

Metadiscourse and Reading Comprehension: The Effects of Language and Proficiency

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Abstract

The present study tries to investigate the effects of metadiscourse markers on the comprehension of English and Persian texts. This study, moreover, attempts to measure the participants' awareness of those markers and their interaction with those texts in both languages by using a follow-up questionnaire. Based on an original English text, a set of 11 True/False questions was developed and used once with that text and once with its doctored version in which metadiscourse markers had been removed. The texts and questions were also translated into Persian and used for a Persian reading comprehension test. The analyses show that the participants performed significantly better on the un-doctored texts although they had read them first, regardless of whether the texts were in their L1 or in their L2. The results reveal that for L2 it was the lower proficiency learners who benefited more from the presence of metadiscourse markers. The results of the follow-up questionnaire also reveal that the difficulty of a text in its general sense had nothing to do with the presence or absence of markers, but the difficulty, in the sense of being able to comprehend the major points of the texts, was closely related to the presence or absence of those markers, with the un-doctored texts felt to be understood more. It was also found that higher proficiency EFL learners' awareness of markers was nearly comparable with their awareness in their L1.

1 Introduction

Nowadays, most researchers or teachers of a second or foreign language pay special attention to the activity of reading, believing that reading is one of the most important skills for ESL/EFL learners (Grabe & Stoller, 2001; Lynch & Hudson, 1991). Richards and Renandya (2002) point out major reasons why language teachers should focus on this activity. First among the reasons is that many EFL learners declare reading as one of their most important goals. Second, extensive exposure to comprehensible written texts can facilitate language acquisition. Finally, reading provides opportunities to introduce new topics, to stimulate discussion, and to study language (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, and idioms).

Reading according to Nunan (2001) is an interactive process which pushes the reader to constantly shuttle between bottom-up and top-down processes. This interactive process means that in addition to decoding the meaning of individual words, prior knowledge of content and relevant schemata should also be activated and used. Moreover, aside from a student knowing a number of words, being familiar with context and falling back on background knowledge, research clearly shows that a reader's knowledge of text structure and discourse cues has significant effects on

reading in a foreign language (Carrel, 1985; Carrel, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Raymond, 1993; Tang, 1992).

In the reading process, parallel to the interaction between the reader and the content, an interaction also takes place between the reader and the writer. This latter interaction is called metadiscourse and is defined by Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen (1993) as “linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content, but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret, and evaluate the information given” (p. 40). Vande Kopple (1997), too, defines metadiscourse as “discourse that people use not to expand referential material, but to help the readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and develop attitudes towards that material” (p. 2). Likewise, Hyland (2005) believes that “metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating”, and, in this way “the writer is not simply presenting information about the suggested route, by just listing changes of direction, but taking the trouble to see the walk from the reader’s perspective” (p. 3).

Ädel (2006) believes that metadiscourse should be regarded as one type of reflexivity in language which is the capacity of any natural language to refer to or describe itself. In this way it can be argued that, as writers write, they work on two different levels. On the first level, they focus on what it is that they are communicating to the readers, and on the second level, they focus on how they are communicating with the readers. The first level is called “primary/discourse level” and the second level is called “metadiscourse level” (Vande Kopple, 1985). Urmson (1952), too, distinguishes between “what is said” and an “understanding and assessment of what is said” (p. 231). This understanding and assessment is also called as metadiscourse, and satisfies the textual and interpersonal functions of language proposed by Halliday (1973, 1985).

Sinclair (1981), as cited in Hyland (2005), also believes that metadiscourse is at the service of the “interactive plane” of discourse, the plane which deals with the ways people use language to negotiate with others and present their texts interactively in order to create a relationship with the reader. He distinguishes this plane of discourse from what he calls the “autonomous plane”, the plane which refers to the gradual unfolding of a record of experience through the organization of text structure. In the same fashion, Crismore (1989) claims that as writers write they work on two levels. On one level, they convey information about their subject matter (propositional content) and, on the other level, they show their readers how to read, react to, and evaluate what was spoken or written about the subject matter. She calls the first level “primary discourse level” and the second level “metadiscourse level.” This second level is therefore called “talk about talk”, “writing about writing”, “discourse about discourse” or “text about text.”

Although in recent years some researchers have investigated the presence of metadiscourse markers in academic discourse (see Carlson, 1988; Connor, 1987; Crismore, 1989; Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990; Hyland, 2000, 2004), in other genres (see Crismore et al., 1993; Fuertes-Olivera, Velasco-Sacristan, Arribas, & Samaniego, 2001; Hyland, 1998; Mauranen, 1993; Valero-Garcés, 1996), or in student writing (see Cheng & Steffensen, 1996; Intaraprawat & Steffensen, 1995), and some of them have also focused on the effects of those markers on reading comprehension (see Camiciottoli, 2003; Chung, 2000; Geva, 1992; Ozono, 2002; Ozono & Ito, 2003), almost no study has, up to this point, focused on their comparative effects on reading comprehension in both L1 and L2 or on their effects on EFL learners according to their proficiency levels.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to shed light on the effects of metadiscourse markers on the comprehension of English texts by Iranian EFL learners and then compare the results achieved with those in their native language (Persian). This study will, moreover, include the proficiency level of the learners as a moderator variable; and, finally, in the present study, the learners’ awareness of metadiscourse markers and the degree of their interaction with the texts will also be investigated and analyzed by using a follow-up questionnaire. In other words, this study attempts to find answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any difference between the performance of EFL learners on the un-doctored English text (the text with the original metadiscourse markers) and the performance of learners on the doctored English text (the text from which metadiscourse markers have been removed)?

2. Is there any difference between the performance of learners on the un-doctored Persian text and the performance of learners on the doctored Persian text?
3. Do the learners find the doctored texts more difficult than the un-doctored ones?
4. Do the learners have more awareness of the metadiscourse markers in their L1 than in their L2?

