2.3.2. Since the convergent relations leads the Iranian students to obligatory choices, no significant error is predicted, at least in terms of the application of vocabulary in this category. However, a native speaker of English who learns the Persian language may provide examples of frequent mother-tongue transfers with this class of words. The reason is that the distribution of the lexical items in Persian will lead him to optional choices, and consequently he will have possibility of confusing one word with the other.

2.4. Zero Representation Relationship (One of the Two Languages having no Lexical Item Corresponding to an Item that Exists in the other Language)

2.4.1. To understand this kind of relationship, the following example will illustrate the problem:

Interlingual Transfer:

Chart 2

10E

Bahram	faced	difficulties
NP1	Tr. V	NP2

10P

Bahram	baa	moškelaat	rooberoo šod
	Prep.	Obj.	
NP1	NP2(IDO)		Tr. V

11E. Bahraam faced ***with** difficulties.

2.4.2. This example indicates that the subclass of monotransitive patterns of English constitutes a number of direct objects (objects with zero prepositions) which correspond to the prepositional objects in Persian. Such incomplete overlapping results in the mother-tongue transfer of the kind mentioned in 11E.

2.4.3. Other examples of this group are: (1) **to marry someone: baa** "with" kasi ezdevaaj kardan ⇒ to marry ***with** someone; (2) **to ask someone:** az "from" kasi xaaheš kardan ⇒ to ask ***from** someone; (3) **to order someone: be** "to" kasi dastoor daadan ⇒ to order ***to** someone; (4) **to enjoy something: az** "from" čeezi lezzat bordan ⇒ to enjoy ***from** something; (5) **to fight somebody: baa** "with" kasi davaa kardan ⇒ to fight ***with** somebody; and (6) **to hate something: az** "from" čeezi motenaffer budan ⇒ to hate ***from** something.

The English two-word verbs are still another example of this category which constitutes a special group, very high on the scale of difficulty.

In order to make an interlingual analysis, it is necessary to contrast the English two-word verbs with their correspondents or translation equivalents in Persian. To do this, we may initially divide the English verbs into transitive and intransitive, with particular syntactic and transformational characteristics:

2.4.3.1. English Two-word Verbs (Transitive+Separable) VS. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs: This subclass of transitive verbs can undergo an optional transformational rule that separates the preposition from its verb and moves it after the object noun phrase. Chart 3 is an indication of this group in the two languages:

English Two-word Verbs (Transitive + Separable) Vs. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs	
12E.	12P.
English: call up (telephone)	Persian: ---------- (telefone kardan)
Examples:	Examples:
1. He called up his sister.	1. ----------
2. He called his sister up.	2. ----------
3. He called her up.	3. ----------
4. He telephoned his sister.	4. oo be xaaharaš telefone kard.

Other examples are(1) **put on**(=wear: poošidan); (2) **cross out**(=omit: hazf kardan); (3) **pick out**(=select: entexaab kardan); and (4) **call off**(=cancel: fasx kardan).

2.4.3.2. English Two-Word Verbs (Transitive+Inseparable) Vs. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs: This subclass of transitive verbs, called inseparable, cannot undergo the optional transformational rule, and the prepositions involved cannot be separated from the verbs. Chart 4 is an example of the contrastive features of this group in the two languages:

chart 4

English Two- word Verbs (Transitive + Inseparable) Vs. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs	
13E.	13P.
English: go over (review)	Persian: ---------- (moroor kardan)
Examples:	Examples:
1.I went over my lessons.	1. ----------
2.I went over them.	2. ----------
3.I reviewed my lessons.	3.dars-haayam-ra moroor kardam.

Followings are further examples of this type: (1) **take after**(=resemble: šabih budan); (2) **look into**(=investigate: baaz-resi kardan); (3) **look for**(=seek: Jostejoo kardan); and (4) **get over**(=recover: behbood yaaftan).

