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THE IMPACT OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNER'S BELIEFS ABOUT VOCABULARY LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of collaboration in influencing Iranian learner's beliefs about EFL vocabulary instruction. Specifically, this thesis comprises an experimental study of two groups of learners who engaged in the completion of a task with a partner or alone. The research seeks to determine what effect individual versus collaborative study of the vocabulary items through a task-based activity has on learner's beliefs about English language vocabulary learning. A total of 60 students were homogeneously selected based on the OPT score among upper-intermediate participants in Pardis institute in Mahmood Abad, Mazandaran, Iran. All of them were asked to fill BALLI questionnaire, and to answer interview and vocabulary test. Then based on the result, the participants were divided into two groups. The experimental group was taught collaboratively. After one semester, almost 20 sessions, post-test procedure like pre-test procedure was done. The following results were conducted: 1. Collaborative learning has significant effect on EFL learner's belief about learning vocabulary; 2. Collaborative learning has significant effect on EFL learner's vocabulary learning.

Key Words: Learner's *Beliefs, Collaborative Learning and Vocabulary Learning and Balli Questionnaire*

INTRODUCTION

Beyond a student's ability to recognize, understand and retain vocabulary in her target language, a number of both obvious and subtle factors must be present to create the conditions for fruitful language learning. Motivation, encouragement and enthusiasm on the student's (and teacher's) part can serve to generate a language-learning environment where the student establishes not only a deeper understanding of form, meaning and use of the designated vocabulary, but also forms a positive, lasting connection to the foreign language learning process. The role and importance of beliefs have been of a great interest for many scholars from diverse disciplines. In disciplines where human behavior and learning are of a primary concern (namely, cognitive psychology, educational psychology and social psychology) beliefs are viewed as an important construct to be investigated in relation to their subsequent impact on people's behavior. Many theories of learning especially the ones which emerged from conceptual frameworks for the study of human cognition, expectancies, goals, attitudes, motivation and social representations utilized beliefs to comprehend human behavior. Learner's beliefs, which contribute to attitude and motivation, may affect language learning. It is therefore valuable to investigate the malleability of learner beliefs, and to determine whether potentially detrimental beliefs can be ameliorated.

This thesis explores the role of collaboration in influencing Iranian learner's beliefs about EFL vocabulary instruction. Specifically, this thesis comprises an experimental study of two groups of learners who engaged in the completion of a task with a partner or alone. The research seeks to determine what effect individual versus collaborative study of the vocabulary items through a task-based activity has on learner's beliefs about English language vocabulary learning.

Statement of the Problem

Belief is one of the characteristics which individual learners hold about language learning. It is learner's opinion about different aspects of language learning. It can be reshaped by context. Understanding learners beliefs is useful both for teacher to be aware of different learner types and also for the learner to be aware of himself, his abilities, his expectations, and his experiences. Wenden (1986) considers that if

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we are to discover what characteristics successful language learning, we need to discover what students believe or know about their learning, and to provide activities that would allow students to examine these beliefs and their possible impact on how they approach learning. Horwitz (1988) stated that learner's beliefs have relevance to the understanding of their expectations, success and satisfaction with their language classes. A learner, who believes that learning a foreign language involves learning new vocabulary, will expend most of his energy on vocabulary learning. Nassaji and Tian's study on 2010 showed that completing the tasks collaboratively led to greater accuracy than completing them individually.

Research about learner's beliefs can be done according to cognitive theory or sociocultural one. According to cognitive theory, belief is static, individual, internal representation of experience, and resistant to change and so the role of external factors and contextual influence is not important. But according to sociocultural theory, belief is context-dependent, dynamic, flexible and changeable, personal and social that can be examined by individual past and present experiences, and so it can be changed by influence of social and contextual factors. Learner's beliefs are very important in learning a foreign language and they are related to their strategy use, their language skills, and their success in language learning. If we, as a teacher try to change our students' traditional and negative beliefs, there will be a good teaching and a good learning of a foreign language. Most of the researches considered learner's beliefs as static one. Recently, there was done a study on the relationship between learner belief and his writing ability in Iran by Mr. Javadi in 2012 and proved that there is relationship between learner belief and his writing ability. Mrs, ghaffarzade conducted another study which examined the effect of teacher's lexicon belief on learner's vocabulary intake. While these researches and many other studies have done about belief and its effects on different aspects of language learning, little research has done on the effect of other social factors such as classroom context on learner's beliefs and finally on their language performance. And also most of the studies which have done about vocabulary learning, concentrated on developing effective vocabulary instruction methodologies and little research has focused on specificways to encourage positive beliefs in learners about FL vocabulary learning. The benefits of collaborative learning for students are touted by an array of researchers and instructors in second language learning and a range of other disciplines. Unlike the individual learning model, which involves student's solitary work in or study of the target language (TL), the collaborative learning model involves the placement of students in pairs or small groups to collaborate to achieve a common linguistic goal in the TL. Collaborative learning has been shown to encourage the growth of student interdependence (Bruffee, 1999), responsibility (Totten *et al.,* 1991), interpersonal skills (Rymes, 1997), and cognitive and critical thinking skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1986). In foreign language learning, collaborative learning models are applicable in the instruction of students of varying ages (from children to adults) studying in a variety of educational environments (primary, secondary, higher education), in second or foreign language settings, of a range of proficiency levels (from inexperienced beginners to highly advanced learners) and in conjunction with other pedagogical approaches and methodologies. Because collaborative learning has been evidenced to positively impact learner attitudes and enthusiasm towards their target language (Kohonen, 1992), the implications for collaboration in vocabulary instruction have tremendous potential to foster motivation and enthusiasm for current and future study of the target language. This thesis explores the role of collaboration in influencing learner's beliefs about EFL vocabulary instruction. Specifically, this thesis comprises an experimental study of two groups of learners who engaged in the completion of a task with a partner or alone. The research seeks to determine what effect individual versus collaborative study of the vocabulary items through a task-based activity has on learner's beliefs about English language vocabulary learning.

