work" (Watton, P., Collings, J., and Moon, J., 2001). For this reason, the participants were also asked to keep diaries and write a reflective report during this 5 hours teaching period. These diaries should be about their use of classroom management strategies during their 5 hours teaching period. After the completion of these diaries, they wrote reflective reports about their reflections in this field.

In addition, interviews were included in this study. Interviews were used as a secondary data collection method after the reflective reports. It is because of triangulation. Researchers need to use multiple research method techniques in order to increase the validity of that study. That is why semi-structured interviews were used which described as "a kind of interview collects detailed information in a style that is somewhat conversational. Semi-structured interviews are often used when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided" (Harrell, M. C. and Bradley, M. A. , 2009) . One interview was conducted with each participant. Semi-structured interview questions were asked to each participant. Many sub-questions were also asked according to participants' responses. Therefore, multiple qualitative methods were used in order to get richer data about participants' true beliefs and experiences on classroom management strategies.

## **2.4. Data Analysis**

Data analysis section of this study has determined teachers' perspectives about classroom management and their personal strategies while managing their EFL classrooms. This part was constructed in relation to the classroom management checklist guiding this study. This checklist refers to the "procedures, actions and strategies teachers use to establish in the classroom" (Burden, 1995). In the checklist, there are 5 crucial aspects. These are organization, physical arrangement, behavioural considerations, instructional strategies and social climate. In this study, all the data analysis was done according to these criteria on the checklist.

Reflective report shows that Jane has both intuitive knowledge and theoretical about the importance of classroom management. In few ways Jane and John have some differences in their classroom management strategies. However, it seems that there isn't a very big difference between two genders according to the results of the reflective reports. Important aspects of classroom management analyzed under separate headings in order to analyze them according to the checklist provided in the appendix.

## **3. Findings and Discussion**

Findings and discussion section is presented according to the aspects of the classroom management as it is mentioned before. Therefore, Jane's and John's classroom management strategies and the impact of their role of gender on classroom management are examined and analyzed below. These findings are the result of both reflective writings and interviews.

### **3.1. Organization**

Being organized is one of the most important aspects of being a successful teacher. Teacher needs to use a wide variety of materials during a teaching process. According to classroom management checklist used in this study, concept of organization is highly related to the directions of activities and assignments, effective use of board for the homework assignments, use of materials in the classroom, to be planned for interruptions and unexpected events and using time in an organized way. However, reflective reports show that both of the teachers don't mention anything about organizational aspects of classroom management neither in the reflective reports nor in the interviews.

### **3.2. Physical Arrangement**

A safe, comfortable, attractive classroom can increase the effectiveness of learning in a classroom and can help to build a communicative atmosphere between teacher and students. For many teachers, physical arrangement of classrooms can be very discouraging because of aged buildings, busy classrooms or school rules. However, it seems that despite all the barriers, John attaches importance to physical arrangement. In his reflective report, he mentioned that he loves using horse shape (U shape) as a sitting arrangement. He claimed that position of a teacher is very important both for watching students and establishing eye contact with them. By this way, he can see the students and students can see him. He also changed lightening according to the atmosphere and activities which is again related to physical arrangement. John mentions his love for U shape during the interview as well. He emphasized that eye-contact and being communicative are very important to him.

On the other hand, Jane seems to pay less attention to physical arrangement. It is because she doesn't mention anything about physical arrangement such as lightening, comfort or other aspects of physical arrangement.

### 3.3. Behavioural Considerations

Behavioural considerations such as being visible all the time by the students, applying rules in the classroom, getting acceptable behaviours, using reinforcement to the students etc. are crucial aspects which are needed to be done for a successful classroom management. It seems that both teachers, Jane and John, are really good at behavioural considerations. For example, Jane often used positive reinforcement by standing the students up and walking around the class. She told them to stand up and ask questions to each other. She said that all of the students were very negative at the beginning but after her positive reinforcement they were quite positive again. She also used games in order to reduce their stress just before the final exams. She gave them chocolates and provided reinforcement to make them focus on the lesson. She also claimed that she let the students to speak and explain their problems. She explained that specific moment as “I stopped and listen to them for the first time. I left them speak. This really helped them; they felt as if someone was by their side”. It means that listening to students’ problems is a kind of classroom management strategy for Jane. She did this for the reinforcement. After that, they studied hard and became more motivated. She supported her ideas about positive reinforcement in the interview. She said that although she is not a mother yet, she feels like a mother when students have problems. She wants to listen to their problems and find solutions.

Correspondingly, John cares about behavioural considerations as well. He used positive reinforcement as well but in a little bit different way. He explained his strategy like this; “I cared a lot to provide positive enforcements, like rewards when my students demonstrated appropriate behaviour”. Besides, he provided “peer praise” during his lessons; he lets other students to applause for a successful student. In addition, John emphasized that being visible by all the students was also very important for him. By this way, he could establish eye contact and was able to monitor their behaviours. Also, he paid attention to give praise to his students by calling their names and saying “Ayşe that is a perfect answer” when they gave right answers to his questions. John also mentioned that he likes correcting his students with a positive language. In addition, John cared about the rules of the classroom by reminding them that they can’t enter the class if they come 30 minutes late after lesson starts. Therefore, positive reinforcement, visibility and applying rules are the three important considerations for John while Jane focuses more only on positive reinforcement. During his interview, John mentioned many times that being visible by the students is very necessary for him. He said that he feels more authoritarian. He believes that it is the biggest difference between male and female teachers.