2 Methodology

2.1 Participants

This study benefited from the participation of two groups of learners. The first group comprised 52 male and female Iranian EFL learners from the SADR Language Institute of Isfahan. And the second group, in turn, comprised 40 male and female native Persian speakers from the Zabansara Language Institute of Isfahan. For the second group, only those who were at high school level or higher were selected. In other words, this group of learners was selected without administering any proficiency test of Persian. The purposeful selection of such participants was because of the fact that at those stages they could naturally be regarded as proficient speakers of Persian.

2.2 Instruments

2.2.1 Nelson Proficiency Test

A 50-item Nelson English Language Proficiency Test (section 300D) was used in order to select the participants and also to divide them into two groups, 'higher' and 'lower' in terms of their language proficiency (see Appendix A). This multiple-choice test comprised cloze passages, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation.

2.2.2 English texts

The un-doctored English text used in this study was adapted from an article written by Jan Figel and published in *Language Magazine: The Journal of Communication and Education* in March 2005 plus its doctored (metadiscourse-removed) version which was developed specifically for the purposes of this study (see Appendices B and C). In metadiscourse identification process, Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse was utilized. This model classifies metadiscourse markers in the following way:

Interactive metadiscourse:

-Transitions	express relations between main clauses
-Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages
-Endophoric markers	refer to information in other parts of the text
-Evidentials	refer to information from other texts
-Code glosses	elaborate propositional meanings

Interactional metadiscourse:

-Hedges	withhold commitment and open dialogue
-Boosters	emphasize certainty or close dialogue
-Attitude markers	express writer's attitude to proposition
-Self mentions	explicit reference to author(s)
-Engagement markers	explicitly build relationship with reader

Table 1 shows the metadiscursive differences between the two English texts. The un-doctored

version included nearly all the categories of metadiscourse markers, but in the doctored version most of them were removed. The remaining metadiscourse markers in the doctored version were those whose omission from the text might change the meaning or make the text appear artificial.

Un-doctored Text	Doctored Text
Paragraph 1 Booster (in fact) Frame marker (the first) Hedge (might) Frame marker (the second) Transition (but) Booster (clearly) Transition (and) Frame marker (I am sure that I do not need...) Booster (of course) Punctual metadiscourse (“ ”) Transitions (also) Frame marker (I will shortly be...)	Paragraph 1 Transition (and)
Paragraph 2 Evidentials (some say that) Transition (but) Attitude marker (I think) Frame marker (after all) Booster (in fact) Booster (quite the opposite) Punctuation metadiscourse (:)	Paragraph 2 Evidentials (some say that) Transition (but)
Paragraph 3 Evidentials (experts estimate that) Hedge (indicate) Transition (however) Booster (we all know that) Code glosses (Iceland, Cuba) Code glosses (the most striking example...)	Paragraph 4 Hedge (can)
Paragraph 5 Frame marker (what then is an official ...) Transition (and) Booster (must)	Paragraph 5 Booster (must)
Paragraph 6 Hedge (more generally) Hedge (I suspect that) Transition (and) Attitude marker (with some surprise) Endophoric marker (I mentioned earlier)	Paragraph 6 Hedge (I suspect that)
Paragraph 7 Engagement marker (should we not all have...)	Paragraph 7 Engagement marker (should we no all...)
Paragraph 8 Attitude marker (it must be admitted) Punctuation metadiscourse (“ ”)	Paragraph 8

Table 1: Metadiscursive differences between two texts

Un-doctored Text	Doctored Text
Paragraph 9 Transition (but) Frame marker (let us keep things...) Punctuation metadiscourse (“ ”) Hedge (generally) Hedge (rather) Code glosses (in simple terms) Punctuation metadiscourse (“ ”) Booster (merely)	Paragraph 9
Paragraph 11 Engagement marker (does this mean...) Booster (most certainty not) Punctuation metadiscourse (!) Engagement marker (remember) Attitude marker (so eloquently made) Evidentials (former German chancellor...) Punctuation metadiscourse (:) Punctuation metadiscourse (“ ”) Punctuation metadiscourse (!)	Paragraph 11 Engagement marker (does this mean...) Evidentials (former German Chancellor...)
Paragraph 12 Illocution marker (to conclude) Punctuation metadiscourse (“ ”)	Paragraph 12

Table 1: Metadiscursive differences between two texts (continued)

2.2.3 English true/false questions

One set of 11 true/false questions was also designed and developed to be used with the texts mentioned above (see appendix D). Table 2 shows the relationship between the True/False questions and the text paragraphs. As can be seen in the table, no questions were made out of paragraphs seven and ten; therefore, they remained intact in both versions.

Question Number	Paragraph Number
1	2
2	1
3	5
4	6
5	8
6	3
7	4
8	3
9	9
10	11
12	12

Table 2: The relationship between questions and text paragraphs

2.2.4 Translated versions of English texts and true/false questions

The next instruments were the translated versions of the English reading comprehension texts discussed above. In fact, both the doctored and un-doctored English texts were translated into Persian and used with another group of native Persian speakers (see Appendices E and F). The English True/False reading comprehension test was also translated into Persian in order to be used

with Persian texts (see Appendix G). It should be mentioned that in the development of both Persian texts and the Persian True/False test, back-translation of the translated versions again into English by an MA student of TEFL, and later comparison with the original English texts resulted in some corrections in the first translation, and, as a result, increased the validity of the procedure.

2.2.5 Multiple-choice questionnaire

The last instrument was a five-item questionnaire used with all the groups in the study in order to measure their degree of awareness of metadiscourse markers in the texts, and also their interaction with those texts. This questionnaire was adapted from the one used by Camiciottoli (2003) for measuring the metadiscursive awareness of Italian ESP students. This post-reading questionnaire was formulated in Persian for all the participants in order to avoid any failure to understand or interpret the questions.

