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## PROBING INTO THE INTERPLAY AMONG SOCIO-CULTURAL CAPITALS AND IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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### *ABSTRACT*

*The purpose of this study was to explore the association among socio-cultural capital factors including social competence, social solidarity, literacy, cultural competence, and extraversion and Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency. To this end, 92 out of 117 Iranian EFL learners in three language institutes, Iran, were selected based on a placement test, ranging from 21 to 29 years old. Next, the selected learners took the Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire (SCCQ) to measure their socio-cultural capitals. The data were analyzed based on structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that social competence was a positive and significant predictor of social solidarity. Social solidarity also significantly predicts literacy. Cultural competence was associated with both literacy and extraversion. Further, learners' literacy positively predicts the social competence respectively, confirming that EFL learners who were exposed to socio-cultural contexts enjoyed a higher level of metacognition and intelligence, and as a result, perform better in learning another language. Finally, the theoretical and pedagogical implications of the study are provided.*

**Keywords:** *Cultural Capital; Iranian EFL Learners; Language Proficiency; Social Capital.*

### INTRODUCTION

Some students learn a new language more quickly and easily than others. This simple fact is known by all who have themselves learned a second language or taught those who are using their second language in school. Clearly, some language learners are successful by virtue of their sheer determination, hard work and persistence. However, there are other crucial factors influencing success that are largely beyond the control of the learner. These factors can be broadly categorized as socio-cultural and linguistic. It is their complex interplay that determines the speed and facility with which the new language is learned. Language proficiency or the term linguistic proficiency is defined as the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, such as how well a person can read, write, speak, or understand language (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). A large number of studies on language are done in the area of proficiency and the factors affecting learners' language proficiency.



Various studies were conducted during the past decades in order to investigate language proficiency, socio-cultural factors, and the relationship between these two. According to Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) language proficiency is “a person’s skill in using a language for a specific purpose” (p. 204). They argued that proficiency is related to the skills with which a learner can use a language, for example, how proficient a person is in reading, writing, listening, and speaking and at the same time benefiting from the main language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Results from studies revealed that socio-cultural factors may have some kind of relation with language learners’ proficiency. Results differed from each other based on the first or second language context.

The influence of socio-cultural factors is often in a family structure. Belief and value system, acculturation levels, socialization goals and practices, attitudes, and language use at home are known as instances of socio-cultural factors (Gonzalez, 2001). Drame and Xu (2008) proposed a model in socio-cultural factors called “Response to Intervention Model” which deals with overrepresentation of minority children in education. Numerous researchers such as Cousin et al. (2002, as cited in Drame & Xu, 2008) conducted a model of five sociocultural contexts that focus on the relationships among the contexts dealt with in educational process for a learner. The contexts mentioned above interact with each other in this model. In a study by Yang (2002), he investigated the effect of motivation and socio-cultural factors upon the color coding ability of university students with socio-cultural and demographic backgrounds. He came to this conclusion that socio-cultural factors are significant elements in group performance in color naming. In the same vein, Rogers (2002) argued that lack of students’ preparation is in relation to socio-cultural factors rather than a lack of students’ academic potentiality. Gonzalez (2001) mentioned the role of socio-cultural factors and its effect within a family structure which exist a level of mediation between parents’ and children’s behavior. Parents and children should develop socio-cultural strategies in order to adapt their children to school system. De Voss (1998, as cited in Gonzales, 2001) stated that "adaptive strategies are observable behaviors occurring within a particular socio-cultural setting that are appropriate within the patterns and perceptions of the social group (p. 17)". One reason for this paucity may be related to lack of enough conceptualization of what socio-cultural and linguistic factors are and how they are related with language proficiency. If such conceptualizations and models had been presented, they could have been a sound platform for instigating curricular reform in instruction toward improving language proficiency.

Language proficiency tests may vary based on numerous factors. Socio-cultural variables have to be investigated largely. It is no possible to focus on language issues separately since there exists a relationship between socio-cultural factors and the aforementioned issues. The language issues are often on the upper surface, but the complex socio-cultural issues are placed in the lower surface. Furthermore, language-related issues cannot be understood without studying socio-cultural environment. Many language institutes and language centers offer language courses and claim that one will learn a target language especially English within three or six month of course duration, but at the end of the course most of students are disappointed from the result of their language learning. They usually do not get the result that they expect before going to language centers.