Literature Review
1. Learner's Beliefs
Research into learner's thinking and learner's beliefs have gained ground with the developments of cognitive psychology. As a result of the influence of cognitive psychology, language learners are today

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seen as active and responsible participants who learn from their own experiences, make their own choices and respond to events as they perceive them (Meskill and Rangelova, 2000; Williams and Burden, 1997). Gremmo and Riley (1995) claim that both humanistic and cognitive psychology emphasize learning as a process resulting in extension of the range of meanings of which the individual is capable, as something learners do, rather than being done to them. They also claim that these two approaches (humanistic and cognitive psychology) form the methodological basis for the communicative approach to language learning and teaching (the approach which is widely advocated by SLL/FLL specialists). From this perspective, which still dominates SLL/FLL today, efficient learning could not be accomplished without understanding learners and their interpretations of their personal learning experiences (Meskill and Rangelova, 2000). Learner's beliefs have proved to influence both the actions and experiences of language learners (Horwitz, 1999). Empirical findings have demonstrated that beliefs that language learners hold about a target foreign language and its culture affect their attitudes towards that language and together with other variables play a role in their L2 motivations (Csizer and Dornyei, 2005; Gardner, 1979, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner *et al.,* 2004; Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). In the same vein, Castellotti and Moore (2002) claim that social group's shared images (representations) about other languages and learning these languages can influence learner's attitudes towards other languages and finally their interest in learning these languages. Attitudes and beliefs have also been reported to have a notable effect on L2 learner's strategy use, with negative attitudes and beliefs resulting in poor strategy use (Oxford, 1994).

White (1999) asserts that language learner's expectations which are developed prior to their experiences are also influenced and shaped by their beliefs. According to White these expectations influence how individuals react to, respond to and experience a new environment. In other words, learner's beliefs, which are formed through their experiences, guide them in their conceptualizations of language learning and influence the approaches they adopt to L2 learning (Benson and Lor, 1999). If they believe that languages can only be learned through translation and explanation, they will expect the language instruction to be based on translation and explanation and will reject any approach adopted by the teacher which does not correspond to this expectation. If learners believe that languages are learned by memorizing and reproducing, they will adopt strategies to memorize vocabulary items and grammar rules to reproduce these whenever required (quantitative/surface approach to learning 5). If they believe that understanding the meaning and the communication is important they will adopt strategies to absorb the language in its natural context (Benson and Lor, 1999).

The beliefs that learners develop and hold to be true about their capabilities and skills they possess have an immediate impact on their learning behaviors. Pajares and Schunk (2002) suggest that research should focus on students' beliefs in order to understand why students choose to do certain activities and avoid others and why they achieve and why they fail to achieve. Zeldin and Pajares (2000) assert that learners who believe that they do not have the required skills will not engage in tasks in which those skills are required and these beliefs about their competencies will affect the choices they make, the effort they put forth, their inclinations to persist at certain tasks, and their resiliency in the face of failure (Zeldin and Pajares, 2000). Similarly, Wenden (1995) maintains that learners refer to their selfconcept beliefs and their perception of the task demands to interpret and act upon the learning activity. She sustains that learners choose to engage in activities when they perceive that they have sufficient competence to fulfil the task requirements. Learners who believe that language learning requires a special ability which they lack, for example: "Some people have a good ear for languages, they just pick them up, but I'm not one of them" (Riley, 1997) or "I'm not gifted for languages" (Riley, 1989), would naturally not be motivated towards learning a foreign language. Riley (1997) states that subscription to any of these beliefs will have a direct consequence on the way learners learn. He maintains that although some of these beliefs can be considered as 'wrong' by SLL/FLL specialists they are still meaningful because they reflect the 'subjective reality', the 'truth' from the learner's point of view (Riley, 1997). Benson and Lor (1999) maintain that language teachers need not only know what beliefs learners hold about learning but they

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also need to know whether these beliefs are 'functional' or 'dysfuctional' in order to be able to influence learner's attitudes and behaviors. In the same vein, Ellis (2001) maintains that it is important to identify learner's beliefs which relate to successful learning and beliefs which have a negative impact on language learning. He suggests that these beliefs be used to develop self-awareness in learners.