### 3.4. Instructional Strategies

Through these reflective reports, we can see that both Jane and John really like using whole group, small group and independent work. It means that, they prefer students to be active, responsible and risk takers. For example, Jane asked her students to do activity all together rather than doing individually. She said that “the aim was to get students to communicate among one another”. She also used communicative group works and pair works in order to make them speak in English all the time. Accordingly, John used pair work on his 5<sup>th</sup> day. He said that his aim was to provide peer correction and peer learning. Unlike Jane, it seems that John used “U shape” sitting arrangement more for making them to communicate each other. But he still used pair work in some situations. In addition, Jane used strategies that capture and maintain students’ interest. For example, John asked students to stand up and speak to each other. She believes that it helped students to focus on the specific activity. On the other hand, John claimed that he employed effective feedback with positive effect and it helped to get the desired behaviour. Jane very often gave feedback during these five days

teaching process. However, Jane didn't mention anything about giving feedback to the students. Both of the participants didn't mention anything related to their instructional strategies during their interviews.

### **3.5. Social Climate**

Creating a fruitful social climate with a supportive environment is one of the most critical classroom management strategies. It includes teacher's positive and friendly attitude, listening to students' problems and needs, inviting students to be risk-takers, providing opportunities for success to students, creating effective communication skills, providing safe and non-threatening environment etc. According to reflective report results, Jane met most of these needs about classroom management. She invited her students to be risk-takers by forcing them to speak in English all the time. She also portrayed friendly and positive attitude by stopping and listening to them. It means that she also listened to what students have and need to say. In addition, she forced them to speak for effective communication skills. John did the same thing by providing students opportunity to success. He applied group works and pair works with a positive teaching atmosphere and somehow gave them opportunity and responsibility to survive and to be successful. Besides, he portrayed safe and non-threatening environment by turning some of the lights off and creating a safe atmosphere for the activity. Both of the teachers said the similar sentences about social climate during their interviews.

### **4. Conclusion**

The goal of the present paper was examining the impact of teachers' gender on classroom management among Cypriot EFL teachers. The findings demonstrated that gender was not very related to classroom management strategies of the teachers. It means that although Cyprus isn't a developed country, it doesn't have gender discrimination in this field as well. Therefore, this result approves what most of the literature have claimed about the similarity between male and female teachers' classroom management. On the other hand, John's saying about being more authoritarian during his interview somehow approves few studies that males are more controlling and authoritarian in developing country (Martin, N. & Yin, Z, 2003). However, it is not possible to prove that as there aren't any other supportive proofs. For example, we don't have proves that show Jane's more passive in any field. Also, there is nothing written in both reflective reports. In conclusion, it is possible to say that as many studies mentioned before, there aren't any very big differences between male and female teachers on classroom management. Both of the interviewers also explained that may be it is more about the personality of the teacher not the gender.

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## **GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SELF-ESTIMATES OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AMONG LEARNERS OF ENGLISH**

Abbas Zare-ee

Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages & Literature, University of Kashan  
Islamic Republic of Iran

Zuraidah Mohd Don

Department of English Language, Faculty of language and Linguistics, University of Malaya  
Malaysia

Gerry Knowles

University of Lancaster  
United Kingdom

Iman Tohidian

Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages & Literature, University of Kashan  
Islamic Republic of Iran

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Abbas Zare-ee

[zare-ee72@kashanu.ac.ir](mailto:zare-ee72@kashanu.ac.ir)

Zuraidah Mohd Don

[zuraida@um.edu.my](mailto:zuraida@um.edu.my)

Gerry Knowles

[g.knowles@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:g.knowles@lancaster.ac.uk)

Iman Tohidian

[tohid\\_483@yahoo.com](mailto:tohid_483@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

According to Howard Gardner, human intellectual ability cannot be measured by a unitary concept of general intelligence, and the performance of cognitive tasks draws on different types of intelligence, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, natural, and existential. Despite the lack of adequate empirical support and recent doubts raised about its validity, this view of multiple intelligences has been extensively employed for the characterization of learners and the development of tasks for language teaching and learning. Whereas gender differences in the learning and use of language have been extensively researched, context-specific information on gender differences in different domains of multiple intelligences has not been seriously examined. The survey reported here is based on the hypothesis that multiple intelligences vary not only at the individual level, but also in the case of gender at a cultural level, and uses McKenzie's *Multiple Intelligences Survey* to explore possible gender differences in Gardner's intelligences. Questionnaire data relating to each of the nine intelligences was elicited from 300 undergraduate volunteers studying English at the University of Kashan in central Iran. The questionnaire included 90 statements and 10 items on each intelligence, and was used to identify the intelligence profile of the participants according to their own self-estimates. The scores for each intelligence type were calculated, analyzed and compared across genders. The results of the study showed that in contrast to the trend observed in previous research, female learners tended to rate themselves higher on most intelligences and their means were significantly higher than those of male learners in the areas of naturalistic and existential intelligences. The findings have both theoretical and practical implications not only for the reconsideration of previous claims that males rate themselves more highly with regard to intelligences, but also for the MI theory itself.

*Key words:* Multiple Intelligences, Learning Styles, Howard Gardner, Individual Differences.

