



# مجلة جامعة راپه رين

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اقلیم کوردستان – العراق  
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وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي  
مكتب الوزير



Kurdistan Region - Iraq  
Council of Ministers  
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حکومتی هه‌ریمی کوردستان – عێراق  
سه‌رۆکایه‌تی ئە نۆجۆمه‌نی وه‌زیران  
وه‌زاره‌تی خۆیندنی با‌لا و توێژینه‌وه‌ی زانستی  
نووسینگه‌ی وه‌زیر

No:

Date :

وه‌زاره‌تی خۆیندنی با‌لا و توێژینه‌وه‌ی زانستی  
نۆسینگه‌ی وه‌زیر

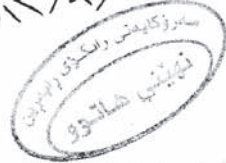
ژماره : نووسینگه / ۱۵۲۴

پێکوت : ۹ / ۸ / ۲۰۱۳ ی زایینی

۱۷ / گه‌لاریز / ۲۷۱۳ ی کوردی

بۆ / سه‌رۆکایه‌تی زانکۆی راپه‌رین / نووسینگه‌ی به‌رپێز سه‌رۆکی زانکۆ

بابه‌ت / گۆفاری زانستی



2006

سلا و رپێز ..

ئاماژه به (برگه‌ی ۴ / ته‌وه‌ری چوارم / کاروباری زانستی و خۆیندنی با‌لا) له کۆنۆوسی کۆبوونه‌وه‌ی ژماره (۱۳) ی  
ئه‌نجومه‌نی وه‌زاره‌ت له (۲۰ / ۶ / ۲۰۱۳) تاییه‌ت به گۆفاری زانستی زانکۆتان. ئه‌نجومه‌نی وه‌زاره‌ت بڕیاریدا به:-  
ده‌رکردنی گۆفاری زانستی (راپه‌رین) ی زانکۆتان.

له‌گه‌ڵ رپێزدا ....

دکتۆر علی سعید محمد

وه‌زیری خۆیندنی با‌لا و توێژینه‌وه‌ی زانستی

فرستێد

خۆیندنی با‌لا و توێژینه‌وه‌ی زانستی  
گۆفاری زانستی

وێنه‌یه‌ك یۆ :-

- ❖ نووسینگه‌ی به‌رپێز وه‌زیر / له‌گه‌ڵ رپێزدا .
- ❖ ده‌رکرده.

حكومة إقليم كردستان - العراق  
رئاسة مجلس الوزراء  
وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي  
رئاسة جامعة راپرين  
مكتب رئيس الجامعة



حكومة تى هەريى كوردستان - عىراق  
سەرۆكايه تى نه نجومه تى وهزىران  
وهزاره تى خویندنى بالآ و تويزینه وهى زانستى  
سەرۆكايه تى زانكۆى راپه رىن  
نووسینگه ی سەرۆكۆى زانكۆ

Kurdistan Regional Government - Iraq / Presidency of Ministers Council / Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research - Presidency of University of Raparin / Office of University President

NO.

Date:

ژماره: ٥٣٧ نوسینگه

پێکهوت: ٢٠١٣/٩/١٧

٢٧/٩/٢٠١٣

### فهرمانى زانكۆيى

### بابه ت / دهركردنى گوڤارى زانستى

ئاماژه به نوسراوى وهزاره تى خویندنى بالآ و تويزینه وهى زانستى / نوسینگه ی وهزىر

ژماره ( ١٥٢٤ له ٢٠١٣/٩/٨ )

برپارماندا به :-

دهركردنى گوڤارىكى زانستى له زانكۆمان به ناوى گوڤارى زانستى ( راپه رىن ) .

پ. د. محمد على عبدالله

سەرۆكۆى زانكۆ

#### وێنه پهك بۆ

- ❖ نووسینگه ی سەرۆكۆى زانكۆ
- ❖ نووسینگه ی پارێددهرى سەرۆكۆى زانكۆ بۆ كارووبارى كارگێرى و دارى.
- ❖ نووسینگه ی پارێددهرى سەرۆكۆى زانكۆ بۆ كارووبارى زانستى و خویندنى بالآ .
- ❖ گشت فاكهتیهكان + سكولى بهرسنارى + بهمش باپۆلۆجى .
- ❖ گشت بهرئۆبجهریهیهكان .
- ❖ دهرجوو .

# **The Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages: How They Developed and the Problems They Encountered**

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## **Abstract**

This article considers which main Foreign Language Teaching Methods (hereafter FLT) are still being used in schools and discusses the theories of language teaching that lie behind them. In addition, the article examines these methods' prime characteristics, the techniques and activities they employ, how they came to be founded and their decline before making a general assessment of them. The methods chosen for analysis are: the Grammar-Translation Method, the Structuralist Method, and the Communicative Method. Following an examination of innovations within education, the article goes on to suggest that Task-based and Process models are viable FLT alternatives. In conclusion, the article establishes a connection between teacher development, innovations within the curriculum and possible changes.

## **1. Introduction**

The prime concern of this article is to conduct a critical examination of the roles FLT play within the education system and includes a discussion about which of the main teaching methods schools employ today. Knowing about these various methods helps foreign language teachers because this background knowledge allows them to form an opinion about pedagogical concerns and influences their own classroom routine. Moreover, it demonstrates to them the changes that FLT has gone through. Considering FLT as a process therefore suggests that teaching has to be flexible in order to adapt to new demands and challenges, which is something that teachers, applied linguists and educational professionals can verify.

In summary, this article discusses the distinctions between the various FLT processes by looking at their different techniques, methods and approaches to language teaching in addition to considering three major recurrent problems. Following this, the article will go on to present a chronological analysis of each method's prime features and assess their pedagogical and psychological characteristics before laying out each of the approach's limitations and contributions. To conclude, the article will show that harnessing classroom research and innovation alongside FLT methodology could be a way to improve learning and help in teacher development.

## **2. The Concepts of Method, Approach and Technique, and the Major Problems Affecting Modern FLT**

To begin, it is useful to briefly explain the concepts of ‘approach’, ‘method’ and ‘technique’ as they are all linked both in a hierarchical and mutual sense. Indeed, they are the three principles that influence a language teacher’s decision-making in the classroom. The most abstract of the three concepts is the ‘approach’ or strategy; this relates to the linguistic, psycho- and sociolinguistic principles, which underpin the remaining concepts. In reality, every teacher has a set of theories that act as a framework for their own opinions about the methods and techniques. On the other hand, though, a ‘technique’ is the most restricted of the concepts as it only has one function within the classroom. Between these two sits the ‘method’ concept, which acts as a mediator between the theoretical (that is the ‘approach’) and the practical (the ‘technique’). Techniques can be shared between several methods, although some have come about independently, however it is from the main methods that the most important ones come (Hubbard *et al.*, 1983: 31).

At this point, it is right to draw attention to the three major problems that affect language learning. These in particular have been the main issues dealt with in language pedagogy and ELT throughout last century and are problems that greatly concern teaching professionals and researchers. Stern (1983: 401–5) names them as:

1. The L1-L2 Connection: this is the imbalance that exists in a language learner’s brain between the inexorable power of his mother tongue compared with his relative weak grasp of a second language.

2. The Explicit-Implicit Option: this describes ways of foreign language learning that is consciously or subconsciously/automatically. Remaining largely unresolved, this problem has regularly caused a dilemma for FLT professionals and researchers. For example, in the 60s of the last century there was an ongoing discussion centred on a cognitivist versus audio-lingual approach. Moreover, Krashen’s Monitor Theory went on to distinguish between language learning, which he described as explicit and conscious, and language acquisition, which he termed implicit and subconscious.

3. The Code-Communication Option: in recent times this problem has become a serious concern and it refers to difficulties language learners encounter when learning a new language. These are mainly caused by the learner being required to be aware of the linguistic system of the target language (the code), but at the same time also concentrating on actually communicating.

## **3. Methods as a Way to Develop a Community of Linguists, Researchers and Teachers**

Here, the essay will firstly consider methods as an FLT paradigm. Secondly, it will examine which of the main methods are still employed as prime examples of FLT in the 21st Century, before thirdly, assessing alternative ways to teach foreign languages.

### 3.1. Methods as Part of a Paradigm

In this section, not one of the FLT methods being considered were supplanted immediately by another; rather, each of them continued until the newer method superimposed itself on them. In fact, it can be said that whenever a newer method came along the loss of the older one meant losing one's hopes in that method alongside any theoretical progressions, research data and classroom practice. In actuality, there is not a definitive difference between the various methods and, indeed, an eclectic mixture of ideas can often be found within methods.

Therefore, in this context, methods can be regarded as models of language knowledge that fulfill a pedagogical need and which do indeed exist within a paradigm where that is defined as being something comprised of theory, research and practice. This, in practical terms, means methods play a major role in constructing theories, carrying out research and engaging in classroom exercises. Moreover, FLT methods have directly come into being precisely because new theoretical conclusions were accepted. However, methods are also influenced by matters such as educational philosophy, the nature of language and how it can be better taught and learned, as well as ideas about how classroom interactions should be dealt with. In turn, all of these issues are affected by human relationships and societal concerns; when these begin to change it is said that a shift of model is occurring (Alcaraz 1990: 10–14).

### 3.2. The Traditional or Grammar-Translation Method

In this method, the study of Latin and Greek grammar was applied to the study of foreign languages and this lasted from the 17th to the 20th Centuries. During the 19th Century, this way of learning foreign languages was widespread, although towards the century's end there was a shift towards the Direct Method. Nevertheless, even today it is not entirely extinct; this is because there are still some textbooks in circulation as well as a few examples of it in practical use in classrooms.

#### *a) The Principles of the Grammar-Translation Method*

Summarised below are the most relevant principles of this method (based on Larsen-Freeman 1986, and Richards and Rodgers 1986):

- 1) There is an emphasis on studying and translating the language as it is written, as the written word is considered superior to the spoken word.
- 2) Learners are considered successful if they are able to translate each language into the other, although it should be noted that they are unable to communicate through speech.
- 3) The main language skills required are reading and writing.

4) In the classroom, the teacher has the dominant role and interaction is chiefly between the teacher and students.

5) Grammatical rules must be learned over and over again, with the students then putting them

into practice in written exercises.

6) The students are required to be able to conjugate verbs and master other grammatical rules.

7) The sentence forms the basis of teaching using this method.

8) Instruction is given in the students' mother tongue, which is also used as a comparison with the language being studied.

### ***b) The Main Techniques Used by the Grammar-Translation Method***

Teaching foreign languages using the Grammar-Translation Method focuses on the importance of grammatical rules alongside long vocabulary lists that have been translated into the learners' native language. In this method, translation is the most important of all the classroom exercises. A typical lesson using this method would go as follows: demonstrate a grammatical rule; provide a list of vocabulary; undertake translation exercises using a variety of texts (Stern 1983: 453).

Further activities and processes are listed below:

- The students read comprehension questions about the text.
- The students are required to identify antonyms and synonyms in the text.
- The vocabulary selected from the reading texts has to be memorised; then, sentences are constructed using the new words.
- The students have to recognise and memorise cognates and false cognates.
- The students are given fill-in-the-blank exercises.
- The students must write a narrative using a pre-chosen subject.

### ***c) The Major Disadvantages of the Grammar-Translation Method***

In hindsight, it is obvious that this method has its drawbacks and these are summed up below (see Roulet 1975):

1. There is no record of up-to-date language being used in the teaching of this method. Instead, great literary authors are used to illustrate grammatical norms.
2. Much emphasis is placed on examples, lists of forms and grammatical meaning. Moreover, because of their diverse criteria, some of the definitions and explanations given are unintelligible. Consequently, the students are left confused about the nature of the language they're learning.
3. This method places great importance on the morphology of language, but fails to address the question of syntax. Thus, it does not give its students any guidance about how to methodically and correctly put together sentences that are complex and sophisticated.
4. There is an overstated significance about the errors the learners must not make as well as an overemphasis on grammatical exceptions. Consequently, this method



stresses the more rigid and perfunctory nature of language.

5. Often, the given translations are inadequate because they have been made verbatim.
6. Finally, there is so much grammatical terminology for the students to learn that a strain is put on their ability to remember. Thus, the result of using this method in FLT is that the students become discouraged while their teachers are not sufficiently challenged.

### 3.3. The Structuralist Methods

This section is specified to analyse various methods that are based on the Structuralist theory of FLT; however, each method shares the common idea that states learning a foreign language is best achieved through a process known as habit formation whereby the learner acquires an understanding of language through repeatedly studying the structures and patterns of the target language. Firstly, there will be an assessment of the approach and then the methods' origins and ensuing development into the Oral or Situational Approach and Audio-lingual Method will be considered.

#### *a) Approach: The Theory of Language and Learning*

Structural linguistics is the language theory behind the development of these methods, and although some differences between British and American structuralism exist both see language as "a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, and sentence types" (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 49). In other words, grammar is no longer considered as consisting of a set of rules, rather it consists of a list of structures, which means that in order to learn a language successfully the learner must be proficient in using the target language's building blocks along with the rules necessary to construct meaningful sentences.

The importance that the structuralist methods place on the spoken aspects of a language are one of the movement's most important features, and also one that distinguishes it from those methods that emphasise the significance of the written word. Moreover, these ideas seem to suggest that there is a scientific principle behind FLT, which, it has claimed, changed language teaching from being an art to a science. Below are five points that summarise this view (as quoted in Stern 1983: 158):

1. Language is speech.
2. A language is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say.
3. Languages are different.
4. A language is a set of habits.
5. Teach the language, not about the language.

Although both the British and American schools based their learning theories on the concept of habit-forming behaviour, the American psychological behaviourism school, as championed by Skinner, took an empirical and anti-mentalist stance toward parts of social life

that is similar to structuralism in relation to language. Three elements can influence behaviour: *stimulus* — which triggers a behaviour, followed by a *response* before finally there is a *reinforcement*.