2.3 Procedure and design

In order to achieve the purposes of the study, the 52 Iranian EFL learners were given the Nelson English Proficiency Test. And those who scored on the mean (29.6) were regarded as having a higher level of proficiency and the rest as having a lower level of proficiency. Table 3 summarizes the results of the Nelson Proficiency Test:

		Statistic	Std. Error
Nelson	Mean	29.6	.74
	Median	31.00	
	Variance	28.442	
	Std. Deviation	5.33	

Table 3: Results of Nelson Proficiency Test

An independent samples t-test was also conducted to further show that the groups were significantly different ($t = 9.82$, $df = 50$, $p < .05$).

When the students completed the proficiency test, the un-doctored text and the True/False questions were administered. Then, after a 10-day interval, the learners were given the doctored text with the same True/False questions. The purposeful order of giving the un-doctored text first lies in the fact that this study wanted to investigate whether the performances of students on the doctored text would be significantly affected even when they had read the un-doctored text once.

In order to achieve the second purpose of this study, the 40 Persian speakers were given the un-doctored Persian text with the True/False questions, and, after a 10-day interval, its doctored version. And for the third and the fourth purposes of this study, all the groups were given the follow-up Persian questionnaire immediately after they finished with the texts and the questions.

For the reading comprehension tests, each correct response was given one point and each incorrect one was given no point; in this way, the mean scores were calculated globally between a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 11. The same procedure was followed for the Nelson Proficiency Test, with one point for each correct response and no point for the incorrect ones. It is also worth noting that both the texts and the questionnaire were administered without any time limit or restriction.

3 Results

Table 4 summarizes the results of the two-way ANOVA for the first purpose of the study, i.e., analyzing reading comprehension scores according to EFL learners' language proficiency level. As the table shows both text type and proficiency level had significant effects on the performances of the EFL learners ($p < .05$), although no interaction between proficiency level and text type was

found ($p > .05$). A look at the learners' mean scores (see Table 5) further reveals that both higher and lower proficiency learners performed significantly better on the un-doctored texts, with the lower proficiency learners benefiting more from the presence of metadiscourse markers (mean difference = 1) than the higher proficiency ones (mean difference = .63).

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Text (Test)	16.930	1	16.930	14.203	.000*
Proficiency	56.540	1	56.540	47.432	.000*
Text*Proficiency	.853	1	.853	.716	.400
Total	2743.000	104			

Significant at $p < .05$

Table 4: Two-way ANOVA for the effects of text type and proficiency level

Proficiency	Text	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Higher	Undoctored	30	5.90	1.09
	Doctored	30	5.27	1.11
Lower	Undoctored	22	4.59	.73
	Doctored	22	3.59	1.33

Table 5: Results for higher and lower proficiency EFL learners

Regarding the second research question, the results of paired sample t-test analysis for the Persian reading comprehension test also showed a significant difference between the performance on the un-doctored text and the doctored one ($p < .05$). As table 6 shows, the mean score for the doctored text (6.30) was lower than the mean for the un-doctored one (7.55). In this way, it can be argued that, even for native speakers, the performance was significantly better on the un-doctored test than the one on the doctored test.

	Un-doctored	Doctored
Mean score	7.55	6.30
Std. Deviation	1.96	1.86
P (two-tailed)	.000*	

*significant at $p < .05$; $N = 40$; $df = 39$; t critical = 4.900

Table 6: Paired samples t-test for means of the Persian texts

For the next purpose of the study, the participants' answers to items number 2 and number 5 of the follow-up questionnaire were analyzed. Three separate analyses were conducted in this regard: First, the answers of the lower proficiency EFL learners who took the English tests; second, those of the higher proficiency EFL learners who took the English tests; and, finally, the answers of those who took the Persian tests were analyzed.

For lower proficiency learners, the results of the Chi-square test revealed no dependency between question number 2 and the kinds of texts ($X^2 = .989$, $df = 2$, $p > .05$). The same results were found for question number 5 ($X^2 = 4.233$, $df = 2$, $p > .05$). In other words, for those learners the two questions were independent of the kinds of texts.

However, for higher proficiency learners, although the result of Chi-square test showed no dependency between question number 2 and the kinds of texts ($X^2 = .699$, $df = 2$, $p > .05$), it showed a dependency between question number 5 and the kinds of texts ($X^2 = 16.762$, $df = 3$, $p < .05$). Therefore, as Table 7 shows, higher proficiency EFL learners felt that they understood the un-doctored text more than the doctored one, although they had read the un-doctored text first.

		Texts		Total
		Undoctored	Doctored	
Never	Count	0	.5	1
	Expected Count	.5	12	1.0
Little	Count	2	1	14
	Expected Count	7.0	7.0	14.0
To Some Extent	Count	24	17	41
	Expected Count	20.5	20.5	41.0
Much	Count	4	0	4
	Expected Count	2.0	2.0	4.0
Total	Count	30	30	60
	Expected Count	30.0	30.0	60.0

Table 7: Frequency of choices for question No. 5 regarding higher proficiency EFL learners

For those who took the Persian texts, again, no dependency was found between question number 2 and the kind of texts. In other words, for this group of learners this question, too, was independent of the kinds of texts ($X^2 = 3.277$, $df = 2$, $p > .05$); but, regarding question number 5, such a dependency was found ($X^2 = 6.853$, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). As Table 8 shows, even native speakers felt that they understood the un-doctored text more than the doctored one, although the two texts were written in their L1 and they had read the un-doctored text before the doctored one.