## 1. Introduction

Howard Gardner is well known for his theory of multiple intelligences (MI), first put forward in 1983, which claims that human intelligence is not a unitary concept, and that there are at least seven distinct intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. Later versions of the model (Gardner, 1999) add two more, namely naturalistic intelligence and existential intelligence. More recently, Gardner (2004:217) also includes the “mental searchlight intelligence” that allows individuals “to scan wide spaces in an efficient way thus permitting them to run society smoothly” and the “laser intelligence” that permits them to generate “the advances (as well as the catastrophes) of society”.

These different types of intelligence have been widely used in the last three decades for the development of new teaching materials, a range of practical classroom techniques, and the investigation of their use and value. It is evident from the number of journals, books, websites, and workshops relating to multiple intelligences that there has been a dramatic increase in attempts to use the MI model in education. According to Waterhouse (2006:207), MI educational websites accessed by Google increased tenfold from 25,200 to 258,000 between June and December 2005, while online MI workshops increased from 10,600 to 48,300. This marks a significant revival of interest after a period in which the value of intelligence as an indicator of individual differences was downgraded in educational circles, and its very existence was called into question (Schiff and Lewontin, 1986).

Research and practice concerning the educational relevance of intelligence ranges from aversion and total banishment at one extreme to enthusiastic interest and support on the other (see Akbari, Hosseini, 2008). However, the existence of differences in human intellectual abilities is a reality that merits attention, exploration, and validation through adequate context-specific research. “As an abstract noun to denote the state of being intelligent, intelligence is real enough, in much the same way as success and productivity and happiness are real” (Howe, 1997:36). On the other hand, there is little actual empirical evidence to justify the recent attention paid to multiple intelligences in education. Reviewing the evidence, Waterhouse (2006) concludes that that “MI theory has no validating data” (p. 207), and goes on to attribute the success of MI-based education to issues such as novelty, teachers’ and students’ interest, enthusiasm, and motivation, and recommends that “MI theory should not be taught without consideration of the absence of empirical validating evidence for MI theory or without consideration of alternate evidence-based models of human cognition” (pp 213-214).

One of the major areas in which sufficient evidence is manifestly lacking is language ability. Oller (1978) explains the close identity connection between language proficiency and intelligence with statistical evidence for close relationships between performance on intelligence tests and measures of language proficiency, with striking similarities between IQ tests and language proficiency tests, and with neurolinguistic evidence showing overlaps among brain areas responsible for language and performance on IQ tests. After about two decades, he still stresses the ideas that most of the advocates of the innate view of intelligence ignore the role of language in IQ measurements, incorrectly interpreting language proficiency as an inborn problem-solving ability or as intelligence (Oller, 1997). Gardner (1999) claims his intelligence domains are relatively independent, and warns that the tendency to measure non-verbal abilities with verbal measures leads to artificially high correlations among the ability domains. However, this claim is still controversial.

According to Oller (1997), verbal measures of intelligence – including measures of verbal/linguistic and interpersonal intelligences, as well as all the pictorial or non-verbal measures – rely, in a sense, on linguistic performance. According to the findings of applied linguistics research carried out over the last few decades, males and females differ in the learning and use of language. Now if these claims are both true, it is possible to predict differences between males and females in the case of multiple intelligences. All human beings are said to possess all the intelligences, one or more of which can flourish in an individual depending on genetic as well as social conditions. What has not been shown is the possible contribution of gender to the distribution of intelligences, which could in turn contribute to individual differences in language learning.

Language learning researchers, language teachers, and language learners seem to have generally focused on tasks based on MI and how these tasks contribute to language learning. Arnold and Fonseca (2004) state that based on the theory of multiple intelligences "language learning, that is to say, developing learners' verbal linguistic intelligence in a foreign/second language, can be favored by using a variety of learning tasks which call upon diverse intelligences" (p. 126). They continue that in this approach, "the teacher offers a choice of tasks, not to teach to specific intelligences but to give learners the opportunity of apprehending information in their preferred way, as well as to promote the development of their other intelligences" (p. 126). However, as long as previous research has not definitely validated multiple intelligences and their (in)dependence, and as long as the role of intervening variables like gender has not been well explored in different cultures, one can expect to find and consider male-female differences in approaching MI-based learning at least in some domains of intelligence. With this background and in the hope of contributing to the literature on the use of multiple intelligences in language teaching and learning, the present study was designed to explore possible male-female differences in questionnaire-based self-reports of multiple intelligences.

**2.Literature review**

There are at least nine different types of intelligence in Gardner's recent models (1983, 1999): linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, natural, and existential. Even though all individuals possess all intelligences, they possess different degrees of strength in each case. Gardner (1993) stresses different manifestations of intelligence in different individuals and sees no single type of intelligence as being intrinsically superior to the others. Table 1 below summarizes these intelligences with short descriptions along with examples of the people who are claimed would possess them at higher levels than others.