### ***b) The Oral Approach***

The first move toward a structuralist methodology came with the development of the Oral Approach whose roots lie in British applied linguistic principles of the 1920s and 1930s that were favoured by Hornby and Palmer. Lasting from the 1930s until the 1960s, this was the first time an attempt had been made to attribute a scientific basis to FLT. It was during the 1960s that this technique became known as the Situational Approach because of the greater emphasis it gave to practising and presenting language in a situational context. The major difference between this method and that of the American structuralist one is the British understanding of ‘situation’ and how the method’s aims were to be achieved, which was something engrained in Halliday and Firth’s ideas of meaning, situation and context and that was clarified by Pittman thus (cited in Richards and Rodgers 1986:35):

*Our principal classroom activity in the teaching of English structure will be the oral practice of structures. This oral practice of controlled sentence patterns should be given in situations designed to give the greatest amount of practice in English speech to the pupil.*

In other words, this approach recommended that learners were given activities that maximised the amount of time they spent speaking the language and that more importance should be given to the meaning of what they were doing.

Below is listed a series of points to illustrate the Oral Approach’s main features:

- a) The syllabus is arranged around structural sentence patterns that become progressively ordered.
- b) Great importance is placed on the role vocabulary plays in this FLT approach.
- c) In the classroom, it is the teacher who acts as the model and conducts the lesson by creating a situation and then questioning the learners in order to stimulate a response.
- d) Learners are required to work out what a word means through the context in which it is used and are not allowed to consult any explanations or translations in their native tongue.
- e) Oral processes used to learn grammatical structures include: repetition; substitution; exercises; reading aloud; etcetera.
- f) As with the Direct Method, grammar is learned using an inductive system that moves from simple up to complex structures.
- g) Learners are required to avoid as many errors as possible as correct grammar and pronunciation are deemed vital.
- h) The oral part of the language is of primary concern with the written secondary.
- i) Both visual materials and textbooks are crucial in this approach.

In a situational textbook, the teaching activities could be something like the following:

My new school  
 My friends like playing football  
 At Bill's birthday party  
 My Christmas presents  
 My New Year's resolutions

### *c) The Audio-lingual Method*

Relating to the American FLT structuralist tradition, the Audio-lingual Method became the dominant teaching doctrine after the Second World War. It can trace its roots back to the influential work done by Bloomfield, who was responsible for establishing the foundation of structural linguistics by dividing and categorizing speech into grammatical and phonological components. Following on from this, Fries, Brooks, Rivers and Lado continued to apply the same principles up to the 1970s that established close ties with behaviourism. Moreover, Bloomfield (1942) was the main influence on the Army Method, which was developed after America's entry in to the Second World War as a response to the needs of its armed forces. This technique uses mainly imitation and repetition as its teaching process.

Below are listed the significant concepts about Audio-lingual Methods of FLT (see Ellis 1990: 21–25).

1. There is no difference between learning a foreign language and other types of learning, that is the same principles and rules can be applied across the board.
2. Experience results in learning can be seen when there is an alteration in behaviour.
3. Learning a foreign language is different from learning one's native tongue.
4. Learning a foreign language relies on habit-forming techniques.
5. Analogy (habit-formation using discrimination and generalisation) as opposed to analysis (learning language rules deductively as in the Grammar-Translation Method) is the way language learning progresses.
6. Mistakes are caused by interference from the L1 and should be eliminated.

As can be seen from the discussion above, Audio-lingualism's major teaching practices place great importance on the oral approach of FLT by concentrating on the precise diction of the learners while grammatical meaning is not considered as crucial.

In this approach, teaching is arranged around the following methodological points:

Nothing will be spoken before it has been heard.  
 Nothing will be read before it has been spoken.  
 Nothing will be written before it has been read.

Consequently, a standard lesson would follow a similar pattern to the example set out below (adapted from Richards and Rodgers 1986: 58–9):

- Firstly, the learners listen to a dialogue that contains the key structures the lesson is made up of. They then repeat what they have heard and memorise it. The teacher monitors their pronunciation and fluency, and corrects any error immediately.
- Dialogue is matched to the learners' interests and/or situations.
- Next, key structures within the dialogue are used to conduct exercises in repetition and pattern recognition. This is first of all done en masse and then on an individual basis.

A typical pattern recognition exercise might be similar to the example below:

To elicit: There's (a man watching TV)

Teacher: There's a policeman. He's standing near a car.

Student: There's a policeman standing near a car.

Teacher: There's a girl. He's knocking at our door.

Student: There's a girl knocking at our door.

- Learners are allowed to look at their textbooks during the exercise. In addition, the teacher may decide to introduce other dialogue-based activities such as vocabulary or writing exercises or suggest further reading material into the lesson.
- Further dialogue and drill exercises may be conducted in a language laboratory along with other follow-on activities.

The core part of lessons taught the Audio-lingual way are language structures that are ranked and ordered. Below is an example of how a lesson might be organised using structures and comes from part of the Index of Alexander's (1967) well-known textbook:

- Is this your...?
- What make is it?
- What's your job?
- Look at...
- Whose is this/that...? This is my/your/his/her...
- What colour's your...?

#### ***d) The Decline and Assessment of Structuralist Methods***

Structuralist methods were widespread throughout the 1960s, however as the decade wore on criticism from several sources began to be voiced. Firstly, questions were raised about the movement's theories and ideas about language and learning. Next, it was suggested that the methods' teachers were not fulfilling their learners' expectations. Finally, learners reported that their learning experience was sometimes boring and disheartening while outside of the classroom they found communicating difficult.

The following section highlights the main criticisms leveled at the movement (see Roulet 1972):

1. The description it uses of the grammatical system is insufficient and as it does not give any firm grammatical rules, it is not possible for countless numbers of sentences to be formed.
2. Excessive emphasis is given to grammatical facts that are, in fact, of secondary import, which means it neglects other vital information.
3. Syntactic relations are only considered lightly.
4. Teachers are not equipped with a criterion with which to determine whether or not the learners' speech is grammatically accurate. Thus, there is no criterion for appropriately treating any mistakes.
5. Excluding the discussion of meaning in American structuralism prevented the systematic instruction of lexis, oral and written comprehension.
6. Emphasising a bias toward formal criteria and habit-formation teaching while ignoring situational and semantic features meant teachers and learners treated the structures as an end in themselves. Moreover, this led them to ignore their importance in real life situations.
7. Teachers are encouraged to regard language as the sole variable, which means problems connected to teaching and learning language are not addressed.
8. It does not allow teachers or learners to have any creative input into their language learning experience.

Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, the structuralist movement did produce some positive contributions to language learning (see Widdowson 1978):

1. Structuralism introduced the first methods recommending that FLT should be founded on both psychological and linguistic hypotheses.
2. It attempted to bring language learning to a wide audience but with the minimum of academic theory.
3. It championed a syntactic progressive approach, whereas previous methods concerned themselves more with morphology and vocabulary.
4. Developing a set of diverse skills was encouraged.
5. It used and actively promoted simple techniques.

### **3.4. The Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching**

Although usually known as the Communicative Approach, this type of FLT has also been labelled using other synonyms such as functional or notional, especially in the early part of its development. However, with regard to teaching language, communicative as a term emphasises a particular interest with the semantics of a language (see Wilkins 1978).

***a) Some Background Information***

It was the criticisms by Chomsky, particularly those contained in his 1957 book *Syntactic Structures* that started the crisis in the structuralist movement. In the book, he makes it very clear that structuralist ideology was not able to reconcile itself with language's fundamental features. Moreover, British applied linguists took exception with the Situational Method because it did not address the communicative and functional aspects of language. Instead, applied linguists began to make use of the functional linguistics of the British (Firth, Halliday), the work done by American sociolinguists (Hymes, Gumperz, and Labov) and philosophical arguments (Austin and Searle).

The influx of all these new ideas and criticisms coincided with an increasing frustration among FLT professionals about how much importance was placed on manipulating grammatical formats and mastering language structures. Teaching foreign language learning using these rules meant turning out students who were structurally capable but communicatively handicapped, as the habit-forming exercises they performed in the classroom could not be transferred to the outside world. This dissatisfaction was further fuelled by new educational challenges that came about with the European Union's expansion and people's ability to move around increased.

Realising they had to confront these challenges, the Council of Europe invited experts to conduct a study into what Europe's students needed. Wilkins made an invaluable contribution to this endeavour with his document in which he stated that language teaching "takes the desired communicative capacity as the starting-point... We are able to organize language teaching in terms of the content rather than on the form of the language. For this reason the resulting syllabus is called a *notional syllabus*" (1976:18). Rather than take his starting point from language structure or grammatical order as in other approaches, Wilkins analysed the functional meaning of language, something that is fundamental to its communicative uses. He went on to identify two categories: the first one relates to notional concepts (that is, time, quantity, location, frequency), the second to communicative functions (approval, prediction).

Culminating in a document entitled the Threshold Level of the Council of Europe the work consisted of lists of topics, functions, situations, accepted forms of language, general and specific ideas, along with a discussion about methodological consequences. When taken into consideration alongside contributions from textbook authors, educational professionals and some applied linguists such as Widdowson, Brumfit, Johnson, Trim, Richterich y Chancerel etcetera, the Threshold Level was one of the influences that helped the development of the Communicative Approach.

Nevertheless, the Communicative Approach did not lead to the establishment of a coherent linguistic community because it does not have a definitive model or text to follow. Indeed, understanding between various authors about how to use this approach differs from one to another, and there have even been developed a variety of syllabus designs all using different elements as their core (see Richards and Rodgers 1986: 64–75):

Type	Reference
1. Structures plus functions	Wilkins (1976)
2. Functional spiral around a structural core	Brumfit (1980)
3. Functional	Jupp and Hodlin (1975)
4. Notional	Wilkins (1976)
5. Interactive	Widdowson (1979)
6. Task-based	Prabhu (1983)
7. Learner generated	Candlin (1976)

As there is so much importance placed on the differences between each model, there is a suggestion from some authors such as Breen (1987) that this is leading to the emergence of a new FLT paradigm with the approaches being split into two sides, that is the procedural method (process and task-based) and the propositional (formal and functional). This will be explored more later on. However, the Communicative Approach does have a few characteristics that are distinctive to those of Audio-lingualism, which allows for a better understanding of language as suggested by Finnochiaro and Brumfit (see Figure 4, based on a quotation in Richards and Rodgers 1986: 67–8).

#### *b) Approach: The Theory of Language and Learning*

As the Communicative Approach employs techniques and innovations in the main from applied linguistics, this section will give a brief summary about the nature of language and how it is understood. In this approach, language is regarded as a social phenomenon by which members of a community are able to interact and communicate. Therefore, the aim of FLT is to encourage communicative competence among its learners (Hymes 1972). This opposes Chomsky's view that competence is related to how much abstract grammatical understanding learners must have in order to produce sentences that are grammatically correct.

However, the Communicative Approach's stance on competence expands Chomsky's theory about understanding and producing sentences appropriate to socio/psycho/cultural situations so that learners are able to transfer their knowledge of the language to their everyday situations. Later, the learners' linguistic abilities will allow them to take part in conversations while understanding what practical conventions manage their participation. Communicative competence also allows learners to be flexible so that they can negotiate these conventions creatively. Thus, these are a set of language competencies that allow genuine interaction in real life conversational situations.

### **Audio-lingual**

1. Attends to structure and form more than meaning.
2. Demands memorization of structure based dialogs.
3. Language items are not contextualized.
4. Learning language is learning structures, Sounds or words.
5. Mastery is sought.
6. Drilling is a central technique
7. Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.
8. Grammatical explanation is avoided.
9. Communicative activities only come after a long drilling.
10. Use of L1 is forbidden.
11. Translation is forbidden at early levels.
12. Reading and writing till speech is mastered.
13. Linguistic competence is the desired goal.
14. The sequence of units is determined solely by principles of complexity.
15. "Language is habit so errors must be prevented.
16. Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal.
17. Students are expected to interact with the language system.

### **Communicative Approach**

- Meaning is paramount.
- Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
- Contextualization is a basic premise.
- Language learning is learning to communicate.
- Communication is sought.
- Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
- Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
- Any device that helps the learner is accepted.
- Communication may be encouraged from the beginning.
- Judicious use of L1 is accepted.
- Translation may be used.
- Reading and writing can start from first day.
- Communicative competence is the desired goal.
- Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content, function or meaning that maintain interest.
- Language created through trial and error.
- Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.
- Students are expected to interact with other people.

Canale and Swain (1980) describe communicative competence as being linked together by four components:

- Linguistic competence: Grammatical, lexical, semantic and phonological competence.
- Discourse competence: The linguistic and meaning of relationships contained within a discourse (cohesion, coherence, gesture).
- Sociolinguistic competence or the understanding of the functional aspects of communication: This includes role relationships, personal factors, social and cultural context.
- Strategic competence: This refers to coping strategies developed to solve any learning problems, which thereby encourages autonomy.



Therefore, it can be seen that the Communicative Approach is an eclectic source for language learning and theorising as illustrated in Figure 5 below, which shows the methods main characteristics (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 71):

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2. The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.
3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4. The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

That said, the actual learning theory underpinning the Communicative Approach has not been fully developed, although out of its practical application in FLT some main features have become apparent. For example, it has been noted that if the following ideas are employed in language activities then learning improves (see Johnson 1982).

- The activities are linked to situations dealing with real life communication.
- Classroom exercises use language in meaningful ways.
- The language used within the classroom makes sense to the learners.
- Language is employed to communicate so that the learners are not just practising grammatical rules.

### ***c) The Activities and Techniques of the Communicative Approach***

In the Communicative Approach there is an emphasis on choosing various techniques and materials that are designed to promote communicative use of language and encourage interaction within the classroom. Below are listed some of the materials used by this

approach along with some of the activities and techniques that have subsequently been developed (see Johnson 1982, and Larsen-Freeman 1986 )

— *The Information Transfer Principle*: This relates to the learners' competence to both comprehend and then produce language-making translations from one of the language's mediums to another. Activities based on this principle could include writing notes while taking part in a listening comprehension exercise, writing a series of sentences based on illustrations, stating a personal opinion about a piece of art etcetera.

