Journal of Modern Education Review

Volume 6, Number 11, November 2016

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Journal of
Modern Education Review

Volume 6, Number 11, November 2016

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Science, Technology and Engineering Education

Social Science Education

Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 785–791
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/001

http://www.academicstar.us

Expanding Access and Deepening Engagement: Building an Open Source Digital Platform for Restoration-based STEM Education in the Largest Public School System in the United States

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Abstract: Citizen science is an ideal vehicle for building smart and connected communities, particularly in underrepresented and urban populations. It provides the means for a community to become vested in its local ecosystem. It simultaneously engages students and schools, public and private stakeholders, educators, and scientists. It plays an essential role in empowering local communities to restore biodiversity, ecological productivity and ecosystem services.

Just as citizen science is a means by which a community can help form its ecological future, citizen policymaking is the analog by which a community can help form its environmental future. The practice of policy connects the diverse disciplines necessary for informed decision-making, such as science, law, technology, economics and social sciences. The combination of science and policymaking, a staple of environmental governance, creates for student, teacher and community member a creative venue for applied learning that connects scientific discovery with civic engagement, scientific method with policy governance, and all-important STEM skills with all the above.

Through a curriculum that explores the combined role of monitoring technologies, data collection and decision-making one can demonstrate the processes that harmonize STEM-based and ecological knowledge with policy priorities and environmental necessity for the greatest societal benefit. For students in particular, such lessons open the door to the interdisciplinary thinking and applied value of STEM in the professions. Just as our schools should be unrivaled training grounds for citizen science, so too should they be the hub for the applied interdisciplinary learning and skills that animate and enliven the principles of democracy and law.

Key words: STEM education, citizen science, environmental restoration, smart and connected communities

1. Introduction

This papers examines the importance of the development of Smart and Connected communities in the Education sector. Evidence as to how to provide this essential connectivity through the development of a digital

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platform to connect middle school students with their peers, research scientists, teachers, STEM industry professionals, and stakeholders is discussed. Additional support is also needed in the area of environmental policy and law to create necessary changes.

2. Background and Significance

This project research focuses upon the expansion of the existing "Curriculum and Community Enterprise for the Restoration of New York Harbor in New York City Public Schools" DRL 1440869. The project is recognized locally as "Curriculum and Community Enterprise for Restoration Science", or CCERS. CCERS is a comprehensive model of ecological restoration based STEM education for urban public school students. Following an accelerated rollout, CCERS is now being implemented in 23 Title 1 funded NYC Department of Education middle schools, led by two cohorts of 33 teachers, serving more than 3000 students in total. Initial results and baseline data suggest that the CCERS model, with the Billion Oyster Project (BOP) as its local restoration ecology-based STEM curriculum, is having profound impacts on students, teachers, school leaders, and the broader community of CCERS participants and stakeholders. Students and teachers report being receptive to the CCERS model and deeply engaged in the initial phase of curriculum development, citizen science data collection, and student-centered STEM learning.

Notably, Mueller, Tippins and Bryan (2012) define citizen science as "an exceedingly inclusive set of activities such as community-centered science, participatory community-action research, street science, scientific literacy, and humanistic science education". With these concepts in mind, the CCERS Model is comprised of five educational pillars, all focused on improving STEM education for middle school students in urban public schools by engaging them in a real-world community enterprise — in this case, the restoration of New York Harbor's most important keystone species, the eastern oyster. The five pillars of the model are: (1) expert led technical trainings for teachers, (2) environmental science based STEM curriculum for students, (3) a student centered digital platform to enable collaboration with scientists, curriculum sharing by teachers, and student centered STEM learning, field data collection, analysis and research (4) Afterschool STEM Mentoring, (5) community based aquarium exhibitions.

More than any other single element of the model, the digital platform is central to the project's three main educational-research goals and has the potential to be replicable, scalable and open sourced on a national and international scale. In its simplest form, the digital platform is a highly versatile and adaptable infrastructure for students and teachers to conduct real-world STEM education — in this case, ecological restoration of New York Harbor and its most important keystone species, the Eastern Oyster — in service of and supported by a Smart and Connected Community of peers, scientists, STEM professionals and volunteers. In the era of social media and device ubiquity, the digital platform is also a powerful tool for student-centered constructivist education. The CCERS Digital Platform puts the onus upon students to "drive" their own education and move from abstractly studying science to learning by engaging. The ability to input, analyze, and share real-time environmental data with peers and scientists captures students' attention in a way that purely classroom-based learning cannot achieve. We have found that teachers are also deeply engaged by the power to digitally collaborate with peers, share their best work online, and access a highly organized curriculum database that is both standards-aligned and purpose driven.

3. Purpose

NSF Motivational Order — Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC)

"Advances in the effective integration of networked information systems, sensing and communication devices, data sources, decision making, and physical infrastructure are transforming society, allowing cities and communities to surmount deeply interlocking physical, social, behavioral, economic, and infrastructural challenges. These novel sociotechnical approaches enable increased understanding of how to intelligently and effectively design, adapt, and manage Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC). Successful S&CC solutions demand demonstration of marked improvement (quantifiable evidence) of the stakeholder experience — whether in personal quality of life, community and environmental health, social well-being, educational achievement, or overall economic growth and stability. Research in S&CC must pursue transformative discoveries through a long-term research agenda that also includes innovation off–ramps along the way." (NSF, 2016)

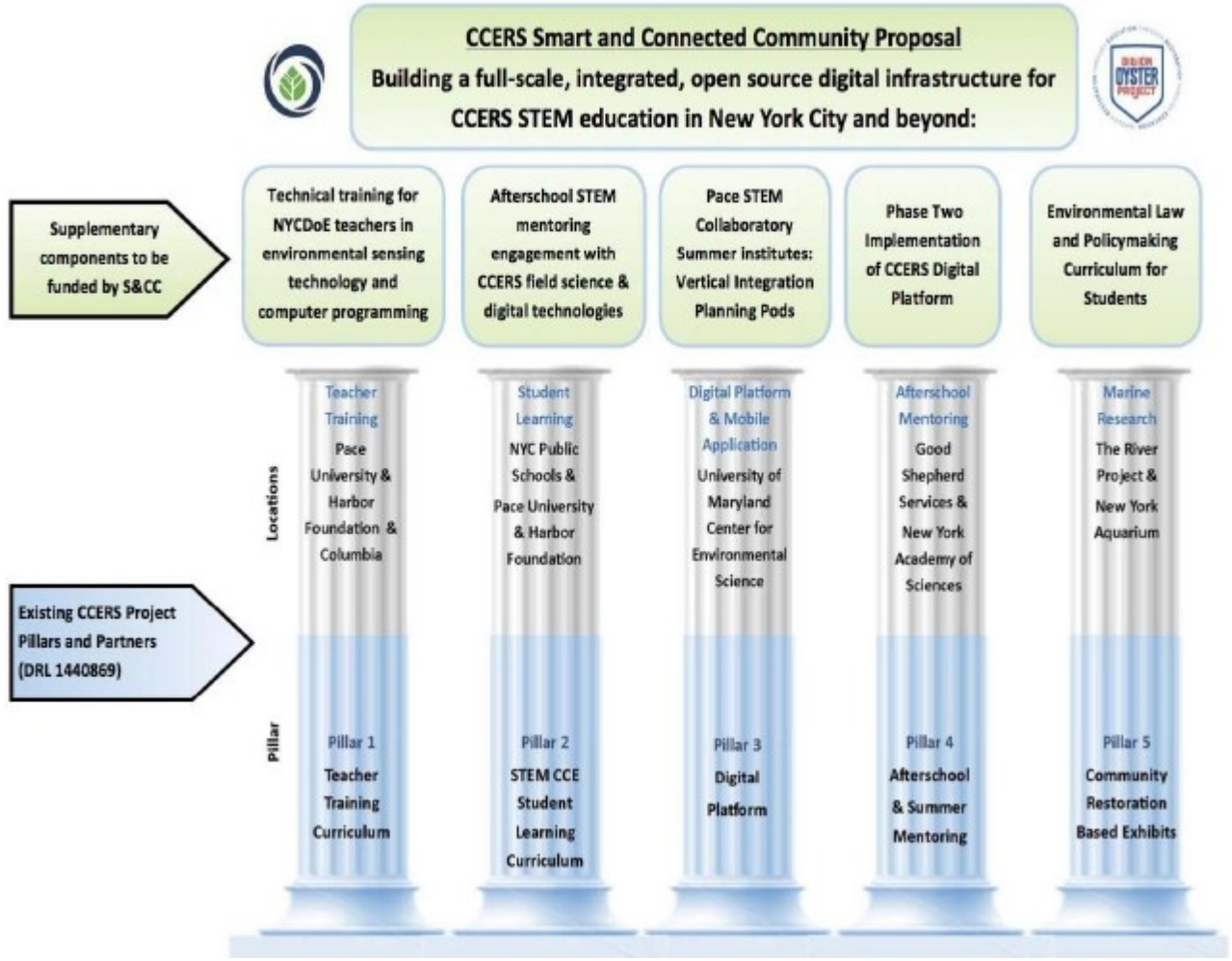
The CCERS-BOP Schools Digital Platform enables students to learn and do STEM–C not in a vacuum, but with the direct online supervision and guidance of their teachers. The user experience is explicitly designed around the needs of middle school students and teachers respectively, to learn STEM–C in the context of a real-world restoration project and to teach, design curriculum, and assess student learning in the context of modern, standards-based schooling. For students, the platform is a multidisciplinary toolkit for doing field science research and a richly engaging space for learning STEM's disciplinary core ideas and practices back in the classroom. For teachers, the platform enables grading and assessment of student learning (through expedition management, validation of datasets, and review of student research) and BOP curriculum access (through lesson plan sharing, feedback, publication, and networking), all with the support of the broader CCERS educational and scientific community. Contemporary studies highlight the need for educational software and online learning environments of this nature to be designed around student and teacher centered constructivist interfaces (Solomonodou, 2009). The CCERS leadership team posits that the underlying framework of the BOP Schools digital platform, including its open source software and compatibility with low-cost environmental sensing hardware, represents a major next step in the future of STEM education in the digital age.

In this framework, tens of thousands of middle school students from Title 1 funded schools in the largest urban school system in the United States are placed at the center of a cutting edge Smart and Connected Community for learning and participating in restoration science. The goal of this community is two-fold: to improve low-income students' access to high quality STEM education and in the process help restore the local environment. The result, no matter the outcome of the ecological restoration effort, is children learning STEM by doing STEM; conducting real research, proposing real policy solutions, and ultimately having real and tangible impacts on the future of their harbor and their city.

4. Methodology

Given the interest in Smart and Connected Communities, we decided to expand on our current environmental restoration research. Our strategic and implementation plans further specified student learning and teacher training objectives built around the goal of measuring impact and engagement with technology. Following upon our initial 17-month implementation period, including the development of a prototype interactive curriculum database and student-centered data input mobile app, the CCERS leadership team concluded that the digital platform is both

more essential to the model and more complex to construct than had been originally conceived. The leadership team's decision was based on close examination of participant feedback regarding the prototype components of the digital platform and the results of external evaluations including student and teacher baseline knowledge and pre-project perceptions of educational technology.



As a result of this analysis, the leadership team identified five specific areas in which development and implementation of the digital platform pillar was lacking or could be improved. These include: 1) technical training for classroom teachers in use of digital technology and web tools; 2) field science training and curriculum resources for afterschool program staff and mentors; 3) summer institutes for students, teachers, and CCERS personnel to partner with and learn from corporate sector technologists; 4) curriculum linkages between citizen science driven restoration projects and regional environmental policy and law; and 5) overall allocations and strategy for web design, development, and maintenance. In accordance with the goals and vision set forth in the Smart and Connected Communities DCL, the CCERS leadership team proposes five additional project components to address the needs outlined above and to improve overall implementation, engagement, and outcomes of technology based learning for students, teachers, and the broader CCERS participant/stakeholder community.

5. Results

In general, early and initial results from surveys and questionnaires from the project's research indicate that students and teachers are more engaged and interested in STEM content when participating in inquiry-based learning while actively collecting data and information for environmental restoration. These initial results are promising and indicate a positive trajectory for the project. Additionally, each one of the pillars will be strengthened by the advancement of the Digital Platform and the creation of a more robust design that will ultimately serve all five pillars in a more effective and efficient manner. Fig. 1 shows a summary of the status of each of the pillars in the project thus far. As we enter into Phase II for the Digital Platform, we are very excited for the new opportunities and areas of growth that will become apparent. These next two or three years will provide information and insight into the digital platform, citizen science and environmental restoration with New York City public school students.

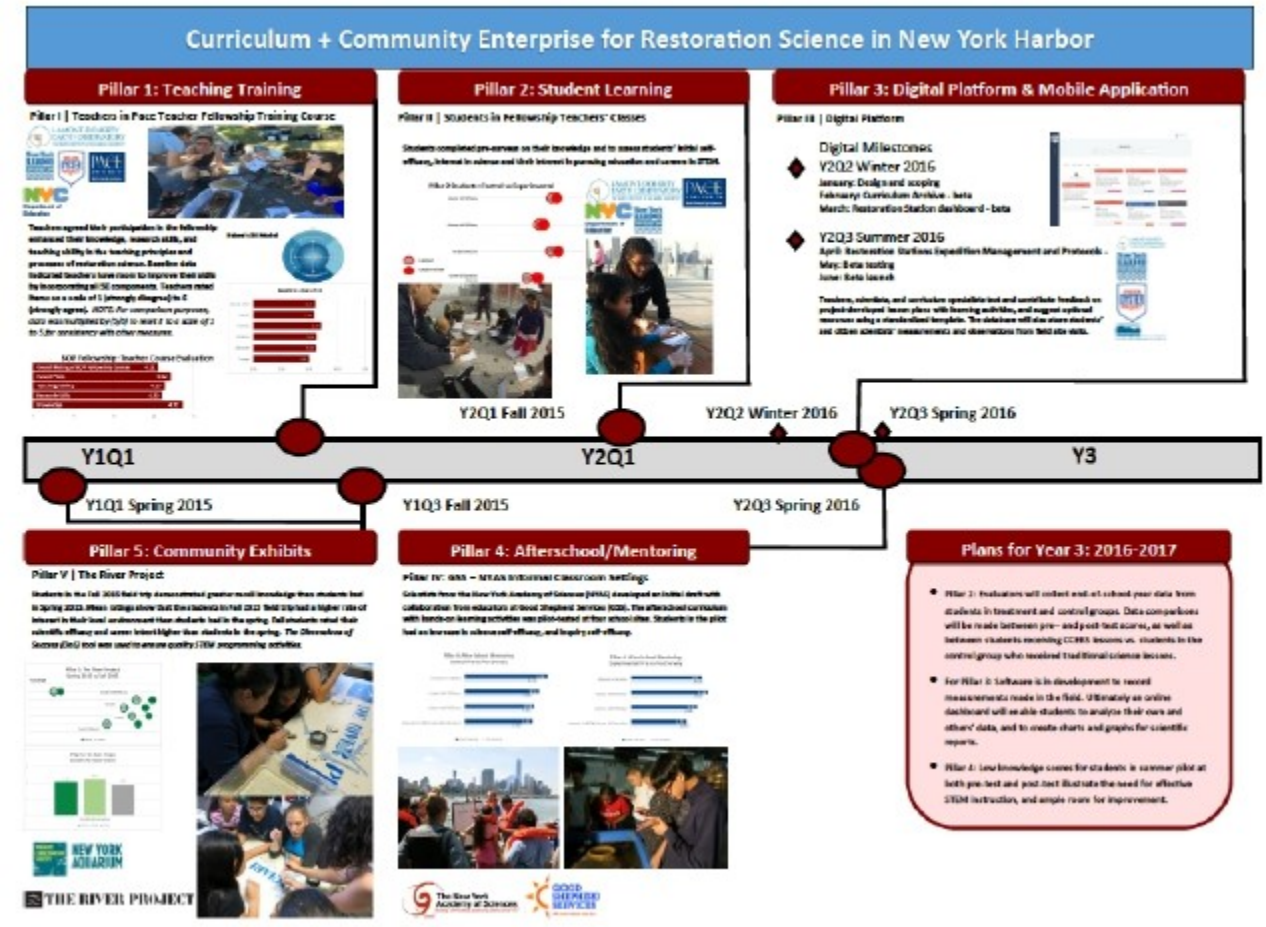


Figure 1 Status of Each of the Pillars in the Project Thus Far

6. Discussion

When implemented in concert, the five supplementary components outlined above will provide the CCERS participant and stakeholder community with an enhanced set of resources, tools, and digital infrastructure to drive

the development of the project locally and replicate the model nationally and internationally. These elements build synchronously from the project's original goals and objectives to connect STEM-C education with local keystone species restoration through the use of environmental sensing technology and an open source digital platform. Each of the five components enables essential new features and all components work together to strengthen and perpetuate the smart and connected community as a whole.

In summary, providing advanced technical training and professional development to NYCDOE classroom teachers is necessary to facilitate full student participation in the curriculum's environmental sensing, microprocessor engineering, and coding applications. Further investment in the afterschool pillar serves to increase and deepen student participation, strengthens wraparound connections in the same building, and ensures that educators and STEM mentors are effectively delivering the same field science and technology based CCERS curriculum in afterschool and summer camp settings. Summer Institutes for Vertical Integration based at Pace University draw together a robust participant support community of public and private sector technologists, simultaneously expanding career opportunity pathways for students and developing mechanisms for long term financial sustainability of the CCERS model. By offering a research-based environmental law and public policy curricular component, students are equipped to move from pure field based data collection to authentic research and development of policy-based solutions for their community.

Lastly, completion of the CCERS open source digital platform is essential for sustainability and replicability of the model; to ensure its function as the connective infrastructure for students, teachers, scientists, and volunteers to share curriculum, datasets, research and results in a real-time, interactively engaged community. The leadership team strongly affirms the synergy between the CCERS vision of an open source, educational-scientific software platform for restoration-based STEM education and NSF's research mandate to develop new modalities and solutions for increasing socio–technical connectivity of diverse stakeholder communities. It is this connectivity and collaboration that will provide the framework and catalyze synergy for a Smart and Connected Community to grow around New York City public schools.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, smart and connected communities are a vision of our future and will be the common theme as time progresses. Connectivity among community members becomes a critical asset as cities grow and expand. The same is true is for education. As education moves to advance technology, the digital platform will become a tool that will allow students to connect with the community through citizen science and participation in community projects. Environmental restoration is a savvy method in which to connect all stakeholders while promoting educational data collection and research.

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 792-802
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/002

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Impact on Preschool Science Teaching: Post-training Examination of Everyday Science

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Abstract: Head Start teachers who attended the Everyday Science for Preschoolers training completed an online survey after 3, 6, 9 and 12 months about experiences with and use of Everyday Science for Preschoolers. Teachers continued to use materials over time and reported using more scientific language, an increased awareness of science, and doing more science activities. Recommendations for professional development include modeling scientific inquiry skills, supporting integration of topics and curriculum areas and providing resources.

Everyday Science for Preschoolers (Everyday Science) is a curriculum that takes a holistic perspective and engages young students in inquiry, enabling learning science through everyday activities. Everyday Science training engages preschool teachers in a sample of hands-on inquiry-based activities, and provides them with a collection of age-appropriate science learning activities in each of twelve science topics.

After training, preschool teachers should be well-positioned to lead young children in inquiry activities on all twelve topics, using instructional strategies that are appropriate to both the age of the children and the particular science topic. In this paper, the authors report on the post-training impact of Everyday Science for Preschoolers on science teaching practices of Head Start teachers.

Key words: preschool, early childhood and science.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Importance of Science Competent Preschool Teachers

The National Science Foundation's 1998 Forum on Early Childhood Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education concluded with a consensus on the lack of early childhood education professionals' study of mathematics and science content, which translates to the absence of mathematics and science content within early childhood settings (Nelson, 1999) and failure to "incorporate appropriate science, mathematics, or technology experiences into children's lives" (Nelson, 1999, p. vi). These conditions still appear to be valid today. According to Early et al. (2010), preschool children spend more of their school day on language arts and literacy, social

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studies and art than science and math, even though science activities could easily by integrated into language arts. Harte and Gilbert (2010) asked preschool and kindergarten teachers to rate their own level of comfort and competence with science and mathematics instruction on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating a high degree of comfort and competence. Sixty-nine percent of the teachers rated themselves in the 2s on comfort, indicating a low level of comfort and 81% of the teachers rated themselves in the 3s on competence, indicating a moderate level of competence.

These low to moderate ratings on comfort and competence in science and mathematics instruction for preschool and kindergarten teachers have become even more problematic with the recent introduction of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) (NGSS Lead States, 2013). Successful implementation of the NGSS requires a shift in classroom culture and teaching practice for K-12 classroom teachers (Reiser, 2013). According to Reiser (2013), the NGSS requires students being "motivated to figure out rather than learning what they are told" (p. 11) and teachers viewing" instruction as building a coherent storyline, in which questions are grounded on phenomena, leading to investigations, and students develop models through argumentation, and refine those models through new phenomena that challenge existing models" (p. 7). Therefore, the best practice in science teaching is no longer what it was in the past. Teachers, at all grade levels, need expertise in content and inquiry processes as well as integration of content and inquiry to enable their students' inquiry and learning. Implementation of NGSS also assumes a holistic perspective in teaching where future science instruction builds on prior students' science experience. This approach means, children's preschool science experience and their teachers' competence in science instruction play an important role in children's future science learning.