Table 1. *Gardner's nine intelligences and their short descriptions*

<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Persons</b>
Linguistic	Sensitivity to spoken and written language and the ability to use language, as well as the ability to learn new languages.	speakers, writers
Spatial	The ability to recognize both large and small visual patterns.	sculptors, chess players



Logical/Mathematical	The ability to study problems, to carry out mathematical operations logically and analytically, and to conduct scientific investigations	Mathematcians,logicians,
Interpersonal	Understanding the intentions, motivations, needs, and desires of others	teachers, clinicians, salespeople
Intrapersonal	The ability to understand and to have an effective working model of oneself, the awareness of one's own desires, fears, and abilities	high self-esteem people
Naturalistic	The ability to recognize and classify objects.	hunters, farmers, and gardeners
Bodily-Kinesthetic	The potential of using the whole body or parts of the body in problem-solving or the creation	dancers, actors, and athletes
Musical	Ability in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns.	Composers
Existential	To ponder the meaning of life	Different

The idea of multiple intelligences has been enthusiastically received in the ELT community in different parts of the world, and this includes Iran. The theory has inspired many different classroom techniques and language learning tasks which attempt to match students with different MI profiles (e.g. Vincent and Ross, 2001 and Smagorinsky, 1995). Research examining the application of MI theory in the teaching of English at university level in Iran has so far been less than critical, and has generally shown positive associations between the use of MI-based activities and different aspects of English language learning, and English language teachers have been encouraged to use MI ideas in teaching. Razmjoo et al. (2009) studied multiple intelligences in relation to vocabulary learning knowledge and vocabulary learning strategies among EFL Iranian learners in Shiraz, and found linguistic and natural intelligences to be predictors of vocabulary learning knowledge. In an earlier study of 278 male and female PhD candidates at Shiraz University, Razmjoo (2008) had found no significant relationship between language proficiency and the combination of intelligences in general and the types of intelligence in particular, and no significant MI differences between male and female students. Yeganehfar (2005) investigated the relationship between language proficiency and multiple intelligences using IELTS scores and the Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scale (MIDAS) and found that overall language proficiency correlated significantly with interpersonal intelligence, while writing ability correlated significantly with linguistic and spatial intelligences. Akbari and Hosseini (2008:82) reported significant relationships between some intelligence types and general proficiency and the use of learning strategies, and noted that “the more intelligent language learners use the language learning strategies more efficiently”. In this study, natural, linguistic and interpersonal intelligences were positive predictors of language learning strategy use, and kinesthetic intelligence was a negative predictor. In another similar study, verbal/linguistic intelligence emerged (perhaps unsurprisingly) as a positive predictor of language proficiency (Marefat, 2007).

Even though the intervening variable of gender has not been considered in any of the above studies, international research has shown that there are indeed differences at least in how male and female learners estimate their global intelligence and their multiple intelligences. In the case of general intelligence, most studies report that, due to psychometric properties of instruments or gender stereotypes or other unexplored factors, males estimate their intelligence higher than females (Bennett, 1996; Hogan, 1978; Zang & Gong, 2001). Studies of people in China (Zhang & Gong, 2001), Germany (Rammstedt & Rammsayer, 2002), and Scotland (Bennett, 2000) also confirm this. In the case of multiple intelligences, results are too few and too varied to make generalizations possible. For example, Scottish males rated their logical, mathematical, and spatial intelligence higher, while females saw their musical and interpersonal intelligence stronger (Bennett, 2000). Furnham et al. (1999) reported gender differences only in logical/mathematical and spatial intelligences, for which males received higher scores. Sex differences in mathematical/numerical and spatial intelligence has also been confirmed in the work of Furnham, Shahidi, & Baluch, (2002) involving Iranian and British participants. Hogan (1978) reviewed 11 studies of gender differences and intelligence, and found significant differences in self-estimates of IQ levels between males and females in most cases. Hogan argued that women tend to be perceived as less intelligent than men because society possibly denies them intellectual equality.

If MI theory is to be used appropriately in teaching and learning, it is essential to have context specific information, and to know to what extent the different intelligences are valid. More importantly, if learners' self-estimates of their own multiple intelligences are to be used as the basis of language teachers' beliefs and assumptions about the potential performance of their students, and about the nature of the tasks that may suit them, it must be borne in mind that these self estimates can be affected by variables such as gender. Holling and Preckel (2005) argue that social comparisons in giving an estimate, experience with and feedback on the tasks applied to assess the estimated ability, and gender differences moderate relationships between estimated and tested intelligences (p. 504). Stressing the lack of any differences in psychometrically assessed intellectual abilities between males and females, Holling and Preckel point out that "most studies on self-estimated abilities reveal significant gender differences" (p. 506). Consequently, more data on gender differences in estimated multiple intelligences from different socio-cultural backgrounds can help teachers clearly contextualize their approach in the use of MI-based activities. Moreover, cross-cultural comparisons can help scholars evaluate the theory of multiple intelligences itself more effectively. The present study was carried out to explore possible gender differences among Iranian university learners of English as a foreign language in terms of perceived multiple intelligences.

### **3.Method**

Much of the published MI research in language learning and teaching focuses on the applications and benefits of MI-based learning activities, and seeks to show how the idea of multiple intelligences can be put into practice or how its application can affect the outcomes of language learning and teaching. This work, by contrast, uses a questionnaire in conjunction with a cross-sectional survey of Gardner's multiple intelligences among Iranian undergraduate learners of English to explore gender differences in intelligences as reflected in learners' responses to an MI inventory.