— *The Information Gap Principle*: Here, the varying amount of Information exchanged between people when they communicate is taken into account. This principle allows for a number of activities to be undertaken such as: learners are given different pieces of information, which they then have to exchange with each other via a question and answer session. Moreover, the learners are free to change their answers, thus the conversation becomes negotiable.

— *The Correction for Content Principle*: This principle places more importance on how the communicative content of a conversation is expressed rather than on its grammatical accuracy. Consequently, errors are treated differently than in the above methods.

— *The Use of Authentic Materials*: The use of authentic materials means that learners become accustomed to the way language is spoken in real life.

— Unscrambling sentences or a conversation or a picture story so that the content once again makes sense is a useful exercise that teaches language cohesion along with other matters concerning discourse in general.

— Exercises organised around playing with language feature three types of communicative activity: the Information Gap Principle as discussed above, the element of choice, and a chance to give and receive feedback.

— Role-playing activities makes the learners aware of the various roles and social scenarios, attitudes, moods etcetera they will come across outside of the classroom.

— Problem solving exercises are included as an important part of this approach.

— Also, important in the overall process is that the learners work together either in pairs or as a group.

Some of the textbooks purporting to champion the communicative cause bring together the elements of functions, situations and topics. Indeed, a lot of them organise their content along functional lines, an example of which is below.

Talk about yourself

Identify types of people

Describe your town

Give someone directions

#### ***d) A Brief Assessment of the Communicative Approach***

Assessing the Communicative Approach accurately is problematic because not only has it been interpreted in several differing ways it also has no absolutely definitive teaching method. As illustrated above, this is especially obvious when it comes to lesson design and classroom processes. However, it has had a powerful influence on FLT, the importance of which is summarised below (see McDonough and Shaw 1993):

1. It has increased interest in language's meaning potential.
2. It has shown that the relationship between a language's form and its function is complex.
3. It highlighted that the concept of communication extends beyond the boundary of just sentences and takes into account texts and conversations

4. In this method, the appropriateness of how language is used is considered as important as accuracy. This in turn impacts on how error correction is dealt with as well as with what materials and activities should be included in lessons.

5. Learners experience realistic and stimulating language learning

6. 'Communicative' as an overall concept is applied to all of the four language skills.

7. A learner's own knowledge and experiences are used in conjunction with their native language.

8. As it has developed, this approach has established improvements in levels of language awareness and reflection.

Despite these positive points, however, the Communicative Approach still has some unresolved issues as stated below:

a) Certainly in the beginning, it placed too much importance on the speaking and listening part of language, which was detrimental to its reading and writing aspects.

b) Reflection on language with respect to all its components has been lacking for the most part.

c) The method does not make it plain what criteria there is for the selection and grading of the chosen functions and grammatical components used in its lessons.

d) Some of its critics claim that its approach is not conducive for foreign language scenarios, which has led them to advocate a more language aware criterion.

e) Some of its teachers whose native tongue is not English are not always confident enough to use the technique.

f) There have even been some suggestions about developing a new choice of language using functions, reminiscent of what the structuralists did with structures.

g) Finally, it does not clarify what a meaningful use of language is because, as can be seen in the classroom-based activities and tasks carried out in its lessons, these are not always that relevant.

### **3.6. New Moves: The Procedural Approaches**

During the past decade, some important and original ideas concerning the theory, research and classroom experiences of FLT have developed. These innovations have resulted in a series of sound changes occurring in foreign language teaching that challenges the dominance of the current orthodoxy. Therefore at present, it is right to say that there are two prime paradigms coexisting in FLT: the propositional, which comprises the structural and functional methods, and the procedural that is made up of task-based and process methods. As discussed earlier, the

propositional approaches think that teaching and learning language is best undertaken in a formal and systematic manner. They do this by emphasising the importance of structures, rules, functions etcetera, although they disagree about which element to focus on and how to order a lesson's content (Breen 1987).

Listed below are the four most important educational innovations and changes (see Breen 1987: 157–60):

- 1) Opinions about language, which have been previously discussed in the section concerning the communicative approach.
- 2) Opinions about teaching methodology, whereby the importance of reaching a balance between planning objectives and a lesson's content while closely monitoring how this is implemented in the classroom is recognised.
- 3) Opinions about the learners' contributions, which believes that context and interaction within the classroom should be the foundation of language learning rather than the lesson content.
- 4) Opinions about planning, which presume that language lessons should consist primarily of the teaching–learning process along with relevant activities aimed at the participants, rather than be overly concerned about lesson content.

These four points indicate a shift in emphasis away from the subject being studied toward the learning process itself and suggest the development of interesting outcomes regarding areas of evaluation, negotiation and retrospective planning.

Below is a list comparing some of these alternative models (Gray 1990: 262).

<b>What is to be learnt?</b>	<b>How is it to be learnt?</b>
Subject emphasis	Process emphasis
External to the learner	Internal to the learner
Determined by authority	Negotiated between learners and teachers
Teacher as decision-maker	Learners and teachers as decision-makers
Content = what the subject means to the expert	Content = what the subject means to the learner
Objectives defined in advance	Objectives defined afterwards
Assessment by achievement or mastery	Achievement in relation to the learners' criteria of success
Doing things to the learner	Doing things for or with the learner

Procedural methods draw on these alternative models and emphasise *how* something is done. They do this by considering linguistic forms and functions as only a part of the learning experience while the task is regarded as the central element. In this approach, tasks are employed to achieve an objective using the target language. Typically, this may be a problem-solving

exercise that is resolved as it would be in real life situations. Moreover, procedural models are flexible in their curriculum design. They decide what the aim of the lesson is before planning tasks and content concurrently. This means that the elements interact so that the tasks can influence the content and vice versa. Finally, the evaluation results are added into the planning process.

However, in contrast with propositional methods, procedural approaches have difficulty in devising content plans and results in the long-term. Thus they have a retrospective approach to this, which explains the emphasis they place on evaluation and classroom-based experiences. This retrospection is evident in their reports, which mention learning objectives, the nature of a lesson's content and how this worked practically, what explanations were asked for, given and by whom, what type of interaction took place, how the lesson time was planned and eventually spent etcetera. This is entirely based on research carried out in the classroom using techniques such as observation and diary entries, which reflect on what procedures were employed, any difficulties encountered, and the advantages and disadvantages this approach had for the learners. Using this planning and evaluation method aids both curriculum as well as teacher development and learning in general (Candlin 1984).

In task-based models, learning is arranged around how well the learners use their communicative abilities to undertake a number of tasks. Task-based syllabuses may be divided into two parts: a) communication tasks, meaning the actual task the learner performs while communicating; and b) enabling tasks intended to help the learner participate in the first part, which specifically focus on the language's rules and conventions, meaning and interpersonal understanding. These tasks are designed to be cyclical and begin with those the learners are familiar with and are competent in before moving on to more complicated, unfamiliar ones.

The origins of task-based models can be traced back to various sources, including the Situational Approach, the utilisation of problem-solving exercises and the use of project-specific materials. In addition, several programmes, especially the Bangalore Project developed by Prabhu (1987) alongside other Indian colleagues, offer practical contributions to this technique. There has also been a marked increase in the amount of project work undertaken, which has led to an emphasis on developing tasks designed for ESL along with the fulfilment of a variety of them.

Going further than task-based models, process methods concentrate on three procedures: communication, learning, and social activity within the classroom. In this method, how activities are conducted in the classroom is the means by which communication and learning comes about. The process model provides a blueprint for this classroom work that: 1) states what joint decisions should be made by teachers and learners through an ongoing, negotiated process; 2) provides a list of suggested classroom-based activities and exercises, but, unlike the task-based model, these are not sequenced.

In the blueprint, decisions are presented as questions that relate to three important aspects of the work to be undertaken in the classroom.

- a. Participation (“Who works with whom?” That is individually, as a pair, in groups or all together, and what is the teacher’s role?)
- b. Procedure (“Which particular activity or task will be undertaken?” “How will it be worked upon and for how long?” “What resources should be used?” “How shall we share and evaluate the outcomes of the activity?”)
- c. Subject matter (“What shall be the focus of the work?” and “For what learning purposes?” (See Breen 1987: 166–7)

Origins for the process model can be seen in educational thinking and practice that has a humanist dimension (Dewey 1974, Holt 1976, Freiré 1970). This is obvious in the way it emphasises the need to learn in groups, encourages learners to reinterpret new knowledge and argues against producing a lesson content plan. The process model is applied in various ways, but the best-known methods are Allwright’s (1982) that worked with adult learners, and Breen’s *et al.* (1989) in-service training programme. In conclusion, it can be said that procedural approaches provide an adequate answer to the new challenges facing the teaching of FLT and give teachers an interesting method with which to further classroom research.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this essay, the main approaches and methods used in FLT have been evaluated as paradigms in terms of theory, research and classroom practice. From a scientific standpoint some of them are obsolete while others are considered contemporary; however, every method has made important contributions at a given time, each superimposing itself on a former in an eclectic manner. Nevertheless, they have two things common to all: 1) a belief that their model provides the best solution, and 2) a set of instructions for teachers to follow.

It is not suggested therefore, from the arguments put forward in this essay, that teaching should follow a set of hard and fast principles. Rather, it takes the view that teaching is most successful when a flexible and reflective approach is adopted, which advocates a permanent, ongoing interactive curriculum between, teachers, learners, methodology, activities and materials. Hand in hand with careful content planning and evaluation, it is what actually goes on within the classroom environment that is the most important thing for teachers to reflect on before linking this with their own theory/ies or other experiences. It is proposed, then, that teachers should adopt a more active role by designing their own lesson content and tasks, promoting interaction, sourcing materials, making evaluations etcetera. This is in contrast to the more passive role that relies on predetermined designs and methodologies. Clearly, the title *classroom researcher* fits this new role. The consequence of adopting such an approach would be that instead of teaching uncritically and eclectically, a constantly analytical and interpretative culture would be introduced to the FLT classroom. In terms of teacher–learner development and the curriculum as a whole, this is by far the best teaching method (see Nunan 1986).

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## پوخته

### ريڭاكانى ووتنه وى زمانه بيانیه كان، چوڻيه تى په ره سه ندى ئو ريڭايانه و ئو گرفتانه ي هاتونه ته پيش

پوخته ي ئه م بابه ته تيشك ده خاته سهر ريڭاكانى ووتنه وى زمانه بيانیه كان كه هيشتا له قوتابخانه كان كاريان پيدكړي و تاوتويي بيردوزه كاني فيربونى زمان ده كات كه ئو ريڭايانه له سهرى دامه زراون. پيش ئه وى هه لسه نگاندى بو هه ر يه ك له و ريڭايانه بكه ين، چهند خاليكى گرنه ده خه ينه بهر باس و ليكولينه وه له وانه: ئاكاره گرنه كاني هه ر يه ك له و ريڭايانه و ئو ته كنك و چالاكيانه ي به كار ده هيندرين، له گه ل هاتنه كايه و به ره و پوكانه وه چوڼى ريڭاكان. ئو ريڭايانه ي هه لمانبژاردون برتتين له: ريڭاي و ه رگيراني ريزماني و ريڭاي پيځهاتگه رايي (ستره كچراليستى) و ريڭاي گفوتوگوكاري. له ريڭايه ي گرتنه بهرى جوړى تويزينه وى نوپكاري له بواري په روه رده دا، خالي پيشنياركارو له م بابه ته ئه وى هه كه ده تواندرت موديلي ئه رك دانان و پروسيسكارى وه ك دوو موديلي شيا و جيگه ي ريڭاكانى تر بگرنه وه له بواري ووتنه وى زمانه بيانیه كان. له كوتايده ئه م بابه ته په يوه ندى نيوان پيشوه چوڼى ماموستا و نوپكاري له چوارچيوه ي پروگرامى خوښندن و گورانكارى شياودا داده ريژيت

## الخلاصة

### طرائق تدريس اللغات الاجنبية، و كيفية تطويرها و معالجة العقبات التي تعرض لها

خلاصة هذا الموضوع تؤكد على طرائق تدريس اللغات الاجنبية، على أن هذه الطرائق مطروحة فى المدارس، فضلاً عن مناقشة النضريات التي تأسست عليها هذه الطرائق. قبل أن نقيم هذه الطرائق نتطرق الى بيان النقاط الأساسية و التي منها: بيان السمات المهمة فى هذه الطرائق من الناحية الفنية و النشاطية، مع تحقيقها و انكماشها، و من هذه الطرائق التي اخترناها ما يأتى: طريقة القواعد و الترجمة، الطريقة البنوية التركيبية، و طريقة التواصلية الاتصالية من خلال اتباع البحث. النقطة المقترحة فى هذا الموضوع هي: تطبيق عملية الواجب و عملية تعليم اللغة. و فى نهاية هذا الموضوع يتم انشاء العلاقة بين تطور المعلم و الحدثة فى اطار منهج التعليم و التغيرات الملائمة



# Contrastive Analysis of Discourse Markers in English and Kurdish

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## Abstract

This paper attempts to clarify the universality of some features of discourse markers across languages. It compares discourse markers across English and Kurdish language. To this end, two short written texts, one in English and the other in Kurdish translated into English, have been examined and investigated to find out similarities and/or differences of those markers. Focus has been put on the functions, grammatical and semantic properties of those markers to identify their universal features between the languages in question.

The results of the study confirm the universality of some features of discourse markers such as the role they play in building coherence (both local and global) in pieces of discourse, the functional sense they convey, their optional status, connectivity and non-truth condition of their content meaning. Finally, suggestions for further study and conclusions which can have pedagogical implications are proposed by the paper.