Thus, understanding language learner's beliefs is claimed to be vital to understanding learners and their approaches to language learning in order to be able to adopt appropriate language education policies and plan and implement consistent language instruction (Benson and Lor, 1999; Castellotti and Moore, 2002; Horwitz, 1999; Riley, 1997; Sakui and Gaies, 1999; Yang, 1999; Wenden, 1999; Zarate *et al.,* 2004). Today in some institutions where foreign languages are taught, learner training or counselling programmes are integrated in language learning curricula to negotiate (mediate) learner's dysfunctional beliefs and help them to appropriate these in a more functional way. The Council of Europe has published various studies proposing different approaches for mediating language learner's representations and helping learners develop positive attitudes toward the target culture(s) and language(s) they are learning.

2. Vocabulary learning

Vocabulary learning is widely regarded as a crucial task for second language learners in their attempts to improve their linguistic competence (Brown and Perry, 1991; Fan, 2004; Gu, 2003 and 2005). Research suggests that vocabulary is enormously important to children's development, especially in reading. Research clearly indicates that children with larger vocabularies have higher school achievement in general (Smith, 1941, cited in Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002) and higher reading achievement in particular (Anderson and Freebody, 1981; Graves, 1986; Stahl, 1998). In fact, people with larger vocabularies even have higher IQs (Bell *et al.,* 2001; Hodapp and Gerken, 1999) Rather, teachers can have a real impact on children's vocabulary knowledge. Research shows that teachers can do things that significantly increase children's vocabularies (Baumann, 2003; Blachowicz and Fisher, 2000; National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl and Fairbanks, 1986), and by doing so children's reading comprehension will also improve (National Reading Panel, 2000; Stahl, 1998).

3. Collaborative learning

The collaborative learning model, in which students ―collaboratively construct and produce knowledge through social interaction and communicational (Fang and Warschauer, 2004) is a classroom approach supported by teachers and researchers across a variety of disciplines in their work with learners of varied backgrounds, ages and cultures. Collaborative learning, sometimes termed cooperative learning, social learning or group learning, is championed for its contributions to the learner's social and individual development, as students engage collectively in building interpersonal skills, problem solving, constructing shared understandings, and also strengthen their relationship to the community at large. The collaborative model is of particular relevance to this study, as it is one of the two learning models researched, so greater attention is paid to its implementation in foreign language learning classrooms. Collaboration is sometimes distinguished from cooperative learning in that cooperation is typically accomplished through the division of labor, with each person responsible for some portion of the problem solving. Collaboration, on the other hand, involves participants working together on the same task, rather than in parallel on separate portions of the task. However, Dillenbourg *et al.,* (1996) note that some spontaneous division of labor may occur during collaboration. Thus, the distinction between the two is not necessarily clear-cut. According to Dillenbourg *et al.,* (1996), in cooperation, the task is split hierarchically into independent sub tasks and coordination is only required for "assembling partial results." Collaboration, on the other hand, may divide cognitive processes into intertwined layers, but coordination occurs throughout.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

RQ1: Does collaborative learning have any significant effect on learner's beliefs about vocabulary learning?

RQ2: Does collaborative learning have any significant effect on learner's vocabulary knowledge?

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And the following hypotheses are drawn:

RH1: Collaborative learning does not have any significant effect on EFL learner's beliefs about learning vocabulary.

RH2: Collaborative learning does not have any significant effect on EFL learner's vocabulary learning. If the results of the study confirm such a relationship, it may mean that students' better performance has been because of the effect of collaborative learning in that group that has been able to affect their beliefs and their vocabulary learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
1. Participants
This research study included 60 participants. All participants were non-native English speaking undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in of Pardis English institute in Mahmood Abad, Mazandaran. Participants ranged in age from 18-27 years. The participants reported having studied English between 2-6 years. Although the curriculum of upper-intermediate level in Iranian English Institute is approximately the same, but for making sure the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) had been administered.

A total of 60 students (females and males) out of 150 were homogeneously selected based on the OPT score among upper-intermediate participants in Pardis English language institute in Mahmood Abad, Mazandaran, Iran. The participants are at upper-intermediate level who study Summit book, 2A in spring semester. Some of the participants are employed and working out, some of them are students of universities, and others are not studying or working. The participants were asked in filling Horwits' BALLI questionnaire to take some information about their beliefs about language learning, an interview was done to know learner's biliefs about vocabulary learning, and also a vocabulary test was done.

Then the participants were divided into two groups, experimental and control group, each group included 30 participants. We had treatment, collaborative vocabulary learning, for experimental group and individual learning for control group. So, all the learners in each group were homogeneous and had similar beliefs about language learning, especially vocabulary learning.