		Texts		Total
		Undoctored	Doctored	
Little	Count	7	14	21
	Expected Count	10.5	10.5	21.0
To Some Extent	Count	26	25	51
	Expected Count	25.5	25.5	51.0
Much	Count	7	1	8
	Expected Count	4.0	4.0	8.0
Total	Count	40	40	80
	Expected Count	40.0	40.0	80.0

Table 8: Frequency of choices for question No. 5 regarding Persian texts

In order to answer the last research question, the higher proficiency EFL learners' answers to questions number 1, 3, and 4 of the questionnaire after reading the un-doctored English text were compared to the answers of the participants who took the un-doctored Persian test. The purposeful comparison between the higher proficiency EFL learners and those who took the Persian test, and not between the EFL group as a whole and those who took the Persian test, lies in the fact that it was not wise to compare a group which included lower proficiency learners who had not learned the metadiscourse markers of their L2 completely to the native Persian speakers who, because of their nativeness, had learned those markers completely. In this way, the answers to questions number 1, 3, and 4 were added quantitatively for both groups and their means were calculated. As table 9 shows the mean difference was found not to be significant.

	Persian	Higher proficiency EFL
Mean score	8.98	8.33
Std. Deviation	1.27	1.52
P (two-tailed)	059	

p < .05; N = 40 in Persian group and 30 in higher EFL group; df = 68; t critical = 1.924

Table 9: Independent samples t-test for the means of higher proficiency EFL learners and native Persian speakers

4 Discussion

Writing involves two levels: discourse level and metadiscourse level. On the first level, the reader is provided with propositional content, and on the second level, the reader is guided through the text (Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore, 1989). As a result, it can be argued that the more metadiscourse markers there are in a text, the more the comprehension will be facilitated. This study, therefore, aimed at investigating the effects of metadiscourse markers as a whole on the comprehension of English texts by Iranian EFL learners and also on the comprehension of Persian texts by native Persian speakers.

The results of this study indicate that all the participants of the study (both higher and lower proficiency EFL learners and native Persian speakers) performed significantly better on the un-doctored texts (the texts with full metadiscourse markers) than on the doctored ones (the texts whose metadiscourse markers had been removed). As a result, it was shown that the more the learners become aware of those markers both in L1 and in L2, the more their comprehension will improve.

This study, moreover, reveals that a text could be difficult in two ways (or aspects). Difficulty in its general sense had nothing to do with the presence or absence of those metadiscourse markers; but difficulty in the sense of being able to comprehend the major points was related to the presence or absence of metadiscourse markers in the texts, because the participants felt that they understood the un-doctored texts more than the doctored ones. Finally, in this study it also became clear that higher proficiency EFL learners' awareness of metadiscourse markers in their L2 (English) was comparable to their awareness in their L1 (Persian).

The findings also indicate that lower proficiency EFL learners might benefit more from the presence of metadiscourse markers in the texts. The results might also suggest that when non-native speakers have difficulties understanding the text, it is the presence of those markers which can help them understand the propositional content of the text more and this is perhaps why their metadiscourse awareness is comparable to that of native speakers.

The findings of this study also have certain implications for both L1 and L2 teachers and learners. The findings might imply that both L1 and L2 language teachers and learners should pay special attention to the concept of metadiscourse while teaching or learning language. In this way, teachers can enable their students to become better readers and also writers. If the students become aware of the fact that texts consist of both propositional content and interactional elements, they can comprehend the texts better by following the writer's line of argument more smoothly, and also write more comprehensibly by anticipating their reader's interaction with the content.

The findings also have implications for syllabus designers and materials developers. The findings might suggest that teaching metadiscourse markers should be a part of some language courses. Language books should enable learners to not only understand those materials and use them as appropriately as possible, but also they should teach them how to use those markers as a strategy for comprehending the texts and also for communicating with others.

Appropriate language teaching materials should be written to ask learners to identify the instances of metadiscourse markers in texts while reading and make use of them while writing. Learners should be given appropriate instruction regarding both interactive and interactional kinds of metadiscourse. As far as the interactive dimension is concerned, language learners should be given enough practice in identifying the presence and use of transitions, frame markers, endophor-

ic markers, evidentials, and code glosses in order to link their presence with the propositional content being discussed. They should know, for example, how the writer's line of argument can be analyzed better by focusing on logical connectives or how the content can be predicted by focusing on the frame markers.

Learners also need special practice regarding the interactional dimension of metadiscourse markers. Awareness and use of hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers should also be an inseparable part of each reading or writing course. Learners should understand how, by the use of hedges and boosters, a writer can withhold commitment or emphasize certainty in a text. They should, moreover, understand the writer's attitude toward the content by focusing on attitude markers. Materials should also provide students with enough practice to feel the author's presence indicated by self-mentions and engagement markers.

5 Future directions

It is a fact that no research is complete in its own right. The more answers are obtained, the more questions will naturally be raised. The domain of metadiscourse is too vast to be explored in one single study. Future research is definitely needed to shed light on other aspects and effects of metadiscourse markers. It is therefore reasonable to end this paper by suggesting some topics related to metadiscourse for future studies:

1. This study included 52 EFL learners and 40 native Persian speakers. A similar study can be conducted with more subjects.
2. This study, as far as EFL learners are concerned, was limited to higher and lower intermediate learners in a language institute. Another study can be conducted with more advanced learners, especially TEFL students.
3. In this study, all the native participants who took the Persian tests were of high school level or above; and they were assumed to have full command of Persian. In fact, no proficiency test of Persian was administered. Future studies might target the effects of those markers on different L1 proficiency levels.
4. This study was limited to the area of general English. Another study can be conducted in the area of ESP.
5. This study had the aim of investigating the effects of metadiscourse markers on reading comprehension. Future studies can target writing as well, because although the use of some markers, like hedges, has been investigated in recent years, the use of other metadiscourse markers by different writers has not been investigated seriously. Particularly it would be useful to investigate those markers in different communities and genres.
6. Future studies might also aim at investigating metadiscourse change over time in different speech communities, styles, and genres.