## Contrastive Analysis of Discourse Markers in English and Kurdish

### 1. Introduction

A text needs to be coherent in order to convey the meaning it attempts to. When texts are not coherent, they do not make sense or they make it difficult for the reader to follow and understand (Halliday and Hasan, 1992). The basic means which contribute to establishing coherence are the cohesive devices pronouns, determiners, conjunctions, conjuncts and adverbials to substitute, repeat, refer or omit items across a text. Through using those devices in texts a relation of cohesion is set up and consequently, a coherent text is created. The relation which makes the text coherent is built by discourse markers. This relation plays a crucial role in the interpretation of discourse by signalling coherence relations between discourse units. Among the cohesive devices are Discourse Markers (henceforth DMs): linguistic items or lexical expressions (text forming devices) which contribute in creating a coherent discourse. DMs essentially partly consider the cognitive effect discourse has with the least cognitive effort from the part of the reader/listener. They direct and guide the reader to recognize the main message of the discourse. In this case, these discourse particles arrange the text in a way which makes it comprehensible and easily processed. On the other hand, they make the reader be engaged

effectively in the respective phases of discourse interpretation. The question which arises here is whether the same procedures and processes in text interpretation phase appear in languages other than English, Kurdish for example. And if so, can one consider it to be a universal feature of human language and cognition? The present paper examines this issue by conducting analysis to texts in English and Kurdish drawing on the results and suggestions earlier presented by scholars of the field.

In the second section below, a general overview of the DMs is presented. In the third section, terminology and functions of DMs are covered. In section four, two extracts from academic books are presented; one in English and the other in Kurdish (translated into English). In the fifth section, the DMs used in the two extracts are compared and contrasted (their function and the semantic relation they create) to find out any points of similarity and difference. In the end of the paper, a summary and the conclusions which have already been drawn are presented with the pedagogical implications they offer.

### **2.1.A general overview of DMs**

Before delving into the details of the main point of this paper, a brief overview of this rapidly expanding body of research is invaluable. And due to the controversial nature of the research issue (discourse markers), there is disagreement on the function, meaning, grammatical class, terminology of the topic in question. Thus, the overview covers the common definitions, the syntactic and semantic status with special issues such as categorization, position of occurrence related to these lexical expressions. Starting with the definitions, according to Richards and Schmidt (2010:175) DMs refer to those words, phrases and clauses that serve to monitor and organize on-going discourse'. Fraser (1998: 931), in turn, presents a functional characterization of DMs which can be defined as a class of lexical expressions drawn primarily from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbs and prepositional phrases which signal the relationship between the interpretation of the segment they introduce, S2, and the prior segment, S1. That is to say, they relate discourse segments and signal the relationship of the basic message to the foregoing discourse. On the other hand, Blakemore (2002: 464) considers DMs as indicators or procedures that constrain the inferential phase of utterance interpretation by guiding the process and offering clues that enable the hearer/reader to recognize the intended cognitive effect with the least processing effort. According to Aijmer (2002), they are 'discourse particles' functioning as signposts in the communication, facilitating the addressee's interpretation of the utterance in various contexts. McCarthy (1991: 49) concedes that what distinguishes DMs from adverbials, conjunctions, interjections and other function words and phrases is that 'they organise and 'manage' quite extended stretches of discourse'.

According to Fraser (1998) DMs have a core meaning which is procedural not conceptual, nevertheless, their more specific meaning is negotiated by the context. There are two types: those

which relate the explicit interpretation of the message conveyed by S2 with aspects associated with S1, and those which relate the topic of S2 to S1. Blakemore (1992) and Fraser (1990) suggest, a DM imposes on S2 a certain range of interpretations, given the interpretation(s) of S1 and the meaning of the DM' (in Fraser, 1998: 942).

There are several aspects related to DMs' meaning. First, DMs relate two discourse segments without any contribution to the propositional meaning of either segment. Second, DM's meaning is procedural not conceptual, i.e. it specifies how the segment or discourse they are part of is to be interpreted relative to the prior. For example, the DM *in contrast* makes a specific contrast with S1:

Naz is happy. *In contrast*, her brother is sad.

Third, every DM has a specific, core meaning which is connected with its function. For example, *So* signals the segment it introduces is to be interpreted as a conclusion (result) which is drawn from the prior discourse:

Susan is sick. *So*, she won't be there.

DMs generally precede clauses (e.g. *so, thus, also*), occur within clauses (e.g. *therefore*), or come at the end of the clauses (e.g. *too*).

Additionally, Schiffrin (2001) states that DMs have been examined in a variety of genres such as narratives, political interviews, health care consultants, newspapers, etc., however, the present paper addresses two discourse pieces by examining the stated function in creating a discourse which is cohesive in form and coherent in meaning. Considering all the above perspectives, the paper aims at investigating the issue, which lies within the contrastive studies' domain, as whether the generalisations made to DMs in English can be carried over and applicable to other languages such as Kurdish.

## 2.2. Terminology and Functions of Discourse Markers

Jucker and Ziv (1998: 1) contend that due to the diversity of terms for the DMs they consequently function differently which include 'discourse connectors, turn-takers, confirmation seekers, intimacy signals, topic-switchers, hesitation markers, boundary markers, fillers, prompters, repair markers, attitude markers, and hedging devices'. Moreover, other labels such as cue phrases, pragmatic markers, discourse particles, discourse operators, pragmatic connectives, etc. have also been used by researchers: Blakemore (1992, 2002), Schiffrin (1987), Fraser (1987, 1990, 1999, 2002) among others. There is no consensus among the researchers on terms used to identify this lexical class. DMs fulfil a number of textual and interpersonal functions which may contribute greatly to the general coherence of a variety of discourse genres and registers. They operate inside the texts to add, to contrast, to emphasize, to provide example, to compare, and

many other functions among which a few are addressed in the present study. DMs also mark opening/closing of discourse units, serve as instructions on how given utterances are to be processed or interpreted (Jucker and Ziv, 1998). DMs are 'regarded as comprising a functional class that draws on items belonging to various syntactic classes' (Schourup, 1999: 229). They contribute to inter-text coherence since they relate textual units. This connectivity characteristic of the DMs plays a great role in building a unified structure to extended texts which might be different across languages.

The DMs function differently to create a coherent text which might be similar across languages. A contrastive approach to address their functions is to compare the in-text characteristics of DMs of the languages in contact. To this end, the categorisation of those markers is an aspect to illustrate similarities and dissimilarities between English and Kurdish in monitoring and organizing texts.

### 2.3. DMs in Kurdish

DMs in Kurdish have been investigated as tools and special expressions and designated (ئامرازى به‌ستن: connection tools or connectors). Those connectors, in Kurdish, have been tackled by Aziz (1980), Ameen (1984), Ali (1992), Tofeeq (2002) among others. All the others discussed them at the sentence level, Except Tofeeq (2002: 199) who addressed them in-text and beyond the sentence level. He stated that through a few special instruments, some sentences connected with each other and built syntactic and semantic relations between them inside a text. Kurdish DMs, like those in English, have their own features and functions which share the connection characteristic, however, they convey different sense; *بە‌لام*/however creates a contrasting relation between the sentences that connects:

هه‌ولێ خۆياندا به‌لام سه‌رکه‌وتوو نه‌بوون.

They worked hard; *however*, they were not successful.

Regarding the function of DMs in Kurdish, one functional categorisation of DMs is made by Qadir (2009: 70-83) in which the categories are realized as adding (and, also, as well as, etc.), sequencing (first, second, after that, etc.), illustrating (for example, such as, for instance, etc.), cause and effect (because, therefore, thus, etc.), qualifying (but, however, although, etc.) among others. Qadir (2008), in turn, posited that some of the discourse particles in Kurdish have the function of making sentence topic of the focus:

هه‌يشتا نه‌مردوم تا کراسه‌که‌م له‌به‌ريکه‌يت. (Qadir, 2008:144)

I haven't died (still alive) yet to wear my shirt.

According to Qadir (2008: 144), the speaker's use of the particle *هیشتا/Yet* is to make the main topic of the sentence (death in the above case) the focus of attention. Thus, the particle's use contribute to the theme/rheme structure of the sentence but not the truth condition of it.

### 3.1. Analyses of the English and Kurdish excerpts

Below is a short piece of writing entitled *Advertisement for British Nuclear Forum* from *The Guardian*, 7 October 1988, p. 17 which (in McCarthy, 1991: 49).

*Whilst* their use will increase they are unlikely to be able to provide large amounts of economic electricity. *Generally*, the cost of harnessing their power is huge.

*However*, there is a more practical, reliable and economical way of ensuring electricity for the future.

And that is through nuclear energy.

In the above extract, the use of DMs is investigated to identify the functions which contribute to the overall structure and coherence of the text. *Whilst* at the onset of the writing functions as opener to the general topic of the discourse which is electrical power. The marker's category is sequencing. The second marker used above is *Generally* which is of cause and effect type, it signals the connection which exists in the text. *However* here signals the opening of the main purpose of the whole discourse aim which is advertisement for nuclear electricity. It signals the basic message to the foregoing discourse and constrains the interpretation process with a contrasting proposition to the one earlier presented. The marker also instructs the reader how to process and interpret the discourse and consequently it serves as the collaborative organizational tool. According to Brinton, 1996; Jucker and Ziv, 1998 the above DMs are optional in the sentence and semantically empty. Now it is the time to turn to the Kurdish extract and its translation below:

له نێو دهستوری گشتی زمانهوانی دا سینتاکس شوینی دیاریکراوی خوێ ههیه، بهلامهتا ئیسته له چه ند لیکۆلینهوهیهک بهولاوه شتیکی ئهوتۆ سهبارته بهم بابته بهرچاو ناکهویت، بۆ وینه :

له نێو کتیبخانهی کوردی دا دهبارهی سینتاکسی رستهی ساده ههیه بهرهمیکی سهربهخۆ، که بۆ ئهم بابته گرنگه تهرخان کرابیت نییه، له بهر ئهوه بوو به پێویستم زانی، بهرهمیکی تایبته بهم باسه ئاماده بکه، بۆیهش له رستهی سادهوه دهستم به توێژینهوهی ئهم زانسته کرد، چونکه رستهی ساده بچووکترین دانهی سینتاکسیه و بهو هیقیهیه له داها تووا له بواری باس نهکراوی دی سینتاکسی بکۆلمهوه .

(from Dr. Kurdistan Mukriane's introduction to her book *The Syntax of Simple Sentences in Kurdish Language*)

### 3.2. English Translation of the Kurdish extract:

In the overall linguistic system syntax has a prominent position, (*Nevertheless, However, But*), *till now*, a significant work pertaining to the subject cannot be found rather than a few researches. For instance, in Kurdish library works directly approaching the subject simple sentence cannot be found. (*Therefore, Thus*), I noticed that I needed to write specifically about the issue. The reason I commenced my study with simple sentences is because they are considered the smallest syntactic segments, and hopefully, in the future, I will be able to investigate the other unattended subfield of syntax.

In the extract above, some DMs have been used that support the text segments to remain tied to one another within the overall discourse. The expressions *but (however and nevertheless)* = بۆ وێنه له بهر ئه وه, signal that a contrastive semantic relationship holds between the previous sentence and the next one and it (they) are of both qualifying and contrasting type. Thus, the function of those DMs is to direct the reader to the way, or one of the ways, by which the utterance can be processed and interpreted – it signals the main topic of the whole discourse which is justification of the writer's attention of the subject (syntax). This, in part, demonstrates the topicalization function of the discourse particle in that a contradiction to the earlier topic exists. Additionally, the DM used (*بۆ ئه لام*) marks the opening of the major issue treated in the article – the writer justifying writing about syntax. And that the message in the forthcoming sentence is valid despite the fact conveyed by the proposition in the previous sentence. Another DM in the Kurdish extract is the expression *till now* which is from the group called sequencing. It signals the period in which no work about syntax has been written. The marker can be deleted without changing the main propositional content of the text. *for instance* is also a DM which of illustrating type and functions as connector to the overall coherence organizational instrument in the text. *Therefore* is another marker used in the Kurdish writing marking the cause and effect of the work done and thus supports in the coherent task of the DMs in the text.

### 3.3. Comparison and Contrast of DMs from the above excerpts

The DMs in the English extract *whilst, generally and however* contributed to the overall discourse structure in tying up the main message to the on-going discourse. Thus, they function to direct the reader's attention to possible interpretations the text might carry. On the other hand, The expressions in the Kurdish extract *for instance* بۆ وێنه, *therefore* له بهر ئه وه, *but* بۆ ئه لام are functioned differently serving the overall discourse structure and content. Given the identified functions attributed to the DMs in both extracts, they share the feature of connecting the overall discourse to the main messages of the two texts. Indeed, this can be considered a universal feature of the DMs. Another aspect of the DMs in the above English and Kurdish extracts is that they give clues to the reader to interpret the text as such intended by the writer. This feature can also be considered a universal stylistic feature by which the intended message can be conveyed. Additionally, the DM *however* is present in the two texts and carries the same function which is

contrasting, and this tool is with its functional aspect is similar across the two languages. The relative usage of the DM might be different among languages which can create an area for further investigation.

### 3.4. Summary

DMs, as a research field, have been tackled in the last two decades extensively and no consensus has been emerged due to their controversial nature. The dispute originates from the grammatical aspect, meaning and function of these lexical expressions. Regarding the syntactical status of DMs, they are drawn from different grammatical classes of conjunctions, interjections, adverbials, etc. Approaching their meaning, researchers claim that DMs have a core meaning which is procedural rather than conceptual. As far as the functions of DMs are concerned, they function differently depending on the context in which they occur. Their functions can be summarized as additive, contrastive, exemplifying, sequencing, etc.; consequently, categorization of DMs has emerged based on the function they carry over. Moreover, there are criterial characteristics of DMs which delimit them can be sated as connectivity, optionality, non-truth-conditionality. They play a crucial role in creating a coherent discourse.

### 4. Conclusion

Results from the content analysis of the discourse segments above posit that the functions – opening the discourse, propositional content and instructing the reader to the way the discourse can be processed and interpreted – of DMs might be similar across Kurdish and English. However, the topicalization aspect of the discourse particles in Kurdish language, to a certain extent, is different from the English DMs. The difference is found in the syntactic position those particles take.

The semantic relation created by DMs such as *however* is contrastive and it is similar across English and Kurdish. Schourup (1999: 262) states that 'the meanings and syntactic properties of many common DMs have not been precisely determined, and conclusions differ even about many items that have already been studied in some depth'. The choice of the right translation equivalent might be affected by, first, the semantic nuances exist among DMs` meaning (Fraser, 2006), secondly, the semantic relationship DMs create between the discourse segments, and third, the overall discourse content. Thus, some of the generalisations which have been made to English DMs might not applicable on those of Kurdish while others might be. In addition to that, some of those features might be language-specific than universal. Exchange of the markers with others which are functionally from the same class can lead to slight differences in the overall content meaning of the text. Indeed, this issue might be further studied and conclusions can be drawn from them.