Teachers play an important role in quality early childhood environments by engaging children in hands on experiences, supporting reflection, engaging in science and integrating science throughout the curriculum (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Teachers need to be able to engage children in science, and also be aware of and address children's misconceptions with confidence. Early childhood teachers need the knowledge, skills and resources to support children in science inquiry. Teachers' ability to scaffold science content and processes for children can lead to development of an initial understanding of the nature of science within young children (Akerson, Buck, Donnelly, Nargund-Joshi & Weiland, 2011).

Teacher support of young children's scientific learning may be influenced by a variety of factors including subject knowledge, support of other teachers, reflective practice, attitude towards science and teacher understanding of the nature of science (Edwards & Loveridge, 2011). Greenfield et al. (2009) conducted focus groups with teachers and examined fall and spring readiness scores on the Galileo System for the Electronic Management of Learning of 4-year-old children enrolled in Head Start. Domains measured included approaches to learning, creative arts, early math, language and literacy, motor development, science, physical health and social and emotional development. Greenfield et al. (2009) determined that science readiness scores were lower than all other domains in the spring and gains from fall to spring were lower in science than in other areas. Also, in focus group discussions, teachers reported low self-efficacy regarding teaching science as well as lack of time in the daily routine. With pre-service teachers, Garbett (2003) noticed limited content knowledge based on results on a science knowledge exam and determined that student teachers lacked awareness of what they did not know.

Both the content knowledge and perceived competence of the teacher are important, as demonstrated in the above studies. For both teachers and children to do science and for teachers to support children effectively, teachers need professional development, resources and support. Pre-service early childhood teachers need a methods course that is integrated across content and involves inquiry processes. Pre-service teachers who

completed an integrated math and science course using project based approaches and engaged in inquiry during the course increased in both the understanding of content and self-efficacy (Saçkes, Flevares, Gonya & Trundle, 2012).

Bandura (2012) described self-efficacy as "people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce given attainments" (p. 15) and asserted four sources that influence an individual's perceived self-efficacy: a) mastery experience, b) social modeling, c) social persuasion, and d) emotional and physical reactions. Of the four, mastery experiences, which require persistence in a task despite challenges, contributes most to a teacher's self-efficacy level. The teacher efficacy definition focuses on teachers' perceptions of how confident they are of their ability to impact student learning (Klassen, Tze, Betts & Gordon, 2011). Higher teacher efficacy also results in welcoming new teaching strategies and ideas (Stein & Wang, 1988). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007) documented that experienced teachers had a higher self-efficacy belief than new teachers because of their prior mastery experiences. Beginning teachers, however, relied on availability of teaching resources along with other contextual supports, for example, social modeling, persuasion, and emotional reactions (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

2. Attributes of Good Early Science Teaching

Developmentally appropriate preschool science involves engagement in experiences that allow for use of scientific skills such as prediction, observation and communication (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Even complex notions such as the nature of science can begin to be explored with young children if teachers use explicit strategies over time and are able to scaffold for children during science investigations.

Early science education ought to include opportunities to develop, test and revise hypotheses. Giving children opportunities to make predictions, observe, make changes in predictions, and then reflect on and revisit their own predictions as well as those of others may help deepen understanding of scientific knowledge (Gropen, Clark-Chiarelli, Hoisington & Ehrlich, 2011).

Inquiry based science allows children to explore the content and the process of science. Engaging young children in science exploration in informal ways, including the home setting, may influence the appeal of science as well as spark a greater understanding of science (Czerniak & Mentzer, 2013). Quality early childhood science programs have a focus on inquiry, allowing for reflection and documentation. Early science instruction can help children learn skills not only important to science, but also to other curriculum areas (Czerniak & Mentzer, 2013; Greenfield et al., 2009).

The Everyday Science for Preschoolers curriculum is intended to enable teachers to engage children in inquiry in age-appropriate ways. The curriculum consists of a binder of activities developed with the input of practicing teachers and university faculty. Activities focused on twelve topics relevant to science for young children. These include animals, birds, insects, reptiles, plants, human body, water, weather, colors, life cycles, simple machines and chemical reactions. The curriculum provided the "what" with resources, suggested materials and possible experiences.

The training provided the "how" with opportunities to explore and practice the activities with a group before using them independently. Participants engaged with the scientific language such as hypothesis and prediction as well as strategies for example, charting, asking questions and making comparisons. The purpose of this post-training survey study was to address the general research question of how Head Start teachers used the information and materials from the Everyday Science training. More specifically, the researchers sought to learn

the extent to which teachers used scientific processes and implemented NGSS practices, and to what extent were these practices sustained over time. Finally, they examined the 12 science topics included in the Everyday Science curriculum, looking at topics with which teachers rated themselves as having most content knowledge, and in which topics they tried out the materials and activities with their students.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

Participants were teachers in Head Start programs in Kentucky and Indiana who participated in Everyday Science training. Seven hundred fifty-four teachers attended the training. No demographic information was collected at the training, so all of the data is truly anonymous.

3.2 Design and Procedure

At the training, Everyday Science activities were explained and demonstrated. Teaching strategies were modeled, specific science vocabulary was highlighted, and resources were explained. After completion of the training, each attendee was given a binder with the curriculum materials to encourage integration into their teaching.

After the training, the agency that conducted the training sent an electronic survey to everyone that had attended the training at intervals of three, six, nine and twelve months after the training. A minimum of two reminder e-mails were sent for each interval. The response rate was 20%, 14%, 10% and 6% at successive time intervals.

The survey design was both descriptive and analytical (Coolican, 2004). It included seven Likert-scale items related to implementation of scientific processes, nine items about classroom strategies, and six items about use of activities/resources from the Everyday Science binder.

Participants were asked to mark which of the 12 Everyday Science topics they had tried at least once, which they tried three or more times, and on which they had most content knowledge.

Open ended questions asked participants where they would go when they needed additional information about scientific topics, what they have done differently in their classroom as a result of the training, and what strategies they have provided to families to extend science learning at home.

4. Results

The seven items related to scientific processes are essential for fostering students' scientific learning and investigative curiosity. As shown on Table 1, higher levels of agreement were reported at 12 months than at three months on all survey items about implementation of scientific processes, demonstrating increase in teachers' comfort in using scientific processes with their students.

At three months, those who either agreed or strongly agreed ranged from 52% to 93%. At 12 months, these percentages ranged from 82% to 100%. Although there was no linear trend, higher levels of agreement were reported at 12 months than at 3 months on all items. For example, the activity reported least at 3 months was 52% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they used words such as "hypothesis" in their classroom. This increased to 82% at 12 months. The activity reported most often was having children describe what they are seeing, with 93% marking agree or strongly agree at 3 months, and 100% at 12 months.

Student's inquiry disposition and science learning are enhanced when teachers incorporate strategies that reflect Appendix F — Science and Engineering Practices in the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards, For States, By States, n.d.). The nine items on classroom strategies (see Table 2) incorporate NGSS practices.

Table 1 Percentage of Respondents Marking Agreement Using Likert Scale 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree)

	5	4	3	2	1	N
I provide specific or detailed descriptions to children in my teaching so I can model focused observation and investigation						
3 months	31.8	56.3	10.6	0.7	0.7	151
6 months	35.2	53.3	8.6	1.9	1.9	105
9 months	30.3	55.3	14.5	0	0	76
12 months	30.3	66.7	3.0	0	0	33
I provide a variety of materials and tools like magnifying glasses, containers and note pads to children so they can collect, describe, and/or record information						
3 months	41.3	45.6	11.9	1.3	0	160
6 months	51.5	41.7	6.8	0	0	103
9 months	51.3	36.8	11.8	0	0	76
12 months	58.8	35.3	5.9	0	0	34
In my classroom, we often try out or test our hypotheses then record what happened.						
3 months	19.2	48.3	25.8	6.6	0	151
6 months	22.1	51.9	18.3	4.8	2.9	104
9 months	28.0	42.7	29.3	0	0	75
12 months	34.4	53.1	12.5	0	0	32
I often use scientific words like "hypothesis" and "investigate" in my classroom because I understand the value of teaching science to build basic literacy skills.						
3 months	16.7	35.3	33.3	14.7	0	150
6 months	17.6	41.2	34.3	3.9	2.9	102
9 months	25.0	27.6	38.2	2.6	0	76
12 months	36.4	45.5	18.2	0	0	33
I use the resources provided in the Everyday Science for Preschoolers binder to plan developmentally appropriate science activities.						
3 months	29.8	48.3	19.2	2.6	0	151
6 months	24.5	58.8	14.7	1	1	102
9 months	30.7	49.3	17.3	2.7	0	75
12 months	39.4	45.5	9.1	6.1	0	33

Table 2 Percentage of Responses to Item: "Indicate Which of the Following Classroom Strategies You Have Used (Please Check All That Apply)" at Each Time Interval

Survey Item	3 mo. (n = 140)	6 mo. (n = 100)	9 mo. (n = 74)	12 mo. (n = 41)
Charting and graphing differences	82.9	87.0	89.2	90.2
Asking questions to encourage comparison (how is ___ different from	89.3	87.0	89.2	87.8
Asking questions to encourage exploration (how does ___ feel?)	90.0	84.2	90.5	85.4
Extending questions and comments to check children's scientific understanding	60.7	63.0	62.2	68.3
Looking for patterns and relationships	81.4	78.0	71.6	85.4
Introducing new vocabulary words and using them in context of the topic we are studying/researching	77.9	78.8	79.7	80.5
Journaling or other ways of documenting	38.6	47.0	47.3	51.2
Viewing quality video clips related to	32.9	33.0	35.1	48.8
I do not use any of these strategies	2.9	1.0	2.7	2.4

At the 3-month interval, the strategy most used was "Asking questions to encourage exploration" whereas "Charting and graphing differences" was most used at the 12-months interval. On five of the eight strategies, a higher percentage of participants at the 12-month interval reported using that strategy, as compared with the 3-month interval. The strategy with the greatest increase in implementation, journaling, increased at each interval. The three strategies most used at all intervals were charting/graphing, asking comparison questions, and asking exploration questions, with more than 80% reporting using these strategies across all time intervals. These three most used teaching strategies address many of the eight practices of NGSS by helping children to ask questions, investigate, and interpret data. At three months, 60% of teachers who responded checked on children's scientific understanding, and at 12 months, the percent was 68. Without teachers assessing their students' knowledge and skill level of scientific inquiry or investigation, preschool students cannot increase in their understanding of scientific knowledge and processes.

Responses to survey items about the impact of using activities and resources from the Everyday Science binder indicate teachers were reading more about science, brainstorming potential materials/tools, and bringing more science concepts into the classroom across all time intervals as result of integrating Everyday Science activities and resources, as shown on Table 3. Use of guest speakers was reported least frequently. Although there was no clear linear trend, percentages were higher at 12 months than at three months for all activities.

Table 3 Percentage of Responses to Item: "Using the Activities and Resources Provided in the Everyday Science for Preschoolers Binder in The Classroom with My Children Has Caused Me to Do the following (Please Check all that Apply)" at Each Time Interval

Survey Item	3 mo. (n = 138)	6 mo. (n = 100)	9 mo. (n = 72)	12.mo. (n = 41)
Research more about topic(s) we are studying, for example going to the KET website	59.4	57.0	55.6	61.0
Bring guest speakers who are expert on the scientific topics we are studying	14.4	19.0	52.8	19.5
Read more about the topic so I have more content knowledge to share with my children	68.8	71.0	72.2	80.5
Brainstorm about potential materials and tools that can be used for children's exploration and investigation.	63.8	66.0	63.9	68.3
Bring more science concepts into my classroom throughout the day	67.4	64.0	81.9	76.5
None of the above	8.7	7.0	4.2	7.3

Table 4 illustrates the results of which Everyday Science topic teachers implemented with their students. The science topics addressed in the Everyday Science binder included typical topics (animals and weather) as well as less commonly practiced areas (e.g., simple machines and chemical reactions). All of the Head Start teachers who responded to the surveys indicated they had implemented all of the topics from the binder with their children at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months interval, indicating their willingness to try new or less comfortable topics as shown on Table 4.

Across all intervals, the topics most often reported as tried at least once were animals, weather and color. At 12 months, 78% had also tried lessons about insects, an increase from the 46% reported at three months. Reptiles and simple machines were tried by fewest, but those reporting trying reptiles increased from 17% at 3 months to 32% at 12 months, whereas there was no such increase for simple machines.

As more time passed after the training, more of the activities from the Everyday Science binder were implemented, as shown on Table 5.

Table 4 Percentage of Responses to Item: "Please Indicate Which Topics from the Everyday Science For Preschoolers Binder You Tried with Your Children (Please Check All That Apply)."

Survey Response	3 mo. (n = 125)	6 mo. (n = 95)	9 mo. (n = 66)	12 mo. (n = 37)
Animals	66.4	57.9	69.7	83.8
Birds	29.6	29.5	40.1	51.4
Insects	45.6	55.7	57.6	78.4
Reptiles	16.8	11.6	36.4	32.4
Plants	41.6	46.3	60.6	73.0
Human body	38.4	34.7	40.9	62.2
Water	46.4	42.1	40.9	56.8
Weather	69.6	70.5	83.3	73.0
Colors	57.6	57.9	69.7	83.8
Life cycles	24.0	29.5	47.0	54.1
Simple machines	27.7	12.6	13.6	10.8
Chemical reactions	20.0	16.8	19.7	29.7

Table 5 Percentage of Responses to Item: "of the Topics Covered in the Everyday Science for Preschoolers Binder, from Which One did You Try at least Three Activities Provided in The Binder (Please Check All That Apply)"

	3 mo. (n = 113)	6 mo. (n = 91)	9 mo. (n = 63)	12 mo. (n = 34)
Animals	37.2	36.2	39.7	44.1
Birds	19.5	18.7	22.2	20.6
Insects	25.7	31.9	20.6	35.3
Reptiles	8.0	8.8	12.7	11.8
Plants	27.4	26.4	41.3	52.9
Human body	20.3	23.1	20.6	35.3
Water	25.7	18.7	20.6	44.1
Weather	41.6	48.4	57.1	61.8
Colors	41.6	35.2	47.6	55.9
Life cycles	12.4	15.4	25.4	23.5
Simple machines	10.6	8.8	17.5	8.8
Chemical reactions	8.0	5.5	12.7	23.5

At three months, 42% reported having tried at least three activities on the topics of weather and colors. At 12 months, 62% had tried at least three activities on weather and 56% on color. Animal activities were next highest, mirroring the most tried topic response from Table 4. Percentages at 12 months being higher than those at 3 months for all topics, except simple machines, which fell from 11% at three months to 9% at12 months, demonstrates teachers' willingness to stretch their comfort level and perhaps increase in their efficacy belief for science teaching.

For the survey item: "Please indicate which topic from the Everyday Science for Preschoolers binder you feel you have the most content knowledge after using it in your classroom," the topics on which participants most consistently reported having the most content knowledge were colors and weather as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6 Percentage of Responses to the Item: "Please Indicate Which Topic from the Everyday Science for Preschoolers Binder You Feel You Have the Most Content Knowledge after Using It in Your Classroom."

	3 mo. (n = 116)	6 mo. (n = 91)	9 mo. (n = 63)	12 mo. (n = 34)
Animals	30.2	24.2	27.0	29.4
Birds	11.2	14.3	34.9	20.6
Insects	19.8	25.3	30.2	29.4
Reptiles	7.8	6.6	14.3	14.7
Plants	23.3	20.9	30.2	29.4
Human body	20.7	18.7	14.3	20.6
Water	23.3	11.0	14.3	26.5
Weather	34.5	39.6	34.9	35.3
Colors	35.3	24.2	38.1	52.9
Life cycles	19.8	18.7	20.6	14.7
Simple machines	8.6	8.8	7.9	8.8
Chemical reactions	7.8	6.6	6.3	14.7

The only topic marked by more than 50% was colors, at the 12-month interval. The percentage having content knowledge increased from the 3-month point to the12-month point for birds, insects, reptiles, plants, water, colors, and chemical reactions. Topics marked as areas of knowledge by fewest participants were simple machines, chemical reactions, and reptiles. From Table 5 on which topics participants used three or more activities, simple machines and reptiles were two of the least popular topics, which can potentially explain why participants may feel less knowledgeable in content. An anomaly was chemical reactions. The chemical reactions activities did gain popularity in Table 5 (from 8% at 3-months interval to 23% at 12-months interval) but only 15% of teachers felt they had the content knowledge after usage. However, increase in popularity did translate to increase in content knowledge as 8% at three months compared to 15% at 12 months stated they felt knowledgeable of content for chemical reactions. Animals and plants were marked by 20–30% of participants, across all time intervals. At the 12 month interval, the rank order of topics on which participants had most knowledge was positively correlated with the rank order of topics on which participants had tried at least three activities, Spearman's $r = .91$, $p < .01$. This strong, positive correlation supports the idea that providers' level of comfort with the content knowledge is strongly related to their classroom implementation.

Responses to open-ended questions were similar across the time intervals. For additional information about scientific concepts, most went to the internet. Books, resources from Kentucky Educational Television and peers were also reported as knowledge sources. As a result of the training, participants used more science activities, more science vocabulary, and paid more attention to making science materials available in the classroom. Most reported sending home newsletters with hands-on activities or experiments, nature walk and exploration activities, color activities, and journaling.

5. Conclusion

Everyday Science for Preschoolers training, despite its limitations, did have an impact on the teaching of science in Head Start programs at three–, six–, nine– and 12–month intervals. Limitations of this study on post-training impact of Everyday Science for Preschoolers include the low response rate at the start as well as the

attrition rate. It is possible that at 12 months only those teachers actually implementing Everyday Science responded. In addition participant demographics were not collected. Examination of these in relation to the findings could have enhanced the study. For example, are newly trained teachers better at incorporating science instruction into the curriculum? Those who did respond reported increased implementation of science in the classroom. While these results cannot be generalized they could inform possible supports in professional development.

Research (e.g., Garbett, 2003; Greenfield et al., 2009) and the National Science Foundation (Nelson, 1999) has indicated that science instruction has been lacking within the early childhood setting and also has demonstrated the need for professional development so preschool teachers can acquire the knowledge, skills, support and resources in order to support children in science inquiry. However for preschool teachers to feel competent to do more science at a deeper, integrated level, which would facilitate successful implementation of NGSS at K-12 level, the preschool teachers will need to apply the principles of constructivism, assimilation and accommodation (Piaget, 1952, 1977), of acquiring a novel task, which in this case would be the integration of Everyday Science activities, resources, and teaching strategies. True understanding results when teachers make sense of the new information themselves and construct how they will integrate science in their teaching based on their existing science competency, comfort, and motivation level. How teachers feel about science influences their actions. The social nature of self–efficacy can facilitate teachers' appraisal of their competence, comfort, motivation, and acquisition of science knowledge; which results in continuous engagement of science and behavior change within the classroom.

The results of this study mirror self-efficacy and constructivist principles in that teachers increased both in implementation of science (number of activities on a topic as well as variety of topics) and integration of explicit science strategies (such as journaling, asking exploration questions) with children over time after the *Everyday Science* training. The Head Start teachers also indicated they were reading more about science themselves and brainstorming about potential resources for science concepts as they used the *Everyday Science* binder more. Thus, Head Start program teachers used the information and materials from the science training to elevate their content knowledge/mastery in science as well as become more intentional with science practices/strategies over time. As teachers engaged in more science, they became, more willing to try out information in the *Everyday Science* binder. The only exception was with the topic of Simple Machines. This topic is not a common topic early childhood educators address in their classrooms; and as a result, Simple Machines may have been a topic that was too novel for them.

5.1 Research to Practice: Recommendations for Early Science Professional Development

Teachers who may feel less secure about fostering their students' inquiry based science learning, if they are provided with training and materials, may engage students and succeed in offering developmentally appropriate science experiences. This change in behavior, then, may in turn influence attitudinal change and increase self-efficacy related to teaching science, which may lead to doing more science. Based on our study findings on post-training impact of *Everyday Science for Preschoolers*, below is a brief discussion of professional development aspects for early childhood educators that could enhance both competence and confidence levels regarding science.

(1) Process matters. Be sure to model scientific inquiry skills such as observing, classifying, predicting, hypothesizing, experimenting and communicating (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) while engaging in authentic

investigation during the training. The more the early childhood educators have the opportunity to try out different science practices in addition to being able to observe, the higher the possibility of making the scientific inquiry skills as their own practice with their students after the training. The more teachers do during and after the training, the more confident and competent they will become in integrating different science practices.

(2) Integration matters. Be sure to provide information on variety of topics. According to The National Association for Young Children Developmentally Appropriate Practice guidelines, the preschool science curriculum ought to include concepts and experiences from life science, physical science and earth science (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). According to Sharapan (2012), Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) is ultimately about discovering and exploring the world around us. Therefore, focus on a range of topics and especially non-typical topics during the training. More exposure to different topic content and strategies during the training will help the teachers engage in intentional examination of what science topics and practices are missing in their teaching. For example, Moomaw and Davis (2010), in an inclusive classroom setting, used pendulums and inclines and noticed children demonstrating higher level thinking strategies and increasing verbal exchanges.