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Appendices

Appendix (A): Nelson Proficiency Test

Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.

My wife's mother was taken ill two days ago so my wife had to go and look after her. Before...1...my wife said, "I had better where everything is or you...2...know what to do. But my train is leaving in half an hour's time and I must get to mother's house as soon as I3...." "...4..." I said. "I can look after myself." Now I realize that I.....5...for a map of the house. If I...6...., I would have found all the food I needed. But when my wife...7....back tomorrow, she won't have any dirty dishes to wash up because I...8....in restaurants since she went away.

1. A. she was leaving
B. that she left
C. leaving
D. to leave
2. A. shan't
B. shouldn't
C. wouldn't
D. won't
3. A. can
B. may
C. could
D. might
4. A. Not to mind
B. Don't worry
C. Not to import
D. Don't matter
5. A. had to ask
B. ought to ask
C. must have asked
D. should have asked
6. A. had
B. have
C. did
D. would
7. A. comes
B. come
C. shall come
D. will come
8. A. am eating
B. eat
C. have been eating
D. ate

Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.

9. He'shis sister.
A. much taller than B. much taller that C. much more tall than D. much more tall that
10. She had three sons, all..... became doctors.
A. of which B. which C. of whom D. who

11. You.....go now. It's getting late.
A. had rather B. would rather C. would better D. had better
12. I'm going to spend a few days with some.....of mine, who live in the north of Scotland.
A. relatives B. familiars C. neighbours D. companies
13. The outside the house said "no parking".
A. advice B. signal C. label D. notice
14. He has no... of winning.
A. occasion B. luck C. opportunity D. chance
15. Those people over there are speaking a language I don't understand. They must be...
A. foreign B. strange C. rare D. outlandish
16. I didn't write it. That is not my... on the cheque.
A. mark B. letter C. firm D. signature
17. The actors have to...before they appear in front of the strong lights on television.
A. cover up B. paint up C. make up D. do up
18. It's a difficult problem but we must find the answer...
A. by one way or other B. somehow or other C. anyhow or other D. anyway or other
19. I want..... immediately.
A. that this work is made B. this work made C. that this work is done D. this work done
20. He's used to.....in public.
A. be speaking B. the speaking C. speaking D. speak
21. You can fly to London this evening.....you don't mind changing planes in Paris.
A. provided B. except C. unless D. so far as
22. It's ages..... him.
A. that I don't see B. that I didn't see C. ago I saw D. sine I saw
23. He made me.....
A. angry B. be angry C. to be angry D. that I got angry
24. Do what you think is right,they say.
A. however B. whatever C. whichever D. for all
25. He arrived late,was annoying.
A. what B. that C. which D. that which
26. His job is yours.
A. the same time as B. as C. alike D. similar to
27. He needs a...
A. few days' rest B. few days rest C. little days' rest D. little days rest
28. Do you know.....the repairs?
A. to do B. how to do C. to make D. how to make
29. We usually have fine weather....summer.
A. at B. on C. in D. while
30. My flat is the third floor of the building.

A. by B. at C. in D. on

31. They live....the other side of the road.

A. in B. on C. for d. by

32. He isn'tto reach the ceiling.

A. so tall B. as tall C. enough tall D. tall enough

33. They treated him.... a king when he won all that money.

A. as B. as being C. like D. like he was

34. I've told him several times but he....doesn't understand.

A. yet B. already C. no longer D. still

35. ...did you go in the car this morning?

A. How far B. How much far C. How long D. How much

36. He'd done that before,....?

A. wouldn't he B. shouldn't he C. hadn't he D. didn't he

37.of them understood him.

A. None B. No one C. Anyone D. Someone

38. It's..... mountain in the world.

A. the more high B. the higher C. the highest D. the most high

39. I'm going to a concert tomorrow evening. So.....

A. I am B. am I C. I will D. will I

40. That's the firm...

A. what we've been dealing with B. we've been dealing with
C. we've been treating with D. what we've been treating with

41. She let the children.....to play.

A. going out B. that they went out C. to go out D. go out

42. It was.....difficult that he couldn't finish it alone.

A. a so difficult work B. a so difficult job C. such a difficult job D. such a difficult work

43. I.....photographs.

A. enjoy taking B. enjoy to take C. amuse taking D. amuse to take

44. I..... me what happened.

A. would like you tell B. would like you to tell C. would like you telling D. would like that you tell

45. he wasn't hungry, he ate a big meal.

A. Although B. In spite C. Unless D. Even

In this series of questions, three words have the same sounds but one does not. Choose the one that does not.

46. A. cleared B. feared C. beard D. Heard

47. A. Shoes B. goes C. blows D. knows

48. A. Wait B. state C. great D. heat

49. A. among B. wrong C. rung D. sung

50. A. broad B. load C. showed D. road

Appendix (B): Un-doctored English Text

The Year of Languages

1. It rapidly became apparent to me that there are **in fact** two sides to multilingualism. **The first** is what **one might** term societal and concerns the European citizen in his everyday life. **The second** dimension is institutional multilingualism. **But** they are two sides of the same coin. Multilingualism is **clearly** an asset to anyone **and I am sure that I do not need to expand on that here**. That is **of course** why the Commission's target for language learning is summed up in the expression "mother tongue plus two." **Also, I will shortly be launching a new Communication in the field of multilingualism.**

2. **Some say that** this is too ambitious, **but I think** the facts do not bear this out. **After all**, multilingualism is far from being the exclusive preserve of an intellectual elite. It is **in fact**, quite the opposite: the vast majority of the Earth's inhabitants speak more than one language.