The DMs considered above in the two languages share some features which might be referred to as universal features. The markers in the English excerpt are optional, semantically

empty, heavily contribute to build a coherent discourse and function differently. Relying on the content analysis of the DMs in the Kurdish extract, the same features can be observed and thus confirms the above claim.

Finally, considering the above results of the present study, pedagogical implications can be gained. One crucial implicit message from the above study is that DMs share some features across English and Kurdish which can be exploited while teaching them. The foreign language teacher can simply explain that the meaning and functions of DMs are similar across English and Kurdish which enhances learning according to the Contrastive Analysis tenets. Thus, the similarity aspects of DMs in both languages can be raised and highlighted by the language teacher. Through those resemblance points the teacher can be supportive and help the learners find the translation equivalents of the DMs. Consequent discovery of the similarity of meaning and function by the learners improves the learning process which has earlier proved by Contrastive analysts. On the other hand, the diverse aspects of DMs between both languages might cause difficulty and consequent impediment of the learning process. The teachers' task in such case is to fill in the gap with extra information about the meaning and function of the varying DMs. Concerning other areas to be further investigated, the question 'how are they distributed in speech and writing of Kurdish texts and conversations?' might be a good one.

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### کورتە

ئەم لیکۆلینە وەهیه هەول دەدات سیما گشتییەکانی ئامرازە لیکدەرەکان پوون بکاتە وە لە زمانەکاندا. لیکۆلینە وەهیه بەراوردی ئەم ئامرازانە لە بەینی زمانی کوردی و ئینگلیزیدا دەکات. بۆ ئەم مەبەستەش، لیکۆلینە وەهیه شیکردنە وە بۆ دوو دەقی کورتی نوسراو یەکیکیان بە ئینگلیزی و ئەوی تر بە کوردی کە وەرگیردراو تە سەر ئینگلیزی کراو بۆ دۆزینە وەهیه لیکچوون و جیاوازییەکانی ئەو ئامرازانە. ئامانجی تاییەتی توێژینە وەهیه لیکۆلینە وەهیه لە ئەرک و سیما پێژمانی و واتاییەکانی ئەو ئامرازانە بۆ دەستنیشانکردنی سیما گشتییەکانیان لە نیوان زمانەکانی لیکۆلینە وەهیه.

ئەنجامەکانی توێژینە وەهیه کە جەخت دەکەنە وە لە بوونی هەندیک لە و سیما گشتییانە ی ئامرازەکانی لیکدان وەهیه و پۆلە ی کە ئەوان هەیانە لە بیناکردنی دەقایەتی ناوخیی و کەونی بۆ گوتارەکان، ئەو ئەرکە ماناییانە ی کە ئەوان دەگوازنە وە، پێگە ی هەلبژاردەییان، تاییەتمەندی بەستە وە بیان و نەبوونی پۆل لە مەرجی راستگویی ناو پۆکی ئەو پستە یە ی کە تیییدان. لە کۆتاییدا، پێشنیارەکان بۆ لیکۆلینە وەهیه زیاتر و دەرئەنجامەکانی توێژینە وەهیه پێشنیار کراون و لە پێگەییانە وە دەگەیین بە هەندیک لایەنی فیرکاری توێژینە وەهیه.

### المخلص

تسعی هذه الدراسة إلى توضيح شمولية بعض الملامح من علامات الخطاب عبر اللغات. فإنها تقارن علامات الخطاب في اللغة الإنجليزية واللغة الكردية. وتحقيقاً لهذه الغاية، قد تم دراسة نصين قصيرين أحدهما مكتوب باللغة الإنجليزية والآخر باللغة الكردية مترجم إلى اللغة الإنكليزية، لمعرفة أوجه التشابه وأوجه الاختلاف في تلك العلامات. وقد ركزت الدراسة على الوظائف والخصائص النحوية والدلالية لهذه العلامات وتحديد خصائصها العالمية بين لغات هذه الدراسة.

نتائج الدراسة تؤكد على عالمية بعض الملامح من علامات الخطاب مثلاً لدور الذي تلعبه في بناء التماسك على الصعيدين المحلي والعالمي (في مقطع من الخطاب)، أي أنها تنقل المعنى الوظيفي، وأن هذه العلامات اختيارية، وأنها تقوم بالربط بين العبارات، إلا أنها ليس لها دور في المعنى الأساسي للجملة. وأخيراً، تقدم الدراسة بعض الاقتراحات لمزيد من الدراسة والاستنتاجات التي يمكن أن تكون لها آثار تربوية

# Using Social Media to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of English as a Second Language

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## **Abstract**

The study is about the role of social media in teaching and learning English as a second language among the students and instructors in Soran University. This qualitative study examines how teachers are using social media as a part of teaching English language, with the aim of encouraging students to view social media as an important tool for learning rather than something for distraction.

Using semi-structured interviews the research will examine how students and instructors perceive social media to support the instructors' teaching and students' learning. Twelve instructors and thirty students will participate in the interview.

The study will provide a good empirical study of how social media can be integrated into the process of teaching and learning English language by instructors and students in Soran University.

## **Introduction**

Digital technologies are the latest tools to achieve social ends. Some researches show that Social Media has a great impact in teaching and learning English as a second language with respect to the difficulties. Some studies have been carried out widely in the west especially the English-speaking world, where the infrastructure is in place and access is relatively easy. Social media have been useful tool toward the process of teaching and learning in higher education in particular and the education system in general.

Social media not only enables students and teachers to connect with each other, but also it is an important tool to help students continue learning outside the traditional classroom. Using social media will also permit the students to put their interaction into practice in a way that is successful for them. They can encourage each other to connect and interact on social media by posting comments for one another.

Steer (2012:30) states that "the future of learning is social- people want to learn together. The tools exist, and the potential is huge. Anyone can publish, share, find, and comment on content". Social media might be the future of the process of teaching and learning; because the tools are very excellent and have great impact on education. It is good evidence that social media will bring added value to learning and teaching.

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn are the three big devices of social media in which the use of them is globally increased day by day by both teachers and students for different purposes. Using and understanding such sites is an important issue for educators and others also. Social media have been useful, and it has become a fundamental part of most people's lives, from checking Facebook and Twitter to posting blogs, and uploading and downloading YouTube videos.

Heatley and Lattimer (2013:8) show that social media is one of the most effective way to expand the process of teaching and learning outside the four walls of class. Social media is an excellent tool to include new ideas and teaching ways into the instructors' syllabus and course teaching method.

It is very important how we use social media for our development as teachers and our students as individuals, because the way we use social media as teachers for our self-development should guide and pave the way for the students to enhance their learning and develop their communication skills.

The main focus of the study will be the way that instructors and students use social media as a tool for teaching and learning and integrating it in the process of teaching and learning. The findings of the study will inform how to use social media in the process of teaching and learning by both teachers and college students.

### **Literature Review**

A great popularity of people might see using social media tools as a leisure time activity. These days, social media might be appropriate places to find information on those subjects that are covered in their studies. In fact, instructors have been integrating social media in their studies syllabus and teaching methods with great and fantastic results.

*Chen and Bryer (2012:87) show that the individual company statistics in 2011; Facebook passed 750 million users; LinkedIn reached more than 100 million members; Twitter hit more than 177 million tweets per day; YouTube had three million views each day, this survey was in July 2011. Social media is growing very fast; in April 2013 a great change occurred to these numbers. With Facebook reaching 1.06 billion user ; Twitter: 500 million total users, more than 200 million active users; YouTube : 1 billion users, 4 billion views per day; Flickr: 87 million users, 8 billion photos.*

The term of social media has been defined in different ways. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) give a definition of social media as a media "that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Taking this definition into consideration, it is easy to understand that all media that are used to exchange among people, like e-mail, Wiki, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn ...etc, can be used as social media.

Despite the potentials which have been mentioned, Bryer & Zavattaro (2011:325) indicate that social media have capability, but they are not necessarily to a degree of collaborative and interaction. For example, YouTube as a video sharing tool; teachers and students can post videos whenever they want, but unless there are also certain comments or the video might be viral

which will not target the exact purpose of interaction and classroom learning. Grace Lin et al (2013:44) report that instructors are not free to choose the social media tools; they mention that the instructors should use the most popular devices like Facebook and Twitter to interact and connect with their students because that is where the students are and the faculty should connect with them as they prefer, not as the instructors prefer.

Some researches used survey method to find out the purpose of using social media by both students and instructors. They had different perceptions about using social media. Caraher and Braselman (2010:13) used survey to come across the percentage of students' use of social media. They surveyed more than one thousand college students in the United States of America. They stated that %41 college students use social media to study and work with one another on the assignments several times each month, on the other hand, %27 of the students use social media to connect with the faculty to know about their work and tasks. The survey tells us that using social media is another form of collaboration and knowledge sharing for both students and teachers.

Bryer and Zavattaro (2011:327) present that "social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds". The concept of their understanding show that social media is an important tool so as to interact easily through several different technologies.

With the respect of the importance of social media, Heatley and Lattimer (2013:9) mention that social media might be an intimidate task for those who have not used yet. There could be some important steps to follow so as to familiarize the students with a variety of tools and then recognizing which tools they are using. Once you find out such issues, you can start to integrate those in the process of learning and teaching.

A diversity of social media definitions has been recommended as a means of interaction and interconnection among students, while Grace Lin et al (2013:40) mention some issues as obstacles toward the use of social media in classes, time is an issue, people who do not have enough time only want professionally related information, the privacy of students and also the lack of integrity of student submissions. FacultyFocus (2011:15) had a survey in which 3.7 percent of 800 respondents used Twitter as a means to cheat on an examination.

## **Method**

Most of previous studies have largely been conducted survey as a certain method for collecting data, although there are exceptions in which questionnaires and interviews have been used. This paper examines the role of social media in teaching and learning English as a second language in English department through qualitative method to explore the research questions. Semistructured interviews will be used to collect the data because the concept of semistructured interviews will be best placed with this type of research which seeks to go beyond the researcher

hypotheses direct to the core understanding of subject. The study will conduct through the understanding of both students and instructors of English department/ Faculty of Arts. It is important to understand what is social media for both students and instructors, what is not for them, what does social media mean for them in respect of personal use, academic, research, educational purposes.

Regarding ethical consideration , participants will fully understand the contents of the research and what the information they share will be used for the purpose of the reserach.. Real names will not be used in the produced document.

There will be some open questions to guide the semi-structured interview. The questions are aimed to shed some light on the research questions. Given the importance of social media in education will lead to find responses to some important questions such as: Do teachers and students use it? What social media tools do English department students and teachers use and why? Give examples of the social media that you used it most frequently? How long have you been using these social media? To what extent is social media used in Soran University? If it is used, where, by whom, for what purposes and with what consequences? If not, what are the main obstacles: the lack of human resources, the lack of easy access to the internet? What are the impacts of using social media on learners' outcomes? Are there concerns of using social media in your classes?

### **Data Collection**

The interview will be arbitrary with students who are doing their assignments, group projects, pair works with tweleve instructors who are the teaching staff members in the English department. Asking for the list of student names and instructors is helpful. Participation in the study is optional. Explaining the necessary of sharing their perceptions and let them fully understand the contents of the study. In the study, the researchers will conduct an interview study so as to better understand the themes, ideas, understanding, and perceptions of both students and teachers toward the use of social media in the process of teaching and learning English as a second language.

The interviews are in English. All answers will be transcribed verbatim, they are not recorded. The interviewees are from Department of English language, including students, head of English department, and instructors of linguistics and literature. The average time of the interview is 25-30 minutes, while some of the interviews took 35-45 minutes. seventeen participants as interviewees were female and twenty five interviewees were male. The age of instructors is from 29 to 45 years old, the age of students is from 20 to 27 years old.

The interviews will be double checked and making a summary of the collected data so as to find out the most remarkable key points and themes that have been collected through the qualitative data method. After analyzing the transcripts, all the data will be reviewed multiple times for the sake of accuracy. The interview data are organized due to interview questions. The technique of coding method will be used for compiling the data which helped me to analysis the

themes and key points. Using the initial codes will reach straight forward to the key words, concerns, tools, obstacles, benefits, limitations, and most important activities and uses of social media.

### Findings

Initially, all the students and teachers were interested and volunteered to participate in the interview without any hesitation and shy. First of all, the students' perception will be described of the social media as a tool for learning English language, and then, the teachers' perception toward the use of social media in their classrooms as a means for teaching process. Finally, the concerns and faculty's policy will be discussed.

All interviewees used social media for different purposes, either for supporting their learning and teaching process, academic works, or for personal uses. All of them use social media every day; however they see that their use of social media is often not related to the process of teaching and learning. The most popular service was Facebook. Most of them used Facebook for their personal use, information sharing, and communication. The other services were, Twitter, YouTube, Wiki, e-mail, and instant messaging.

Most of the participants mentioned the importance of having social connections between students and teachers. They found that the easy use of social media is at the top of benefits and make the students especially be familiar with the new digital technology in the digital era. The majority of the interviewees have used social media for the last six years.

Most of the Students ( $n= 22$ , % 73) mentioned Facebook as the most popular service to share their information and communicate with their instructor, while ( $n=8$ , %27) of the students do not use facebook as a means for supporting their studies; they thought it is only wasting of time and might be addicted to some extent. They also mentioned that because the infrastructure is not to a satisfied degree they could not change their attitude toward using social media for teaching and learning. Among Teachers ( $n= 9$ , %75) used Facebook for their personal use, only three of the teachers mentioned that they have some pages for sharing information of teaching in a professional way with their learners. Eight out of twelve ( $n= 8$ , % 67) teachers used E-mailing service to communicate with their students so as to share documents, share ideas, submitting papers, arranging tasks. The same interest found among ( $n=21$ , % 70) of the students for using e-mail in order to share their ideas with their teachers and submitting their homework and assignment to their teachers.