(3) Resources for individual teachers matter. Provide resources that were used during the training to each teacher so that s/he can refer back while implementing what was learned in professional development in the classroom. It is vital that teachers build onto their current expertise/mastery so they can address children's misconceptions. An essential feature of the resources for teachers from the training ought to be additional online resources. As teachers engage in more science, they will seek out more to increase their science knowledge, skills, and strategies. Having a starting point for finding additional resources is critical for teachers' self-improvement/education and continual science learning.

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 803–812
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/003

http://www.academicstar.us

A Study of the Relationships among Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention of Textbook Publishers in Taiwan's Elementary Schools

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the Changhua County elementary school teachers and the textbook Publishers for the service quality in Taiwan, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. The method of the study adopts questionnaires to "service quality, customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of the textbook publishers" as a research tool, Changhua County elementary school teachers to used Nani Book being the subject of study. Stratified random sampling of subjects, issued a total of 384 questionnaires were distributed 368 copies, 18 copies of removing invalid questionnaires, the effective sample recovery was 91.15%. The quantitative analysis of questionnaires was done by SPSS statistical software package. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed by descriptive statistics, independent sample T-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation analysis and stepwise multiple regression analysis.

The major findings of this study were as follows:

Teachers were satisfied with the Publisher's service quality and the customer satisfaction.

There were significant differences in the service quality, customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of the textbook publishers by gender and location of school teachers.

Service quality, customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions showed positive correlation.

Service quality would positive affect satisfaction and repurchase intention. In service quality, empathy, tangible, assurance and reliability could predict customer satisfaction. In service quality, empathy, tangible, and reliability could predict repurchase intention.

Satisfaction would positive affect repurchase intention. The overall satisfaction factors of customer satisfaction could effective predict repurchase intention.

Key words: textbook, service quality, satisfaction, repurchase intention

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1. Introduction

This study aimed to understand the textbook of elementary school teachers press service quality, satisfaction and repurchase intention to study and discuss service quality, the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention.

1.1 Study Motivation

The changes of the times, many different types of services, it is becoming more and more fierce competition, requirements will also increase the quality of public services. But the service sector with the intangible (intangibility), heterogeneity (heterogeneity), indivisible (inseparability) and disappearance (perishability) four characteristics (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988), People in the industry, the same kind of product with service personnel at different times, and different clients have different quality of service. Same level of products and services, sometimes due to different customer needs and values, and the satisfaction of different. Service quality is good or bad, will affect customer repurchase intention (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Quality service can cause customers ' continued willingness to buy, get more profits. Bad service is spread between the customer, thus affecting the corporate image. Overall customer satisfaction is recognized as an important pointer for predicting consumer behavior. Bolton (1998) study, increases in overall consumer satisfaction would increase customer repurchase intention, and will also be reflected in the actual repeat purchase behavior of consumers. Peppers and Rogers (1993) in his book, also mentioned in the cost needed to develop a new customer than to retain old customers cost as much as 6 to 9 times. Therefore, how to maintain good relationships with customers so that customers would often business becomes very important. Publishers of school textbooks, in order to improve customer purchase rate, you must provide a high quality of service, enhance customer satisfaction, and establish a good long-term relationship with customers.

Domestic primary and secondary school textbooks used to be centrally by the National Institute for compilation and editing and publishing, are centrally managed by the State. After 85, along with the textbook policy change, open private enterprises were involved in the editing and publishing of textbooks, publishing houses into market competition, are scrambling for textbooks, but less people and more, under the dual influence of market mechanisms and competition environment, the industry could not withstand competition eliminated, dropped out, dominance of a minority market.

In order to survive, the private sector publishing house for the textbook industry marketing marketing methods, plays the most important factor is the front line staff interaction with teachers. In the service quality of service attitude, is the key to success of enterprises, poor staff attitude will affect customer satisfaction, could cause unexpected losses (Lin Long Yi, 2010). Study on the main spindle is NanYi book company personnel's quality of service, explore the Chang Hua County elementary school teachers' cognition on service quality of the textbook industry, further understand the textbook industry market. Then with consideration of consumer behavior, consumer decision making focus and consumer perceptions of services, choice or judgement of the study factors such as differences in dimensions, analysis of overseas teachers of textbook quality of service requirements to provide operators reference the textbook industry, this is one motivation for this study, through literature and the study is to survey design and implementation, whereby the user (teacher) differences between expectations and reality, and segment the target market can be further developed in line with customers' expectations of service quality and product mix, improving customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. Expected to enhance or

improve the textbook industry's competitiveness, to increase market share, obtain greater profit goals, users and operators can achieve a win-win situation, this is the motivation for this study, two.

Aim of this paper consists of the following four points:

(1) Current elementary school teachers pay more attention to quality of service project?

(2) Compare different demographic variables of the various services provided by the publishing house service quality, satisfaction and repurchase intention differences.

(3) Compare the various services provided by the Publishing House of quality, satisfaction and repurchase intention differences.

(4) Explore the press quality of service and the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention.

Table 1 Open History of Textbook System

Time	Fact	System
78 study years	Open junior high school textbook, activities of the subjects by some publishers to participate in editing, sent by the National Institute for compilation and review issue.	Pipeline parallelism
80 study years	Open elementary arts and activities account for the validation of this.	Pipeline parallelism
85 study years	"Education reform Committee report"	Full opening of elementary discipline of the yearly approval system.
89 study years	NICT (have been incorporated into the National Institute of education) leave the elementary school textbook market	Full opening of elementary discipline of the yearly approval system.
90 study years	The nine-year integrated curriculum	Elementary School of approval system
91 study years	National Institute for Compilation and Translation completely out of the textbook written composition only ad hoc panel to review private publishing industry submittal of audited subjects textbook .	Junior high school Section annually within three years to comprehensive examination and approval system
94 study years	Preparatory Office of the National Institute of Education (National Institute for Compilation and Translation) to rejoin the ranks of the textbook editor , published mathematical and natural Division Two .	Preparation and Review parallel system

Source: This study finishing

Junior high school and elementary school textbooks, early single released by National Institute for Compilation and Translation education sector, called "Edited by the Ministry of the Republic of China" 85 years since privatization of yearly compilation published by the publishing industry, because the materials subject to education sector passing the examination, so the issue of private industry are referred to as "validation of this". Before the textbook market is not open, there is no other booksellers compete against a National Institute for Compilation and Translation exclusive manufacturers, therefore, not considered textbook "merchandise", and the books are published in the government-funded, the price is not cheap, there is no difference in quality of problem, but also affect the market from competition. However, since the Republic of China 85 years education sector relaxed and open civil department published a book, in a competitive free market, the textbook is not only a

cultural product, but also an economic product. Since then, a small country officially jump textbooks as "market" transactions "merchandise" (Ou, 85 people). CULTURE industry to industry statements, the textbook market can be said to be an emerging market, and the staggering profits. According to scholar Shi Jin Village (2000) study indicated that this textbook market, if the co-existence of 12 publishing market makers on 86 school year basis, the annual output value of about 3.95 billion yuan, annual output value of 87 to learn more of 4.367 billion yuan, if the estimate to 91 school year, full market value will reach $6 billion. And this data is only a textbook based on turnover, not included in the attached reference market, and if so then its value is bound to be more substantial.

South a bookstore was founded in the Republic of China for 42 years, initially started renting Buddhist books, foreign language books into distribution after two years of social and books, and drive it into North Gate Bookstore location Tainan Street bookstore. 55 the establishment of paper products, production of green (EVERGREEN), envelopes, diaries, and other paper products. Sedan exhaust system and thereafter gradually adding new printing presses and set production lines, mining business marketing new concept business reference books. 60 the careers reference books published as the main force, and the new superior reference book, started marketing names, establishment of Kingdom of reference books. 80, the subsidiary long hung press, full comic book publishing business. Republic 83 up, for should Government open civil textbooks published, South a immediately will business gravity betting in development elementary and middle schools textbooks of published issued work, invited scholars experts compiled textbook, and design test, hired professional line elite engaged in planning, and edit, and proofing, and art, and typesetting, and printed, and issued, work; another has familiar textbook, and education status of business Commissioner is responsible for collected market information, inquiry using views and the provides after-sales service, seeks to excellence, success transformation for professional academic publishing.

South a bookstore Corporation set Yu Tainan City, has editorial, and printing Qian Department, and printed Department, and binding Department, and issued Department, and business Department, and shop, and North, and peach bamboo, and in the, and Southwest, and South, and should be spent the District of Service Center, another Yu Taipei set a editorial, scale huge, organization sound, uphold with "education is Shuren Xingguo of cause" of concept, full heart input textbooks published work, period can upgrade textbook content quality and the learning efficiency. Main products and services include textbooks, reference books, supplementary, e-learning learning network, does not conduct teaching seminars on a regular basis, which is now the elementary, junior high to high school textbooks to develop the most complete, highest rate of approval by the Publisher.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of quality of service

Service is intangible, no physical product, it has no fixed standard, so that quality of service is good or not, it is difficult to quantify the numbers to determine. Levitt (1972) quality of service refers to the service results to be in line with the standards set by Garvin (1984) the perception of service quality is a subjective quality. Parasuraman et al. (1985) points out that the quality of service more difficult to judge than product quality, quality of service is the consumer service expected to service the actual consciousness after the gap. In General prior to 1980, scholars study in terms of service quality, mostly focusing on tangible products, until 1980, the academic study of the definition and measurement of service quality of mature. Following comprehensive scholar's definition of quality of service, and as shown in Table 2:

Table 2 Definitions of Quality of Service

Vintage	Scholars	Define
1972	Levitt	Quality of service refers to the service results to be in line with the standards set by.
1979	Philip Crosby	Quality of service means customers expect service and the actual perception of service to compare results.
1981	Oliver	Appraisement on the service quality is a continuity of the consumer affairs.
1982	Lehtinien and Lenhitnien	Interaction in the quality of service consumers and service organization that produces results.
1984	Garvin	Service quality is a subjective perception of quality, consumer reaction to something subjective, not an objective assessment.
1985	Olshavsky	Quality of service is an attitude, overall assessment is the consumer looks for things.
1985	Parasurama et al.	Quality of service is the consumer service expected to service after the actual gap between perceived service.
1988	Parasuraman et al.	Service quality is the customer service advantages and disadvantages of subjective judgments.
1990	Bitner	After the service quality for consumers of the service consumption, quality of service attitude of the whole image.
1991	Parasuraman et al.	Quality of service the consumer look forward to compare with the actual level of access to the services and to measure gap is basically customer service at the mental level of a rating.
2003	Bienstock, Demoranville and Smith	Service quality is a subjective cognition of quality: service quality is a subjective determination by the consumer, not an objective assessment.
2004	Hong Jiarong	Quality of service is provided by customers for enterprise service quality evaluation.
2009	Li Wenling	Service quality is a subjective consumers on product or overall evaluation of the service, including the service delivery process and outcomes.
2009	Cai Junyan	Quality of service is the consumer to an object, an event and a process of cognition.
2010	Lin Zhiwei	Service quality is a subjective awareness of consumers based on their prior expectations of service and the actual experiences of service gaps.
2010	Lin Zhiwei	Service quality is a subjective personal cognitive behavior, is accepted by a customer or user in services, the results of subjective judgement, and the service quality is good or bad is perceived by the customer service and expectations of service determined by the sizes of the gaps between. Therefore, service = customer perceived service quality-customer service
2011	Lin Longyi	When purchasing financial products, quality of service for customers, feel the quality of the services provided by banks and their extent.

Data source: the sorting

After the above discussion of sorted, this study concludes the service quality for teachers of distributors to provide services for the publishing industry as a whole evaluation and assessment of student learning outcomes if the publishing house provided actual achievement than teacher's psychological expectations, which is a high quality of service, on the contrary, lower quality of service.

Measuring the dimensions of service quality because scholars study the difference in different industry. The research object of the press belong to the services sector, Parasuraman, three scholars to develop quality of service questionnaire, it can help the service sector assess customer expectations for service quality, can also assist in press attention of the dealer managers and improve the quality of services. This study used the 1991 Parasuraman three scholars, such as the proposed "fix SERVQUAL" scale, according to the needs of this study, developed quality of service measure dimensions, including: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and care of five dimensions, its dimensions are as follows:

(A) Tangible property: entity service equipment, service accessibility, service content and carriage.

(B) Reliability: stability and accuracy of the service.

(C) Responsiveness: willingness to serve and immediate.

(D) Guarantee: Service staff have the knowledge, courtesy, respect and ability to implement the results trustworthy.

(E) Care: passion for customer care and service, able to provide individual services.

2.2 Satisfaction

First proposed in 1965, Cardozo customer satisfaction (customer satisfaction) concept, the research found that customers expected and actual gaps will influence the satisfaction, improving customer satisfaction will increase customer repurchase intention, and customer will purchase the other products. In 1969 Howard and Sheth satisfaction to consumer theory, they believe that satisfaction is the sacrifice paid by consumers in order to purchase products (such as time and money) and receive compensation or remuneration (for example, products and services) the appropriateness of a cognitive state. Oliver (1981) believe that customer satisfaction is the emotional reaction of a particular Exchange. Parasuraman et al. (1988) customer satisfaction is receiving a service response, and the emotional response is from the service's real feelings and expectations before the service is inconsistent. Woodside, Frey and Daly (1989) argue that customer satisfaction is the general attitude of customers by following the consumption, which reflects the degree of customers in the consumer likes and dislikes. Kolter (1994), integrated academics pointed out that consumer satisfaction from consumer products before buying expectations and expectations, and after purchasing the actual cognitive performance product features or services, formed after the comparison of the degree of pleasure or disappointment. If the gap between the two, you are satisfied or not satisfied with negative feelings and cognitive performance equal expectations, are moderately satisfied or feel no difference. Kolter (1999) and customer satisfaction is a proposed buyer before purchasing post-purchase evaluation of expectations for product quality.

3. Methods

3.1 Research Framework

This study mainly to elementary school teachers point to explore quality of service, the impact of satisfaction and repurchase intention to prove that quality of service through the satisfaction which affects repurchase intention. Detailed framework shown in Figure 1.

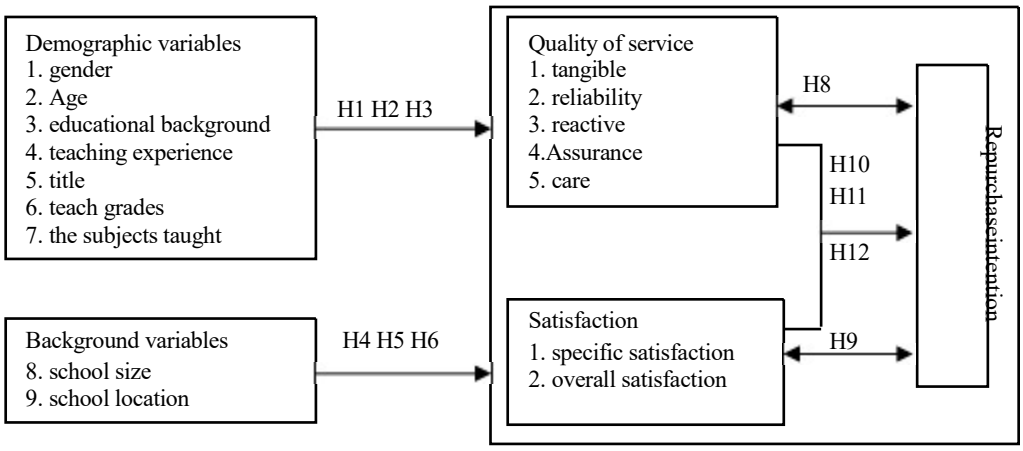

Figure 1 Study

3.2 Research Hypotheses

On the basis of research objectives, research questions, literature reviews and research framework analysis, proposed alternative hypothesis of the study are as follows:

(A) The assumption of differences

(B) Relevance assumption

H1: Demographic variables on the press, significant differences in quality of service.

H2：Demographic variables have significant differences on satisfaction of the publishing house.

H3: Demographic variables on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different.

H4: Background variables on the press, significant differences in quality of service.

H5: Background variables have significant differences on satisfaction of the publishing house.

H6: Background variables on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different.

H7: Press service quality and satisfaction have a significant impact on the relevant .

H8: Press service quality and repurchase intention has a significant impact on the relevant .

H9: Press satisfaction and repurchase intention has a significant impact on the relevant .

(C) Affect the relationship between the variables

H10: Satisfaction with service quality have significant predictive power .

H11: Service quality of repurchase intention have significant predictive power .

H12: Satisfaction repurchase intention have significant predictive power .

The study in early March 103 to the end of March, Total issuance of 36 schools, issued a total of 384 formal questionnaires, recovery in early April, and recycled a total 368 questionnaires, recovery rates of up to 95.83%, after discounting invalid 18 questionnaires, a total of 350 questionnaires questionnaire was 91.15%, with each school questionnaires, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3 Formal Questionnaire Sampling, Recycling to Schools List

School size	Name of school	Number of distributed	The number of recovered back	Invalid questionnaire	Valid questionnaires
The following 12 classes	LANGUAGE AND CULTURE 103, Chun Liu, Fang Yuan , Han Po , Shaanxi, Yumin , Nankang , fresh water , Tan Gan , Kada , KwongHing , Ming Sheng, Luo house , Taiping	90	85	5	80
13 to 24 classes	Pusin , success, Hunan , Po salt bridge, chutang , Ayutthaya , the old building , Lo Green , member of the East	110	104	8	96
25 or more classes	Yuying , Omura, Ming is , Erlin , Zhongshan, retreat , Tanaka , South Guo , Yongjing , Compass , livelihood	184	179	5	174
Total	36	384	368	18	350

4. Results and Conclusion

A whole overview of this chapter is to present research, and according to the aforementioned study and discussion, conclusions and recommendations. Explore the different backgrounds of teachers in service quality, satisfaction and repurchase intention of differences in service quality, satisfaction and repurchase intentions related; then analyze service quality, satisfaction and wishes all facets of change scenarios. Finally, the findings of

the research, consolidated conclusions, and conclusions put forward specific recommendations for reference by publishers and related research.

According to the results of this study, the validation of the hypotheses of the study result summaries Table 4.

Table 4 Research Results Summary Table

Research hypotheses	Verification results
H1: demographic variables on the press, significant differences in quality of service	Partially substantiated
1.1 gender on the press, significant differences in quality of service	Partially substantiated
1.2 age of publishing significant differences in quality of service	Not established
1.3 quality of education services for the Publishing House has significant differences	Not established
1.4 years of teaching experience to press significant differences in quality of service	Not established
1.5 titles of press quality of service were significantly different	Not established
1.6 teaches first-grade quality of service to the Publishing Househas significant differences	Not established
H2: demographic variables have significant differences on satisfaction of the publishing house.	Partially substantiated
2.1 gender there was significant difference satisfaction with the publishing house	establishment
2.2 Age on satisfaction of the publishing house were significantly different	Not established
2.3 Education background to the satisfaction of the publishing house there is a significant difference	Not established
2.4 Teaching experience of significant differences in satisfaction with the publishing house	Not established
2.5 Titles significant differences in satisfaction with the publishing house	Not established
2.6 Teach grades have significant differences in satisfaction of the Press	Not established
H3: demographic variables on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different.	Partially substantiated
3.1 repurchase intention of sex on the Publishing House has significant differences	establishment
3.2 age repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Not established
3.3 educational background on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Not established
3.4 years of teaching experience on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Not established
3.5 title repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Not established
3.6 teaches grade repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Not established
H4: work background variables on the press, significant differences in quality of service.	Partially substantiated
4.1 size of press quality of service there is a significant difference	Not established
4.2 location of press quality of service there is a significant difference	establishment
H5: background variables have significant differences on satisfaction of the publishing house.	Partially substantiated
5.1 school satisfaction with the publishing house were significantly different	Not established
5.2 the school where significant differences in satisfaction with the publishing house	establishment
H6: background variables on repurchase intention of publishing house were significantly different	Partially substantiated
6.1 school scale on repurchase intention of publishing house has significant differences	Not established
6.2 position repurchase intention of publishing house has significant differences	establishment
H7: Publishing House has a significant impact on service quality and satisfaction.	establishment
H8: Publishing House and repurchase intention has significant impact on the quality of service.	establishment
H9: Publishing House of satisfaction and repurchase intention has significant impact.	establishment
H10: quality of service have significantly predict the satisfaction.	establishment
H11: quality of service ability to predict a repurchase intention	establishment
H12: satisfaction with ability to predict a repurchase intention	establishment

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 813–819
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/004

http://www.academicstar.us

Beyond Male and Female: Same-sex Imagery in Malachi 2

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Abstract: Malachi 2.10-13 is often interpreted as a complaint against idolatry. The passage, however, may also contain an atypical form of the prophetic marriage metaphor, in which God is male and Israel is female. In honor of the work of Dr. Randall Bailey and placing African American biblical hermeneutics in conversation with queer theory and masculinity studies, I propose to read the passage in Malachi 2 as an example of the queering of the heterosexual marriage metaphor. God's personification as male and the lack of Judah's personification as female suggests a same-sex marriage metaphor. My argumentation will be based on the Hebrew text and the application of theory and conclude with implications for the text's use in marginalized communities. If this passage in Malachi 2 need not be read in heteronormative terms, then more opportunities for religious discourse about broader views of marriage and intimacy that are not limited to a gender binary become possible.