There are many reasons for this discrepancy between the claim of the language centers and the result that students get at the end. It can be the reason of lack of efficiency and confidence in teacher in the target language. He may be unable to use such strategies and techniques, which make the students speak the target language and may be unable to provide a speaking environment to the students, but this reason may be less obvious because most of the teachers appear in language teaching after having enough knowledge of the target language. There may be some other reasons and factors like society and language and many more reasons. The present study tried to investigate developing a model of socio-cultural and linguistic factors affecting learners' proficiency.

Williams and Burden (1997) state that learning environments will enable individuals to learn how to learn and to develop as fully integrated learners. Learner's access to different cultural materials such as, Internet, computers, pictures, paintings, textbooks, and dictionaries (Cultural capital), and learners' relationships with teachers, parents, siblings, and peers (Social capital) may have a profound influence upon whether, what and how any individual learns a language. Bourdieu (1986) adds that cultural capital exists in three forms, namely, embodied state (long-lasting dispositions of body and mind), objectified state (cultural goods such as pictures, paintings, books, monuments, instruments, writings, machines, dictionaries, etc.), and institutionalized state (academic qualifications and degrees). He also defines social capital as the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." These relationships can exist in material and symbolic exchanges which might offer each of its members the "backing of the collectively-owned capital (p. 248).

Social capital might include: number of close friends, presence of two parents at home, number of siblings, extracurricular activities, church attendance, parent knowledge of children's friends, parents' employment, parent monitoring and involvement in education, etc. It was already mentioned, the idea of the relationship between "power and capital" has been highlighted in Bourdieu's works (1986; 1993). In the field of language learning, his ideas have been employed to show the relationship between power, language, identity, cultural and social capital (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). As Pennycook (2001, p. 120) points out,

a major task for critical applied linguistics is to find ways to meet the challenge of working across multiple levels, of looking at contextual issues of second language acquisition, while accounting for layers of institutional influence and relations of ethnicity, gender, or social class.

In the same vein, Ricento (2005) has correctly pointed out that educational institutions play a critical role in production and reproduction of social identities and unequal relations of power in society. One important issue which has been examined by researchers in the field of language learning is the relationship between social class, success and different capitals learners possess. For example, Clemente (2007) explains how ESL students show differing degrees of eagerness to learn English (linguistic capital) with respect to the amount of cultural capital they possess. She observed that while middle-class students consistently participated in and paid attention to classroom activities, working-class students did not seem to regard the English language to be that much necessary for their career, and consequently, they did not share a strong sense of accomplishment as middle-class students did. Moreover, as Pavlenko (2002, p. 281) states, "The



social context is directly involved in setting positive or negative conditions for L2 learning." This is in line with Bourdieu's (1986) *reproductive* standpoint by which he maintains that social inequalities among social classes are reproduced in the context of education. Lin (1999), however, elaborates on the importance of sociocultural and economic "situatedness" (p. 411), and maintains that different kinds of creative, discursive agency are needed on the part of ESL teachers for each particular classroom situation in order to *transform*, rather than reproduce, ESL learners' social worlds into more cooperative and attentive environments.

### *Sociocultural Theory and Language Learning*

Lantolf (2002) believes that one of the primary concepts of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is mediated. He states that Vygotsky finds an important role for what he calls "tools" in humans' realization of the world and of themselves. He also maintains, Vygotsky believes that human beings do not act upon the physical world directly and without the using of mediating tools. Whether symbolic or signs, Vygotsky considers tools as artifacts produced by human beings under certain cultural and historical conditions, and they carry with them the characteristics of the culture. They are utilized as aids in solving problems that cannot be solved in the same way if they are not present. In turn, they also have an impact on the individuals who make use of them since they increase the previously unknown activities and previously unknown manners of conceptualizing phenomena in the world. So, they are continually modified while they are passed from one generation to the next, and each generation modifies them with the aim of meeting the needs and aspirations of its individuals and communities. Vygotsky states that the role of a psychologist should be to recognize how human social and mental activities are organized through culturally created artifacts.