2. Materials
To collect data for this research about learner's beliefs and learning reactions on vocabulary side of language, a questionnaire and a vocabulary test were developed and implemented. The adoption of a questionnaire as a tool for data collection in studies on beliefs is a common practice in relevant literature (e.g., Horwitz 1985; Peacock 2001). The questionnaire was used for categorizing the learners in the groups and the vocabulary test was utilized as a tool to identify the results of the research.

2.1 Oxford Placement Test (OPT)
The Oxford Placement Test measures a test takers' ability to communicate in English. It gives the instructors the information they need to find out about a person's language level. Usually before enrolling in one of the English language courses, they have to take a level test which will help the teachers identify the learner's level of English. The Oxford Placement Test was administered at the beginning of the study to find the exact upper-intermediate level of the students. So, this test was used just to make the learners, in different groups, homogenous. Then we can rely on the results of the vocabulary test. In fact this test is used as a pretest just to use as criteria for arranging the learners in two groups homogenously.

2.2 (BALLI) Questionnaires
Horvitz, (1987) offered BALLI as a quantitative self-report questionnaire that investigates 34 different learner beliefs. BALLI includes five major areas:

A) Motivations and expectation: items 5, 20, 24, 29, 31, and 32.

B) The nature of language learning: items 8, 12, 17, 23, 27, 28.

C) Learning and communication strategies: items 7, 9, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22, and 26.

D) Foreign language aptitude: items: 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 16, 19, 30, and 33.

E) Difficulty of language learning: items 3, 4, 15,25and 34.

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The survey instrument asks participants to rate their agreement to 34 statements on a Likert scale. This instrument is scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "1: strongly disagree" to "5: strongly agree". The questions are in English language. BALLI is a kind of standard questionnaire with a Cronbach alpha of 0.79. Acceptable value of Cronbach alpha is at least 0.70. Subjects are asked to read the statements and decide if they (1) strongly disagree,(2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree with each statement.

2.3 Interview

A number of different interview types can be employed to gather data for research. Interviews are often associated with survey-based research, as well as being a technique used by many qualitative researchers. In structured or standardized interviews, researcher usually asks an identical set of questions of all respondents. They resemble verbal questionnaire and allow researchers to compare answers from different participants. In semistructured interviews, the researchers use a written list of questions as a guide, while having freedom to digress and probe for more information and in unstriuctured interviews and no list of questions is used. Interviewers develop and adapt their own questions. They are similar to natural conversations (Mackey and Gass 2005). In this research, the researcher used semistructured interview. She prepared some written questions and asked them from the participants. The questions were about vocabulary learning.

Interview can allow researchers to investigate phenomena that are not directly observable. Because interviews are interactive, researchers can elicit additional data if initial answers are vague, incomplete, off-topic, or not specific enough. Also, it can be used to elicit data from learners who are not comfortable in other modes. Interview can be done in the learner's L1 to remove concerns about the proficiency of the learner impacting the quality and quantity of the data.

2.4 Testing Vocabulary

A test is a procedure used to collect data on subjects' ability or knowledge of certain disciplines. In second or foreign language learning research, tests are generally used to collect data about the subject's ability and knowledge of the language in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, metalinguistic awareness, and general proficiency (Seliger and Shohamy 1989).

The main purpose of using a vocabulary test in this study was to measure the learners' progress in learning vocabulary in relation to collaborative learning and their belief changes. In fact this test was constituted of 20 words that the students just should answer it at the test time without any preparation for the exam. This test will be given to the learners after at least one semester (almost 20 sessions) that teachers have taught them.

2.5 Dictogloss Task

Dictogloss is a kind of collaborative task that encourages students to work together by reconstructing a text presented to them orally. It involves four stages:

-The preparatory stage: including informing students of the aim of the task and what they are expected to do, a warm up discussion of the topic and presentation of unknown vocabularies, and organizing the students into groups.

-The dictation stage: including reading the text twice at a natural speed.

-The reconstruction stage: students work together to reconstruct the text and discuss the accuracy of their language use.

-The analysis and correction stage: the reconstructed text is analyzed and corrected by students and teachers together (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011).

In this study, the teacher asked the students to listen to the conversation of the book which is playing on the computer. There were unknown words in the conversation. The other time teacher read the text and students listened to it. Teacher introduce new words and explain them for the students and then students worked together to reconstruct it. So, the treatment, collaborative vocabulary learning, was done by using the dictogloss task.

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3. Procedures
The design of this study was organized based on a questionnaire, an interview, an OPT test, a vocabulary test, and dictogloss task. The design and procedure of using each of them will be explained in the following.

3.1 Pre-test procedure
The Pre-test procedure was administered during the first week of the semester. It has three sections: answering OPT and filling BALLI questionnaire, and replying to interview.