Key words: marriage metaphor, queer theory, masculinity studies

1. Introduction

Malachi 2.10-16 easily may be described as the most textually challenging section in the entire biblical book. Unclear words and phrases, sudden pronoun shifts, and the possibilities for literal and figurative readings create those challenges. Scholars often interpret the first half of the passage, verses 10–12, as a prophetic critique of idolatry, but the interpretation may also contain an atypical form of the prophetic marriage metaphor. In texts such as Hosea 2, Jeremiah 2-3, and Ezekiel 16 and 23, God, personified as male, complains about the unfaithfulness of his wife Israel. Malachi 2 seems to suggest that God is the wife, distressed that "Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord...and has married the daughter of a foreign god" (2.11). This is the most common metaphorical reading of the passage, and I repeat it in a recent commentary on Haggai and Malachi. Based on those shifting pronouns and consistent gendering of God in the Hebrew Bible as male, however, the most common reading need not be the only reading.

Placing Mal 2.10-13 in conversation with feminist theory, queer theory, and masculinity studies suggests that the passage may also be read as an example of the queering of the heterosexual marriage metaphor. God's personification as male and the lack of Judah's personification as female suggest a same-sex marriage metaphor. While such an idea might have been impossible in Malachi's post-exilic context, it certainly may be possible in the 21st century. Malachi 2 can be added to a small but growing number of biblical texts that challenge heteronormativity and facilitate conversations about love and intimacy that are not limited to a gender essentialist binary.

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2. Malachi 2 and Queer Theory

In her response essay to the Hebrew Bible chapters in Bible Trouble: Queer Reading at the Boundaries of Biblical Scholarship, S. Tamar Kamionkowski writes, "The political and social agenda of bringing down heteronormativity (an agenda that I share) is the primary aim of these authors, and it seems to me that the biblical text and other cultural media are tools, or the means by which the political agenda is addressed" (2011, p. 132). How can this be done, particularly when working with a canon that so often seems to legitimate compulsory heterosexuality? Those who have no interest in Leviticus, for example, will quote Leviticus 18.22 as proof for the "sin of homosexuality." And prooftexting combined with biblical literalism has historically produced bad outcomes - the history of slavery in the United States is simply one negative result among many. One answer to the question of how to use the Bible in revolutionary ways may be found at the intersection of feminist theory, queer theory, and masculinity studies. As Joseph A. Marchal notes, "Queer studies, then, has deep and significant roots in feminist theoretical work" (2014: 263). By definition, queer theory challenges what is considered "normal" or "natural," along with the connotations of those words as positive and queer as negative (Marchal, 2014, p. 264). Similar to feminist theory, masculinity studies works against fixed views of gender, recognizing gender as a social construction that can and should be critiqued. Marchal notes that "masculinity studies aims to denaturalize gender, both masculinity and femininity, contesting hegemonic conceptions of masculinity and the accompanying, oppressive views of femininity" (2014, p. 269). Masculinity, however, is not static; there are multiple forms, some of which can become hegemonic and others that can be undermined.

So, a queer reading of the prophetic marriage metaphor in general and Malachi 2 in particular not only resists the heteronormativity seemingly embedded in the metaphor (Macwilliam, 2011, pp. 35–54) but also uses the gendering of God as a way to undermine the metaphor itself. Stuart Macwilliam notes that בהא, to love, when used to describe God's action towards people, refers almost exclusively to God's love of men (2011, p. 39). Already, the Hebrew text includes an element of uncertainty regarding sexuality; although the marriage metaphor appears to glorify heteronormativity as natural and divinely sanctioned, the metaphor itself is not airtight, since male Israel is God's lover. And the Hebrew Bible consistently genders God as male (Macwilliam, 2011, p. 68). As Macwilliam notes, "The fundamental metaphorical gendering of Yhwh is a triumph of gender performativity, and the apparent reluctance to abandon it is a tribute to its effective use of the naturalization process" (Macwilliam, 2011, p. 65). This reluctance is clear in feminist readings of Malachi 2, which are more comfortable personifying God as female than leaving God as male and then wrestling with Judah's personification as male.

3. Malachi 2 and Feminist Theory

The recognition that the marriage metaphor in Malachi is not like the others does not lead to a challenge of heteronormativity. Gerlinde Baumann calls Mal 2. 10-16 an example of "prophetic marriage imagery" (2003, p. 41), noting that the metaphor has flipped: "In Malachi the gender of the actors has changed: Now it is the male Judah who enters into a marriage with another woman. In this way, on the level of gender roles, the prophetic marriage imagery has been altered by its reception in Malachi: Now it is the male partner, not the female, who has worshiped foreign gods" (2003, p. 215). Judah, seen as male, has betrayed God by marrying "the daughter of a foreign god" (Mal 2.11); the verb לאב, to marry, is third person masculine singular. Baumann, borrowing from Abel Isaksson's 1965 work, concludes that Malachi personifies God as a woman, Judah's betrayed wife, and notes

"the shift in Judah's gender and the 'reversed metaphor' with YHWH in the female role" (2003, p. 217).

Not everyone, however, accepts the reversed metaphor. Markus Zehnder actually rejects a figurative reading of Mal 2.11 because it "would result in YHWH taking the role of a bride which contradicts the normal reverse order in which Israel is the bride and YHWH the bridegroom (cf. Hos., Jer., Ezek., DtJes)" (Zehnder, 2003, p. 228; emphasis mine). God must remain a man but without interrogating the implications of a male-male marriage metaphor; instead, Zehnder is much more comfortable with a metaphorical reading of Mal 2.13, in which the second masculine plural verbs refer not to men weeping at God's altar but to women whose husbands have abandoned them (2003, p. 234).

Zehnder, however, is a noticeable exception to the interpretive rule of Mal 2. Writing a chapter four years ago for a book that came out this month, I used other scholars to echo Baumann's argument about the flipped marriage metaphor, in which the male and female roles are reversed. Julia M. O'Brien argues that Mal 2.11 describes Judah first as female (הדגב) (bagdah, 3rd person feminine singular — "Judah has been faithless") and then as male (ללח) (hillel, 3rd person masculine singular — "Judah has profaned"). The shift makes Judah the husband and God the wife, reversing the traditional marriage metaphor (O'Brien, 1996, pp. 247–249). David L. Petersen notes that "[YHWH] is here viewed as the spouse of Israel, but this time a female spouse of the male Israel. The gender of the spouses is different from the book of Hosea, in which [YHWH] was the male spouse and Israel the female" (1995, p. 203). Martin A. Shields argues that in Mal 2.10-12's critique of idolatry, Judah abandons his bride YHWH and marries another goddess instead (1999, pp. 68–69, 72–73, 78).

But a queer analysis calls for the marriage metaphor to be flipped again, and just as Hebrew verbs make Judah a woman and then a man, Hebrew verbs keep God a man and not a woman. With apologies to my 2011 self, I missed this four years ago. Mal 2.11 says that "Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord, which he loves"; the verb for "he loves", which refers to God, is בהא, third person masculine singular. God remains male in the text, and the scholarly assumption of feminine personification, including my own, is just that, an assumption. If the author of Malachi had wanted to personify God as female, then another verb shift easily could have happened. It didn't. The insistence upon a flipped marriage metaphor reinforces an expected heteronormativity at the expense not only of the text in question but also of the Hebrew Bible's consistent gendering of God as male, even when creating metaphors that have nothing to do with marriage. Jeremiah 13 comes to mind, with Israel being described as God's loincloth, which unfortunately does not serve its proper purpose (13.11). In every use of the word loincloth (רוזא) [ezor], however, the reference is to a man. Additionally, Erin Runions, while suggesting that God could be either gender in Ezekiel 16 (pp. 157, 159, 165-166), describes God's portrayal as a jealous deity and states that God typically is viewed as masculine (2001, pp. 157, 159, 165-166). She suggests that God may be a parent and not a lover and that "such a reading does have the extra-textual effect of challenging the predominant heterosexist reading of the character of [YHWH]" (Runions, 2001, pp. 167). As Jonathan Stökl notes, most Hebrew Bible prophets are male, just like their deity; in the ancient Near East, "there was a common concept...that gods spoke through prophets of the same gender" (Stökl, 2009, pp. 89, 87). Prophets do not marry the deity, which makes the marriage metaphor quite puzzling, especially considering that "marriage in the Hebrew Bible, Mari, and the Neo-Assyrian Empire was defined heterosexually" (Stökl, 2009, pp. 20, 90, 92). Stökl concludes that "Israel's God, YHWH, was male…[because] in a patriarchal and monotheistic society...such as biblical Israel, the only god is male" (Stökl, 2009, pp. 98–99).

If the God in Mal 2.11 is male, and Judah is male, and the prophet expresses God's unhappiness about Judah's new marriage, then God appears as a male lover jilted by his male partner. This does not seem like a

radical argument, since every Hebrew verb has a person, gender, and number; identifying such verbs often feels like playing a game of connect the dots. But the implications of that game could be significant. Marchal writes that "the relation of queer to regimes of the normal and the natural is crucial for the development of queer activism and the parallel forms it takes in the academy" (2014, p. 263). Similarly, Ruth Goldman calls for queer theorists to use their work to benefit the lives of real queer people, regardless of color, class, or sexual orientation (1996, pp. 169-180). What would it mean to use this small passage in Malachi in queer ways?

4. Queer Theory, Feminist Theory, and African-American Biblical Practice

In African American Protestant communities, where the Bible has pride of place, it would perhaps precipitate a rethinking of the opposition to same-sex relationships on the grounds that such relationships are not biblical (http://conservativetribune.com/black-pastors-threaten). This will be no easy task, however, particularly in the wake of the Supreme Court's June 2015 ruling that legalized same-sex marriage across the United States. A recent poll indicates that only 34% of African American Protestants support same-sex marriage. In July, an official Christian Methodist Episcopal Church statement reaffirmed that marriage is between one man and one woman. Same-sex marriages "are contrary to biblical teaching" and church discipline and cannot happen in a CME church, according to the College of Bishops[1]. The National Baptist Convention clarified their position after the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act in 2013, writing to their military chaplains in January 2014 that because of Gen 2, the chaplains cannot perform same-sex marriages[2].

And even looking like you are in favor of the institution can be controversial. Just ask T.D. Jakes, who had to backtrack twice from a HuffPost Live interview that suggested a possible reconsideration of same-sex marriage on his part. Jakes responded on Facebook in August that his pastoral method for LGBTQ people is evolving, but not his theology. He wrote, "My position on the subject has been steadfast and rooted in scripture," citing 2 Tim 3.16, Eph 5.31, Rom 1.24-29, and Heb 13.4[3]. The Ephesians text quotes Gen 2.24, a statement about men leaving their parental homes when they marry women; beyond that, the prooftexts become tricky. Hebrews says that extramarital sex is wrong — "Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled" (Heb 13.4); while the first-century context of the verse certainly fits a heteronormative reading, that reading does not have to apply to the twenty-first century, because the verse itself does not mention anyone's gender.[4] The Romans text creates a similar problem, as a student in my independent study course on queer theory pointed out years ago — Paul considers same sex acts as punishment for idolatry. Remove the latter, and you challenge the former. What about LGBTQ followers of Jesus? Can they be called idolaters?

It is Jakes' reference to 2 Timothy that opens the door a bit more to a reconsideration of same-sex relationships in biblical texts. The verse reads, "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." That should include Mal 2.11's doubly flipped marriage metaphor, adding it to a small number of Hebrew Bible texts that queer theologians recognize as verses that resist

[1] http://www.thecmechurch.org/Announcements/officialstatement_samesexmarriage.htm.

[2] http://www.nationalbaptist.com/about-us/position-statements.html.

[3] http://m.christianpost.com/news/bishop-t-d-jakes-says-he-has-not-evolved-on-homosexuality-and-does-not-endorse-gay-marriage-142427/.

[4] Creflo Dollar cites the same verse as proof for his argument that same-sex marriages are wrong, but he uses the Message translation, which adds "wife and husband" to the first part of the verse (http://www.creflodollarministries.org/BibleStudy/Articles.aspx?id=435). There is not enough time to talk about the dangers of paraphrasing here, but consider this a ten-second warning against it.

heteronormativity, including 1 Sam 18.1 and 20.17 and 2 Sam 1.26 (the story of the love David and Jonathan had for each other), as well as the bond between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in the book of Ruth. In the U.S., the Bible has always been the primary source in Christian ethical debates; being mildly aggressive by nature, I am not one to cede ground in my research area unless I have no choice. And in the interests of full disclosure, I chair a Gender and Women's Studies department at a Catholic college and am an LGBTQ ally. Because of my friends, colleagues, and students, plus the climate in which I work, I have a lot of skin in this game.

Even if I didn't, the nasty fight going on within the Church of God in Christ about same-sex relationships and LGBTQ churchgoers should worry everyone. Exactly one month ago, a letter appeared on the COGIC website in response to an ongoing dispute between Elder Earl Carter and Bishop Charles E. Blake. The letter reminded the reader that homosexuality is "sinful and immoral", based on 1 Cor 6.9-11 (the text says that "male prostitutes [and] sodomites", Paul's attempt to include both partners in male same-sex activity, "will [not] inherit the kingdom of God."), so COGIC preachers can speak against same-sex intimacy; however, such preaching cannot be offensive or vulgar. In November 2014, Elder Carter said that he hoped gay men would bleed monthly from their anus, "like a girl"[5].[6] The letter condemns the comment as hate speech and degrading to women. Because Elder Carter has not apologized, instead publicly criticizing Bishop Blake, the letter concludes with a petition, calling on him either to stop the criticism or leave the denomination.

Before giving COGIC an unqualified pat on the back, however, two points need to be made. First, the other ministers did not and do not have a problem with the rest of Elder Carter's statements from last November, and that may explain the continued nasty rhetoric in his December 2014 response to Bishop Blake's apology from the previous month. Here is a very, very brief snapshot of Carter's lengthy response: "Well, I found bringing my son to a so called Holy Convocation and being inundated by sissies, homosexuals, gays, down-lows or whatever you choose to call them offensive! Can you imagine coming to the Holy Convocation and having to explain how the effeminate men or homosexuals get to serve, sing, shout and dance without any correction?...That is to say: stay out of the choir, stay away from praise and worship, stay out of the youth departments, and for [heaven's] sake stay out of the pulpit, and please don't even think about serving communion to the Lord's people"[7]. If gay men cannot serve in a COGIC church in any capacity or even praise God, one could easily ask whether they are welcome at all. The answer appears to be no, and Elder Carter is simply taking the COGIC position to its logical conclusion. Interestingly, however, he quotes Mal 2.7-9 as support for his argument, which warns priests that failure to give the correct information to others will bring divine punishment. The prooftext implies that he has the correct instruction. As with all prooftexting, however, it ignores what comes directly after it, which is Mal 2.10-12, complete with that potentially subversive marriage metaphor. It could be entertaining to see Elder Carter wrestle with that.

The entertainment would be short-lived, because of the second troublesome point that the COGIC controversy raises. The petition does not exist because of a concern about the ways in which LGBTQ people are perceived in Elder Carter's preaching. The petition is the result of what, of all things, pimppreacher.com calls a "COGIC coup d'etat" and "Bishop on Bishop crime"[8]. The COGIC letter calls Elder Carter's attack against

[5] http://www.cogic.org/blog/church-of-god-in-christ/a-letter-to-the-members-of-the-church-of-god-in-christ-inc/.

[6] In a note explaining why Gen 1 cannot be liberative, because of its use against women, Joseph Marchal writes, "Such a stance reflects how queer hermeneutics often are (or at least can be) forms of feminist critique, while further reminding that women are among queer folk, and queer folk are often treated 'as women'" (2014, p. 278).

[7] http://exministries.tv/dr-earl-carter-response-to-bishop-blakes-apology/.

[8] http://pimppreacher.com/post/129253458190/earl-carter-manifesto-says-presiding-bishop.

Bishop Blake "scandalous and deceitful," "unwarranted, baseless and demonic," and deplores the fact that the accusations "of immoral behavior" have no foundation[9]. The attacks, however, claim that Bishop Blake engaged in same-sex relationships, or what the trusty pimppreacher.com calls an attack on "Bishop Charles Blake's manhood"[10]. It is the COGIC letter's silence about the accusations and pimp preacher's description of them that should give people pause. The almost uncritical dismissal of LGBTQ people as sinful, immoral gender-benders means that the greatest insult you can level against a black male preacher is to imply that he is gay. If such rhetoric and attitudes remain unquestioned, then any apology to LGBTQ people for "extreme" language sounds hollow. On a fundamental level, Elder Carter is only behaving as he has been taught, and COGIC can't be too surprised if the student eventually turns on the teacher.

5. Conclusion

Even if Mal 2.11 isn't a doubly flipped metaphor, at minimum you have a gender-bending deity. Those who argue for a reversed marriage metaphor suggest that God is characterized as female, challenging the idea that God must always be the hegemonic male. And if God is male in this verse, and I think "he" is, then he's not a hegemonic male here either. Instead, God is holding up a small sign to Judah, which says, "Why did you leave me?" The relationship between deity and people has been broken, on the people's end, and they have chosen someone else, because they can. Divine-human relationships are as messy and complicated as strictly human ones, and they happen regardless of the gender of the parties involved. Part of the reason the marriage metaphor exists is precisely because the prophets are trying to explain the closeness of the relationship between men and their male God, and marriage suggests an intimacy that no other relationship in the ancient world could lawfully have. Today, the call to love God "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut 6.5) refers to anyone who believes in it, as attendance at a Conservative synagogue demonstrates; all present, regardless of gender, recite the passage after one of the chants of the Shema: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one" (Deut 6.4 – my translation). One interesting verse in Malachi does not a theology or an ethical revolution make, but that verse is part of the canon, too, and I hope it can at least continue a conversation about why opposing same-sex relationships need not be a litmus test for Christian orthodoxy.

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 820–823
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/005

http://www.academicstar.us

Transition University Answers the Challenge

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Abstract: The challenge of providing same-age peer mentoring in a community based setting to high school students with disabilities has been answered over the past few years by providing programs at local universities. Transition University (TU) is an on-campus biweekly program located at Jacksonville State University (JSU). This program provides over 50 high school students who are 18–21 with same-age peer mentoring and instruction in transition skills by teacher candidates completing an undergraduate special education teacher program at JSU. The success of this program has led to an increase in social and vocational transition skills for the high school students, hands-on teaching opportunities for the teacher candidates, and collaborative interaction among the high school teachers. Transition University has also led to the development of a grant which will fund a two-year residential program soon to be implemented at JSU.

Key words: transition, teacher education, collaboration

1. Introduction

For many students with significant intellectual disabilities who are ages 18–21, interacting during the school day with same-age peers without disabilities is a formidable challenge. Benefits of same-age peer mentoring to students with disabilities include an increase in self-confidence, self esteem, self-determination, and a decrease in problem behavior (McGuire & McDonnell, 2008; Zambo, 2010). However, a majority of students without disabilities who are 18–21 graduate from high school and move on to post-secondary education at a community college, vocational school, or university, or will join the work force (Causton-Theoharis, Ashby & DeClouette, 2009). Those students with intellectual disabilities who follow an alternative curriculum often remain behind in the high school setting until age 21 or 22. Therefore, opportunities to benefit from same age peer mentoring are very limited or non-existent.

University campus settings are becoming increasingly popular as a solution for providing students with intellectual disabilities access to same-age peer mentoring and the opportunity for additional vocational training (Carroll, Blumberg & Petroff, 2008; Farley, Gibbons & Cihak, 2014; Kelley & Westling, 2013; Papay & Bambara, 2011; Uditsky, Frank, Hart & Jeffery, 1987). On-campus programs for students with disabilities have increased over the past few decades from fewer than 25fifteen years ago (Hart, Mele-McCarthy, Pasternack, Zimbrich & Parker, 2004), to almost 250 programs in the United States alone (Think College, 2016). Transition University is one such program.

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2. Description of Program

Transition University (TU) began as a collaboration between two high school teachers who taught transition skills to students with significant intellectual and other disabilities, and two university instructors of special education at Jacksonville State University (JSU). These two high school teachers had heard of programs where college age high school students with disabilities were able to visit local college campuses. The JSU instructors also saw this as an opportunity to: (1) assist the local teachers with transition training in a community based setting, (2) provide their high school students (18–21) with same-age peer mentoring from university teacher candidates in the special education teacher education program, and (3) give their teacher candidates the opportunity for community based practicum experiences where they would plan and implement both formal and informal instruction in needed transition areas such as community experiences, public transportation, financial management, employment development, self-advocacy, socialization, and recreation.

Any program like TU would not be possible without support from both the university and the local school systems. The high school students travel biweekly to the campus for this program where JSU classrooms are provided for TU activities. Participating school systems provide transportation to the campus. TU requires that certified teachers (or a licensed substitute) accompany high school students to campus. Therefore, the school also provides a half-day substitute to instruct any of the teacher's remaining younger students. The high school teachers are able to observe formally and informally the teacher candidates' lessons. They offer advice on how to improve instruction and submit topics to enhance their high school students' individual educational plan's (IEP) transition goals. Often the teachers follow up these lessons with further instruction upon return to the high school classrooms. Additionally, these teachers have opportunities to collaborate with each other. It is not unusual in small school systems to have only one high school transition teacher. Through TU, collaborative opportunities for these teachers are provided so that they can share instructional strategies and state standard updates.