Vygotsky (1978, as cited Lantolf, 2002) believes that the sociocultural environment provides the child with various tasks and demands, and engages the child in his world by the tools. According to Vygotsky, in the early stages, the child is totally dependent on other people, typically the parents, who initiate what the children do by teaching him/her what to do, how to do it, and also what not to do. While parents are the representatives of the culture and the medium through which the culture passes into the child, they also actualize these instructions chiefly through language. Vygotsky (1978, as cited Wertsch, 1985) answers the question of how do children then make these cultural and social heritages internal, by asserting that the child obtains knowledge through contacts and relationships with people as the first step (inter-psychological plane), and after that absorbs and internalizes this knowledge besides including his personal value to it (intra-psychological plane). There have been various studies conducted in relation to social aspects of the language. However, there is also much research supporting the idea that value systems affect language usage at a variety of levels. In particular, research regarding thanking (e.g., Long, 2010), requesting (Hill et al., 2007), and greeting (Mizutani, 1981) indicate significant cross-cultural differences in behavior as well as the values underlying such behavior. The following section presents a discussion of this research.

Rezaei (2012) studied cultural and social aspects of second language learning and foreign language teaching and the mixture, which builds the sociocultural aspects of language learning and teaching. It was basically to identify the connection that is between language learning and social factors. The findings revealed that in course of learning or teaching other languages, even



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though they are necessary to focus on sections such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation among others, it is obviously recommended to take socio-cultural aspects into consideration as well. According to him, there are cultural or social aspects in any language which might be different totally, or completely contrary to the things in one's own language, this is one of the reasons why cultural aspects must be taught.

In another study, Gholami (2012) conducted a study on the social context as a trigger in EFL contexts. The researcher investigated the value of the social context and its significant role it plays in language learning. He believes that the social context has an important effect on learners' motivation and attitude by supplying learning opportunities that develop students' outcomes. Based on the findings, the students learn a language by social communication with speakers of that language. However, the role of the social context is usually neglected in many countries.

Momeni et al. (2021) explored the relationship of social and cultural capitals with academic motivation. The participants consisted of high school students of the Ilam province in the school year 2019-2020. To gather the data, the Vallerand Academic Motivation Questionnaire (1992); the social capital used for measurement of state social capital (2015), and the cultural capital self-made questionnaire were used. Findings showed that the social and cultural capitals were significantly related with the academic motivation. Results of structural equations showed that social capital had direct significant influence on academic motivation. "Cultural capital" with a standard regression coefficient of 0.68 had a direct significant influence on "academic motivation" and its indirect effect through "social capital" on "academic motivation" is 0.25. Altogether both social and cultural capitals directly and indirectly indicated the academic motivation variance to heed to these concepts in the academic system.

Fishghadam et al. (2023) aimed to investigate the role of different types of capital, including economic, social, and cultural, as well as emo-sensory intelligence (ESI) in the academic achievement of students in the two contexts. To this end students from two countries were selected. They were asked to fill out the Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire (SCCQ) and the Emo-sensory Intelligence Questionnaire (ESI-Q). Their grade point average (GPA) was taken as the indicator of their academic achievement. The findings revealed that students' level of cultural capital and emo-sensory quotient (ESQ) had a significantly positive role in their academic achievement. Moreover, significant differences were found between the two contexts in terms of the level of capital, with Afghan students having significantly more cultural capital, and Iranian students having significantly higher economic capital. Iranian students were also found to have a significantly higher level of ESQ compared to Afghan students. Reviewing the related literature showed that very few studies have been conducted on the relationship among socio-cultural capital factors including social competence, social solidarity, literacy, cultural competence, and extraversion and Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency. Accordingly, the current study was an endeavor to shed light on the interplay among socio-cultural capital factors and the language proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. The proposed model for the variables is illustrated in Figure 1.