Most of the students ( $N= 24$ , %80) and teachers ( $N= 10$ , % 83) mentioned instant messaging, they primarily use instant messaging for urgent cases so as to get a quick answer to pressing issues. Two teachers mentioned the importance of instant messaging especially if something bad happens to the teachers. Three out of thirty students mentioned instant messaging as the quickest means to get straight answers from the other students, especially when you have a question or something you want to know about the assignment, group working or homework.

YouTube is the most preferable service for the communication and spoken English teachers. Three teachers who taught communication and spoken English mentioned video watching through the service of YouTube. Three out of twelve teachers used YouTube videos. For example, one of the teachers mentioned IELTS speaking test videos to familiar their students with the pronunciation of native people, while other teachers ( n=9, % 75) used YouTube service for their personal use rather than supporting their studies. Regarding students, twenty one out of thirty ( N=21, % 70) students roughly watch YouTube Videos to improve their pronunciation and fluency because they found YouTube videos more easier and faster than reading a book about phonetics and phonology, on the other hand, ( n=9, % 30) mentioned YouTube only for watching those ideas that they want rather than as a tool for learning.

Four teachers (n=4, % 33) out of twelve mentioned Twitter service for teaching as a means of collaboration and interconnection among students. They mentioned that they have created a Twitter account for the class works and asked each student to create a Twitter account. After that they found by doing this they could encourage those students who feel shy and hesitant can tweet the teachers in order to share their ideas and ask questions and getting their answers.

Our participants were interested to integrate social media in the process of teaching and learning in English department. They found that not everybody was successful. Seven out of thirty ( n= 7, % 23) of the students mentioned that the lack of interest among the students might lead the social learning not to a learning goal. They stated that a few classmates of mine do not check their emails or Facebook once a week, this is because of privacy, lack of concern, and some personal reasons.

All the interviewed teachers reported that using social media inside and outside classes will have great impact on the students. Some of the teachers ( N= 9, %75) mentioned motivation as the top list of the impacts, three teachers out of twelve ( n=3, %25) mentioned the integration of face to face learning with the use of social media as more importantly motivational, they thought that social media might lead the students to be distracted and addicted, checking their social media tools inside the class will lead them to ignore the class engagement. The three mentioned teachers only used social media for questions and short answers. While some of the students (N= 6, %20) mentioned using social media in teaching and learning might not be as readiness as face to face learning method. Sometimes social media might lead to the misunderstanding, less of sharing information, less of interact creativity when students do not work together in confrontation. On this account, when students want to do a group work and sending the work to other people by social media for any reason, it might have negative impact on the students' interaction, coordination, collaboration, and classroom engagement.

Regarding the concerns of using social media in classes, all teachers mentioned workload and obstacles of technology as the top-listed concerns.

They mentioned their daily workload and the lack of easy access to internet do not allow them to fully adopt themselves to the new tools of digital age and help them to agree of satisfaction in order to explore new things for their teaching method. They need more back up



from the faculty so as to have access to new technology. The faculty support is the most important part to success in the integration of social media in teaching and learning process.

The teachers pay a great attention to the ethical issues. The majority of them try to avoid potential relationship between students and teachers, even some of them do not want to friend their students till they finish the college.

The most remarkable issue for students is more guidance on how the social media tools work on their learning effectively. They asked for more clarifications and the way that will work for them in order to avoid distractions among them.

Concerning policy ( n=26, % 87) of the students they have not seen any written document policy or online policy about social media; the only thing is that they advise students to use social media for right and permitted things. while the rest students ( n= 4, % 13) answered do not know . It will be very useful to have such policies for both sides, either for teachers or students. All teachers have their own policy in using social media in the classroom, but most of them have no idea about a certain policy that their institution have it.

### **Discussion**

The aim of this study is to find out to what extent social media is used for learning and teaching English as a second language in English department at Soran University. The interviewees mentioned that social media has a place in Higher Education.

They widely think that social media will easily break the cycle of isolation among students and teachers. Social media is the best aspect of motivation in classrooms. Students will have their own words and sayings through it. When the teachers offer them the chance of using social media ; the students might automatically use these tools for academic purposes as well. Their concerns and interests might be inclined to a degree that they can interact and collaborate more effectively.

Social media is one of the potential tools that reconstruct the learning and teaching atmosphere between students and teachers. However, the teacher might feel more comfortable when they see that his role transforms to a facilitator more than a teacher.

To the best of the knowledge from this study, the interviewees use different tools of social media for different purposes. The interviewees mentioned the importance of using social media and networking technology in teaching and learning English as a second language, but they indicate that implementing social media is not to that level easy, especially when the infrastructure is not in its place, the relationship between teachers and students with the security concerns might not lead these technologies to achieve the most wanted learning outcomes.

The students need more support and guidance from the teaching staff on how to use social media as a means of leaning in English department. As a concern, there should be some certain rules and policy of using social media so as to avoid the students of using social media inappropriately with friends or others. The faulty should have its own policy as a form of

guidelines especially because we are in the process of using these new technologies into teaching and learning process.

As it has been noticed from this study, the teaching staff of English department specially and the faculty in general are eager to provide the students with the easiest method of teaching with marvelous learning outcomes, but the faculty should provide them all the facilities so as to achieve their goals throughout the integration of social media in their methods of teaching.

All participants ask for the strong support of faculty in adopting services of social media to support their studies. They would like to have an easy access to internet so as to learn more up to date ways of using social media in the classrooms; they need more motivation and encouragement from the faculty toward the use of social media for teaching and learning English language as a second language. Faculty should provide them with a good and quick wireless internet inside campus or Wi-Fi to make the integration of social media with teaching and learning more effective and successful.

### **Conclusions**

Throughout the study, the following points have been explored to integrate social media in teaching and learning English as a second language:

1. Teachers and students are complementary for more help, guidance, and collaborative.
2. Their daily workload might not lead the participants to fully adopt to the new advices and tools.
3. Students perceive the use of social media with face-to-face interaction. It would provide with different good results. Although social media has a place in teaching and learning language, but face-to-face meeting would also have a good collaborative learning results and outcomes.
4. Each module has its own specification, for example social media might be more effective with good learning outcomes in spoken English, and communication rather than novel and creative writing.
5. Students and instructors are not free to choose the devices as they prefer, because choosing the unreachable devices might lead to lose the interact between both participants.
6. Educating participants of using social media inside and outside of the classroom to keep in mind the warnings of cyberbullying.
7. Students, who use social media for supporting their learning, are more creative and more open minded persons toward the new ideas and themes alongside the risks that they should be aware of it.

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## پوختەى توپژینه‌وه‌كه

ئەم توپژینه‌وه‌یه گرنگی دەدا بە پۆلی مالمپەرە كۆمە‌لایەتییه‌كان لە پڕۆسەى فیربەوون و وتە‌وه‌ى زمانى ئینگلیزى وەك زمانى دووهم لە لایەن مامۆستایان و قوتابیانى زانكۆى سۆران. هەروەها ئەم توپژینه‌وه جۆرییه لیکۆلینە‌وه لە چۆنیەتی مالمپەرە كۆمە‌لایەتییه‌كان دەكات لە لایەن مامۆستایان وەك بەشێك لە پڕۆسەى وتە‌وه‌ى زمانى ئینگلیزى بە ئامانجى هاندانى قوتابیان و لەسەر بە‌كارهێنانى مالمپەرە كۆمە‌لایەتییه‌كان وەك ئامرازى گرنگی فیربەوونى زمانى ئینگلیزى نە‌وه‌كو وەك ئامرازى كات بە‌سەر بردن.

چاوپێكەوتنى راستە‌وخۆ و ناراستە‌وخۆ یه‌كێكه‌ له‌ و هۆكارانه‌ى كه‌ له‌م توپژینه‌وه‌ى بە‌كارهێنراوه‌ بۆ لیکۆلینە‌وه‌ لە‌سەر چۆنییه‌تى تیگه‌یشتنى مامۆستایان و قوتابیان لە‌ بە‌كارهێنانى مالمپەرە كۆمە‌لایەتییه‌كان لە‌ پڕۆسەى فیرکردن و فیربەوونى زمانى ئینگلیزى. بۆ ئەم مە‌به‌ستە‌ش دوانزه مامۆستاوى سى قوتابى بە‌شدارییان کردووه‌ له‌م چاوپێكەوتنانه‌.

ئەم توپژینه‌وه‌یه‌ دەرئە‌نجامیكى باش به‌ پشت‌به‌ستن به‌ تیبینى و تاقى کردنه‌وه‌ سه‌باره‌ت به‌ تیکه‌ل‌کردنى مالمپەرە كۆمە‌لایەتییه‌كان به‌ پڕۆسەى وتە‌وه‌ و فیربەوونى زمانى ئینگلیزى له‌ لایەن مامۆستایان و قوتابیانى زانكۆى سۆران پێشكە‌ش دە‌كات.

## المخلص

یهتم هذا البحث بدور الصفحات الاجتماعية في عملية تعلم وتعلم اللغة الانكليزية من قبل الاستاذة والطلبة بجامعة سوران باعتبارها اللغة الثانية.

ويعد هذا البحث توعياً حيث يبحث عن كيفية استخدام الصفحات الاجتماعية من قبل الاساتذة وهي جزء رئيس في عملية تعلم اللغة الانكليزية وبأهداف تشجع الطلبة لاستخدامها وهي عامل مساعد لتعليم اللغة الانكليزية، وليست عاملاً لقضاء الوقت.

والمقابلة المباشرة وغير المباشرة أحد الاسباب التي استعملت في هذا البحث لأجل التوصل الي مدي استيعاب الاستاذة والطلبة لاستعمال الصفحات الاجتماعية في عملية تعلم وتعليم اللغة الانكليزية. ولهذا الغرض قد شارك (12) معلماً و (30) طالباً في هذه المقابلة ويحقق هذا البحث نتيجة جيدة عن طريق الاستناد الي الملاحظة بدمج الصفحات الاجتماعية مع عملية التعليم والتعلم في اللغة الانكليزية الذي من قبل الاساتذة والطلبة بجامعة سوران.

# Teaching Poetry to Kurdish EFL Learners

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November, 2013

## Abstract

Teaching poetry is a challenging task for teachers, because they need to combine various techniques and methods to teach poetry effectively. The main aim of this study is to show how poetry can be taught to Kurdish learners in English classrooms.

The present study focuses on four main sections. In the first section, the rationale behind the study is introduced. In the second section, approaches to teaching poetry are highlighted. In the third section, previous literature on improving poetry methodology is reviewed. Finally, this research suggests for poetry teachers some pedagogical implications for enhancing their methodology in teaching poetry.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

English language has been an important constituent of international curriculum for decades. Nowadays in Iraqi Kurdistan, English language plays a prominent role in people's lives. Therefore, many Kurdish people try to learn this language. Many Kurdish people believe that the most important place for learning English language is likely to be university, because almost all universities include English departments in which many subjects are offered to teach English and improve the students' skills in English. One of these subjects is "Poetry". Poetry is an integral part of English teaching curriculum in almost all universities in Iraq and Kurdistan. However, many students find this subject difficult and they are haunted by the fears of "not understanding" poems. Therefore, English poetry is "all too often left to one side" in ESL/EFL classroom (Maley & Moulding 1985:134) and "neglected by teachers in the language classroom" (Burrill 2011:14). However, many researchers (for example, Hanauer 2001; Maley & Duff 1989; Kellem 2009; Collie & Slater 1987; Ramsaran 1983; Llach 2007; Khatib 2011) concluded that poetry-based activities in the EFL/ESL classrooms are influential and provide an ideal opportunity to enhance learning the language.

Poetry is believed to be a difficult subject; so, effective methodology is needed to ease the subject. Therefore, teachers should do their best to enhance teaching poetry. According to (Povey 1979), poetry teachers are likely to be responsible for causing the negative attitude of the students towards poetry. Many teachers in Iraqi Kurdistan are reluctant to teach poetry in classrooms. One of the promising ways to make poetry an enjoyable and more useful subject in EFL classrooms is to use effective teaching methodology. This study shows some ways to

enhance teaching poetry in the universities of Iraqi Kurdistan, especially in the University of Raparin.

## **2. Approaches to Teaching Poetry**

To enhance teaching poetry in EFL/ESL classrooms, three different approaches have their roots in literary criticism.

### **1. Stylistic Approach:**

This approach analyzes the language forms of the text. According to (Short 1996), stylistics is the direct application of linguistic evidence to interpret and analyze literature, and is an analytical means of discussing the meaning of a poem through the explanation of formal aspects of the poem. For instance, lexical repetition in a poem can be used to strengthen the impact of a word used in the poem. This approach is useful to improve students' skills of phonology, grammar, vocabulary, writing and speaking.

Many researchers have acknowledged the utility of this approach in English language teaching. One example is provided by (Kellem 2009) who claims "EFL teaching activities in which students analyze poetry stylistically can provide opportunities to explicate the formal features of English including the levels of phonology, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse and relate them to the understanding of the poem" (p.13). Many others, such as (Rosenkjar 2006) and (Buckledee 2002), have used this approach in their classrooms and found it useful. Thus, students through this approach have more extensive knowledge about some integral aspects of language.

### **2. Reader-Response Approach:**

This approach focuses primarily on the reader. It shifts the focus of reading from the author and the text to the reader. According to this approach the creation of meaning is inseparable from the act of reading. This means that the level of interaction of the reader with the literary text helps the reader understand and realize the meaning of the text. (Schultz 2001) and (Schultz2009) treat this approach as an important part of teaching literary texts in language classrooms, and believes that it fosters the development of learners' higher level of critical thinking skills. (Schultz 2009), moreover, claims that "a reader-response view essentially capitalizes upon students' individual and experiential interactions with the text, gradually encouraging them to restructure their own experiences and eventually develop a reflectively critical view of a given literary work" (p.130).