The typical TU daily program begins with morning arrival where the high school students engage in socialization with the university teacher candidate peers and with students from other participating high schools. Because multiple schools participate, some students and teachers arrived early, while others who come from more distant districts arrive later. Teacher candidate peers meet the busses and escort the students and teachers to the designated meeting place. Once all high school students have arrived, instruction on the designated transition skill is provided by teacher candidate peers. These lessons have been planned in advance by the teacher candidates, approved by the university instructors and supervisors, and then shared with those teacher candidate peers who served as teacher assistants.

After classroom instruction, the entire group embark upon a trip (often using the campus transit system) that accentuates the lesson topic. Sites visited are both on-campus and off-campus and include the university art gallery, planetarium, post office, library, stadium, and coliseum, in addition to the local town pharmacy, bank, grocery store, discount store, nursing home, and hospital. Usually, the final stop for TU is at the JSU campus dining hall where TU participants have opportunities to mingle with other university students, make dining choices, and increase their self-determination skills.

Participation in JSU Transition University (TU) has multiplied from 8 students within two schools in one local school system, to over 50 high school students representing eight different school systems. Teacher candidate peers continue to take the lead in providing instruction, but additional teacher candidates, who are a semester behind in the program, are able to participate by providing assistance, much like paraprofessionals. This

experience not only benefits the high school students by allowing for additional one-on-one or small group interactions, but also benefits the teacher candidate peers, who will probably supervise paraprofessional in the future.

When interviewed, high school teachers who had participated in TU for at least one year or more indicated that they had witnessed positive educational outcomes in several of their students. One example involved a young woman with autism who usually did not speak in her high school classroom. She shocked her teacher and spoke in front of the TU students, and later proceeded to introduce herself to several college students sitting at a nearby table in the dining hall. A leap in communication skills was verified in several other students, as well. Teacher candidate peers also witnessed generalization of various other skills taught when after lessons on appropriate social contact, the high school students were able to introduce themselves and carry on conversations in several community settings. Many students return to their high school classrooms and share with their younger classmates the lesson learned at TU. The experiences at TU have also been known to reveal undiscovered talents. After visiting the on campus art gallery, one high school student went back to his classroom and sketched from memory a picture very similar to one of the ones he had seen on display.

3. Conclusion

The success of Transition University has led to the development of a new two- year residential program. This new on-campus vocational program entitled *On to JSU* is the result of a federal grant and revolves around the premise of person-centered planning. Once implemented, students with intellectual disabilities will be able to reside and take classes at JSU for two years. During that time, they will attend designated university classes, participate in campus social opportunities, and complete a vocational internship. Although such a program may not be appropriate for all TU high school participants, for some, this may be an option to continue transition and vocational training towards personal independence in a familiar setting.

Programs offering post-secondary opportunities to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities are increasing at colleges and universities nationwide and beyond. JSU's TU and *On to JSU* provide essential experiences for students and teacher candidate peers thus serving as a model for other institutions. Perhaps the lessons learned and the positive outcomes observed from these programs will serve to inspire more universities to provide similar opportunities for their local students with disabilities.

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 824–829
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/006

http://www.academicstar.us

Written Corrective Feedback: Issues and Implications

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Abstract: This paper reports findings from a study that looked at how teachers provide written corrective feedback (WCF) on students' writing, and what students do with teachers' WCF in the university EFL context of Japan. Teachers' and students' perceptions on WCF were also investigated. Questionnaires for teachers and students with open and closed questions were used, where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. Altogether sixty students from two different proficiency levels and six teachers participated. Results showed a strong preference for WCF on all grammar errors among teachers and students. However, there is a lack of consensus in the WCF methodologies used by teachers, and only a limited range of WCF methods were used. Most students made use of teacher's WCF in subsequent writing, but only a minority believed that they could learn from WCF. The paper ends with a discussion of the implications that arise from the study.

Key words: written corrective feedback, English as a Foreign Language, direct error feedback, indirect error feedback, error codes

1. Introduction

With the advance of technology, approaches to providing written corrective feedback (WCF) in students' writing have changed dramatically over the years. Despite these changes, WCF has remained an essential element in writing courses, especially when learners go through a multiple-drafting process (Keh, 1990). Studies have found that when teachers provide feedback on students' writing, not only would students have a higher motivation to revise their drafts but also improved the accuracy in their writing more over time (McGarrel & Verbeem, 2007; Ashwell, 2000; Chandler, 2003). Given the wealth of studies that looked at different methods of WCF (Robb et al., 1986; Ashwell, 2000; Muncie, 2000; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Chandler, 2003; Bitchener et al., 2005; Hamid, 2007; McGarrel & Verbeem, 2007), very little work has focused on how teachers and students practice WCF and their reactions to it in the EFL context of Japan, where grammar errors are severely frowned upon in a testing-oriented learning environment. This study aims to examine the beliefs and attitudes teachers and students in a Japanese university context have towards WCF by addressing the following questions:

(1) How do teachers give WCF on students' grammar errors?
(2) What are teachers' perceptions on WCF?
(3) What do students' do with teachers' WCF in their writing?
(4) What are students' perceptions on WCF?

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2. The Study

This study looked at six writing classes of two proficiency levels at a Japanese university in Japan. Altogether, 60 students and 6 teachers teaching these classes in the school of Science and Technology participated. Two questionnaires were used. The ones for teachers was written in English, and the ones for students was in English and Japanese. Both were designed and piloted with a small group of teachers and students through personal contact, then revised and finalized.

All teachers were native speakers of English, and all of them had seven to ten years of experience in teaching English writing. Three teachers were teaching first year students, and three were teaching second year students.

For the teacher's questionnaire, qualitative data were summarized and categorized. Quantitative data were analyzed by totaling the number of answer options selected. Students' responses were tabulated and calculated into percentages for each answer. Similarly, qualitative data were summarized and categorized.

3. Results

3.1 Teachers

Four teachers reported that they give WCF on all grammar errors regardless of the different levels they were teaching. In addition, teachers gave similar reasons for adapting this WCF strategy because the consequences for students not knowing errors are adverse such as failing exams or affecting their ability to publish academically in their field of study. All four teachers also mentioned that they believe it is their job to point out all errors, therefore; even though they find it extremely time–consuming and tiring to give WCF on all errors, they still do it.

Only two teachers reported that they provided WCF selectively, but for different reasons. One teacher said that marking all errors is too time consuming for teachers and demotivating for students, and does not enhance students' self-correcting skills. When asked about the major principles for selecting errors, their responses also varied. One teacher said the errors selected were directly linked to the current instructional focuses in class, while another teacher said errors were selected on an ad hoc basis.

In terms of the type of WCF, the most frequently used WCF strategy was indirect feedback where three teachers reported that they always or often indicated the location of errors explicitly by underlining or circling without telling students what kind of errors they were. Two teachers said they gave WCF by categorizing errors using a coding system. They believe that it is important in terms of learner training, such as mentioned by one teacher: "I find that by showing the location of the errors and explaining the type of error with correction symbols, my first year students improve their writing. By the time they are second year students, they have more experience with writing and editing." Teachers who used error codes believe that it is important for learners to become more independent in terms of correcting and editing their own writing. Therefore, it is crucial for students to think about their own errors before correction. One teacher said, "I rarely give students correct answers because I want them to think about errors, but I tell them what kind of errors they've made in the writing."

Only one teacher directly corrected students' errors for them because of the confusing nature of error codes: "I have found in the past that marking with codes and lines creates a puzzle to be solved, and that can sometimes be difficult for students and so demotivates them, or if they do solve it, they have focused on the solution, and not on the error, so the error is not undone and they just repeat the error again." All teachers also mentioned that they always actively encourage the learners to ask questions with regards to teacher's WCF, either during class time or

outside class time. Two teachers said that they set aside time after class every week for student and teacher conferences to clear any queries students have towards WCF. However, teacher also mentioned that students are not very proactive in raising questions even when they are confused.

When teachers were asked to reflect on the overall effectiveness of their current error feedback practice on students' progress, most teachers had positive comments. Four teachers thought their students were making "good progress". One teacher considered students making "some progress", while only one teacher thought the students were making "little progress" in their grammatical accuracy in writing.

3.2 Students

Almost all students (92%) said they preferred teachers giving WCF on all their errors for similar reasons. They believe that errors in writing have severe adverse effects on their academic study or later career, therefore; must be avoided altogether. Students also considered it teacher's job to detect errors for them because they are incapable of doing it alone. Only 7% of all students preferred teachers giving WCF on selected errors because they think too many corrections is demotivating and impossible to rewrite. Overall, 81% students think positively towards the use or error codes, they think it's efficient and easy to understand. Only 8% of students think they are confusing and only creates more problems.

94% students considered teachers' WCF effective and reported using the WCF in further re-writing tasks as they go through a multiple drafting process because it is required for their course. However, only 7% of students reported benefiting from the rewriting tasks because they believed they could learn from their errors.

4. Discussion and Implications

One limitation of the study was the small sample size, meaning that the results cannot represent the whole population in Japanese universities. Secondly, participants' viewpoints were based on self-reported statements rather than actual writing samples. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, this study uncovered a number of key issues regarding WCF in the Japanese university EFL context.

The findings suggest that both teachers and students considered errors in writing extremely negative, and preferred WCF on all errors. They consider WCF important in language learning, which is in line with Ferris' argument and supports the idea that WCF should be continued.

However, teachers need to consider whether to give WCF on all errors or only on selected errors. Ferris pointed out the effectiveness of selective error feedback: "when it focuses on patterns of error, allowing teachers and students to attend to, say, two or three major errors types at a time, rather dozens of disparate errors" (Ferris, 2002, p. 50). Teachers working in contexts where errors have significant adverse effects such as passing entrance exams, and where tests are high stakes need to re–examine their methodology in going about WCF. If selective WCF benefits students more in the long run, it is important for teachers to discuss their WCF policy amongst themselves, and to share any problems or concerns they might have. In addition, when error codes are used in WCF, care must be taken so that the coding system is systematic amongst teachers so as to avoid confusion. This also points to the importance of having a consistent teacher training programs at the school level if possible, where teachers working in the same context can share and unify their WCF methodologies and error codes, and to regularly discuss the effectiveness of their ongoing WCF practice.

Lastly, the study also showed that teachers' tend to take on too much responsibility in providing WCF, and that teacher's WCF strategies are only limited to either direct or indirect feedback methods. This again points out

the need for a more regular and consistent in-service teacher training program to be put in place, so that teachers can be more confident in trying out different WCF strategies. Teachers need to be made aware of the importance of learner-training, so that students can become more independent in detecting and correcting their errors. Similarly, students need to rely less on teachers for error identification and correction. Activities such as peer-editing and self-check lists can be used more to promote learner autonomy.

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Appendix I

Teachers' questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching English writing?
2. What proficiency level are you currently teaching?
3. In your opinion, what's the main purpose of providing written corrective feedback on students' writing?
4. Which statement best describes your existing written corrective feedback strategy?
   a) I give written corrective feedback on ALL students' grammar errors.
   b) I only give written corrective feedback on students' grammar errors SELECTIVELY.

   In one or two words, briefly explain why you use the above feedback strategy.
5. Which of the following best describes your written corrective feedback strategy?
   a) The errors I select are directly linked to the current instructional focus in class.
   b) The errors I select are related to students' specific feeds. E.g. I know they are weak in prepositions, so I select prepositions.
   c) The errors I select are chosen on an ad hoc basis.
6. Do you use error codes in your feedback?
   a) Yes.
   b) No.
7. If you use error codes, the error codes you use…
   a) were designed by you.
   b) were designed by another teacher and adapted by you.
   c) were taken from an external source such as a textbook.
   d) Others (please specify).
8. What is your opinion with regards to the use of error codes in providing written corrective feedback?
9. Circle the frequency in which you use each of the following corrective feedback techniques according to the scales below.
   a) Never or rarely
   b) Sometimes
   c) Always or often

I indicate (underline/ circle) errors and correct them.	1	2	3
I indicate (underline/circle) errors, correct them and categorize them by using error codes.	1	2	3
I indicate (underline/circle) errors, but I don't correct them.	1	2	3
I indicate (underline/circle) errors and categorize them by using error codes. However, I don't correct them.	1	2	3
I hint the location of errors.	1	2	3
I hint at the location of errors and categorize them by using error codes.	1	2	3

In one or two words, please explain why you utilize the above corrective feedback technique.

10. Approximately, how much time do you spend marking one composition?
    a) Less than 10 minutes.
    b) 10 to 20 minutes.
    c) More than 20 minutes.
11. How would you evaluate the overall effectiveness of your current corrective feedback practice on student progress in writing?
    a) Good progress.
    b) Some progress.
    c) Little progress.
    d) No progress.
12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements according to the scales below.
    1- Strongly disagree
    2- Disagree
    3- Agree
    4- Strongly agree

There is no need for teachers to provide written corrective feedback on errors.	1	2	3	4
Teachers should provide feedback on errors selectively.	1	2	3	4
It is the teachers' responsibility to locate and correct errors.	1	2	3	4
Teachers should vary their corrective feedback strategies according to the error type.	1	2	3	4
Error codes are useful in helping students to correct their errors.	1	2	3	4
It is the students' responsibility to locate and correct their errors.	1	2	3	4
Students should learn to locate and correct their errors.	1	2	3	4

Appendix II

Students' questionnaire

(All questions were in both English and Japanese on the actual questionnaire)

Please circle the appropriate answers.

Which of the following is true?

My English teacher corrects ALL of the grammar errors in my writing.

My English teacher corrects SOME of the grammar errors in my writing.

Before / after looking at your writing, does your teacher tell you the types of errors he/she will select to give corrective feedback on?

Yes.

No.

Which of the following do you prefer?

My teacher gives me written corrective feedback on ALL my errors.

My teacher gives me written corrective feedback on SOME of my errors.

My teacher does NOT give me any written corrective feedback.

Does your teacher use correction codes when giving corrective feedback (i.e., using symbols like V for verb, Adj. for adjective etc.)?

Yes.

No.

If your teacher uses error codes, do you think they are helpful in correcting the errors in your writing?

Yes.

No.

Briefly explain the choice of your answer.

After your teacher has given you corrective feedback in your writing, what do you do?

I look at teacher's feedback and re-write the composition with corrections.

I look at teacher's feedback and re-write with the help of other resources e.g. a dictionary, ask a friend.

I often don't know what to do.

Others. (Please specify)

Which of the following do you agree with?

It is mainly the teacher's responsibility to locate and correct errors in students' writing.

It is mainly the student's responsibility to locate and correct their own errors.

Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 830–841
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/007

http://www.academicstar.us

Political Means and Political Liberalism as "Basic Law": A Developed Reminder Suited to the Crisis

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Abstract: Social Science provides tools of theorizing about social phenomena and social scientists try to select the appropriate tools for each empirical case.

The recent Greek economic crisis seems to be a multi-faced phenomenon as suggested by scientists, journalists, columnists and other social commentators. In this paper we focus on two particular aspects of it: A. The political means normally used to handle complicated situations, some of which are institutional, while some others are informal. B. The related issue of liberal politics and what liberalism has originally been.

The first question will be tackled through a resort to particular aspects of Machiavellian thought, some of which are quite thoughtful, while some others are treated by the author with a certain degree of skepticism. The debate constructed here will be closed with references to some Enlightenment authors, e.g., Descartes, Hume, Kant. The second question aims to develop a re-definition of liberalism, from the point of view of the above discussion, i.e., appropriate political means. It will be shown that liberalism was meant to be a humanizing tool especially as regards penal sentences and, as we argue, a "basic law" for human beings and their basic freedoms.

A final section is being added to help relate theoretical points to the Greek economic crisis. Some relevant social science questions are tackled in the footnotes section.

Key words: postmodernism, new realism, political means, fortune, Greek crisis

> "The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions. " (Locke 1991/1690 in Ball & Ragger 1991, p. 81).

> "It is only light and evidence that can work a change in men's opinions; and that light can in no manner proceed from corporal sufferings, or any other outward penalties. " (Locke 1991/1689 in ibid, p. 77).

> "No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed".

> "The law ought to prohibit only actions harmful to society. What is not prohibited by the law, should not be hindered, nor should anyone be compelled to that which the law does not require. " (Declaration of the French Revolution 1991/1789 in ibid, p. 109).

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"Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted". (Bill of Rights of the US 1791 in ibid, p. 39, art. VIII).

…….

"Adoration of ends opens an appetite for means.

Too many means are to weaken the ends.

I adore means, I adore ends.

I adore means as well as images. " (Kioukias, 2014).

1. Introduction

The years of economic crisis and fiscal reorganization across Europe for all the benefits promised seem to have ushered in some new ideas about political and social order. Order, for example, is supposed to be more important, at least for some time, than some individual rights in order (!) for the European economies to become more efficient and adjustable to global economic competition. Neo-institutionalism, "public market" or "new public management" (e.g., Chandler, 2000; Makrydimitris et al., 2014) have surfaced as new ways of improving governance. So far, so good, but a particular kind of political realism appears to accompany institutional methods and their transparency with the result that several critics feel that various constitutional rights might have been suppressed or misinterpreted (e.g., Manoledakis, 2007).

Yet it may not be solely the Market or the new institutional means to blame. Other students have put the blame on post-modernity[1], that is a culture which maybe rightly sought to overcome some old ideological

[1] Post-modernity is a social science concept which denotes a new phase of late history which has gone beyond classical ideologies and definitive answers to historical and social problems (some basic sources are: Lyotard, 1993 and Cahoone, 1996).

To better substantiate this claim we may remind that political and social institutions are to a great degree shaped by culture. For instance, Max Weber attributed the coming of modern capitalism to the cultural background which to him was the "protestant spirit". However, Weber himself admitted that market functions were observed in nearly all past civilizations: "Capitalism and capitalist enterprises, even with an advanced rationality of capitalist calculation, there have been existed in all civilized countries of the planet, as far as we can judge on the basis of economic documents: In China, Babylon, Egypt, Mediterranean countries of the classic era as well in the Middle Ages" (Weber, 2010). Therefore, in his well known book he appeared to define a new stage of market development (see also Kioukias, 2010, p. 29). The concept of "stages of development" appears in other (different) theories too (e.g., in Brewer1980). If we combine these two theses (importance of culture and stages of development), we confirm the above thesis on the shaping force of postmodernism upon market and politics. Some aspects of "postmodern capitalism" so to speak can be found in Rifkin, 2000 and Drucker, 1996).

Another scholarly current seems to disagree with the previous thesis, arguing that postmodernism, rather than being an autonomous shaping factor (an independent variable we might say), it is in fact the product of late capitalism (e.g., Jameson, 1999). It does not disagree, however, with the thesis of "stages of development", as Jameson talks about "late capitalism". It can be inferred then that there might have been existed a different kind of capitalism which did not produce such symptoms as those allegedly attributed to postmodernism. In addition, I would argue that, since culture refers to regulation of human relationships, it seems to be a wider concept than the market. We cannot, for instance, claim that Babylonian market produced the kind of human relationships observed in Western cultures. In other words, if cultures are different, human relationships will be probably different and markets (organization of production) may differ too. This is particularly evident in non structural factors as in the behavior of the working force and the management. Naturally some common and ecumenical principles – derived from the characteristics of human species- must exist.

In conclusion, in our view, market is a subdivision of a culture and is operated via particular human beings. Sometimes, it increases its power, while some other times politics, technology, religion or ethical norms play a major role in society. Vernant, for example, observed that in the ancient Greek city states the market was both an economic and social place and built according to the general

rigidities (dogmatic narratives), but at the same time contributed to an extreme relativism. The state and the law came under attack, while the political and social fragmentation which followed did not seem to provide an integrated political proposition. It seems that postmodernism is well suited to the transitional phase of the current global economic and political convergence. For as borders increasingly relax, so borders between public and private spheres as well as borders between "private" and "private" seem to do (a theme sometimes expressed by scholars as "hybrid" culture, e.g., Moutsopoulos, 2001).

One particular consequence of this state of affairs is some kind of superficiality as regards political institutions and methods. Sometimes one may come across particularly severe laws, some other times one may find some kind of erratic behaviour, even on the part of decision makers. Thus, we indeed can talk about a new "realism"[2]. This is facilitated by new technologies, as communication provided is often distant and hidden and provides opportunities for lax behavior and speech[3]. It could be argued at this point that the gap created by postmodern culture and the erosion of the state was partly filled with a democracy of the ephemeral personalities, icons and images and finally habits, cultural and/or physical ones (it may be noted here that postmodernism used to "glorify" the partial, the local, the ephemeral, the sarcastic, or the "cult").

More often than not comparing different epochs, that is resorting to some sort of historical analysis (including history of ideas), proves helpful in order to better understand the latter epoch. Consequently, we thought it useful to return to the roots of "realism" and juxtapose it along with classical liberalism. We believe that both traditions in the form of brief interpretations may bring light to some modern crises and hopefully help decision makers and citizens to reconsider some of their options.

2. Political Realism and the Practical Exercise of Power

As it is well known every day politics cannot solely rely on legal statute; as human beings assume the task of making laws "talk", calculations, interests, rhetoric, passions and human relationships are also involved. The latter constitute the real exercise of power (the "actual implementation" function distinguished as it were from the "theoretical" and legislative ones-irrespective of the fact that implementation entails some "theoretical" and non material elements too: e.g., speeches, persuasion techniques, influence). A major figure of political thought, Machiavelli, well understood it and worked more on this side of politics than the institutional side.