In this study, OPT test was used for categorizing the homogenous learners in two groups that were constructed as described in the previous part. In fact this test was utilized as an instrument to place the two groups in the same level so that we can measure the effect of independent variable (collaborative learning) on the dependent variables (learners' language learning beliefs and their vocabulary knowledge).The test will be given to the students before they will be taught by the teachers. And the results will help to place the homogenous learners in two groups. Using BALLI questionnaire is another instrument which helps to take information about learner's beliefs and placing the participants into two groups. Beside these, the researcher used interview to take more information about learner's beliefs about vocabulary learning. All of these were given to the participants before the treatment. And after the treatment, these will be given again to take conclusion.

3.2 Task procedure for experimental group
After that the participants are placed into two groups, experimental and control group, the researcher started to the treatment, collaborative learning. It was administered in second week and continued until the eighteen session of the spring semester.

Before starting any work, the researcher as the teacher of the participants gave some explanation about her research and her purpose of doing it. She described collaborative learning and gave some information about it. Control group were taught by the participants as usual (individual learning), but she used collaborative learning for the experimental group. The researcher designed a dictogloss task for the experimental group. First, the researcher as a teacher tried to engage the participants by some warm-up question according to the title of the unit of the book. After that, she made an explanation to make clear the meaning of unknown words. Then she holds a conversation by using the new words. She was as a partner and other students should response her questions of the dialogue. If the participants didn't know the answer, she herself answered them. Next, she asked students to make conversation like hers by using the new word. The students did it in pair. During this, the meaning of words negotiated and the participants understand them. After they made their text of dialogue, they compared their text with other groups to correct their text. The teacher facilated their works then they did conversation with their partner, when other groups were observing them. If there was any error, they corrected it each other. During this semester (spring semester) all of the lessons were taught collaboratively.

3.3 Post-test procedure
After the treatment, nearly at the end of the semester and before their final exam of the institute, in the nineteenth and twentieth session, the researcher holds post-test procedure. The learners were not informed for the exam because the goal is to take the real result, not an artificial one. Here, the researcher again gave the BALLI questionnaire and hold interview with the participants. A vocabulary test was designed by the researcher according to the participants' book. Post-test procedure like pre-test procedure was done during two sessions. In session one, the participants asked to answer to the BALLI questionnaire. In session two, they answered the vocabulary test and the interview. Finally, at the end of the semester, on the day when their final exam was hold, Participants were also asked to write in one paragraph at the end of their final test paper about their experience with collaborative learning, and would they like to have this experience again or not. At the end, the participants were thanked for their participation in the study.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As we have mentioned before, the purpose of this research is to study the impact of collaborative learning on EFL learner's beliefs about vocabulary learning. The result of the research data for studying the hypotheses is based on descriptive statistics (mean & standard deviation), inferential statistics of t-test, and multivariate covariance analyses (MANCOVA).

The multivariate covariance analysis (MANCOVA) allows us not only examine the effect of different dependent variables, their interaction, and rejecting the effect of other variables, but also shows the relationship between different dependent variables. All of these can be done simultaneously.

With study of diagram that has obtained of relationship between dependent variables it is conducted that there is linear relationship between dependent variables.
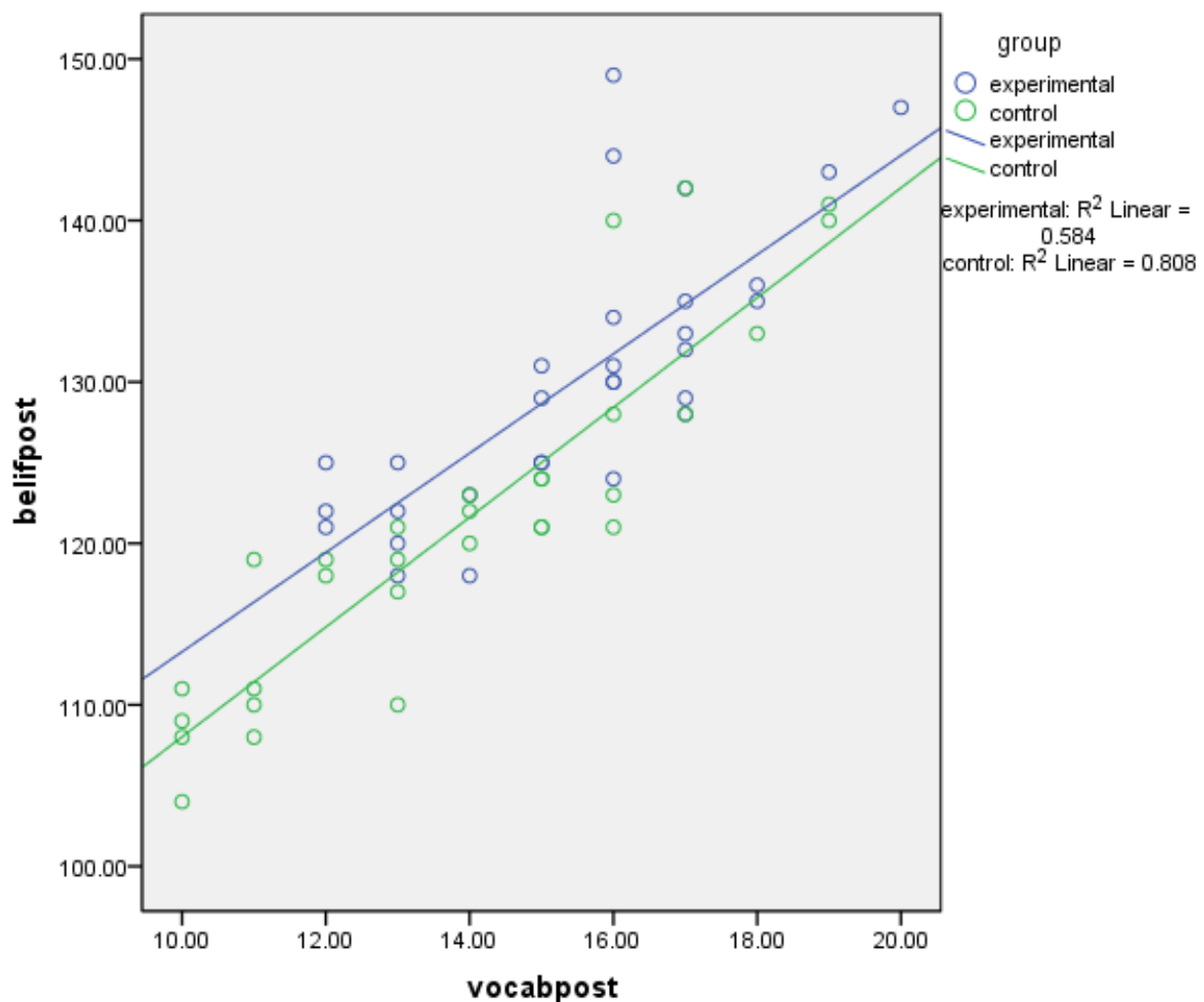