Many researchers extol the virtues of the Reader-Response approach for second language (L2) acquisition. For instance, (Ali 1993) used this approach while teaching EFL to engineering students in a university in Malaysia. He found that students' reading experience was enhanced when they are asked to personally respond to a given short story. Additionally, (Liaw 2001) studied the effects of Reader-Response theory in an EFL course taught in Taiwan. The students were asked to personally respond to short stories given by the researcher. He found that the

students' interest was highly generated when they felt that they could personally relate and respond to the characters and themes of the stories. Moreover, (Akyel & Yalcin 1990) in their study concluded that students (i.e. the participants) did not see literature as a part of achieving their language learning goals because they were rarely asked to personally respond to the literary texts.

Thus, it can be concluded that when the students became engaged in independent meaning making or risk-free environment, their interest in reading literary texts will be steadily increased. This is also conceded by many researchers such as (Tomlinson 1998; Martin & Laurie 1993).

## 2. Formeaning Response Approach:

This approach was suggested by (Kellem 2009). It is the combination of two terms: *Formeaning* and *Response*. Firstly, He coined the term *formeaning* from *form* and *meaning* to represent Stylistic approach, which is the language-centered approach to teaching poetry. According to (Kellem 2009), form and meaning are inseparable parts in Stylistic analysis because "to correctly describe and understand a language form-such as a lexical item or grammatical structure- one must consider the form in a meaningful context. Therefore, form and meaning are not two separate aspects to consider when analyzing poetry." (p.14). Secondly, *Response* component represents the Reader-Response approach. This is based on the students' personal responses to literary themes. This, to (Kellem 2009) "assists the learning process" (p.15).

In teaching poetry, both linguistic elements and students' personal responses should be concerned. Therefore, this approach is likely to be useful and should be used in EFL classrooms. (Kellem 2009) seems to be ideal about his approach, as he further claims that "[the Formeaning Response approach] makes poetry learning motivational and personally relevant to students, and is designed to bridge the gap between aesthetic and stylistic reading approaches, and to show how pleasure and understanding can coincide [...]" (p.15).

## 3. Previous Literature on Teaching Poetry

Based on the previous approaches, many activities and lesson plans have been designed to improve teaching poetry in EFL classrooms. (Llach 2007) suggested some activities to ease teaching poems in classroom. He proposed four main sections for analyzing a poem: Responding, Analyzing, Writing, and Experiment further. The first section is similar to pre-reading or warming-up activities in which the students look at the title, some words in the poem, and think about the general context out of which the poem has been written. In the second section, the students look at the deeper analysis of the poem in which content and form are concerned. In the Writing section, the students are asked to write a composition about the poem (based on their understanding), or write a poem based on the theme of the poem. In the final section, the students are required to compare/contrast between the given poem and another poem.

(Dutta 2001) in his article entitled *teaching poetry in the school classroom: an integrated and communicative approach*, proposes a range of activities to ease teaching poetry. The first proposed step is pre-reading activities. In this step, he suggests, students should be led to *look at the title, do illustration, provide warmers, look at the key words, and do language exercises*. The second step which is whilst-reading activities. In this step, the students listen to a good reading of the text, read the text, do some language exercises, and check the predictions made about the text in the pre-reading activities. The final step, which is post-reading activities, (Dutta 2001) uses comprehension questions, language exercises, and creative activities to create a suitable situation for the learners to express their reactions to reading the text.

Both (Rosenkjar 2006) and (Buckledee 2002) give some language-centered examples for teaching poetry in university EFL classes. In the suggested examples, the students:

- highlight complete sentences in a poem with different colors.
- categorize words from a poem into different parts of speech groups.
- circle personal pronouns and find patterns.

(Kellem 2009) proposes some classroom activities for poetry teaching. The activities are based on the Formeaning Response approach. In the Formeaning part the students do the following:

- Alternative word exercise: in this exercise some words are taken from the poem and put into a multiple-choice exercise, then the students as a group, need to find out which word is the most suitable word for the poem.
- Listening cloze: some words are deleted. The teacher reads out the poem; then the students fill in the blanks with the missing words.
- Listing: the students are asked to list the words in a poem according to different parts of speech and rank them in order of importance in the poem.

Regarding the Response part of the approach, (Kellem 2009) suggests some activities such as giving discussion questions, draw pictures, role plays, letter writing, and true/false questions.

The activities proposed so far are can be effective and useful in EFL classrooms. However, these activities include some limitations. For instance, one of the most important sides of teaching poetry is to study poetic devices. Nevertheless, none of these activities includes a part about teaching poetic devices. Additionally, the teachers should give or explain the meaning of some words in the poem before asking the students to read it. This is also not highlighted in the proposed activities mentioned so far. Therefore, further pedagogical implications are worth proposing.

#### **4. Pedagogical Implications to Teaching Poetry**

Teaching poetry in EFL/ESL classes has always been a very challenging task. To ease this task, effective methodology is needed. So far, many attempts have been made to ease the process of teaching poetry, but they have some limitations. Thus, in this study I will suggest the following pedagogical implications to improve teaching poetry in EFL classrooms.



## 1. Explaining poetic devices

Language is an important tool which distinguishes poetry from other literary genres. Poets use language in musical ways, and for doing so, poets need to use many musical poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, rhyme and rhythm to give a special effect to the poems.

Poetry is an interpretation of life, and it gives a shape to an experience or a visual image of an experience. Poets use some figurative poetic devices such as imagery, personification, metaphor, and simile to express various experience and visual images.

Poetic devices are used to enhance the words chosen by the poet. Hence, teachers should forewarn the students about these devices and explain them to the students before giving any poems because through the devices the students will have a better understanding of the poems. The table below shows the definition of some poetic devices with possible classroom activities.

Poetic Devices	Definition	Possible Activities
Alliteration	The repetition of the same consonant sound in several words placed close together. For instance, in <i>big brown boots</i> , the consonant sound (b) is repeated in the words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find out the words showing alliteration/assonance in the poem below.</li> <li>Give a sentence in which some words show alliteration/assonance.</li> </ul>
Assonance	The creation of sound effect by repeating vowel sounds in the words placed close together. For instance, in <i>bright shining light</i> , the vowel sound (i) and this created a sound effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underline the repeated consonant/vowel sounds in the poem.</li> </ul>
Rhyme	Repeating the final sound of a word which can be at the end of or within a line. For instance, <i>blue, grew, and too</i> have the same rhyme because they end with /u:/ (i.e. long /u/) sound.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match the words in column A to those in column B to make rhyme.</li> <li>List some words that end with the following sounds (/y/, /er/, /p/).</li> </ul>
Imagery	It is the use of words or pictures to describe ideas or actions in poems (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 2003). For instance, in <i>her mind was an eagle</i> , the image of "eagle" was used to describe "her mind".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at the following lines and draw a picture to match the description.</li> </ul>
Personification	It is giving human characteristics to a lifeless object or idea. For instance, in the following <i>"Ah, William, we're weary of weather," said the sunflowers, shining with dew. "Our traveling habits have tired us. Can you give us a room with a view?"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personify the following words (computer, sea, breeze, wind).</li> <li>Find out personification in the poem below and identify the words show personification.</li> </ul>

	William Blake (1757-1827) sunflowers are speaking to William Blake. However, in reality sunflowers do not speak. But they were given a human characteristic which is “speaking”.	
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## 2. Oral Reading

Poetry is distinguished from the other genres of literature through the use of its sound and rhythm. Poems should be read in such a way that the listeners should feel this musical aspect. Reading the poems aloud or playing a tape (on which the poem is recorded) is very helpful to feel the musical poetic devices used by poets. This is also useful for improving listening skill, pronunciation and rhythm.

## 3. Defining poems’ essential vocabulary

Vocabulary is an integral part of language. Therefore, students should be given the meaning of some critical or unknown words included in poems, as research has concluded that vocabulary is the main reading problem for second language learners (Mckinley 1974). Moreover, teachers can also encourage students to use context clues. For instance, in the poem “she walks in beauty” by Lord Byron (1788 – 1824), the teacher should explain the meaning of *clime*, *aspect*, *mellow*, *raven tress*, *tint*, and *glow*. The meaning of these words also helps the students guess the meaning of the other words in the lines. Thus, the students will have better understanding of and interaction with the poem.

## 4. Grammar

Grammar is an integral part of language. In any discourse, whether it is written or spoken, grammar plays an essential role. Poets generally use some complex grammatical structures to give a special form to their poems. These grammatical structures should be clarified by the teachers and should be analyzed within the reading to facilitate and thereby deepen the students’ comprehension of the material (Stern 1991).

There are many grammatical irregularities in poems. Restructuring them is likely to be very helpful to master these unfamiliar grammatical structures. The following are examples of unfamiliar grammatical structures taken from the poem “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” by W. B. Yeats (1865 – 1939).

- “Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee”

The correct grammatical structure can be “I will have nine bean-rows and a hive for the honey-bee there.”

- “I WILL[capitalization is original]...a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made”

The correct grammatical structure most likely is “I will build a small cabin (made) of clay and wattles, there”

Restructuring these grammatical structures helps the students understand poems and at the same time it is useful for improving their grammar skill. Thus, teachers should forewarn the students about these irregular grammatical structures and provide some activities about restructuring such structures while reading poems.

### **5. Reading**

Students need to get rid of the fear they have about reading poetry. For doing so, teachers should create a relationship between poems and students. One of the good ways for creating this relationship is to caution the students about the benefits of reading poems. Reading poems can have various benefits. (Llach 2007), for instance, claims that the shortness of poems and their distinctive linguistic features (i.e. unusual syntactic patterns, polysemy of words, alliteration, etc.) make poetry to be useful language learning materials. Moreover, (Holmes & Moulton 2001) acknowledged that reading poems can enhance many positive learning functions including grammar, awareness of different phrases and structures. Additionally, (Sarac 2003) explains the educational benefits of reading poems by stating that reading poems help the readers have a different idea towards the use of language by going beyond the known rules and uses of grammar, syntax and vocabulary.

Another way to make students get rid of the fear they have about reading poems is to ask the students to read many poems as a part of the course requirements. Here, teachers can assign the students to choose 2-4 poems of their favorite and prepare a report or a mini project including the summary of the main points with the incorporation of their comments on the poems; and such activities can be graded by the teachers.

### **CONCLUSION**

Poetry is an integral subject in all syllabi of English departments in Iraqi Kurdistan, and teaching poetry is challenging for teachers. To teach this subject effectively, well-planned methodology should be used. In the previous literature, there are many approaches, lesson plans, and activities, which have been designed and proposed to teach poetry effectively. The present study, moreover, contributes to the literature by adding more pedagogical implications to enhance teaching poetry.

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### پوختەى توێژینهوه

وتنهوهى بابەتى هونراوه له زمانى ئینگلیزیدا بو مامۆستایان ئەرکیکی هیلاککەرە، چونکه بو وتنهوهى ئەو بابەتە بە شیوهیەکی کاریگەر ئەوان پێویستیان بە بەکارهێنانی چەندان تەکنیک و میتۆدی جیاوازی هەیه. ئامانجی سەرەکی ئەم توێژینهوهیە بریتی یە لە پێشکەشکردنی چەند رێگایەکی بو وتنهوهى بابەتى هونراوه بە خوێندکارانی کورد له زمانى ئینگلیزى.

ئەم توێژینهوهیە له چوار بەشى سەرەکی پێک هاتوو. له بەشى یەكەمدا، خوێنەرانی بەو بیروکەیهیه ئاشنا دەبن که له پشتی ئەنجامدانی ئەم توێژینهوهیەیه. بەشى دووهم پێک هاتوو له بەرجەسته کردنی ئەو بوچوونانەى که سەبارەت بە وتنهوهى بابەتى هونراوه له زمانى ئینگلیزیدا پێشکەش کراون. له بەشى سێیەمى ئەم توێژینهوهیە، پێداچوونەوهیەکی ورد بە هەموو ئەو توێژینهوه و چالاکیانەدا کراوه که له بارهى بەرهو پێشبردنی رێگاکانى وانهوتنهوهى بابەتى هونراوه له زمانى ئینگلیزیدا له لایەن توێژەرانهوه به ئەنجام گەیهنراون. له بەشى چوارەم و کۆتایی دا، ئەم توێژینهوهیە کۆمەڵێک پێشنیار و پاسپاردە پێشکەش بە مامۆستایانی بابەتى هونراوه له زمانى ئینگلیزى دەکات بو بەرهو پێشبردنی رێگاکانى وانهوتنهوهى ئەو بابەتە گرنگى زمانى ئینگلیزى.

### المخلص

تعليم مادة الشعر مهمة لاتخلو من التحدي. إذ أن على الاستاذ ان يزواج بين تقنيات وطرق مختلفة ليكون التعليم مؤثرا وذا جدوى، إذ تبين هذه الدراسة كيف انه بالامكان لمادة الشعر ان تدرس للطلبة الكرد.

تنقسم الدراسة الى اربعة اقسام رئيسية. يعالج القسم الاول منها الاسباب التي دعت لهذه الدراسة بينما يسلط القسم الثاني الضوء على الاساليب والطرق المتبعة في ذلك. اما القسم الثالث فانه يعمد الى مراجعة الدراسات التي اهتمت بتطوير تعليم مادة الشعر ويختتم القسم الرابع هذه الدراسة بتقديم مقترحات ويعرج على بعض المضامين التعليمية مما يساهم في تطوير تعليم مادة الشعر.

# Effect of crude oil smoke on methemoglobin, sulfhemoglobin and some other hematological parameters in Erbil manual brick factories

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## Abstract

The effect of crude oil smoke on methemoglobin (Hi), sulfhemoglobin (SHb) and some other hematological parameters hemoglobin (Hb), packed cell volume (PCV), red blood cell count (RBCs), white blood cell count (WBC), and platelet count (PLT) were studied in workers of manual brick factories in Erbil governorate. Two groups (GI&GII) were selected from manual brick factories workers, while the control group was served as normal Erbil individuals. The Hi and SHb showed significant ( $P<0.05$ ) in the worker groups compared with the control and also when compared to each other ( $P<0.05$ ), While Hb value was significant increase ( $P<0.05$ ) in both (GI&GII) when compared to control. PCV, RBC count and WBC count were significantly increase ( $P<0.05$ ) in (GI&GII) as compared to the control. PLT count values of group two (GII) was significantly decreased ( $P<0.05$ ) when compared with group one and control.