Some writers of early modernity thought he pushed his argument too far, for he seemed to overstress atypical methods at the expense of legitimate ones. One of his "enemies", Frederic B', charged him with not bothering about cruel methods, calling him "master of horror" who in addition "softened" words normally associated with "horrible actions". The King seemed quite offended by the "Prince", for he would prefer him to have conveyed to the future statesmen positive messages such as love of education and devotion of life "to the hard task of discovering the truth" (Kioukias, 2009).

political architectonic pattern (e.g., many parallel circles around an acropolis).

[2] A connection between postmodernism and realism is also established by A. Heywood (Heywood, 2007, p. 562) on the grounds that postmodernism brings about a "politics free of ideologies which is concerned more about realism than idealism: it offers political products, not political visions".

[3] Sometimes it is falsely assumed that sociological analysis of mass media and internet is also a critique of their technical capabilities and necessarily aim to question their importance. We would not like to take part in this fallacy. To provide an example, telephone was also a major invention, but it also favoured lax speech, while it contributed to a modification of social relations. With regard to some new forms of publicity, again one may not particularly like certain visual representations, but one may not necessarily reject publicity as such (in all its manifestations).

It is clear that Frederick's style was not especially akin to Machiavelli's cynical descriptions. In addition, he thought that he did not choose the right examples from past History (Frederick, it must be noted wrote at a later time when liberalism had made quite a few advances). As a result, due to such charges, the diplomat from Florence was supposed to have taken the path of a tyrant maker, one who excessively relies on realistic means[4], supposing there can be drawn a sharp distinction between a "superior" code of behaviour and a common ethics code (reserved for the masses). Descartes and David Hume basically agreed on this argument saying that certain practical means suit more tyrannical governments than constitutional ones, even though the former found in Machiavelli's work some interesting observations (Machiavelli in Eleftherotypia, n.d.a) — indeed the kind of comparative analysis pursued, particularly in "Discorsi", justify the claim that he was the founder of modern political science. But, most notably Kant's little book on "Perpetual Peace" was a famous critique of realist and Machiavellian methods, as it sought to establish an ethical and law based political community both at the national and international levels. His main methods consist of toleration of foreign territories, denouncement of conquest, concerted and consensus decision making and legal agreements (Kant, 1992).

More favourable views about this kind of thought argue that it is more rational and democratic (as indeed the thinker urged the statesman to take into regard his people and seek the love of them). In addition, he was supposed to pursue a right cause. This is an argument which gives the goal higher priority than the concrete means to be pursued to achieve this goal (also see note 2). In any event, it could be argued here that democracy is not just about the goals of a political authority; it is also a method in itself (Sartori, 1987, p. 152). Neither is it, we could add, a mere public interest. A good democracy should narrow the scope of public interest, just as it legalizes most areas of social life (and power itself). A leader is not judged by democratic wishes, but by observing the democratic procedures. Therefore we can say that democracy as an end does not justify all kinds of means.

Following Machiavelli, it could be argued that indeed real life is wider than constitutional agreements; that the boundaries of the legal rules are somehow artificial. Would it be possible to shrink all human motives and actions to make them fit with (enforceable) legal formulas? An answer to this could be that laws normally embody common as well as advanced ethics to a great degree. From this point of view, one of the great dilemmas posed by Machiavelli, i.e., a sharp distinction between an advanced ethic versus common ethic, a so to speak platonic distinction between wisdom and common wisdom, need not excite us so much. For much of the wisdom is captured by the laws which in a democratic constitutional order connect the leaders with the led through a common communication code (though intermediaries and representatives are often required to make it functional).

Plato was explicit in that advanced wisdom is communicable-not without hard struggle though. In "Polity" (Plato, Sinclair, 1951, p. 143) he seemed to adopt a particular kind of mysticism by limiting the gift of advanced knowledge to an inner circle. In his "Laws" (Plato, 1992), however, he appeared in favour of "a second best", suggesting that laws can be a sort of benign compromise. Laws in this light are compromised wisdom

[4] By the term "realistic means" we mean here non transparent and not formally legitimized means. The term "realism" in our view is not always clear. In any case we think that a good calculation of real power capabilities is a good aspect of realist school. The suitable means for action in particular cases is another thing which always puzzles statesmen as they have to take into account the existing institutional environment. The term "policy selling" is relevant here. We also think that the question of just decisions is inherent in human nature; consequently it cannot be avoided in politics. Indeed it seems that in most cases recognition is most desirable and therefore a "just" decision is sought. In some other cases it may happen that a leader or a leading group view and interpret justice in a narrower sense, in a somehow divine sense. In such cases accountability to wider audiences plays a minor role. In addition, under warlike circumstances there often appears the doctrine of the "lesser evil" which however may be interpreted either widely or narrowly. However, all political affairs cannot always be reduced to unsurpassable dilemmas, for in such case the decision makers may be charged with incompetency.

communicable to all.

Human relationships are often more complex than compromised and ratified wisdom makes of them, yet through such compromises and official ratifications we can establish a common (to all) code of (right) behavior.

Machiavelli, having studied the Greek and Roman letters, seems to be a mystic too. Both virtứ and fortuna testify to this. For the former is an expression of a strong will (not necessarily accountable), whilst the latter is the hidden and the unspoken. Greeks had their own word for this: moira. This was a kind of farm inherited by chance (morja = lot[5]). Hercules, for instance, had his own moira. Greek myths showed that you can use your virtue to fight a difficult fortune (to be finally rewarded). According to the myth Hercules opted for virtue at the expense of "malice". The Machiavellian hero on the other hand is just led by the survival instinct. When faced with this dilemma, he did not bother to move to various options and found a good excuse for taking a lot more liberties. Deifying to him was not fighting within the frame of the law, but rather standing above the law.

Moreover, whereas in politics we often have to do with great (magnified) issues, we do not always face great dilemmas- which often provide governments with good excuses to widen their notion of public interest (see note 2). That we are called to choose through a "yes/no" formula shows of course that most of the issues are made such great as to appear as urgent moral dilemmas (and we apply a common morality if we are to truly participate in politics. There is, of course, always a case we elect though a common moral code to make possible for the elected to apply a superior moral code-here we apply a simply functional and pragmatic formula).

Nevertheless, the outcomes of our procedures are laws (most of the times) which are lengthy, detailed, rarely reduced to a yes/no formula. In addition, if laws are good, they allow for various levels of punishments and rewards which are guided by a spirit of proportionality (weighing our actions and reactions in face of specific cases and circumstances seems indeed similar to tolerating).

Now there will always exist an area not governed and regulated by laws. Politics and diplomacy, morals and ethics usually govern this area of human transactions. Machiavelli, a diplomat by profession, aspires to be a professor of diplomacy as well as political psychology. He understands that human relationships cannot be solely handled through orders. He well understands the role of image in mass communication and a good deal of his suggestions in this area look like a common place by modern standards. However, he is so fascinated with political games that he does not bother at all to denounce particular techniques and practices. Unlike the Greeks (and some of the Roman heirs such as Cicero-Clarke, 2004, p. 103), he does not care about suggesting change in the ways of doing things. Instead he makes himself a captive of a prehistoric cave, turning back to basic instincts. As such he makes us think that famous superior wisdom is nothing more than the wisdom of the underworld (a theme often showed by numerous contemporary cinema movies). What is more he constantly points out to states of both hidden and open war as if they were a routine state for politics. Politics is then truly the other face of war to paraphrase Clausewitz's dictum. It is politics by all means.

The man from Florence wished to portray things as they really are, that is why he is held to be a genuine representative of the realist school. Things as they really are: yes and no. Some phenomena are omnipresent (in human relationships), some others are "new". Some things become what we make them to be. Human

[5] It should be noted here that etymologically the word "democracy" ("Democratia") was derived from the prefix "da" (tha) which in archaic times meant "lot" (share) - see Cohen, p. 117). Therefore, from this point of view democracy must be interpreted as a distribution of shares (farms initially), or, in later language, property rights. Democracy as a rule of the people (Demos) seems to be derived from classical thought. The most accurate definition of democracy seems to combine both dimensions, i.e., property rights and their distribution as well as the number of the rulers (see on this Blondel, 1990, p. 24).

relationships can be improved, for instance, by refraining from activating aggressive instincts. Some people may believe that this can be done through suppressing individuality. Some others may wish to uphold it. What is for sure there is a kind of knowledge which is capable of elevating human beings to a level higher than an one sided knowledge of survival may allow for. This is not an always easy knowledge and that is why the people who dedicate their lives to haunting the 'truth' deserve recognition by the “Prince”.

As a source has it, when in exile the man from Florence used to take off his dirty clothes, put on the garment of an official and sit down to write (Curry & Zarate, 2011, p. 47). He did not just write about the "Prince" and Discourses; he also wrote about his misfortunes. A cynic would laugh at him, for his virtue and other suggestions of a diplomatic kind did no good to rescue him from bad fortune. The professor of diplomacy was a bad diplomat when it came to his own affairs (or we may say that fortuna was not on his side). Besides he lived at a time of extreme turbulence, division, fractionalization and intrigue. Thus, in a similar way to Hobbes’ suggestions, he seemed to understand life as a continuous battle, a life with no much prospect, in which the instinct is the other side of fortuna. In such times some men adopt a heroic realistic stance; they seem to suggest that, if life is so cruel, everybody must be strong and tough too. A writer however who writes not just for present time, but for the future as well, may state some of such conditions and distinguish remedies for such conditions and remedies for other conditions. Yet we do not know much about the writer’s feelings and inner thoughts, after all a hero who professes diplomacy is someone who is supposed to talk and write less. The students of his writings ought however to take them in principle at face value, reserving secondary interpretations for the end of their reading (or writing). When they reach this stage, they are supposed to explain to new students that what they interpret is a post script.

Time is not always on our side, is, in our view, one of the nicest Machiavellian sayings. As a matter of fact, historical progress may bring about greater civility and subtler political ways. Widespread democratization has been a method to achieve this end. On the other hand, renewed interest in Machiavelli and 'his' policies has been evident in the 20th century, especially in foreign affairs (where public interest can be interpreted more widely than in domestic politics). Moreover, an eclectic intellectual spirit which has marked the last decades created some apparently strange bedfellows: his ethic has been associated with various public figures, both statesmen and intellectuals. Whether such associations are always convincing or not is here less important than the inference that this may have happened just because much of Machiavelli is about methods and ways. He is at the same time much about naturalism, that is to say (and confirm) that modern political institutions have not extinguished fundamental human roles and archetypical relationships. This kind of realism should not nevertheless render our inquiry purposeless. The key question of the relationship between a higher and conventional wisdom should be borne in mind. The art of Government should not be dissociated from law (including international law), as the latter, albeit imperfect and “conventional”, embodies both higher and conventional wisdom thus establishing a common language for leaders and led. Though human relationships cannot be “ruled” by law altogether, the area freed from the realm of law should not be covered by primitive morality. Democracy is shown it cannot easily dispense with some primary rules, but it is a method in itself (not just a type of formal government). It makes sense to evoke it, particularly when it is in a position to humanize politics and society.

Machiavelli has offered us a platform for discussion as well as important insights in order for us to understand the roots of political realism in its particular manifestation of a view of politics as it is often practiced, especially when the rule of law is not held into great regard. In such cases laws become quite instrumental, furthering to a great degree particularistic interests, becoming populist or asymmetrical and unjust. Sometimes they appear unjustifiably severe, sometimes quite partial, some other times sudden and quickly changeable. As it

has been suggested by ancient Greco-Roman literature, the ups and downs of the laws signal that something is wrong with them as well as Government (e.g., Polybius, Plato, etc.). A cosmogony in the legal system resembles the mythical Giants vs Titans wars, i.e., a transition to a new social order. Normally the legal system is stabilized after a finite outcome of such struggle.

Sometimes social scientists tend to overstress the underlying conditions beneath social theories and ideas. However, it must be born in mind that the persons themselves can also create conditions and ideas. That is to say that there is no reason to consider individuals mere captives of their social milieu. For instance, personal reading and relative choices cannot be precluded from the process of thinking and theory formation. Thus people who also lived in turbulent times came up with different conclusions from those of a particular kind of political realism. We turn therefore to classical political liberalism, as it seems that it offered some other ideas in relation to the issue of the practical exercise of politics, the political means and the art of government.

3. Classical Political Liberalism: An Enriched Reminder

Is classical liberalism an antidote to the symptoms of excessively "realistic" politics as presented previously? A new (and personal I might say) reminder to such a tradition might add some new insights.

Liberal tradition has been transferred and made an impact in the modern constitutions: It constitutes a basic pillar of democratic constitutional states. According to it the state, or any sovereign by international law political authority is supposed to confine itself to specific competences defined in turn by law. Among others it assumes the task to defend citizens against fellow citizens when they intrude into their personal sphere (sphere of freedom that is) and cause malaise to their life and creativity (as the latter is a basic aim of life and in the absence of it man/woman falls into a state of simplistic-elementary existence). In this Liberalism seems to incorporate a kind of ecumenical-natural law (Locke, 1991, p. 81), as in nearly all past civilizations such goods have been regarded vital and the act of harming them unacceptable. Indeed inhibition of vital functions of the human body/organism is subjectively met with reactions and when a lot of subjects react, it is probable that a collective regulation which aims at the easing of relative inhibitions will come about.

Yet History has known instances of a quite cruel treatment of human beings — both by political authority and other men. In what in late centuries was called liberal-constitutional state there was institutionalized the principle of "non exemption" of the state from the general rule applied to all citizens. As it was said, political authority is confined to specific competences-powers, in Montesquieu's words power controls power (Montesquieu, 2006; Petroulakos, 1995, p. 31), in order for a power to lose appetite for trespassing the "fences" of the people (Locke, 1991, from this point of view liberal-constitutional authority, I would add, is not a borderless authority and distinguishes itself from communal utopias such as that of T. More).[6]

From this point of view, property is indeed under protection[7], as there is a strong belief that not everything belongs either to the state, or the elites (an excessive concentration of means in the hands of a ruling elite would probably distort the liberal idea which is mainly pluralist and in favour of divided power. In addition, there may be cases wherein an elite may interpret its position as such of a collective owner, I would argue).

[6] The question of fair possession has been handled by John Locke, yet redistribution issues are not part of our subject, as we deal with liberalism as a rudimentary but fundamental starting law.

[7] According to J. Rifkin possessions are closely associated with "personality". For instance, if one was deprived of one's intellectual products, one would feel as something without person (Rifkin, 2006, p. 233. The author bases this argument on Hegel's equation of possession with liberty and personality).

If such conditions are actually held in the real world, a good example is transmitted to the body politic. However we do not think that liberal government is excessively relied upon example; it is rather an institutional government. In other words, let me argue this, this is much less a government through morals than it is through law[8]. It normally intervenes least in social morals, it appears indeed a "minimal government" (we have also come across the term "neutral government" which resembles more a balanced government than a true neutral government).

Nonetheless, such minimal expectations from a government may appear somehow problematic: "Minimal government" has often been criticized for appearing to be an indifferent one. This kind of discretionary non discretion especially as regards "life rights" has not always drawn proper attention and the normal rule is a constant call for state intervention. To draw an analogy, it may be not enough for a parent to directly (both *in expressis verbis* and in deeds) establish rules and practices of peaceful and convenient children upbringing; he/she must also intervene in family life in order to distribute evenly possessions.

Political authority is not of course a paternal or maternal power; it is a legal agreement concluded via representatives. Nevertheless, it will still be obliged to proceed to some kind of intervention, especially to attend social aims. But the way of such intervening which, once it manifests itself in practice, colors and personifies each political authority, varies with particular values and ideas. In any event it is subject to specific rules which do not infringe upon vital spaces of (free) life, as these are defined in constitutions' fundamental rights. Thus, while a particular mode of intervention bestows the exercisers of power with "natural personality", i.e. an identity and a concrete set of ideas, its exercise goes hand in hand with a so called "honest routine".

From this point of view, Liberalism is a fundamental conditio about the way of intervening. It is made to be a least coercive power-due to specific limits crossing of which might betray a qualitative change of the mode of government (politevma). For instance, if one deducts from democracy formal and essential freedom of speech, one may take a silent government. Then there may be developed indirect forms of expression, iconolatry, conspiratory tendencies, an excess in practical doings, hidden authoritarianism (lack of speech and resort to psychological pressure means) as well as other symptoms normally associated with tyrannical regimes (e.g., Xenophon, Strauss & Kojeve, 1995).

The liberal way seems to be above all a component in the term "liberal democracies". As such it colors the way power is exercised as well as nearly all kinds of human relationships. It divides power to avoid confusion and possible alienation of powers. It creates John Locke's famous "fences", to separate not just state from society, but also one citizen from another, to avoid infringing upon rights, capacities, creations (e.g., intellectual and artistic). It does that by limiting power representatives and simple citizens to their legally exercised business. Thus, according to the classical economic liberal credo creation of monopolies (either public or private) is despicable.

[8] This is distinction in the ways of government was made by Montesquieu, 2006. The emphasis on governing by law is expressed especially in the Declaration of the French Revolution, see above passage.

To avoid any misinterpretations this conception does not contradict morality, particularly as Locke speaks on behalf of natural laws. Yet, in the classical liberal tradition there was drawn a distinction between issues which should be and become public (through law and publicity) and merely private issues against which a certain degree of toleration had been established (the role of publicity in Liberalism is well stressed in Dohn & Fritzsche, 1977. This work by the way describes accurately the phenomenon but also makes critical remarks). We could add here that the term "minimal government" normally associated with Liberalism could well apply to this case too. What is public should not be confused with private, as Montesquieu wrote: "We should not attempt to regulate private issues via public law" (in Kioukias 2004).

To take the matter a bit further one might argue that in a modern complex society this rule may not be easily enforceable. There is still however a great space of private matters and traditions which could be left out of politics, or treated in a technical way (the question of whether politics is everywhere is tackled among others in Kioukias, 2004).

More often than not such claims have been regarded as utopian. The well known Marxist critique, for example, holds that in any case the state is a mere instrument of class interests, not of the people as a whole, but of a particular class (it may be noticed that without the word "class" the same expression would be much more acceptable by such critics, for the term, for instance, "public services" which are ought to service the people is normally quite desirable, while the role of the state as an instrument is not necessarily bad, at least when the state cannot be a Mind). For, if a state falsely presents itself as a Mind (an infallible one sometimes), it had better be an instrument. But equally a political authority which relies too heavily on sentiment may be proved to be just a propagandistic one).

In any event, this is a quite philosophical question which at the end of the day might be reduced to the matter whether man is capable of mastering his mind and soul independently of his material position. So we ask sometimes whether the fed is able to understand the hungry, the lucky guy the unlucky, or the one who comes from a "complete family" the orphan. So we argue here, if, aided, as it were, by modern science and audio-visual civilization which help us widen our visual scope, we are able to see beyond our nose and physical needs, then everything is possible: We actually can understand even under conditions of inequality and difference. Why is it then impossible for the teacher to understand the pupil, contemporaries History, politicians the citizens, independently of class and bias?

But, as we have slightly been distracted in relation to the basic argument, we shall close this parenthesis and our discussion by making reference to some other — in our view more actual — aberrations from liberal doctrine which it might be said has an appeal to numerous sides of the political spectrum.

Thus, the liberal state, or rather the liberal mode of governance, seems to have lost some of its balances in the face of various new social transformations and perceptions. Much has been said about the role of economic factors and regional or global convergence. What we could comment here is that many states seem to have confined their liberalism to an ethological and group pluralism as well as a concomitant ethical relativism, partly departing from classical liberalism as described above. Despite the fact that their law was kept individualistic to a great degree, there were developed quite a few (informal?) conceptions of group and collective responsibility as well as indirect responsibility, often not transferred to formal legal statute. What is more, there appeared a considerable increase in public and collective regulations at the expense of private space.

In conclusion, our comments — on a much discussed subject to be sure — aim to hopefully remind us of the fact that historically liberalism largely meant protection of individual rights and (self) protection of political authority from abuses and violations of such rights. Even if such kind of terminology may not directly appeal to people's sentiments today, perhaps a welcomed magnification of our inspection lens may make us more sensitive, especially when we encounter common but not happy human stories with close relevance to the individual rights theme: Honor/reputation, housing and living conditions, quality and quantity of legal sentences and relative suctions, torture and experimenting on humans, intellectual and artistic products, etc. As it was told, here we have to do with a quasi natural law (as it seems that such kind of rights have been at all times and places of great concern[9]), a primary law, we could add, from which every kind of vita contemplative and vita activa (Arendt) does begin. As such it does not of course cover every aspect of human life, but is a basic precondition for them, especially in eras in which political means tend to forget the liberal part of constitutions.

[9] Here we provide a brief explanation to the question whether liberalism with all its rational pretenses in reality is initially based on irrational claims such as natural law (Dohn & Fritzsche, 1977).