Figure 1: The relationship between dependent variable of learner's belief and vocabulary learning

Also, by examining the result of box-test, it was showed that box-test is not significant (BoxsM=3.314, F= (3605520.000) = 1.063, P= .363). So, the equality of variance and covariance matrix is not rejected. The amount of correlation between dependent variables is showed in table 1.

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Table 1: The amount of correlation between dependent variables

The variables vocabulary learning	Beliefs
P[**] <./01	[**]0.862

The result of correlation shows that there is significant relationship between dependent variables (lower than "0.90"). Therefore, using of MANCOVA is possible. Statistical characteristics of dependent variables in two groups of experimental & control, is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Statistical characteristics of dependent variable's compilation, relationship between Individual in two groups (Experimental and Control)

Variable	Group	Mean	SD	SE	MD	T	df	P
Learning belief	Experimental	130.20	8.433	1.327	28.966	15.414	58	0.000
	Control	121.17	10.309	1.330	28.966			
Vocabulary learning	Experimental	15.50	2.096	0.376	7.866	11.469	58	0.000
	Control	13.26	2.725	0/573	7.866			

The numbers of table 2 shows that there is difference between the mean of control group and the mean of experimental group in dependent variables. These differences are significant in both variables and this is appropriate for the experimental group.

Hypothesis one:
There is significant different between adjusted means of beliefs of the two groups. $(F (1, 56) = 186.830, P=0.000, ETA=0.769)$. For clarifying this point, the information of this section is shown in diagram 4.2. If put two levels of experimental and control group in horizontal axis and dependent variable "belief" in vertical axis , the lines of means will be such as following figure.
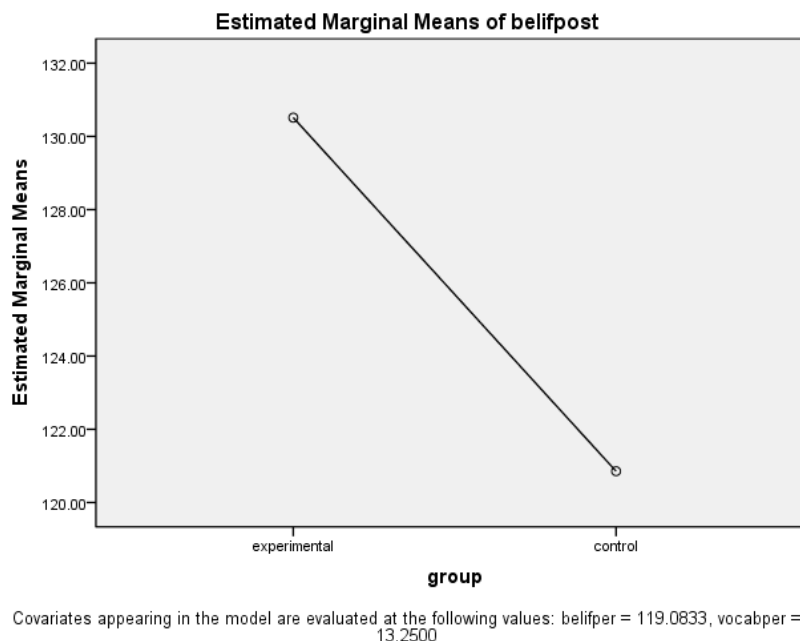

Figure 2: Showing the means of learner's belief in two groups (experimental and control)

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The above diagram show clearly that, the EFL learners that had treatment "collaborative learning", have higher learning belief than control group.