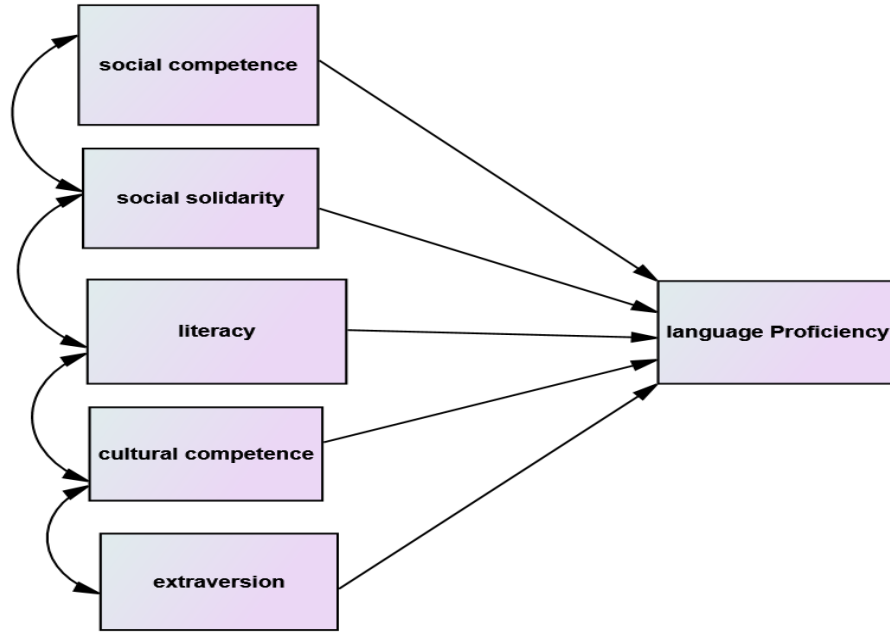


Figure 1. The Proposed Model of the Variable Associations

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design. To conduct the study, 117 Iranian EFL learners enrolled in three language institutes, Iran, were selected. Then, they took a placement test, and 92 homogeneous sample was selected, comprising 38 male and 35 female EFL learners. They ranged from 21 to 29 years old. To gather the required data, two research instruments were utilized. First, to examine the participants' English language proficiency, the students of the present study took a general training version of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). In addition, the Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire (SCCQ) developed by Pishghadam et al. (2014), to measure students' social and cultural capital was used. It comprises 42 items measuring five subscales, namely, social competence, social solidarity, literacy, cultural competence, and extraversion that are scored on a 5-points Likert-scale. The reliability estimates for the five underlying factors of SCCQ were calculated by the authors. To conduct the study, first, among 117 Iranian EFL learners, the placement test was conducted, and 92 participants, who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. Next, they were requested to fill in the SCCQ within 20 minutes. The obtained results were analysis via structural equation modeling. To examine the structural relations, the proposed model was tested using the Amos 22 statistical package. A number of fit indices were examined to evaluate the model fit. Table 1 shows the goodness of fit indices. As demonstrated by Table 1, the chi-square/df ratio (2.07), RMSEA (.058), GFI (.91), and CFI (.88), all the fit indices lie within the acceptable fit thresholds. Hence, it can be concluded that the proposed model had perfect fit with the empirical data.

**Table 1.** Goodness of Fit Indices

	X2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable fit	<3	>.90	>.90	<.08
Model	2.07	.91	.88	.058

To check the strengths of the causal relationships among the components, the standardized estimates were examined. The standardized estimate is the standardized coefficient or beta coefficients ( $\beta$ ) resulting from an analysis carried out on independent variables that have been standardized. It explains the predictive power of the independent variable and the effect size. The closer the magnitude to 1.0, the higher the correlation and the greater the predictive power of the variable is. T-values were then calculated for evaluating the proposed model and the significance of the relationships. The T-values of the relationships in the proposed model which were greater than 1.96 were kept in the structural model. After eliminating the nonsignificant relationships, the final model was obtained. Thus, all the evaluations were done on this model on the other stages of this study. Based on the results of Table 2, all of the relationships of the variables under study are significant since  $p < 0.5$ .