3. **Experts estimate that** there are about 6,700 languages in the 220 countries or states identified by the United Nations. Statistically, this **indicates** an average of around 30 languages per country. **However, we all know that** statistics do not always reveal the wider truth. There are some (rare) countries that have one single language (**Iceland, Cuba**) while others have literally hundreds of languages. **The most striking example is Papua New Guinea which apparently covers a staggering 817 different languages and dialects!**

4. From a purely functional and pragmatic view, the distinction between languages and dialects **can often** be extremely relative. **If a distinction is needed**, it is **often** based on considerations of a demographic, social, economic or political nature. What is considered an official language in one country can be classed as a dialect in the neighboring country.

5. **What then is an official language?** Referring more specifically to the European Union, the official languages are those mentioned in the Treaty **and** any change **must be** agreed unanimously by all the member states. We now have 20 official languages.

6. **More generally, I suspect that** nowadays an official language means a written language and I learnt **with some surprise** that of the 6700 existing languages or dialects **I mentioned earlier**, there are only 200 written languages in the world.

7. In today's world where cultures mingle freely, where fashions disregard borders and where geographical distance means very little, it is legitimate to ask if multilingualism is still relevant. **Should we not all have a common language?**

8. A great deal of ink has been used on the subject of English in the world. It is, **it must be admitted**, a subject which generates a great deal of emotion- proof positive that language is not just a tool but some thing which goes far far deeper. Not for nothing is the European Union's motto "unity in diversity."

9. **But let us keep things in their proper context.** "Global English" is not a very close relative of the English spoken by native speakers or those with an excellent command of that language. It is **generally rather** impoverished and reductive. **In simple terms**, it is an international "lingua franca". This is not pejorative or demeaning, it is **merely** a fact.

10. Historically, "lingua franca" originally referred to a mixture of Italian with Greek, French, Arabic and Spanish used in Levant. Throughout history there has always been a need for a "lingua franca" although that language has differed over time and across domains. That need is now greater than ever.

11. **Does this mean that everybody will speak English and everything else will disappear? Most certainly not! Remember the point so eloquently made by the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt:** "If I am trying to sell you something, we can speak English but if you are trying to sell me something, dann müssen sie deutsch sprechen!"

12. **To conclude**, multilingualism is vibrant, dynamic and alive. “The value of a dialogue depends to a great extent on the diversity of competing opinions. If the Tower of Babel hadn’t existed, we would have to invent it.”

Appendix (C): Doctored English Text

The Year of Languages

1. It rapidly became apparent to me there are two sides to multilingualism. The societal multilingualism concerning the European citizen in his everyday life **and** the institutional one. They are the two sides of the same coin. Multilingualism is an asset to anyone. This is why the Commission’s target for language learning is summed up in the expression mother tongue plus two.

2. **Some say that** this is too ambitious. **But** the facts do not bear this out. Multilingualism is far from being the exclusive preserve of an intellectual elite. It is the opposite. The vast majority of the earth’s inhabitants speak more than one language.

3. There are about 6700 languages in the 220 countries or states identified by the United Nations. Statistically, an average of around 30 languages per country. Statistics do not always reveal the wider truth. There are some (rare) countries that have one single language, while others literally have hundreds of languages.

4. From a purely functional and pragmatic view, the distinction between languages and dialects **can** be extremely relative. The distinction is based on considerations of demographic, social economic or political nature. What is classified as official language in one country can be classed as a dialect in the neighboring country.

5. Referring more specifically to the European Union, the official languages are those mentioned in the treaty. Any change **must** be agreed unanimously by all the member states. We now have 20 official languages.

6. **I suspect that** nowadays an official language means a written language. I learnt that of the 6700 existing languages or dialects, there are only 200 written languages in the world.

7. In today’s world where cultures mingle freely, where fashions disregard borders and where geographical distance means very little, it is legitimate to ask if multilingualism is still relevant. **Should we not all have a common language?**

8. A great deal of ink has been used on the subject of English in the world. It is a subject which generates a great deal of emotion- proof positive that language is not just a tool but something which goes far far deeper. Not for nothing is the European Union’s motto unity in diversity.

9. Global English is not a very close relative of the English spoken by native speakers or those with an excellent command of that language. It is impoverished and reductive. It is an international lingua franca. This is not pejorative or demeaning. It is a fact.

10. Historically, “lingua franca” originally referred to a mixture of Italian with Greek, French, Arabic and Spanish used in Levant. Throughout history there has always been a need for a “lingua franca” although that language has differed over time and across domains. That need is now greater than ever.

11. **Does this mean that everybody will speak English and everything else will disappear? Former German Chancellor Willy Brandt** gives the answer by saying that if he is trying to sell you something, you can speak English but if you are trying to sell him something, dann müssen sie deutsch sprechen.

12. Multilingualism is vibrant, dynamic and alive. The value of a dialogue depends to a great extent on the diversity of competing opinions. If the Tower of Babel hadn’t existed, we would have to invent it.

Appendix (D): English Reading Comprehension Test

Regarding the passage you read, please choose either True (T) or False (F).

1. The fact that many people speak more than two languages contradicts the idea that only the elite have the asset of multilingualism (T/F).
2. The Commission's goal is that people should learn more than two languages (T/F).
3. According to the text, for each language to be called official, it should be mentioned in the treaty (T/F).
4. It is only the written form of the official languages that is important nowadays (T/F).
5. Unity in diversity is against multilingualism (T/F).
6. The author believes that statistics correctly shows that each country has an average of about 30 languages (T/F).
7. Because of the fact that one country's language is another country's dialect, languages and dialects are rather distinct (T/F).
8. The writer believes that in the most countries of the world hundreds of languages are spoken (T/F).
9. International lingua franca of the world is different from global English (T/F).
10. By the spread of global English there is no need for local languages (T/F).
11. The writer believes that in the history multilingualism has always been important (T/F).