Hypothesis two:

The results of covariance table show that, there is significant difference between two groups (experimental and control group) in vocabulary learning variable.

(F (1, 56) =41.498, P=0.000, ETA=0.426). If put two levels of experimental and control group in horizontal axis and dependent variable "vocabulary learning" in vertical axis, the lines of means will show the following figure.
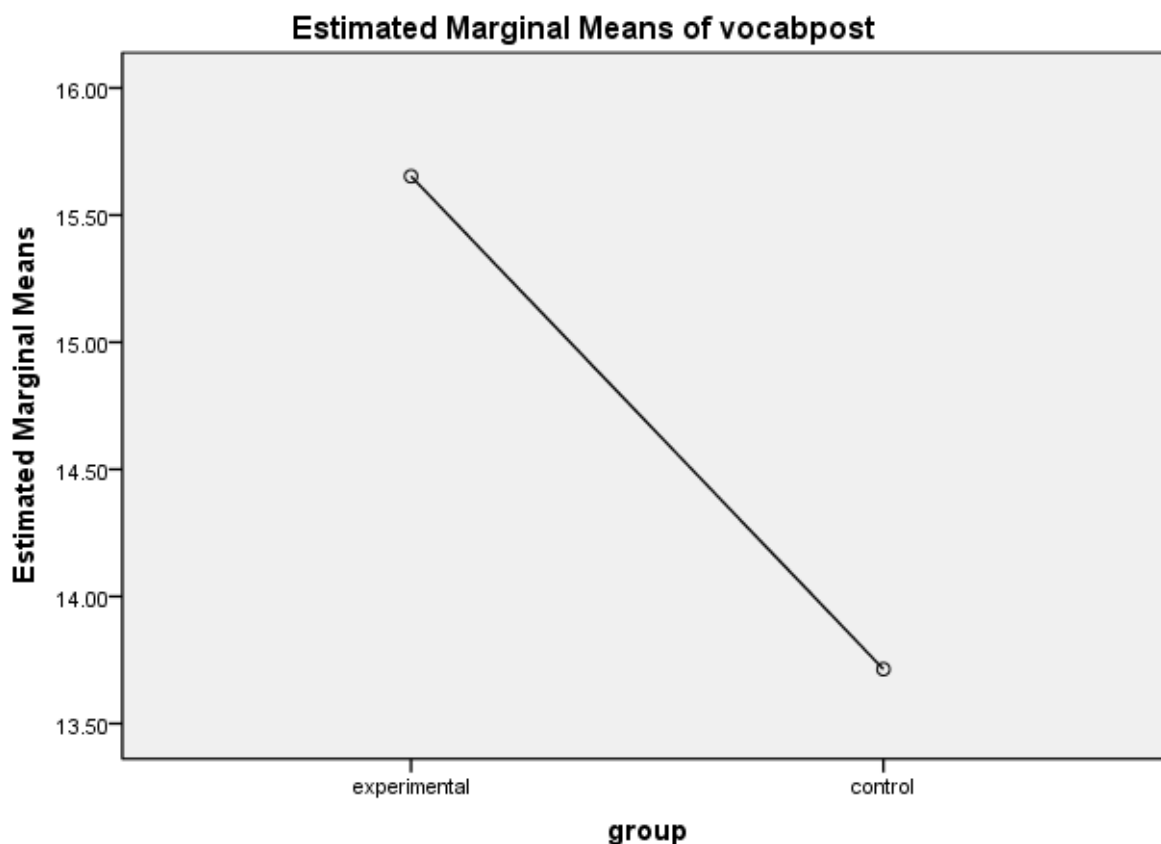
Figure 3: Showing means of vocabulary learning in two groups (experimental and control)

This diagram shows clearly that experimental group of the EFL learners that had treatment "collaborative learning" take a higher grade in vocabulary testing than control group.

Implication

The intent of this study has been to examine the impact of collaborative learning on learner's beliefs about English vocabulary learning and on the development of vocabulary knowledge. One important implication of the findings regards second language instructors' attention to learning styles that will promote positive learner beliefs about English vocabulary learning. Participants did note an overall

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preference for learning vocabulary in a collaborative environment, remarking that a collaborative vocabulary learning experience would have a positive effect on their beliefs about English vocabulary learning. Participant preferences for collaborative language learning cannot entirely be unanticipated. Researchers who support collaborative learning claim that work with a partner ―trigger[s] interaction and meaningful communication in the L2, which spark positive learner attitudes towards the content (Koenraad, 2006). Through the creation of ―shared meaning and in the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise amongst group members, collaborative environments form empowering social contexts that are ―mediated by personal relationships, preferences and motivations (Debski *et al.,* 2005). Instructors can expect that the personal relationships that develop from decision making and negotiation processes in collaborative learning environments help to establish lasting motivation for future explorations of the content in the TL, in addition to enhancing students' communicative competencies. When selecting learning styles that fit the students and the curriculum, foreign language instructors should inquire about their learner's preferred learning environments.