**Table 2.** Pearson Correlation of the Variables of the Study

		SC	SS	L	CC	EX
SC	Pearson Correlation	1	.325*	.271	.364**	.361
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021	.057	.009	.007
	N	92	92	92	92	92
SS	Pearson Correlation	.325*	1	.295*	.429**	.422
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021		.038	.002	.28
	N	92	92	92	92	92
L	Pearson Correlation	.271	.295*	1	.507**	.521
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	.038		.000	.032
	N	92	92	92	92	92
CC	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.429**	.507**	1	.466
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.002	.000		.000
	N	92	92	92	92	92
EX	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.429**	.507**	.435	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.002	.000	.000	
	N	92	92	92	92	92

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

SC: Social Competence

SS: Social Solidarity

L: Literacy

CC: Cultural Competence

EX: Extraction

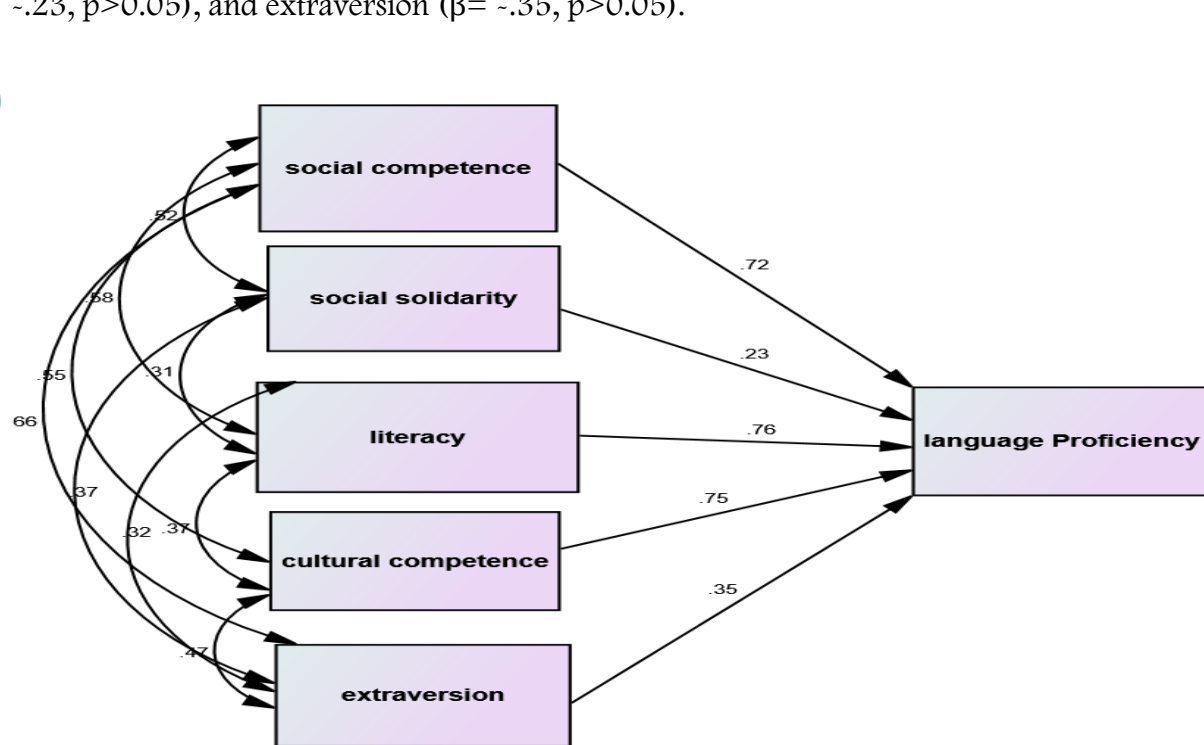
Further, the descriptive statistics were calculated and reported. Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics of Iranian EFL learners' social competence, social solidarity, literacy, cultural competence and extraction.



**Table 3.** The Descriptive Statistics of the Main Variables

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD.
Social Competence	92	1.22	1.37	1.92	1.75
Social Solidarity	92	1.57	1.78	1.35	1.81
Literacy	92	1.22	1.63	1.02	1.44
Cultural Competence	92	1.08	1.38	1.26	1.01
Extraversion	92	1.21	1.33	1.57	1.62
Valid N (Listwise)	92				