4. Lessons for the Current Greek Economic Crisis

It seems that in Greece too postmodernism gradually has become the prevalent culture, even before the Crisis. Some of its manifestations appear to us to be:

The increasing significance of a new realist thinking and the decrease in the allegiance to the state, political institutions, older social institutions, grand (historical) narratives, the law, etc. Some of these beliefs were enhanced during the Crisis, as political institutions were considered inadequate to prevent it or efficiently handle it. Certain, disputed, values were replaced by a new realism with a concomitant belief in power and unlimited individuality. The liberal respect for life and society appeared less important and law and proper jurisdiction was rather equated with formalism and instrumentality. Sometimes, contemporary law was perceived as severe and imbalanced, that is not symmetrical with the actions attempted to be regulated. It seems that for various segments of society Crisis as a critical blow on basic property and income rights contributed to the weakening of the acceptance of law and political institutions. Heavy taxation, for instance, may be considered as an unjustified state intrusion in vital individual rights, especially when it is not accompanied by generous social compensation. As in principle the "Social Contract" is largely based on this formula, i.e., taxation with representation and social protection — a quid pro quo between clearly defined state intervention and true opportunities for human development — it is more than possible that the political system will be destabilized (in Greece and for that matter other countries too).

As a result the power of non state groups, or personalities will be expected to assume more power and influence. This phenomenon which is comparable to what is happening in other countries is shaded by modern communication technology that increasingly focuses on image, lifestyle, habits, scandals (another word for habit), nutrition, psychology, ethnic groups, etc. Public persons are judged more on the basis of habits than achievement. Personal stories are constructed more on such basis than on a linear and global one.

On the other hand, it should be added, efforts have been made for an avoidance of the pitfall of picking moments as good criterion of judgment and seeking objective criteria. Although in such cases a new personal narrative is not reconstructed or rehabilitated (except in the cases of submitting brief and formal biographies), readymade questionnaires and similar techniques are servicing evaluation needs. For it seems that in postmodernity ensuing fragmentation has to be channeled to new representative, albeit minimal, forms.

This is quite responsive to an ethics of efficiency which have succeeded the ethics of belief (according to Max Weber's distinction). Technical objectification techniques came as an answer to the problem of fragmentation and subjectivity (which indeed has been observable). From this point of view, expertise assumed part of the state's control mechanisms (a natural answer in an era of continuous economic competition, save for the cases in which an abstract representation of this kind does not leave much room for essential discussion[10]).

[10] For instance, while some technical instruments are well tested and respond to the social functions made for, there are others which leave much to be desired. The widespread use, for instance, of informational tests about individual capacity may sometimes fail to succeed. More generally question based evaluation tools resemble closed "language games" (Lyotard, 1993) in the sense that the "right" answer is chosen from the list of the "manufacturers" and not from the common sense or the large knowledgeable community (present and past).

Thus, a good question is, in our view, one which does not by pass individual will and knowledge, leaving much to be supposed according to a prefabricated scheme, in other words being just on the mind of the "examiner". For it may be the case that a particular question could be answered through plural alternative routes and sometimes different words, perhaps of older origin, but in practice conveying the same meaning as particular new terms/words.

Just like the laws or similar regulations, questioning must be well defined and articulated, leaving less room for arbitrary interpretation, as the latter is normally considered to be partial and (sometimes) "despotic" (in the sense that it becomes a privilege of

To point to another relative matter, postmodernism is particularly manifested in social roles and relationships, part of which were invested with a good deal of parody play (quite characteristic of postmodern mentalitẽ). Role confusion, even power games such as social status usurpation and finally quite instrumental (political and social) means may have been produced as a result.

We can suggest then that postmodernism in Greece is probably a vehicle through which the liberal part of the Greek constitution is being rendered obsolete and a new realism established.

5. Conclusion

A new kind of realism seems to have emerged in both in Europe and Greece under economic crisis with the result that the liberal aspects of modern constitutions seem to have somehow subsided. Postmodern politics have apparently made a good impact on societies, leaving room for this new realism, as postmodernism's main characteristic was a fierce critique of old political ideologies including liberalism. At the same time mass communication helped to uncover to the public's hidden political practices commonly understood or perceived as political corruption, while they chose to cultivate a "free" spirit of forgetfulness about "serious and grand narratives". In effect it seems that both demystification and entertainment fortified this new realism. The Crisis itself came in the end as an accelerator of this process. Fear, fun and "small stories" about hidden life swept the social landscape; social relationships became more fragile and politicians were reduced to a "small" category alike. Public order without necessarily full rights was then in order, albeit with full (enriched) political rights. Quite often, however, the markets' extreme fluctuation, new population movements, ecological dangers and terrorism did point to that direction. Quite often, though, a "realistic" adhocism would make its appearance, leaving the impression that a really grand plan was not there. Despite the good intentions and efforts to provide mechanisms of greater accountability and prevention, despite further coverage of social relationships with legal regulation, there seemed to be an impression of lack of (fair) regulation.

Machiavelli was a hero who lived in turbulent times and through his writings systematized political realism of which a main characteristic was the widening of the concept of "public interest". Though political realism is useful in order for one to understand some actual power techniques, it should not be taken too far as a political method for it opens the way for a disrespect of human life, especially when the political means become quite advanced (as it happens in our times).

Classical political liberalism tried to humanize political and social relationships suggesting a well defined (by law), more tolerant and transparent political community. Human societies have gone further than this rudimentary Law, but any political settlement which will attempt to destroy natural and eternal foundations of life apparently embodied by liberalism will probably end in a new kind of tyrannical government, as the latter has been historically been combined with an extreme and non proportional attack on private life.

Technology advances rapidly. It offers more possibilities for the realization of human potential, but it also increases "the means". These are not, of course, evenly distributed (as a good Machiavellian would well know)

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the ruler, not a right of the examined in which case a "lengthy" apology is offered).

For such reasons, we think that in certain cases more room should be allowed for a freer-less stereotypical and expected-development of an answer, at least where judgment is asked or sought. Furthermore, we think that technical instruments should be subject to both accountability and *improvement*. As being technical, they should not be let become social-ideological and thereby divide society. It must be noted here that liberalism is not just about neutral settlements, but also reason and proper jurisdiction-competence.

and therefore the weaker risk a much greater danger of losing freedom. So, apart from excellent means, we need excellent goals too. If we cannot avail such, we had better put some of our means and "weapons" aside (in a way similar to the nuclear weapons deactivation).

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Journal of Modern Education Review, ISSN 2155-7993, USA
November 2016, Volume 6, No. 11, pp. 842–855
Doi: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/11.06.2016/008

http://www.academicstar.us

The Case of a Private Language School in Iran

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Abstract: As the objective of learning a foreign language is now defined in terms of intercultural competence, all aspects of an English as a foreign language (EFL) program are expected to be geared towards cultivating interculturality. The issue is specifically significant in the Iranian context, because of the indeterminate status of English language in the country, and also the growing need of intercultural competence for Iranians. The present study investigated to what extent the learning tasks in textbooks for adult courses in a private language institute aimed at increasing learners' intercultural competence, and what dimensions of intercultural competence they addressed. The methodology centered on qualitative theory-based content analysis of the textbooks (targeted at an international audience), categorized according to the themes in Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). Indicating the little emphasis on developing intercultural competence, and also the unequal share of the different dimensions of intercultural competence in the textbooks, the findings of the study cast doubt on the appropriateness of these so-called "global" English textbooks, especially for Iranian learners. Hence, the results of the study can have pedagogical implications for stakeholders in EFL education in general, and for curriculum developers and material designers in Iran, in particular.

Key words: English as a Foreign Language (EFL), intercultural competence, interculturality, textbook analysis, Iran

1. Introduction

The present study is part of a broader project investigating the role of culture and intercultural competence (IC) in English as a foreign language (EFL) in Iran. Research on interculturality is of specific significance in this context for a number of reasons. First of all, the English language has an equivocal status in Iran. Before the Islamic Revolution in 1979, due to the governmental ties with the western world, especially the United States and the UK, the English language received extensive attention; however, after the revolution, it faced waves of hostility, because politically and culturally the new government opposed the west (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015). The post-revolutionary cynicism against the western culture has somehow been attenuated with the recent developments in information technology and telecommunication, and with the establishment of English as the global language of trade and education, more people are changing their views regarding the need to foster intercultural communication with the world (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008, cited in Mirzaei & Forouzandeh, 2013). Still English is regarded as the enemy's language (Borjian, 2013, cited in Davari & Aghagolzade, 2015) and at the same time a path to progress (Riazi, 2005, cited in Davari & Aghagolzade, 2015). The second reason which makes

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interculturality distinctly important in the Iranian context is the substantial number of people leaving the country every year. There are already four to five million Iranians living in 32 countries around the world. According to a report by the International Monetary Fund in 2009, Iran, with an annual loss of 150,000 to 180,000 specialists, topped the list of developing and developed countries which lose their academic elite. There is no gainsaying the fact that these people need to develop IC in order to be successful in culturally different contexts. Besides, according to the Iranian Ministry of Interior in 2015, more than two million Afghan refugees live in Iran. And last but not least, Iran, with a population of around 80 million is a multicultural country with various ethnic groups who speak different languages and have different cultures, hence the importance of cultivating IC even for those who stay in the country.

The importance of IC in foreign and second language education has been recognized since 1980s (Baker, 2009). Today, due to the developments in transportation, telecommunication, and information technology, and also through the process of globalization, cultural exchange has increased drastically. In fact, people of various cultural backgrounds, now more than ever in history, have contact with each other (Fantini, 2009). Such changes have affected not only industry, health, politics, and business, but also education (Sercu, 2005). Accordingly, the objective of learning a foreign language has changed in important ways in recent years as well. It used to be defined as the ability of a person to act linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate in a foreign language (Council of Europe, 2001). However, today, within an intercultural approach to language education, learning a foreign language is defined in terms of IC which is defined as 'the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures' (Meyer, 1991, p. 137). It is further explained that adequacy and flexibility refer to the fact that there are cultural differences, and one should be able to handle the problems that such differences might lead to. In other words, IC "implies a normative transformation of self that overcomes claims of absolute truth and encourages the subject (and the community) to live with differences and constructively engage with the Other" (Witte, 2014, p. 232). Hence, teaching a foreign language should take place in a way that the learner's view of the world which is dominated by his own culture develops into a multicultural one (Kaikkonen, 1997, p. 49).

For Iranian citizens there are two systematic ways to learn English: in public schools and/or in private language institutes. Students start to learn English as a compulsory course from grade 6 (age 11) onwards in public schools, where all educational policies, including curriculum development, textbooks and materials, and testing system are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (Zohrabi, Torabi & Baybourdiani, 2012). In public schools, the goal of teaching English is mainly to master the grammar (Zohrabi et al., 2012; Musawi, 2001; Hayati & Mashhadi, 2010) with hardly any reference to foreign cultures (Agari, 2015; Mahboubi & Javdani, 2012; Aliakbari, 2004). Due to the perceived failure of the public sector in English language education, and also during a wave of privatization from 1989, private language institutes became prevalent and popular, and at the beginning of the 21st century, along with the growth of globalization, the Internet and their social and cultural influences, the private sector flourished (Davari & Aghagolzadeh). Unlike public schools, the teaching approach in private institutes is mainly communicative language teaching (CLT), and they use 'global' English textbooks, such as American File, Top Notch and New Interchange Series, published by international publishing houses (Leather & Motallebzadeh, 2015).

Although the idea that it is actually possible to produce English language textbooks for a global market, bearing in mind that "one size fits all", has been a matter of dispute (Harmer, 2001, cited in Lund, 2007), publishing "global" English textbooks has been an expanding and competitive industry (Gray, 2002). A "global"

coursebook which Bell and Grower (2011) believe is misleadingly called so is defined as "a coursebook for a restricted number of teaching situations in many different countries rather than all teaching situations in all countries" (p. 117). Bell and Grower (2011), who are themselves writers of such textbooks, claim that in order for international materials to be successful, not only the publishers, but also the users should make compromises. Despite contrary arguments, they believe international course materials could in fact foster individualization and creativity, if the teacher is ready or allowed to adapt them based on the characteristics of their students and the context in which they teach.

As for the specific Iranian context, there is a mismatch between learners' need for IC, and the textbooks used in EFL education. On the one hand, in public schools, foreign culture has hardly any place in English language curriculum and in the textbooks which are produced by national authors. On the other hand, in private institutes, textbooks used are targeted at a general international audience. The fact that there are no English textbooks specifically produced for Iranian learners, ones in which different cultures are presented, makes it difficult to say whether 'global' textbooks are the best option for Iranian learners' interculturality. At the moment, they are the only option for them. Whether such textbooks could foster IC in learners is a question tackled in the present study.

2. Review of literature

2.1 Byram's Definition of IC

Despite efforts to develop the notion of IC for more than five decades (Deardorff, 2011), researchers still do not seem to have a consensus on the terminology around this concept (Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2009). Terms used in the literature include biculturalism, multiculturalism, multilingualism, communicative competence, cross-cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication, cultural or intercultural sensitivity, global competence, and international communication (Fantini, 2009). As for IC, there are numerous definitions, frameworks, and models published. For a synoptic review of IC theories and models, see Spitzberg and Changnon (2009). In her doctoral dissertation, Deardorff (2006) applied a methodology called Delphi to document a definition for IC based on the opinions of a number of experts in the field. Based on the results of her research, Byram's (1997) definition was top-rated. Byram's definition of IC is part of his comprehensive model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). This model which is based on a foreign language teaching background is applied as the theoretical framework in the present study.

Byram (1997) proposes a comprehensive model of ICC which renounces the notion of native speaker as a model for foreign language learning and teaching and instead introduces the notion of intercultural speaker. An intercultural speaker is an interlocutor who brings his/her national identity, language, and culture to an intercultural interaction (Byram, 1997). In his model of ICC, which is developed for an educational context, Byram (1997) distinguishes between linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural competence.

To clarify the concept of IC, six components are proposed which are called saviors, and some educational objectives regarding each of them are defined (Byram, 1997). The first component, savoirs (knowledge) concerns knowledge of one's own national identity and culture and also those of others. It includes, but is not limited to historical, geographical, political, and social knowledge. Among the objectives for this dimension is also to know about the levels of formality in different social interactions. The second component, savoir etre (attitudes) which is fundamental to IC is about curiosity and openness, and willingness to devalue one's own presuppositions and valuing other perspectives. The objectives also include a willingness to take opportunities in order to engage with

otherness, which is different from seeking out the exotic. The relationship between the first two components is not one of cause and effect. In other words, more knowledge does not necessarily result in positive attitudes. The third component, savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating) is the ability to compare and contrast cultural issues in one's own culture and a foreign culture. It is also about the ability to identify ethnocentric perspectives, and areas of misunderstanding in interactions. The fourth and the fifth components are respectively savoir apprendre (skills of discovery) and savoir faire (skills of interaction). The main objective in the last two components is not only to acquire new knowledge about cultures from various sources, but also to operate one's knowledge in real-time communication. An intercultural speaker knows how to draw on his/her attitudes and skills in order to ensure understanding and avoid dysfunction. The last component, savoirs' engager (critical cultural awareness), is about the ability to critically evaluate cultural practices, products, and perspectives. This evaluation needs to be based on explicit ideological criteria.

Some of the specific objectives of IC are very demanding and complex, and therefore not compatible with usual classroom work. To overcome the limitations of the classroom, Byram (1997) describes two other categories of locations for acquiring IC; namely, fieldwork and independent learning. In each of these so-called locations, he specifies the roles of the teacher and the learner. Moreover, he explains how some dimensions of IC could be better developed in which locations.

2.2 The importance of textbooks in English language education

In spite of the debates for and against textbooks as the best medium for delivering language learning materials, they continue to dominate the language teaching market (Tomlinson, 2012). Textbooks have a central role in foreign language education; one that scholars across time have believed cannot be overestimated: they control a major share of classroom teaching (Tergujeff, 2014). Textbooks can have various roles, such as that of a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, an authority, a de-skillser, and an ideology (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). They provide a map for both teachers and learners so they can see what has already been done, and what they should expect in future lessons. (Tomlinson, 2003, cited in Demir & Ertas, 2014). The significance of textbooks is emphasized to the extent that learning programs might have no influence without them (Richards, 2001). Indeed, it is not the actual reality that students learn through textbooks, it is the reality created by the text (Karvonen, 1995, cited in Lappalainen, 2011).

2.3 Culture and Intercultural Issues in 'Global' English Textbooks

Although textbooks have been a subject of interest for scholars for decades (Andarab, 2015), they had not been systematically studied until the 1990s (Elomaa, 2009, cited in Lappalainen, 2011). Numerous studies have analyzed representation of culture or intercultural elements in English language textbooks. What follows is an overview of some recent ones which have focused on 'global' English textbooks.

Hamiloglu & Mendi (2010) analyzed five EFL textbooks published by well-known publishing houses: Oxford, Longman and Express Publishing for cross-cultural/intercultural elements. What they were especially interested in was to find out if the frequency of intercultural elements was chronologically related to their publication date, as they had expected to see more interculturality in newer textbooks. However, according to their results, that was not the case. Tozun (2012) analyzed a series of textbooks published by Oxford University Press which were used in public secondary schools in Northern Cyprus. The analysis focused on the cultural content with specific reference to intercultural sensitivity. She found out that the culture presented in the textbooks is dynamic, and not limited to British or American culture. She also concluded that although throughout the

textbooks, learners are encouraged to reflect on cultural issues, mainly by comparing and contrasting different cultures — comparable to the skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) as defined by Byram (1997) — the textbooks hardly fostered intercultural sensitivity. Zarei & Khalessi (2011) analyzed the "cultural density" in the New Interchange Series textbooks, published by Cambridge University Press, based on a model of cultural patterns. Their results indicated strong cultural biases and a tacit goal to acculturate language learners to the target language culture. In a more recent study, Andarab (2015) investigated a series of English as an International Language (EIL) coursebooks, and concluded that throughout the textbooks essentialist notions of cultures were presented in which they were considered national entities. This led to overgeneralization and stereotypization of foreign societies.

In the studies mentioned above, different models and frameworks were applied which were either drawn from the literature, or developed by the authors themselves. Moreover, they addressed the cultural content of the textbooks from different aspects. Nevertheless, there has been no research investigating how IC — as defined by Byram (1997) — is addressed in English textbooks targeted at an international audience. The present study attempted to fill this gap. It is specifically important because of the prevalence of "global" English textbooks in Iran, and also the growing need for IC among Iranian learners.

The context of the present study is Safir Language Academy, one of the largest and most popular private language institutes in the country, with over 60,000 students and around 1,200 teachers in 72 branches in different cities. Like in many other foreign language programs, textbooks have a central role in EFL courses in this institute, and in a way, they guide teachers and learners, therefore it is worth investigating how IC is addressed in them. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

(1) To what extent do textbooks for adult learners in a private language school in Iran aim at improving learners' intercultural competence?

(2) What dimensions of intercultural competence do the learning tasks found in the textbooks address?

In order to answer these questions, both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied. Qualitative methods were used to determine which dimensions of IC (if at all) the learning tasks in the textbooks address, while quantitative methods were used to find out the ratio of IC learning tasks, and the different dimensions they addressed, to the total number of learning tasks.

3. Methodology

3.1 Materials

Data consisted of seven textbooks; the ones used in courses targeted at adult learners: English Result Elementary, English Result Pre-intermediate, English Result Intermediate, English Result Upper-intermediate, FCE Result, CAE Result, Proficiency Masterclass. They are all published by Oxford University Press and thus used internationally. In Table 1 more information about the textbooks can be found. (Note: CEF, or the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, is a guideline developed by the Council of Europe to describe foreign language proficiency at six levels.)

3.2 Data analysis

The methodology centered on directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of the learning tasks in the seven textbooks. In this approach, analysis is based on an existing theory, framework or model. This can help

focus the research questions, and also initial coding categories. In the present study, content analysis was categorized according to the dimensions described in Byram's (1997) model of ICC: savoirs (knowledge), savoir etre (attitudes), savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating), savoir apprendre (skills of discovery).

Table 1 Textbooks Analyzed

Title	Publishing year	Objective
English Result Elementary	2007	Takes a student from false–beginner level to A1+ on CEF
English Result Pre-intermediate	2008	Takes a strong A1-level student to A2+ on CEF
English Result Intermediate	2009	Takes a strong A2-level student to B1 or B1+ on CEF
English Result Upper-intermediate	2010	Takes a strong B1-level student to B2 on CEF
FCE Result	2011	Prepares the student for *Cambridge English: First* (FCE) exam which corresponds to level B2 on CEF
CAE Result	2008	Prepares the student for *Cambridge English: Advanced* (CAE) exam which corresponds to level C1 on CEF
Proficiency Masterclass	2002	Prepares the student for Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) exam which corresponds to level C2 on CEF

After reading thoroughly Byram's account of IC, and also a preliminary analysis of the first textbook, a decision was made to remove savoir faire (skills of interaction) and savoirs' engager (critical cultural awareness) from the analysis. In savoir faire (skills of interaction), the objective is to 'use in real time an appropriate combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to interact with interlocutors from a different country and culture' (p. 53) The problem lies in the fact that Byram's model of ICC takes a national culture as the basis for teaching IC. Therefore, based on the objective described in Table 2, whether a learning task in the textbooks, for instance, a pair work or a group discussion, could improve learners' skills of interaction (savoir faire) depends on the learners' nationality and is beyond the knowledge of a textbook analyst. Moreover, when Byram (1997) classifies locations of acquiring IC into three broad categories, namely, classroom, fieldwork, and independent learning, he claims "what the classroom cannot usually offer is the opportunity to develop the skills of interaction in real time" (p. 68). He further explains; however, that in a second language as opposed to a foreign language classroom context, or in some immersion and bilingual programs, this specific opportunity exists, because in these context, learners interact with interlocutors from different nationalities/cultures.