Through administration of a survey, individual or class discussion, or other means, determining learner's preferred learning styles, then attempting to incorporate these styles appropriately into in-class and at-home activities will not only serve to boost students engagement with the curriculum, but also show the students that the second language instructor is equally invested in the learners' success in language learning. Encouraging positive beliefs in vocabulary learning rests largely on the pedagogical choices an instructor makes in the classroom and listening to learner's preferences to help inform these pedagogical decisions may help propel positive beliefs toward the content.

Another implication that can be drawn involves selection of an appropriate learning style to yield increased development of vocabulary knowledge. Data from this study show that the difference in reported growth in vocabulary knowledge was statistically significant based on the learning style in which the participant completed the Language task. Because the collaborative treatment group showed a significantly higher amount of growth in vocabulary knowledge compared to the control group, foreign language instructors should consider making use of collaborative techniques to enhance their own student'sdevelopment in knowledge of the target vocabulary. It should be mentioned that, as Dillenbourg *et al.,* (1996) caution in their research, the claim cannot be made that ―conversational processes are exclusive candidates for explaining the effects observed. The 'mere presence' of a partner can, in itself, be responsible for individual progress. In other words, the interactive communicative process involved in completing the task may not have been the sole source of increased vocabulary knowledge among collaborative learners. The growth in reported vocabulary knowledge may have been brought about by a range of other relevant contributing factors. Perhaps one reason for the increased growth in vocabulary knowledge among collaborative learners was learners'sense of shared responsibility to complete the task, possibly causing an increased degree of engagement with and internalization of the target vocabulary.

As Fang and Warschauer (2004) assert, in collaborative activities there is a push to take initiative in learning the subject together, a possible cause for deeper or intensified learning. Whatever the reason for the increased growth in the collaborative treatment group, second language instructors should consider incorporating cooperative learning activities into their vocabulary instruction to provide greater engagement with the language.

Other implications relate to task design. One implication for second language teachers is to create tasks which are suitably challenging for the learners. Because collaborative learning environments involve both partners in brainstorming, planning, negotiating, developing and revising content related to the assigned task, learners are capable of accomplishing more challenging tasks than they would if completing the tasks alone. Collaborative learners are also more apt to take risks with the language and explore their creativity in the process of task completion (Dodge, 2002). As a consequence, instructors using collaboration in the classroom should create activities that are multi-layered, have higher expectations and which allow the second language learners to push the limits of their comfort zone in the L2.

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Though the specific implications from this study will be best applied to higher educational ESL settings with advanced language learners, these suggestions could be implemented in other English language learning contexts as well. Adaptations could be made to suit the needs of learners of varying levels of English language proficiency, native language backgrounds, ages and environments of study (ESL or EFL) to effectively promote development of beliefs about English vocabulary learning, as well as enhance growth in vocabulary knowledge.

Suggestions for future study

One suggestion is that future research on foreign language vocabulary learning investigates how assorted learning styles influence learner's beliefs in studying target language vocabulary. Although second/foreign language learning research in recent years has given way to increased attention to the advancement of vocabulary learning techniques and methodology, few studies have explored how to cultivate positive learner beliefs about the vocabulary-learning process. For this research, the researcher used collaborative learning style. Another proposal for future research involves investigating the impact of various learning styles on vocabulary acquisition. As opposed to looking at the learner's vocabulary acquisition in treatment group, this thesis focused on learner's vocabulary development that is, this study focused on observation of the continuing process by which learners gain more knowledge about a word. Concentrating on the effect of diverse learning styles on vocabulary acquisition will enable researchers to see the specific benefits afforded by each chosen style.

The other recommendation is for future research to encompass longitudinal case studies investigating the impact of various learning styles on vocabulary acquisition and on learner beliefs about vocabulary learning. Case studies, in particular, give the breadth and depth of data needed to understand the extent of potential benefit to the learner provided by a certain learning style. In the field of Applied Linguistics, longitudinal case studies of language learners are recognized ―as a valuable means of illustrating issues connected with learning, using, and in some cases, losing another language (Duff, 2007). Case studies consider contextual variables, such as biographical, educational and social information about the research participants, and may use varied elicitation techniques to collect detailed quantitative and qualitative data. Implementing the case study approach in future applied linguistics' research will assist professionals in understanding the scope of possibilities for different learning styles and classroom strategies in second language vocabulary learning. And the other recommendation can be on other aspects of language learning (grammar, speaking, listening, and other skills). As we saw, in this thesis we studied collaborative learning on EFL learner's beliefs about learning. Future study can be on the impact of collaborative learning on EFL learner's beliefs on other aspects. Research on a wider range of students can be the final recommendation. As we know, this research was done on 60 participants in one institute of one city. Other researches can be done on a wider range of students in different institutes of different cities.

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