In order to evaluate the structural relations, the hypothesized model was examined. As shown in Figure 2, two estimates were presented on the paths. The first measure was the standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) indicating the predictive power of the independent variables and showing the effect size. In general, the closer the magnitude to 1.0, the higher the correlation and the greater the predictive power of the variable is. The second measure was the t-value (t); if  $t > 2$  or  $t < -2$ , the results will be statistically significant. The results demonstrated that among socio-cultural capital factors, only social competence ( $\beta = .72$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), literacy ( $\beta = .76$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and cultural competence ( $\beta = .75$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) are positive predictors of Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency. However, English proficiency is not influenced significantly by social solidarity ( $\beta = -.23$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), and extraversion ( $\beta = -.35$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

**Figure 2.** Structural Equation Modeling of the Variables

$\chi^2 = 125.08$ ,  $df = 72$ ,  $RMSEA = .112$ ,  $GFI = .91$ ,  $NFI = .82$

In addition, the results showed that social competence is a positive and significant predictor of social solidarity ( $\beta = .52, t = 4.08$ ). Social solidarity also significantly predicts literacy ( $\beta = .31, t = 2.16$ ). In turn, cultural competence is associated with both literacy ( $\beta = .37, t = -4.03$ ), and extraversion ( $\beta = .47, t = 3.08$ ). Further, learners' literacy positively predicts the social competence ( $.58, t = 3.05$ ), respectively. Their values were high enough to meet significant levels and thereby did indicate significant effect. Then, to find out the exact differences and ranking among variables Friedman Test was utilized. In this procedure, ranking each row (or block) together is considered regarding the values of ranks by columns. Table 4 depicts the results.

**Table 4.** Friedman Rank Test Results

Variable	Mean Rank	Rank
Social Competence	2.63	1
Literacy	2.17	2
Cultural Competence	1.86	3
Solidarity	1.52	4
Extraversion	1.33	5
$\chi^2$	df	p-value
34.28	92	0.001

According to Table 4, the findings of the Friedman rank statistics showed that Friedman rank statistics is significant ( $p = 0.001, X^2 = 34.28, df = 92$ ). Concerning the mean ranks, a decrease is evident in variables from social competence to extraversion. In fact, the results of the Friedman test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in five variables ( $2.63 > 2.17 > 1.86 > 1.52 > 1.33$ ). Based on the results, it is argued that those learners who are exposed to socio-cultural contexts enjoy a higher level of metacognition and intelligence, and as a result, perform better in learning another language. Surprisingly absent from previous findings was a consideration of practical applications of such models to the process of language learning.

In recent years, there has been obviously an awareness of learning models among professionals in the field of language teaching. To do this, there has been a growing amount of collaboration on both the theoretical and practical levels between the language educators and sociolinguists (e.g., Blum- Kulka et al. 1989; Wolfson 1989). In the same line, the causal claim of the model is similar to Ricento's (2005) identity and its understanding. He argues that if a learner identifies herself/himself (known as sociological factor) with another culture, she or he will be more proficient (known as linguistic factor) to learn the target language. Furthermore, results of the current study are in agreement with Bourdieu's (1986) socio-cultural factors in educational achievement. In addition, the findings are in line with Bourdieu's (1986) idea that socio-cultural factors are considered as a predictor of language learning than other factors.

When the learners acquire the first languages, they also acquire the sociolinguistic and linguistic norms with that language. In other words, they make not only sentences that are proper in any social context but also grammatically correct sentences in the mother tongue. In learning a foreign language, they do not learn the former. Grammar structures, pronunciation, vocabulary and other components of the language form are taught (Ellis, 2008). In EFL classes, it is usually the only place where learners have the chance to be exposed to the target language, and when the learners are not taught sociolinguistic and linguistic aspects of the language, they get



speakers of language who are not communicatively proficient, that is, learners who cannot use the language in real life contexts. Moreover, the outcomes of this study corroborate Vygotsky's (1978) idea that tools can form cognition. It implies that when learners use computers to learn, their cognition will be more strengthened. As a matter of fact, the findings revealed that extended cognition is due to the environmental factors and in reality mind is in the society.