### 3.1.Participants

The sample used for this study consisted of 300 volunteers who together made up about 80% of the population of Iranian undergraduate students studying English at the University of Kashan in central Iran. English language learners were chosen in view of the current proliferation of research and teaching activities recommending the application of MI theory in the teaching of English as a second, foreign, or international language. The participants were homogenous in terms of nationality (all Iranians), mother tongue (Persian), and place and course of study. They differed in gender (46.7% male, n=140; and 53.3% female, n=160), age (19 to 24), year of study (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior), and in their level of proficiency in English. They participated in the study on a voluntary basis, which reflects their admirable interest in responding to the questionnaire and finding about their own profiles. The greater number of female participants reflects the balance of male and female learners in the study programme. The participants individually filled out hard copies of the research questionnaire in break times between classes, or in student residential complexes when classes were over. Participants who wished were given details of their MI profiles.

### 3.2.Data collection

To collect data for the study, Mckenzie's (1999) MI Inventory was downloaded and used for the calculation of each learner's scores on each of the intelligences. According to the developer, the inventory provides a snapshot in time of the intelligence profile of the respondents. The questionnaire includes 90 statements, 10 on each of Gardner's nine intelligences. The Cronbach alpha reliability scores for the questionnaire and its nine sections are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Cronbach's Alpha reliability for McKenzie's questionnaire and its sections*

MI Component	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Naturalistic Intelligence	.613	1-10
Musical Intelligence	.401	11-20
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	.512	21-30
Existential Intelligence	.713	31-40
Interpersonal Intelligence	.651	41-50
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	.744	51-60
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	.620	61-70
Interapersonal Intelligence	.759	71-80
Visual Intelligence	.768	81-90
All nine intelligences	.890	All 1-90

The reliability index for the whole questionnaire was 0.89 and all components also showed high indexes. The lowest index, 0.4, was related to musical intelligence. Other researchers using this instrument have also reported overall internal consistency in the range of 0.85 and 0.90 for the questionnaire (Al-Balhan, 2006; Razmjoo, 2008; Razmjoo et al., 2009). The questionnaire is not a test of multiple intelligences, but a cross-sectional indication of how respondents perceive their own intelligences. Even though doubts can always be raised about how accurately learners can estimate their intelligences through such questionnaires, criterion-referenced validity checks of self-estimates of multiple intelligences has mostly shown weak to moderate correlations

between self-estimated and tested intelligence (Mabe and West, 1982; Holling and Preckel, 2005).

### 3.3.Procedures

All students in the undergraduate English language programme at the University of Kashan were notified through emails, notices, and class announcements that they could learn about their own multiple intelligences by taking the questionnaire. Even though the survey is freeware and can be taken online, the researchers preferred to collect the data in printed form and make manual calculations for the sake of control and accuracy. The online version requires respondents to assign themselves one mark only on each of the 90 statements that definitely describes them and add up the marks on the 10 items and multiply by 10 to get a final score on each of the nine intelligences. However, since initial pilot testing showed that it was difficult for the participants to rule out some statements totally and assign scores only to some statements in a black or white fashion, they were asked to rate the relevance and truth of each item to themselves on a five-point scale, from 1 'this is not true about me at all' to 5 'this is certainly true about me'. The collected data were stored in SPSS format, and the scores for each participant on each of the nine intelligences were calculated for later analysis.

### 4.Results

To describe the participants' performance on the MI inventory, first the means and standard deviations on all the nine intelligences were calculated. As Table 3 shows, intrapersonal intelligence and bodily/kinesthetic intelligence received the highest means whereas the lowest means related to verbal/linguistic intelligence and musical intelligence for the whole population.

Table 3. *Total mean scores on sections of McKenzie's questionnaire (n=300)*

<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Intrapersonal Intelligence	41.55	4.764
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	40.82	5.241
Existential Intelligence	40.28	5.081
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	39.22	5.797
Visual Intelligence	38.59	5.659
Naturalistic Intelligence	37.29	4.848
Interpersonal Intelligence	36.44	5.092
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	36.41	5.150
Musical Intelligence	28.55	5.609

This finding indicates a general lower estimate of sensitivity to spoken and written language and a lower perceived ability in using and learning new languages. The ability to perform, compose, and appreciate musical patterns received the lowest mean (28.55) for the whole group. The analyses also revealed that musical intelligence was the only domain that did not correlate with others. As Table 4 shows, except for musical intelligence, all relationships between the intelligences were positive and significant at the 0.01 level and were weak to moderate. The strongest correlations were observed between bodily/kinesthetic, visual and intrapersonal intelligences.

Table 4. *Correlations between nine intelligences (n=300)*

Intelligence	Naturalistic	Musical	Mathematical	Existential	Interpersonal	Bodily-Kinesthetic	Verbal	Interpersonal	Visual
Naturalistic	1	.218**	.282**	.429**	.250**	.347**	.236**	.277**	.309**
Musical	.218*	1	-.006	.139**	.035	.195**	.042	.032	.158**
Logical/Mathematical	.282*	-.006	1	.253**	.192**	.239**	.245**	.275**	.260**
Existential	.429*	.139**	.253**	1	.460**	.343**	.342**	.431**	.395**
Interpersonal	.250*	.035	.192**	.460**	1	.305**	.433**	.500**	.394**
Bodily-Kinesthetic	.347*	.195**	.239**	.343**	.305**	1	.391**	.567**	.523**
Verbal/Linguistic	.236*	.042	.245**	.342**	.433**	.391**	1	.410**	.525**
Interpersonal	.277*	.032	.275**	.431**	.500**	.567**	.410**	1	.497**
Visual	.309*	.158**	.260**	.395**	.394**	.523**	.525**	.497**	1

The main research question was whether there was a difference between the mean scores of male and female participants on each of the nine intelligences. Table 5 summarizes the mean and standard deviations of the scores for each group. Female students obtained a slightly higher mean on eight of the nine intelligences. The only domain in which there was a slight difference in favour of male participants was interpersonal intelligence ( $F=36.27$ ,  $M=36.64$ ), which later analyses showed not to be significant anyway.