Besides, savoirs' engager (critical cultural awareness) was omitted from the analysis, mainly because it sums up and includes all the other dimension of IC. It specially has overlaps with objectives of savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating) savoir apprendre (skills of discovery) and savoir faire (skills of interaction). However, what is specific for savoirs' engager (critical cultural awareness) is the evaluative dimension "especially for purposes of clarifying one's own ideological perspective and engaging with others consciously on the basis of that perspective" (Byram, 1997, p. 101). In the textbooks analyzed, although there are some specific learning tasks inviting learners to make an evaluative analysis of events, concepts or controversies (such as global warming, prisoners of conscience and Amnesty International) drawing upon their political and ideological perspectives, almost all other tasks belonging to the category of savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating) could also improve learners' critical cultural awareness, depending on how the teacher leads the learners in the arguments, and how conscience the learners themselves are in approaching those subjects. Moreover, when elaborating on how different locations for acquiring IC (classroom, fieldwork, independent learning) are specifically suitable for which dimensions, Byram does not mention savoirs' engager. In a way, this dimension is

concerned with the educational system, or "political education" using Byram's words, in which teaching and learning take place, rather than the materials used.

3.3 Unitizing

All seven textbooks have 10–12 units, and each unit has a theme; such as travel, shopping, and health. In English Result series, the following skills are being focused on: reading, listening, writing, and interaction. Besides, each unit has grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation lessons related to the theme. In FCE Result, and CAE Result, each unit consists of the following sections: Lead in, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, Speaking, Use of English, Writing, and Review. In Proficiency Masterclass, the sections for each unit are: Reading, Language in use, Comprehension and summary, Listening, Speaking, Writing, and Overview. The structure of all the textbooks is based on learning tasks which come in different forms and focus on different skills. As these learning tasks are the smallest units which bear all the information required for analyzing textbooks, they were defined as the units of analysis.

3.4 Coding

In order to have clear criteria in determining whether a learning task fosters IC, Byram's (1997) objectives for each dimension of IC were used; especially those which are relevant to classroom as a learning location, because as Byram (1997) maintains, some objectives he mentions for each *savoir* are more complex and also more demanding than what normally leads the work in a classroom context. These objectives are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2 Criteria for Identifying and Analyzing IC learning Tasks

Dimension of IC	Objectives	Description of objectives
Knowledge (*savoirs*)	Factual knowledge of cultures	Tasks in this category contribute to increase learners' knowledge of culture specific (their own/foreign) events, products, significant individuals, emblems, conventions, and institutions.
	Knowledge of the levels of formality in social interaction	Tasks in this category contribute to increase learners' knowledge of appropriate use of language and levels of formality in different modes of interaction.
Attitudes (*Savoir etre*)	Discovering new perspectives on cultural issues	Tasks in this category invite learners to find different perspectives, for example by having a discussion.
	Questioning values and presuppositions on cultural issues	Tasks in this category attract learners' attention to presuppositions, generalizations, or stereotypes about cultural issues.
Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*)	Relating cultures and cultural issues	Tasks in this category invite learners to compare and contrast cultural events, conventions and issues to see the differences and similarities.
	Identifying ethnocentric perspectives	Tasks in this category invite learners to analyze events or documents in order to find ethnocentric perspectives.
	Identifying causes of dysfunction in interaction and mediate between the interlocutors	Tasks in this category invite learners to identify causes of misunderstanding in interaction and explain them in terms of each of the cultural systems present and/or help the interlocutors find a common ground.
Skills of discovery (*savoir apprendre*)	Acquiring and eliciting new information on cultural issues	Tasks in this category invite learners to find out new knowledge of cultures from different sources.

3.5 Examples of Learning Tasks

In the textbooks analyzed, there are quite a few types of learning tasks improving learners' knowledge of cultures (saviors). They include, but are not limited to cloze tests, listening, writing, and speaking exercises,

pictures with short descriptions, strips of short stories and reading passages followed by questions. They provide learners with diverse aspects of culture, such as arts, literature, celebrations, traditions, rituals, and social and political organizations around the world. For instance, in CAE Result (2008, p. 21) learners listen to two people talking about two festivals; Kattenwoensdog (Belgium's cat festival which originally dates back to 12th century) and La Tomatina (the Spanish festival in which people throw tomatoes at each other), and then answer some questions. Another task in English Result Upper-intermediate (2010, p. 49), invites learners to read a short passage entitled 'A song of freedom' and then answer a few questions individually and with a partner. 'A song of freedom' is about the American Civil War and the history of slavery in the US.

The learning tasks addressing learners' attitudes towards cultures (savoir etre) are mostly of two types. Some of them are group/pair discussions in which learners are invited to agree or decide on something, or simply to exchange opinions. These tasks help learners discover new perspectives and learn to value them. Other tasks start with questions where learners are supposed to think about some cultural issues such as the importance of money, friends, or traveling, the notion of luck, and the significance of preserving language and land for future generations. They are then asked to read a text, listen to an audio extract, or have a group discussion on the same issues. In this way learners can question generalizations, stereotypes and presuppositions about cultural matters. For example, in English Result Intermediate (2009, pp. 122–123), firstly, learners read some short extracts entitled "Extreme Decisions". As the title suggests, they are about decisions some people have had to make when faced with moral dilemmas. In one of them, for instance, a group of passengers whose plane had crashed on high snowy mountains, left with no food, decided to eat the dead bodies after a few days, in order to survive. After reading these passages, learners are invited to discuss them and share their views with a partner.

Similar to the learning tasks improving learners' attitudes towards cultures (savoir etre), those which address learners' skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) are also mainly in the form of pair/group discussions on topics like honesty or white lies, politeness, forms of greeting, fashion and religion. In addition, there are also writing exercises, reading or listening extracts, and questionnaires followed by some questions. In all of these tasks, learners are invited to compare and contrast different issues in various cultures in order to see their similarities and differences. For instance, in English Result Pre-intermediate (2008, p. 54) there is a short text about giving gifts in China. Learners are supposed to read it and then (if they are not Chinese) think in what ways their country is different from China when it comes to choosing and giving gifts. In another learning task in Proficiency Masterclass (2002, p. 117) learners discuss the characteristics of family life in their own country and any other countries that they know. They also talk about how important families are in their culture. In this case, although they might come from the same country, family life might not have the same status in their subcultures.

To improve their skills of discovery (savoir apprendre), learners have to acquire and elicit information on cultural issues from different sources. In the textbooks analyzed, there are only three learning tasks addressing these skills. In two of them learners are supposed to ask their partners some questions. In the one in English Result Elementary (2007, p. 44) the topic is everyday life and the one in English Result Pre-intermediate (2008, p. 93) is about table manners. The third one in English Result Elementary (2007, p. 104) invites learners to ask their teachers questions to find out about Pablo Neruda, the Chilean poet.

4. Results

In this section, the quantitative results of the textbook analysis are reported. Every single learning task in

each textbook was examined to see if they had, in one way or another, intercultural objectives. If a learning task included audio or visual aspects, they were taken into account as well. Altogether, more than 5,000 learning tasks were analyzed based on the coding system described in Table 2.

The first research question was to what extent the textbooks aim at improving learners' IC. To answer this question, for each textbook, the ratio of the learning tasks aimed at improving learners' IC to the total number of tasks was determined using descriptive statistics. In Figure 1, the ratio of IC learning tasks to the total number of learning tasks in each of the seven textbooks are displayed. Learning tasks addressing more than one dimension were counted once.

Out of the seven textbooks, Proficiency Masterclass had the highest (10%), and English Result Elementary, the lowest (3%) ratio of IC learning tasks. The second textbook with the highest proportion of IC learning tasks was English Result Upper-intermediate (9%). English Result Pre-intermediate had a slightly higher ratio of IC learning tasks (5%) than English Result Elementary. The other three textbooks, i.e., English Result Intermediate, FCE Result, and CAE Result had the same (6%) proportion of IC learning tasks. On the whole, there was only little emphasis on IC development in the analyzed textbooks.

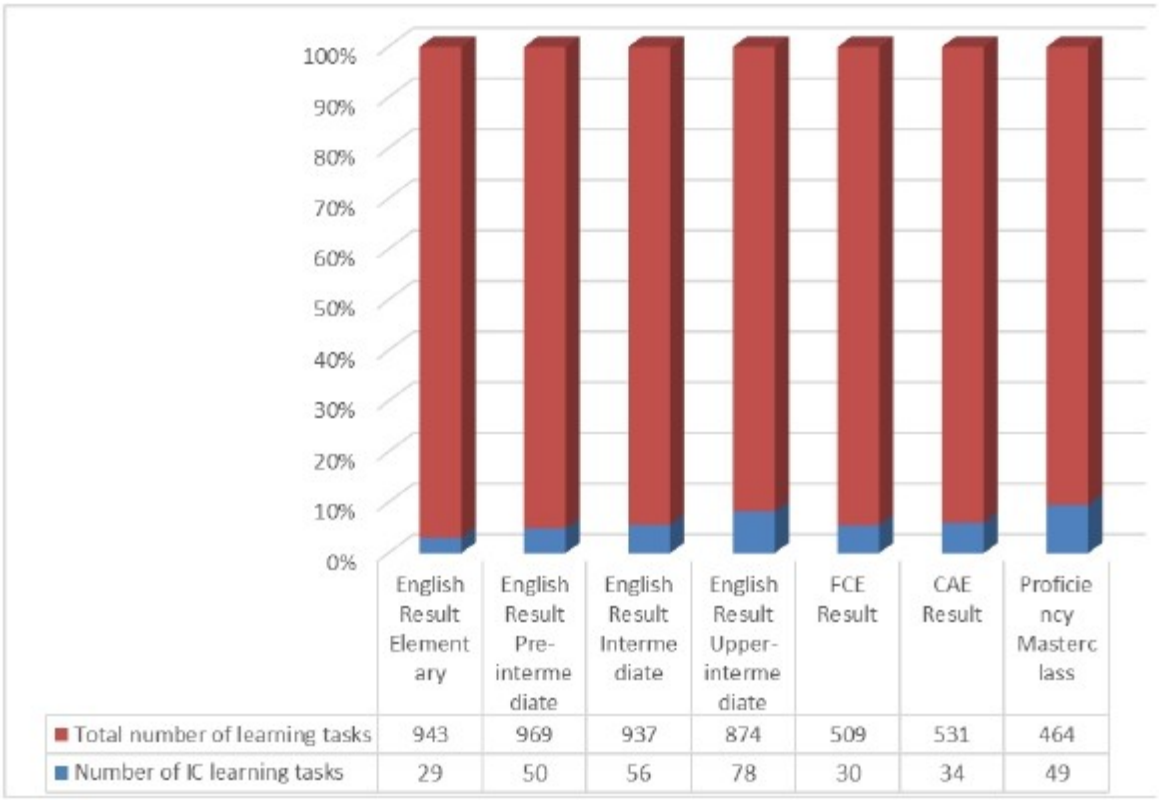

Figure 1 Ratio of Learning Tasks Aimed at Increasing Learners IC to the Total Number of Tasks in Seven Textbooks

The second research question was what dimensions of IC the learning tasks found in the textbooks addressed. To answer this question, firstly, the learning tasks which were related to each of the four dimensions of IC — savoirs (knowledge), savoir etre (attitudes), savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating), and savoir apprendre (skills of discovery) — were counted in each of the seven textbooks. Secondly, the ratio of the total number of tasks for each dimension in all textbooks, to the overall number of tasks in all textbooks (5, 227) and

also to the overall number of IC learning tasks was determined using descriptive statistics.

In Table 3, the number of the learning tasks corresponding to different dimensions of IC in each textbook is displayed. Learning tasks addressing more than one dimension were counted separately.

Table 3 Dimensions of IC Addressed in the Learning Tasks of the Seven Textbooks

Dimension of IC	*savoirs*	*savoir etre*	*savoir comprendre*	*savoir apprendre*
English Result Elementary	23 (62%)	5 (13%)	7 (19%)	2 (5%)
English Result Pre-intermediate	43 (67%)	11 (17%)	9 (14%)	1 (2%)
English Result Intermediate	35 (48%)	18 (25%)	20 (27%)	0
English Result Upper-intermediate	45 (45%)	37 (37%)	17 (17%)	0
FCE Result	8 (25%)	20 (62%)	4 (12%)	0
CAE Result	15 (43%)	17 (48%)	3 (8%)	0
Proficiency Masterclass	21 (38%)	29 (53%)	5 (9%)	0
Total number of IC learning tasks in textbooks	190 (48%)	137 (35%)	65 (16%)	3 (1%)

Some diversity was observed regarding the IC dimensions addressed in the textbooks. In the four textbooks of English Result series, in most of IC learning tasks, the objective was to increase learners' knowledge of cultures (savoirs). Whereas, in the other three textbooks, namely, FCE Result, CAE Result, and Profociency Masterclass, a higher ratio of IC learning tasks addressed learners' attitudes towards cultures (savoir etre). Moreover, the skills of discovery (savoir apprendre) were only addressed three times, and only in two textbooks. Figure 2 displays the ratio of the dimensions of IC in the learning tasks of the textbook data.

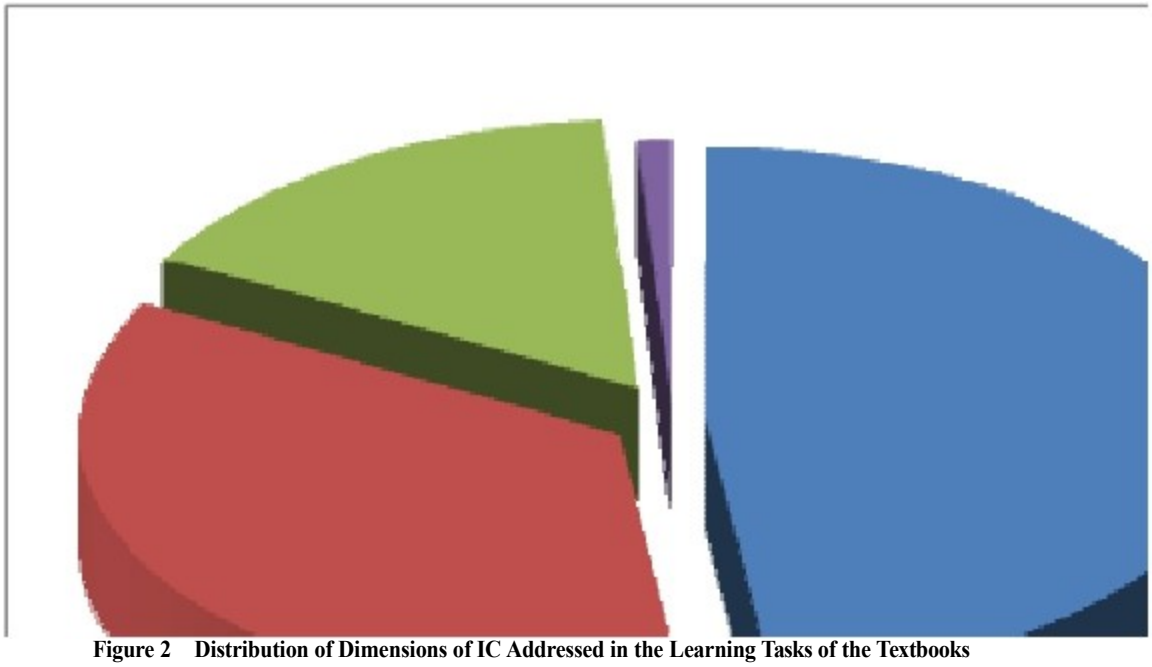

Figure 2 Distribution of Dimensions of IC Addressed in the Learning Tasks of the Textbooks

Almost half (48%) of IC learning tasks belonged to the dimension of saviors (knowledge), 35% to savoir etre

(attitudes), 16% to savoir comprendre (skills of interpreting and relating), and only 1% to savoir apprendre (skills of discovery). Overall, although all dimensions of IC were addressed in the textbooks, their distribution was quite uneven, and they were not equally emphasized.

5. Discussion

The present study attempted to answer two main research questions about a series of English textbooks designed for an international audience, used in a private language institute in Iran: firstly to what extent (if at all) they could improve learners' IC and secondly, what dimensions of IC they addressed. The theoretical framework used was Byram's (1997) model of ICC and specifically his definition of IC. The analysis of the seven textbooks showed that in each textbook, only 3% to 10% of all the learning tasks aimed at increasing learners' IC. Moreover, according to the results, the four dimensions of IC were not equally addressed in the learning tasks of the textbooks.

The majority of IC learning tasks (48%) provides learners with bits and pieces of information about different cultures (savoirs), rather than train them to acquire new knowledge independently (savoir apprendre). Furthermore, in many of the learning tasks, culture is directly or indirectly defined in national terms. For instance, in a learning task in English Result Upper-intermediate (2010, pp. 60–61), learners read a short passage about someone's personal experience at the end of which it is concluded that silence is not a problem for Finns. Such generalizations could lead to stereotypes about cultures, and hence negatively affect intercultural communication. Byram (1997) claims in classrooms, learners must acquire the "underlying principles" (p. 69) of different skills and knowledge and also the right way of generalization, so they can learn from their new independent experiences. This suggests an approach to teach about culture in its own right, in other words, on the definition of culture, and not just about different cultures. In the textbooks analyzed in the present study, there was nothing concrete in this line, but perhaps it is more a matter of a teaching approach. In case of many learning tasks, like the one mentioned above, the teacher has a crucial role in the way learning takes place. For instance, he/she could attract learners' attentions to the issue of cultural stereotypes and overgeneralizations, even if the focus of the task is something else. Unfortunately however, "language teachers are supposed to teach nothing but language; culture is reserved for the professors of literature" (Kramsch, 2013). I believe it is something which definitely needs to be considered in teacher training programs in English language education in Iran. Unless teachers are interculturally competent and knowledgeable, it is doubtful that they can help foster interculturality of their students.

However, having interculturally knowledgeable teachers is not a sufficient condition to meet the needs of Iranian learners. Apart from the low ratio of IC learning tasks, the major problem here is the fact that the textbooks are not specifically designed for Iranian English learners, and thus their specific backgrounds and needs are not taken into account. In fact, the name of the country, Iran, is not even mentioned in the seven textbooks. Although some cultural issues are touched upon in some learning tasks, they are not necessarily the most relevant ones for the Iranian learner. In some of these tasks, people's experiences of different cultures are briefly discussed. For instance, in a series of listening tasks in English Result Upper-intermediate (2010, p. 110), a Mexican woman shares her experiences of living in England for seven years. Although such tasks could help improve learners' knowledge of other cultures (savoir), and sometimes their skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre) or their attitudes towards cultures (savoir etre), they could be much more helpful if they were somehow related to Iran. For instance, experiences of Iranian immigrants or refugees in other countries are probably more useful and

meaningful for Iranian learners. On the other hand, the issue of Afghan immigrants in Iran, their living conditions, problems, and relationships to Iranians is something that an Iranian learner could more easily grasp, and make use of to develop IC.

According to Byram (1997), an important part of IC is to know one's own culture. In his model, this is part of the broader dimension saviors which includes knowledge of other cultures as well. In the analyzed textbooks, most of the IC learning tasks belonging to the dimension of saviors, improved learners' knowledge of other cultures, not that of their own. One main advantage of textbooks designed specifically for an Iranian learner is that they help learners find their own stance as individuals in the cultural groups that they belong to. For instance, by reading about Muslim Iranians, they might realize that they do not behave in the way that is generally ascribed to these groups. Furthermore, they could become more sensitive to cultural stereotypes in general. The issue of knowing one's own culture is also present in Baker's (2011) model of intercultural awareness (ICA), as well as Witte's (2014) model for mediating IC in the L2 classroom. In the latter, it is elaborated on as a principle: developing subjective intercultural spaces (p. 367).

In another study, using the same theoretical framework, Äijälä (2009) analyzed three English language textbooks used in Finnish upper secondary school. However, unlike the present study, the textbooks were specifically designed for Finnish learners. The results were slightly different from those of the present study. The three coursebooks had a higher ratio of IC learning tasks (8%, 9%, and 15%). However, as for the second research question, the findings were quite similar. Most of IC learning tasks aimed at increasing learners' knowledge of cultures (savoirs). The second and the third most frequently addressed dimensions of IC were respectively attitudes towards cultures (savoir etre) and the skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre), similar to the results found in the present study.

6. Conclusion

As argued in the beginning of this article, it is crucial to incorporate IC in English language education in Iran, and more specifically in textbooks as a central source of teaching and learning in this context. As the findings reported here show, only a small portion of the learning tasks in the textbooks analyzed contribute to the development of IC in learners. The most important problem with the textbooks lies in the fact that they do not have a specific target audience whose needs would be taken into account. Although the significance of needs analysis in curriculum development and textbook design is well recognized in EFL education, the issue seems to be ignored in the private language institute under investigation. While there are limitations to the present study, such as lack of peer debriefing, the results could have pedagogical implications for curriculum developers, teacher trainers, and even teachers at the language institute under investigation, as well as in others comparable contexts. Moreover, by using Byram's (1997) model of ICC, it is hoped that the study contributes to the theoretical literature in the field of foreign language education and interculturality.

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