The results indicate that the workers of manual brick factories have abnormal hemoglobin's due to the injurious from the toxic components of the crude oil smoking.

**Key words: crude oil smoke, hematological parameters, methemoglobin and sulfhemoglobin**

## Introduction

Crude oil has been described as a complex mixture of over than 6000 potentially different hydrocarbons and metals<sup>1</sup>. The chemical composition varies indifferent geologic formation<sup>2</sup>. The major fraction of crude oils is polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon e.g. naphthalene, anthracene phenanthrene and benzo[a] pyrene<sup>3</sup>. Light crude oil contain up to 45% of hydrocarbons<sup>4</sup>. Aromatic hydrocarbons are relatively soluble in water<sup>5</sup> and have the high adverse effect on the body than the heavier, less water-soluble crude oils<sup>4</sup>. Daniel<sup>6</sup> has also reported hematotoxic effect of crude oil in rats following ingestion of light crude oil. It has been reported that hydrocarbon compounds, which are the major components of the crude oil are metabolically transformed by cytochrome P-450-linked polysubstrate monooxygenase system to highly reactive and carcinogenic compounds<sup>7</sup>. Benzene is the prototypical aromatic hydrocarbon which its vapors are nearly three times heavier than air and a proven cause of aplastic anemia,

leukemia, lymphoma and the myelodysplastic syndrome<sup>8</sup>. Chronic exposure to benzene can reduce the production of both red and white blood cells from bone marrow in humans, resulting in aplastic anemia.<sup>8</sup>

The hematological effects of chronic benzene poisoning in exposed workers can be detected by monitoring blood counts at regular intervals. For example, the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommends monthly blood counts and removal of workers from areas with high benzene exposure if they have white blood cell counts below 4000/mm<sup>3</sup> or erythrocyte counts below 4 000 000/mm<sup>3</sup><sup>9</sup>.

Methemoglobin (Hi) is abnormal hemoglobin in which the iron moiety of unoxygenated hemoglobin is in the ferric (Fe<sup>3+</sup>) state rather than the ferrous (Fe<sup>2+</sup>) state. When hemoglobin contains a ferric iron, it is unable to carry oxygen or carbon dioxide. In adults with no hereditary methemoglobinemia, the baseline Methemoglobin level is approximately 1% of total hemoglobin<sup>10</sup>.

Acquired methemoglobinemia is the most common form of methemoglobinemia and most often results from exposure to drugs, heat or toxins that oxidized ferrous iron<sup>11</sup>.

The absolute amount of hemoglobin that must be in the ferric state to cause cyanosis is 1.5gm/dl. Provided that hemoglobin levels are in normal range (12-15gm/dl), 1.5gm/dl would account for 10-15% of the hemoglobin. If a patient is anemic, 1.5gm/dl will account for a larger percentage of methemoglobin. Therefore, a larger percentage of the hemoglobin will need to be in the methemoglobin state for the patient to be cyanotic. For example, if a male patient with renal failure has hemoglobin of only 8mg/dl, and then 1.5gm/dl would account for approximately 19% of his hemoglobin. Thus, the methemoglobin level in this patient would be at least 19% before he would appear cyanotic<sup>12</sup>. Local anesthetics (benzocaine, prilocaine and lidocaine) and nitrites are major agents that cause methemoglobinemia. Benzene derivatives, dinitrophenol, chlorates, and other oxidizing chemicals also produce methemoglobinemia<sup>13</sup>.

Furthermore, vitamin C can directly reduce methemoglobin and is proven to treat cyanosis effectively<sup>13</sup>. Vitamin E is an antioxidant, protecting the RBC from hemolysis induced through lipid peroxidation and the oxidation of sulfhydryl groups<sup>14</sup>.

Sulfhemoglobin (SHb) results from the incorporation of a sulfur atom into the porphyrin ring of hemoglobin. Sulfhemoglobin will cause the patient to appear cyanotic and may be incorrectly interpreted by co-oximeters as methemoglobin. Sulfhemoglobin also is unable to carry oxygen molecules; however, the patient usually tolerates sulfhemoglobinemia better. Only 0.5gm/dl of hemoglobin must be sulfhemoglobin in order to cause cyanosis<sup>15</sup>. Sulfhemoglobin also shifts the oxygen dissociation curve to the right, thus allowing oxygen to be more easily released into tissue. Sulfhemoglobin lasts for the life cycle of the individual red blood cells. It is not reversed by the administration of methylene blue because the sulfuration process is permanent<sup>16</sup>. The present study, investigates the effect of crude oil on some hematological parameters, Hi and SHb values in Erbil manual brick workers.



## Materials and Methods

Brick produce manually in south of Erbil city locally called Cura in past they were used dray animal fesses and straw, but nowadays they use crude oil for burning mud mould for converting it to brick as a source of heating which produce heavy smoke reduce the vision length to few meters. According to the natures of working in Cura there are two groups of workers, group one (GI) is the most exposure to the oil smoking which remain for 48hrs beside Cura for monitoring fire source. Group two (GII) are workers whom work 8hrs daily in Cura. Experimental tests were 30 blood samples, 15 samples for each group their ages were (22-43) years, and another 15 normal persons of Erbil city in same age group serves our study as a control group. 5ml of blood were obtained from all participants in the end day of working by vein puncher then transfer to container containing K-EDTA used for estimation of Hi and SHb rapidly and blood parameters (RBC count, WBC count, PLT count, PCV and Hb concentration) all tests were carried out at Zagros medical laboratory-Erbils, blood parameters were measured by coulter counter (Sysmx K-1200). Hi was measured by the spectrophotometric method using the cyanohematin method. The maximal absorption of Hi is 630 nm. Hi and SHb values were given as g/l. SHb was measured at 620nm the determination described by Dacie& Lewis<sup>17</sup>.

Analysis of data was performed by using SPSS (Version 10). Results are expressed as mean  $\pm$  S.E. Statistical differences were determined by Least Significant Differences (LSD) for multiple comparisons after analysis of variance ANOVA<sup>18</sup>.  $P < 0.05$  represent a statistical significant.

The present design was conducted on 45 persons 15 of them served as control, while others sub grouped into GI and GII.



**A photograph shows crude oil smoke in manual brick factories of Erbil governorate**

## Results and Discussions

The different kinds of Hb in Erbil manual brick factories exposed to crude oil smoking shown in Table 1. The results of Hb revealed that group I and group II had a significantly ( $p<0.05$ ) high Hb when compared with control group. However there was no significant difference between group I and group II.

**Table 1: Various hemoglobin parameters of Erbil manual brick factories workers**

Parameters	Hb g/l	Hi g/l	SHb g/l	Hi %	SHb %
Control	13.6±1.41	0.16±0.08	0.01±0.0	1.09	0.1
Group one	16.3±1.16*	0.32±0.67*	0.12±0.03*	1.81	0.7
Group two	14.7±1.68 <sup>+</sup>	0.25±0.41 <sup>+</sup> *	0.06±0.04 <sup>+</sup> *	1.59	0.4

Values are presented as mean ± SE, n = 15 workers per group;

\* Significantly different from control ( $p<0.05$ ).

+ Significantly different from group 1 ( $p<0.05$ ).

The results presented in Table 1 show Hi and SHb values of the control group, group I and group II. Group I had a significantly ( $p<0.05$ ) higher values of Hi and SHb. The two test groups were significant ( $p<0.05$ ) different from each other with group II having a lower value.

Alterations in some hematological indices have been observed in workers of manual brick factories of Erbil governorate due to exposure to crude oil smoking. Several studies shown that volatile low molecular weight components diffuse in to the blood through respiratory tract<sup>6</sup>. After absorption via the pulmonary or gastrointestinal routes, crude oil is transported in plasma initially bound to albumin and larger proteins to the liver<sup>4</sup>. The results of this study revealed clear difference between the blood levels of both Hi and SHb in the groups study especially between group I and other two groups. This can be explained by the fact that this group has long duration of exposure in the brick factory. Although the level of each methemoglobin and sulfhemoglobin did not reach its toxic level but the harmful effect of both substances can not effectively transport oxygen; their by it activate the erythropoiesis and increase red cell count as shown in Table 2 the Hb value elevated in the workers due to the converting of normal hemoglobin to dysfunctional Hb (Hi and SHb) under effect of crude oil smoke compounds<sup>19</sup>.

**Table 2: Various hematological parameters of Erbil manual brick factories workers**

Parameters	PCV (%)	RBCs count ( $\times 10^{12}/L$ )	WBCs count ( $\times 10^9/L$ )	PLT count ( $\times 10^9/L$ )
Control	42 $\pm$ 4.1	4.8 $\pm$ 0.63	6.8 $\pm$ 1.21	260 $\pm$ 8.93
Group one	48 $\pm$ 1.2*	5.7 $\pm$ 1.13*	8.9 $\pm$ 0.61*	247 $\pm$ 11.71
Group two	44 $\pm$ 2.8 <sup>+</sup>	5.1 $\pm$ 0.86 <sup>+</sup>	7.1 $\pm$ 1.13 <sup>+</sup>	173 $\pm$ 10.32 <sup>+</sup> *

Values are presented as mean  $\pm$  SE, n = 15 workers per group;

\* Significantly different from control (p<0.05).

+ Significantly different from group 1 (p<0.05).

The values of other hematological parameters (PCV, RBC count, WBC count and PLT count) of this study are presented in Table 2. It showed that group I had a significantly (P<0.05) higher rate of PCV, red cell count and white cell count when compared with the control, while group II was not significantly different from the control. However PCV, RBC count and WBC count values of group II was significantly (p<0.05) lower when compared with group I. The platelet count of control and experimental groups were also presented in Table 2. Group II had significantly (p<0.05) lower platelet counts when compared with control and group I, but group I had none significantly affected when compared with the control.

The elevated values of PCV and RBC count of group I indicated that this group was high exposure to the smoke of crude oil component that led to an increase in dysfunctional Hb and oxygen demand of the body elevated in red blood cell mass<sup>20</sup>. The elevated WBC count of group I and II may be due to the exposure of respiratory tracts of these two groups by the toxic effect of crude oil smoke<sup>21</sup>.

Platelet count were decreased in two groups of workers, it may be due to the nature of hard physical manual working of these two groups as an increase in bleeding and platelet consumption by destruction of capillary blood vessels of muscle mass<sup>22</sup>.

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### پوخته

ئە م تووژینه وه یه ئە نجا مدرا بو زانینی کاریگه‌ری دووکه‌لی نه‌وتی خاو له‌سه‌ر بری میپه‌یموگلوبین Hi و سلفا هیموگلوبین SHb له‌گه‌ل چه‌ند پیوانه‌یه‌کی تری خوین (هیموگلوبین Hb و قه‌باره‌ی خرۆکه سووره که‌له‌که بووه‌کان PCV، ژماره‌ی خرۆکه سووره‌کان RBC count و خرۆکه سپیه‌کان WBC count و په‌رده‌کانی خوین PLT count) له‌سه‌ر کریکاری کوره‌کانی که‌رپووچی هه‌ولیر که کاریگه‌ری ئە م دووکه‌له‌یان له‌سه‌ر بوو به دوو کوّمه‌ل، کوّمه‌له‌ی ئاسایی بو به‌راورد کردن سوودمان له‌خه‌لکی هه‌ولیر وەرگرت که له‌هه‌مان ته‌مه‌ندابوون.

بوّمان ده‌رکه‌وت که بری Hi، SHb، Hb گورپوه ( $P < 0.05$ ) له‌نیوان دوو کوّمه‌لی کریکاران و کوّمه‌لی ئاسایی، هه‌روه‌ها دووکه‌له‌که کاریگه‌ری هه‌بووه له‌سه‌ر RBC count و WBC count و PCV ( $P < 0.05$ ) له‌نیوان کوّمه‌لی کریکاره‌کان و کوّمه‌له‌ی یه‌که‌م و کوّمه‌له‌ی ئاساییه‌که، که‌چی PLT- count ته‌نها له‌گروپی دووه‌م کاری لیکرابوو به‌رامبه‌ر کوّمه‌له‌ی یه‌که‌م و کوّمه‌له‌ی ئاساییه‌که‌ز له‌م تووژینه‌وه‌یه بوّمان ده‌رکه‌وت که کریکاره‌کان دووکه‌لی نه‌وته خاوه سووتاوه‌که کاریگه‌ری هه‌بووه له‌سه‌ر زیادکردنی بری Hi و SHb که دوو جوړ هیموگلوبین نا‌ئاساین له‌خویندا جگه له‌پیوانه‌کانی تری خوین.

### المخص

تم دراسة تاثير التعرض دخان النفط الخام على كمية الميثهيموكلوبين وسلفاهيموكلوبين وبعض مقاسات الدم الاخرى (الهيموكلوبين، حجم مكدهاس كريات الدم و تعداد كريات الدم الحمراء والبيضاء والاقراص الدموية) لعمال معامل الطابوق اليدوية في محافظة اربيل. تم اختيار مجموعتين من العمال للدراسة، بالاضافة لمجموعة السيطرة وهم غير معرضين من نفس الفئة العمرية.

اظهر النتائج ان مقدار الميثهيموكلوبين و سلفاهيموكلوبين زيادته معنوية ( $P < 0.05$ ) في مجموعتي العمال المعرضين مقارنة بمجموعة السيطرة و ان مقدار الهيموكلوبين تغير معنويا ( $P < 0.05$ ) بين المجموعتين ومجموعة السيطرة. كما اثر دخان على مقدار حجم مكدهاس كريات الدم الحمراء، تعداد كريات الدم الحمراء و كريات الدم البيضاء معنويا ( $P < 0.05$ ) لكلا المجموعتين. اما تعداد الاقراص الدموية للمجموعة الثانية فكان تأثيره معنويا مع كلتا المجموعتين. ونستنتج من هذه الدراسة تاثير عامل معامل الطابوق اليدوي في محافظة اربيل بشكل سلبي نتيجة تعرضهم لدخان النفط الخام.