Table 5. *Gender differences in mean scores on nine intelligence (M=140, F=160)*

Type of Intelligence	sex	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Naturalistic Intelligence	male	36.44	4.744	.401
	female	38.04	4.829	.382
Musical Intelligence	male	28.04	5.893	.498
	female	28.99	5.327	.421
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	male	38.68	4.544	.384
	female	39.70	6.682	.528
Existential Intelligence	male	39.43	5.062	.428
	female	41.03	4.994	.395
Interpersonal Intelligence	male	<b>36.64</b>	4.968	.420
	female	<b>36.27</b>	5.209	.412

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	male	40.51	5.534	.468
	female	41.10	4.971	.393
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	male	36.24	5.272	.446
	female	36.57	5.053	.399
Interpersonal Intelligence	male	41.45	4.529	.383
	female	41.64	4.973	.393
Visual Intelligence	male	38.39	5.532	.468
	female	38.77	5.779	.457

The differences between male and female participants were very slight, and a Chi-square analysis of the frequencies of responses to the items relating to each intelligence indicated that with the exception of intrapersonal intelligence (Chi-square value=37.38, df=23, two-tailed sig=0.030), the differences were not significant. To test the hypothesis that male and female university learners of English would rate their intelligences differently, the means were compared using independent samples t-test, and the results are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Independent Samples t-test for mean differences on nine intelligences (M=140, F=160)

Type of Intelligence	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Naturalistic Intelligence	-2.890	298	<b>.004</b>	-1.602
Musical Intelligence	-1.458	298	.146	-.945
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	-1.526	298	.128	-1.021
Existential Intelligence	-2.745	298	<b>.006</b>	-1.596
Interpersonal Intelligence	.634	298	.526	.374
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	-.977	298	.329	-.593
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	-.558	298	.577	-.333
Interpersonal Intelligence	-.351	298	.726	-.194
Visual Intelligence	-.573	298	.567	-.376

The t-values were significant only for naturalistic and existential intelligences, indicating that in these two domains only the mean differences in favour of female learners were significant. In other words, female participants seemed to contemplate more on the meaning of life and to better recognize and classify objects in the natural environment.

## 5. Discussion

Judging by the analysis of the data collected for this study, undergraduate students of English rated themselves generally higher in intrapersonal and bodily/kinaesthetic intelligences, and lowest in verbal/linguistic intelligence and musical intelligence. These results may differ from those in other contexts where, for example, composing and listening to music of various forms is much more common than in the context of this study, and where approaches to the performance, composition, and appreciation of music are different.

Contrary to reports in most previous studies of gender differences in MI domains (Bennett, 1996; Hogan, 1978; Zang & Gong, 2001), the results of this study indicate that female students obtained a slightly higher mean score on eight of the nine intelligences (i.e. all except interpersonal intelligence). Furnham et.al. (1999) and Shahidi, & Baluch, (2002) reported gender differences only in the case of logical/mathematical and spatial intelligences where males received higher scores; whereas the present study suggest slightly higher naturalistic and

existential intelligences in girls. This finding also raises doubts about the justifications that men rate themselves higher and are rated higher on the more masculine intelligence domains such as bodily/kinesthetic.

From a scientific point of view, negative or inconclusive results that rule out logical possibilities are valuable, and make a positive contribution to the development of theory. Our exploration of possible male-female differences in questionnaire-based self-reports of multiple intelligences has yielded little, and in any case little agreement with previous work. The question to be asked is why this should be.

There are in fact several possibilities, including cultural factors. If males are expected to assess their own intelligences more highly than females, the finding that this is not the case is in itself interesting and important. It could indicate, for example, a growing confidence in females, and perhaps declining confidence among males. Another interesting finding is that language students do not claim any superiority in linguistic intelligence. Language students receive ample feedback on their level of proficiency, and a realistic awareness of how much they have yet to learn could make it difficult for them to claim a high level of linguistic intelligence.

It is also important to re-examine the notion of multiple intelligences itself. Gardner has argued persuasively against the notion of a unitary intelligence, but that does not mean that general intelligence is to be dismissed out of hand. One can question the validity of the tests originally designed by Alfred Binet (Gardner, 2006, p. 3) to predict academic performance, and one can point to the language bias in IQ tests developed subsequently; but academic systems across the globe rely in practice on the prediction of future performance. Binet's tests were adapted to select recruits for the US army in the First World War; and as Gardner himself (2006, p. 3) argues rather illogically, since the US won the war [sic], the intelligence testing must have been effective. In the study of human evolution, growth in brain size is taken as an indicator or increasing intelligence, and while it may be true that hominids must have had multiple intelligences, it would be bizarre and pompous to argue against an increase in general intelligence.