In addition, as Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981) represented, learning of any language is inter-mental rather than intra-mental, indicating that sociological factors provide the learning's infrastructure and the solid foundation of that language. Thus, according to the results of the study, it is fair to claim that the social environment of learners help them how to manage, monitor, and plan or how to make use of their analytical thinking. Generally, in the context of language education linguistic factors are given more priority than socio-cultural factors. For instance, teachers frequently pay more attention to their learners' attitude, aptitude and motivation rather than learners' family background. A careful and deep look at the previous studies in the field of language education can be as a proof to this claim, meaning that socio-cultural factors have been the focus of educators in recent years. However, the findings of the present study can represent a rich foundation for priority of socio-cultural issues.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study shed light on the socio-cultural nature of language learning in relation to learners' proficiency. This study contributed to the present literature on language proficiency by taking into account the important factors influencing the development of language proficiency. Few studies explored the influential factors in a foreign language academic context as well as factors affecting language proficiency on one hand, and to develop a model on representative of these variables through the use of structural equation modeling, on the other. These results could cast light on the issue of language proficiency. The results demonstrated that social factors are more dominant to the other factors, which were examined in this study to contribute to language proficiency. These results can also be useful to programmers of university courses providing them with information about the factors affecting language proficiency. In particular, the study provides them with this information that learning a language is not just a matter of learning grammar or vocabulary. Rather, it includes other factors like social, cultural and linguistic factors affecting development of a language. Many of these factors could be at least brought to the consciousness of the learners.

Further, educational policy makers should take into account that learners who have access to different social and cultural aspects perform in academic achievement differently. In addition, they should keep in mind that learners' situation at home and their access to cultural aspects not only affect learners' achievements, but also explain those factors. For instance, literacy as an important subcomponent of linguistic and social context should be taken into account by teachers in foreign language classes, since learners may come from various cultural backgrounds (Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). Therefore, teachers should be alert to various levels of literacies by different social levels. This indicates that teachers are required to know the learning problems of their learners outside their classrooms. On the other hand, cultural and social factors are known as compulsory factors in educational contexts which are usually



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provided by family for the learners. The role of family is a significant factor in determining the extent to which a learner has acquired a specific cultural competence (Bourdieu & Johnson, 1993).

The implication of the this research for teachers in EFL contexts is also that they enhance their socio-cultural competences periodically, their overall communicative abilities in general; and to transfer their knowledge to students with the new methods, progressing their classes to be more communicative and enhancing their teaching efforts by achieving more proficiency in learners. As it is obvious, EFL context of learning and teaching is affected by the different situations of the classroom interaction. Such effects might encompass the learners' inability to achieve communicative and interactive tasks because of their incompetence in communicative ability, barriers in their cooperative learning contexts, and the lack of confidence in their daily interactions. Besides these, it also affect learners' spirit of interaction with peers from various backgrounds by helping learners to develop the attitude of new information's rejection concerning other learners' cultural linguistic realities.

Moreover, effective teaching strategies that take into account the learners' backgrounds used to overcome the challenges of classes' interaction in EFL classes, hence they are considered as being helpful to gain the goals of EFL teaching. EFL teaching's basis is on the context. As a result, its content came from the learners' cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds and each of the learners' background is equally treated. However, in practice, it was not implemented yet. If the instructor pair the learners from different or even completely heterogeneous backgrounds in an EFL class as it is considered as an important type of instructional strategy to overcome the socio-cultural factors in classes' interaction, but again practically, it was not implemented to be one of the challenges' sources. It is of high importance to make situations to teach EFL materials which come from different linguistic, cultural and social backgrounds. In addition, there is a need to motivate the learners in order to make them make use of the target language frequently.

This study inevitably had many limitations; first and foremost, it was conducted with a small sample size, and the corpus was based on a quantitative research design. Secondly, this study mainly focused on socio-cultural capital factors, in which, the majority of students were all native speakers of Persian. Accordingly, the findings from other studies -with more international students participating in the classroom discourse- can be quite different from what had been discussed here, and therefore, the results cannot be generalized to many other EFL classes.

It is suggested that further research be carried out with mixed-method research and have more samples to conduct the study. It is also suggested that if it is feasible, more nonnative students with different L1 participate in the research, which may give a better view of the cultural knowledge that each group brings to. Further research can go beyond cultural knowledge and have an in-depth analysis regarding inter/intracultural competence. Finally, while this study analyzed the manifestation of socio-cultural capitals, additional research can focus on the other factors such as linguistic factors, as well.

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