Appendix (E): Un-doctored Text in Persian

سال زبانها

۱. به سرعت بر من آشکار شد که چند زبانی در اصل دارای دو جنبه است. اولین جنبه چند زبانی آنست که می توان آن را جنبه اجتماعی نامید و هر شهروند اروپایی را در زندگی روزمره اش تحت تاثیر قرار می دهد. جنبه دوم، چند زبانی سازمانی است. اما این دو جنبه، دو روی یک سکه اند. چند زبانی آشکارا برای هرکس موهبتی است و اطمینان دارم که نیازی به تفصیل این موضوع در اینجا نیست. این البته به این دلیل است که هدف هیئت فراگیری زبان در این گفته خلاصه می شود "زبان مادری بعلاوه دو." همچنین، من به زودی راه ارتباطی نویی را در زمینه چند زبانی آغاز خواهم کرد.

۲. برخی می گویند که این امر بسیار بلندپروازانه است، اما گمان من بر اینست که حقایق خط بطلانی بر این موضوع نمی کشند. معهذرا، چند زبانی فراتر از آن است که منحصرا نشانه بزرگان اندیشمند باشد. در حقیقت چند زبانی کاملاً خلاف این موضوع است: اکثریت عظیم ساکنان زمین به بیش از یک زبان سخن می گویند.

۳. کارشناسان تخمین می زنند که در حدود ۶۷۰۰ زبان در ۲۲۰ کشور یا ایالت شناخته شده توسط سازمان ملل وجود دارد. از نظر آماری، این عدد نشانگر آن است که به طور متوسط در حدود ۳۰ زبان در هر کشور وجود دارد. به هر حال، همه می دانیم که آمار همیشه حقایق را در سطح وسیع نشان نمی دهد. چند کشور (محدود وجود دارد که تنها یک زبان دارند) ایسلند، کوبا (در صورتی که برخی دیگر کشور ها صاحب صدها زبان به م عنی واقعی کلمه اند. در خورتوجه ترین مثال کشور گینه نو پایوا است که آشکارا به طور حیرت زایی ۸۱۷ زبان و لهجه مختلف را در محدوده خود دارد!

۴. از دیدگاه کارکردی و کاربردشناسانه محض، تمایز میان زبان و گویش می تواند اغلب بسیار نسبی باشد. اگر که به تمایزی نیاز باشد، اغلب

بر اساس ملاحظاتی که طبیعتی جمعیت شناسانه، اجتماعی، اقتصادی و سیاسی دارند صورت می گیرانچه در کشوری زبانی رسمی تلقی می شود، ممکن است در کشور همسایه به عنوان گویش طبقه بندی شود.

۵. پس زبان رسمی چیست؟ با نگاهی محدود تر به اتحادیه اروپا، زبان های رسمی آن هایی هستند که در پیمان به آن ها اشاره شده و هرگونه تغییری می بایست با توافق یکپارچه تمامی اعضا هیئات صورت گیرد. ما اکنون ۲۰ زبان رسمی داریم.

۶. در سطحی کلی تر، شک داریم که امروزه زبان رسمی به معنای زبان نوشتاری است و با شگفتی در یافته ام که از ۶۷۰۰ زبان و گویش موجود که پیش تر به آن ها اشاره کردم، تنها ۲۰۰ زبان نوشتاری در دنیا وجود دارد.

۷. در جهان امروز که فرهنگ ها آزادانه با هم در می آمیزند، مدها مرزها را نادیده می گیرد و فاصله جغرافیایی دیگر چندان معنی ندارد، مناسب است که بپرسیم آیا هنوز چند زبانی پا برجاست. آیا نباید یک زبان مشترک برای همه ی ما وجود داشته باشد؟

۸. در جهان بر سر موضوع زبان انگلیسی قلم فرسایی بسیار شده است. این موضوعی است که، باید پذیرفت، بسیار احساس بر انگیز است. برهان قطعی اینکه که زبان تنها ابزار نیست بلکه چیزی است که عمق بسیار بیشتری دارد. شعار اتحادیه اروپا "یگانگی در چندگانگی" چنان بی اساس هم نیست.

۹. اما بگذارید به هر چیز در جای خودش بپردازیم. انگلیسی جهانی" خوشاوند نزدیک زبان انگلیسی کسانی که زبان مادری اشان انگلیسی است و به آن تکلم می کنند یا آن ها که بر انگلیسی در سطح بللی مسلط اند نیست. این نوع انگلیسی عموماً نسبتاً تحلیل رفته و تنزل یافته است. به بیان ساده، "زبانی میانجی" است. این موضوع تحقیر آمیز و یا اهانت آمیز نیست، تنها یک حقیقت است.

۱۰. به لحاظ تاریخی، "زبان میانجی" در اصل به مخلوطی از زبان ایتالیایی با یونانی، فرانسه، عربی و اسپانیایی که در لوانت به کار گرفته می شد اطلاق می شد. در طول تاریخ همیشه نیاز به "زبان میانجی" بوده، اگرچه زبان در طول تاریخ و در قلمروهای مختلف تغییر کرده است. این نیاز اکنون بیش از هر زمان دیگری احساس می شود.

۱۱. آیا این بدین معنی است که همه به انگلیسی صحبت خواهند کرد و هر چیز دیگر از میان خواهد رفت؟ قطع به یقین خیر! نکته ای که صدراعظم آلمان ویلی برمت به آن اشاره می کند را به خاطر آورید: "اگر که من بخواهم چیزی به شما بفروشم، ما می توانیم به انگلیسی صحبت کنیم، اما اگر شما بخواهید چیزی به من بفروشید-dann müssen sie deutsch spreche!"