A close look at Gardner's linguistic intelligence shows that it also contains several components. He claims (2006, p. 7) that 'one core of linguistic intelligence is the sensitivity to the phonological features of a language'. This implies that there are other cores, and indeed six pages later (Gardner, 2006, p. 13), the literary and creative writing skills of T. S. Eliot are put forward as the exemplar of linguistic intelligence. Eliot is an unfortunate choice, as he was a protagonist in what Ricks (1963) described in his opening chapter as the 'Milton controversy'. John Milton had long been regarded as second only to Shakespeare in the English pantheon, but in the middle third of the last century, a group of poets and literary critics held the view that he was not such a good poet after all. Now phonological awareness surely has little if anything to do with the subjective rating of different poets. The point is that linguistic awareness is open to exactly the same kind of objections, albeit at a more detailed level, as those Gardner raised against the notion of unitary intelligence. We have to take account of multiple linguistic intelligences.

At this point we have to reconsider McKenzie's (1999) MI questionnaire. The questions included in section 7 are entirely appropriate given Gardner's description of linguistic intelligence, and ask about interest in foreign languages, in reading and writing, in public speaking, and in language games. And yet these questions do not necessarily have anything at all

to do with the special skills and motivations of language students. Young people who study English in the modern world may have employability in mind, rather than any particular interest or ability *per se* in English as a foreign language.

Gardner presents his theory of multiple intelligences as ‘an alternative vision’, ‘a radically different view of the mind’ (2006, p. 5). Perhaps general intelligence and multiple intelligences are concerned with human mental abilities at different degrees of delicacy. The literature of psychology contains a huge multidimensional array of precise measures of mental abilities, cognitive abilities and brain functions of every conceivable nature; but psychologists need to generalise sometimes, and general intelligence may be a good way of saying how clever people are. Educationists are very much aware of the differences among students, and of the fact that different students learn in different ways. The notion of multiple intelligences enables the researcher to zoom in on more precise sets of abilities, and for many educational purposes this is an appropriate level of delicacy. This is a possible explanation for the fact that Gardner’s ideas have found much more widespread acceptance in education than in psychology.

The researcher in language education has a problem. The term *linguistic intelligence* seems to promise a set of abilities at exactly the right degree of delicacy, but in fact it turns out to have as much to do with writing poetry as with learning languages. To investigate a set of abilities appropriate for language learners, we have zoom in to another level of delicacy, and deal with such familiar abilities as pronunciation, vocabulary learning, and the ability to extract meaning from syntactic constructions.

The conclusions to be drawn depend on the degree to which we accept the theory of multiple intelligences itself. If we accept the theory as put forward by Gardner, it is difficult to argue that male or female learners are expected to exhibit higher levels of intelligence in some of his intelligence domains (Gardner, 1993, 1999). We would argue that it is better to claim that male and female learners of English are merely *different* in their self-estimates. Differences in the way people are seen to be intelligent or see themselves to be intelligent can just mean they are different; it does not necessarily correlate with higher or lower intelligence scores, and there is no justification for generalizations claiming that boys (or girls) rate themselves or indeed score higher for different intelligences. Context differences, cultural differences, social settings and many other factors can affect the way clever people see themselves or are seen by other people. Gardner (1993) explains that "We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems that we face in the world" (p.12). We would suggest that the word *combinations* in Gardner's statement has been largely overlooked in attempts to match different learning activities to individual domains of intelligence, and in claims about male or female superiority in specific domains.

On the other hand, we may take a more critical view of the theory of multiple intelligences. The theory takes a necessary and useful step in zooming in on a set of abilities related to language. But there is no guarantee that this is a natural set, or even a set of abilities that can usefully be measured together. Nor is there any reason for confidence that the notion of linguistic intelligence is set at the appropriate level of delicacy. Perhaps researchers in language education need to zoom in further to a greater degree of delicacy. In short, our findings give little support to the notion of linguistic intelligence, or to the assumption that the theory makes any substantial addition to the understanding on the part of applied linguists of language-related abilities.

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**APPENDIX A: Items of Multiple Intelligences Survey ©1999 Walter McKenzie,  
retrieved from <http://surfaquarium.com/MI/inventory.htm>**

<b>Statements on Gardner's Intelligences</b>	<b>Mean(F)</b>	<b>Mean(M)</b>	<b>SD(F)</b>	<b>SD(M)</b>
I enjoy categorizing things by common traits	4.19	4.18	.787	.867
Ecological issues are important to me	3.41	3.11	1.183	1.132
Hiking and camping are enjoyable activities	4.08	3.74	.873	1.036
I enjoy working on a garden	3.99	3.83	1.003	1.045
I believe preserving our National Parks is important	4.51	4.49	.700	.694
Putting things in hierarchies makes sense to me	4.50	4.44	.785	.761
Animals are important in my life	3.37	3.49	1.108	1.103
My home has a recycling system in place	3.26	2.91	1.000	1.118
I enjoy studying biology, botany and/or zoology	3.36	3.14	1.281	1.183
I spend a great deal of time outdoors	3.38	3.12	1.233	1.232
I easily pick up on patterns	3.56	3.59	.874	.952
I focus in on noise and sounds	3.96	4.01	1.018	1.056
Moving to a beat is easy for me	3.08	2.87	1.040	1.156
I've always been interested in playing an instrument	4.37	4.46	.782	.714
The cadence of poetry intrigues me	4.38	4.39	.784	.819
I remember things by putting them in a rhyme	4.48	4.01	4.037	.971
Concentration is difficult while listening to a radio or television	3.78	3.54	1.201	1.288
I enjoy many kinds of music	4.53	4.37	.691	.790
Musicals are more interesting than dramatic plays	4.33	3.99	4.158	1.032
Remembering song lyrics is easy for me	3.96	3.83	.947	1.010
I keep my things neat and orderly	4.01	3.67	.883	1.166
Step-by-step directions are a big help	4.02	4.04	.865	.808
Solving problems comes easily to me	3.51	3.64	.932	.824
I get easily frustrated with disorganized people	3.87	3.71	1.088	1.165
I can complete calculations quickly in my head	3.26	3.51	1.042	1.049
Puzzles requiring reasoning are fun	4.05	3.92	.983	.849
I can't begin an assignment until all my questions are answered	3.74	3.41	1.130	1.138
Structure helps me be successful	4.88	4.48	4.071	.948
I find working on a computer spreadsheet or database rewarding	4.08	4.11	1.019	.980
Things have to make sense to me or I am dissatisfied	4.29	4.19	.894	.830
It is important to see my role in the "big picture" of things	4.37	4.39	.774	.756
I enjoy discussing questions about life	4.31	4.26	.876	.870
Religion is important to me	4.45	3.99	.767	1.258