۱۲. در نتیجه، چند زبانی فرایندی پر جنب و جوش، پویا و بسیار زنده است. ارزش يك گفتگو به مقدار زیادی وابسته به گوناگونی نظرهای رقیب است. اگر که برج بابل وجود نداشت، می بایست آن را می ساختیم."

Appendix (F): Doctored Text in Persian

سال زبانها

۱. به سرعت بر من آشکار شد که چند زبانی دارای دو جنبه است. جنبه اجتماعی که هر شهروند اروپایی را در زندگی روزمره اش تحت تاثیر قرار می دهد و جنبه سازمانی. اما این ها دو روی يك سکه اند. چند زبانی برای هرکس موهبتی است. زبان مادری بعلاوه دو هدف هیئت فراگیری زبان است.

۲. **برخی می گویند** که این امر بسیار بلندپروازانه است، اما گمان من بر اینست که حقایق خط بطلانی بر این موضوع نمی کشند. چند زبانی فراتر از آن است که منحصر ا نشانه نخبان اندیشمند باشد. اکثریت عظیم ساکنان زمین به بیش از يك زبان سخن می گویند .

۳. در حدود ۶۷۰۰ زبان در ۲۲۰ کشور یا ایالت شناخته شده توسط سازمان ملل وجود دارد. از نظر آماری، به طور متوسط در حدود ۳۰ زبان در هر کشور. آمار همیشه حقایق را در سطح وسیع نشان نمی دهد. چند کشور (محدود) وجود دارد که تنها يك زبان دارند در صورتی که برخی دیگر کشور ها صاحب صدها زبان به معنی واقعی کلمه اند .

۴. از دیدگاه کارکردی و کاربردشناسانه محض، تمایز میان زبان و گویش می تواند نسبی باشد. این تمایز بر اساس ملاحظات که طبیعی جمعیت شناسانه، اجتماعی، اقتصادی و سیاسی دارند صورت می گیرد. آنچه در کشوری زبانی رسمی تلقی می شود، ممکن است در کشور همسایه به عنوان لهجه طبقه بندی شود .

۵. با نگاهی محدود تر به اتحادیه اروپا، زبان های رسمی آن هایی هستند که در پیمان به آن هتلا شده. هرگونه تغییری می بایست با توافق یکپارچه تمامی اعضا هیئت صورت گیرد. اکنون ۲۰ زبان رسمی وجود دارد .

۶. **شک دارم** که امروزه زبان رسمی به معنای زبان نوشتاری است. در یافته ام که از ۶۷۰۰ زبان و گویش موجود تنها ۲۰۰ زبان نوشتاری در دنیا وجود دارد .

۷. در جهان امروز که فرهنگ ها آزادانه با هم در می آمیزند، مدتها مرزها را نادیده می گیرد و فاصله جغرافیایی دیگر چندان معنی ندارد، مناسب است که بپرسیم آیا هنوز چند زبانی پا برجاست. آیا نباید یک زبان مشترک برای همه ی ما وجود داشته باشد؟

۸. در جهان بر سر موضوع زبان انگلیسی قلم فرسایی بسیار شده است. این موضوعی است که بسیار احساس بر انگیز است - برهان قطعی اینکه زبان تنها ابزار نیست بلکه چیزی است که عمق بسیار بیشتری دارد. شعار اتحادیه اروپا یگانگی در چندگانگی چنان بی اساس هم نیست.

۹. انگلیسی جهانی خوشاوند نزدیک زبان انگلیسی کسانی که زبان مادری اشان انگلیسی است و به آن تکلم می کنند یا آن ها که بر انگلیسی در سطح بالایی مسلط اند نیست. این نوع انگلیسی تحلیل رفته و تنزل یافته است. این زبانی میانجی است. این موضوع تحقیر آمیز و یا اهانت آمیز نیست، یک حقیقت است .

۱۰. به لحاظ تاریخی، "زبان میانجی" در اصل به مخلوطی از زبان ایتالیایی با یونانی، فرانسه، عربی و اسپانیایی که در لوانت به کار گرفته می شد اطلاق می شد. در طول تاریخ همیشه نیاز به "زبان میانجی" بوده، اگرچه زبان در طول تاریخ و در قلمروهای مختلف تغییر کرده است. این نیاز اکنون بیش از هر زمان دیگری احساس می شود .

۱۱. آیا این بدین معنی است که همه به انگلیسی صحبت خواهند کرد و هر چیز دیگر از میان خواهد رفت؟ صدراعظم آلمان ویلی برمت اینگونه جواب می دهد که اگر او بخواد چیزی به شما بفروشد، شما می توانید به انگلیسی صحبت کنید، اما اگر ش ما بخواهید چیزی به او بفروشید dann müssen sie deutsch sprechen.

ارزش يك گفتگو به مقدار زیادی وابسته به گوناگونی نظرهای رقیب است. اگر که برج بابل وجود نداشت، می بایست آنرا می ساختیم .

۱۲. چند زبانی فرایندی پر جنب و جوش، پویا و بسیار زنده است .

Appendix (G): Questionnaire (administered in Persian)

Regarding the text you read, please choose the best alternative.

1. To what extent did you feel the presence of the author in the text?

☐ Much ☐ To some extent ☐ Little ☐ Not at all

2. How was the difficulty level of the text?

☐ Very difficult ☐ Difficult ☐ Average ☐ Easy

3. To what extent did the author try to make a kind of dialogue with the reader?

☐ Much ☐ To some extent ☐ Little ☐ Not at all

4. To what extent did the author try to make the reader understand the complicated points of the text?

☐ Much ☐ To some extent ☐ Little ☐ Not at all

5. To what extent did you understand the major points of the text?

☐ Much ☐ To some extent ☐ Little ☐ Not at all