I enjoy viewing art masterpieces	4.22	3.95	.909	.962
Relaxation and meditation exercises are rewarding	3.82	3.24	.951	1.065
I like visiting breathtaking sites in nature	4.44	4.09	.799	.948
I enjoy reading ancient and modern philosophers	3.66	3.76	1.081	1.124
Learning new things is easier when I understand their value	4.37	4.32	.766	.875
I wonder if there are other forms of intelligent life in the universe	3.68	3.62	1.091	1.028
Studying history and ancient culture helps give me perspective	3.71	3.81	1.042	.974
I learn best interacting with others	4.09	4.19	.961	.845
The more the merrier	3.83	4.17	1.041	.889
Study groups are very productive for me	3.62	3.43	1.149	1.100
I enjoy chat rooms	3.09	3.28	1.090	.990
Participating in politics is important	3.24	3.28	1.227	1.126
Television and radio talk shows are enjoyable	3.39	3.18	1.155	1.237
I am a "team player"	3.84	4.03	.875	.848
I dislike working alone	3.17	2.99	1.209	1.138
Clubs and extracurricular activities are fun	3.90	3.89	.966	.945
I pay attention to social issues and causes	4.11	4.22	.851	.814
I enjoy making things with my hands	3.99	3.72	.928	1.073
Sitting still for long periods of time is difficult for me	4.17	4.06	1.037	1.168
I enjoy outdoor games and sports	4.34	4.41	.809	.831
I value non-verbal communication such as sign language	3.70	3.60	1.132	1.124
A fit body is important for a fit mind	4.54	4.56	.792	.751
Arts and crafts are enjoyable pastimes	4.38	4.38	.751	.694
Expression through dance is beautiful	3.82	3.51	1.174	1.306
I like working with tools	4.04	4.00	.917	.831
I live an active lifestyle	3.88	3.91	.879	.905
I learn by doing	4.22	4.35	.866	.767
I enjoy reading all kinds of materials	4.22	4.02	.859	1.021
Taking notes helps me remember and understand	4.19	4.23	.935	.884
I faithfully contact friends through letters and/or e-mail	3.17	3.09	1.230	1.234
It is easy for me to explain my ideas to others	3.53	3.59	1.093	1.162
I keep a journal	2.49	2.54	1.149	1.354
Word puzzles like crosswords and jumbles are fun	3.52	3.43	1.028	1.120
I write for pleasure	3.81	3.71	1.061	1.127
I enjoy playing with words like puns, anagrams and spoonerisms	3.88	3.48	1.042	1.160
Foreign languages interest me	3.95	4.20	1.103	.907
Debates and public speaking are activities I like to participate in	3.81	3.94	1.037	.998
I am keenly aware of my moral beliefs	4.25	4.20	.854	.946
I learn best when I have an emotional attachment to the subject	4.42	4.44	.756	.751

Fairness is important to me	4.16	3.96	.789	.909
My attitude effects how I learn	4.22	4.12	.790	.800
Social justice issues concern me	4.09	4.13	.907	.973
Working alone can be just as productive as working in a group	3.95	3.75	.930	1.033
I need to know why I should do something before I agree to do it	4.40	4.37	.720	.703
When I believe in something I will give 100% effort to it	4.39	4.44	.736	.761
I like to be involved in causes that help others	4.04	4.19	.886	.872
I am willing to protest or sign a petition to right a wrong	3.73	3.85	.911	.856
I can imagine ideas in my mind	3.82	4.00	.937	.929
Rearranging a room is fun for me	4.12	3.38	.921	1.083
I enjoy creating art using varied media	3.99	3.65	.955	1.187
I remember well using graphic organizers	3.69	3.81	1.035	.913
Performance art can be very gratifying	3.59	3.46	1.189	1.159
Spreadsheets are great for making charts, graphs and tables	3.73	3.89	1.026	.903
Three dimensional puzzles bring me much enjoyment	4.03	4.11	.977	.968
Music videos are very stimulating	4.20	4.18	.815	.833
I can recall things in mental pictures	3.96	4.04	.954	.948
I am good at reading maps and blueprints	3.65	3.88	1.004	.869