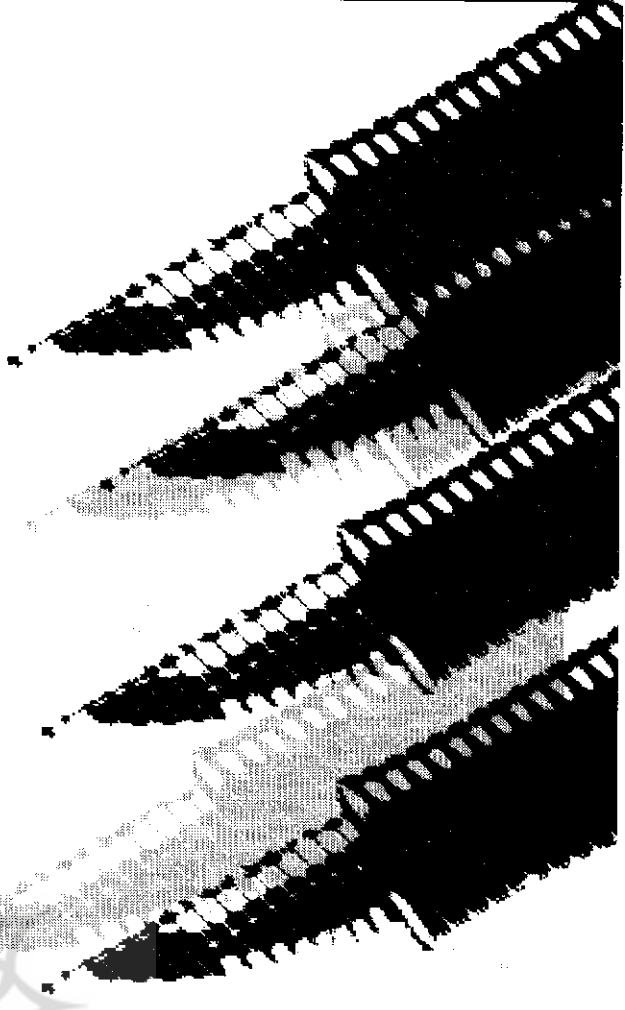
2.4.3.3. English Two-word Verbs (Intransitive) Vs. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs: The verbs characterized in this category are **intransitive** since they do not take a direct object. The contrastive patterns of these verbs are illustrated in the following chart:

chart 5

English Two-Word Verbs(Intransitive) Vs. Persian Simple or Compound Verbs	
14E.	14P.
English: fall through (fail)	Persian:---------- (šekast xordan)
Examples:	Examples:
1.The plan fell through.	1. ----------
2.The plan failed.	2. aan tarh šekast xord.

Other examples of this group are(1) **show up**(=appear: zaaher šodan); (2) **fall off**(=decrease: kaaheš yaaftan); (3) **stand by**(=wait: montazer šodan); and (4) **come about**(=happen: ettefaagh oftaadan).

The examples given in the subgroups **2.4.3.1, 2.4.3.2,** and **2.4.3.3** delineate the fact that not only the structural mechanism of verb formation in the two languages is different, but there is not a perfect semantic correspondence between the Persian verb system and the English two-word verbs. The reason is that **"two systems usually correspond perfectly when there is word-by-word translation equivalence between them" (Stockwell, et al, 1965),** whereas in Persian, the combination of a verb preposition never forms a semantic meaning which would differ from the sum of the meanings of its individual parts. However, we may admit that there is an imperfect correspondence between the Persian verb system and the English simple verbs. We call this an **imperfect correspondence,** because the operations of the corresponding lexical items do not correspond in all details. Thus, in



comparing the verb systems of the two languages, the English two-word verbs are left over without Persian correspondents, and, therefore, it is obviously inaccurate to list the English two-word verbs such as **take after, get through, put out,** and **fall off** as the perfect correspondents to **šabih budan, tamaam kardan, xaamoš kardan,** and **kaaheš yaaftan,** respectively. The perfect correspondents of these Persian verbs are **resemble, finish, extinguish,** and **decrease**.

2.5. Cognitive Relationship (Words That Are Similar in Form and Meaning)

2.5.1. The Persian language has borrowed thousands of technical and sub-technical words from French or English that are reasonably similar in form and in meaning and occur with or without a slight change in pronunciation. Examples are **radio, television, penicillin, aspirin, radiator,** and **motor.**

These cognates can be classified into a relatively small number of sub-group according to the source of their correspondence. For example, the words mentioned above can be classified as follows:

(2.5.1.1.)	(2.5.1.2.)	(2.5.1.3.)
Medical Science	**Electronics**	**Mechanics**
penicillin	radio	radiator
aspirin	television	motor

2.5.2. There is a sub-division of this category (2.5.) called **"Deceptive Cognates".** This group includes words that are similar in form but partly or totally different in meaning.

For example, in English the word **dašbord** refers to a panel under the windshield of a car, containing indicator dials and control instruments. The Persian language borrowed this word but restricted it mostly to the **glove compartment** which is a space built into the dashbord of an automobile, for miscellaneous articles.

We can refer to another example of deceptive cognates. The word **telegraph,** an apparatus or system for communication or the action of communication by this system, came into Persian and extended its meaning to denote **telegram,** meaning a message sent by telegraph. As a result of this expansion, a Persian speaker learning English might say he received a ***telegraph** meaning that he received a **telegram.**

The words of this category whether **cognates** or **deceptive cognates** are usually

distributed throughout the technical and sub-technical disciplines, and native speakers of the Persian language recognize them easily. These words constitute the lowest difficulty group of lexicon and, therefore, are labeled easy in this study.

Summary:

While I may try to avoid the enchanting claims that have been frequently made in discussions of **transfer**, I make no secret of my belief that **transfer** is an extremely important factor in the acquisition of English language lexical items for the native speakers of Persian. There is every reason to believe that the same kind of distortion that we can observe in the sounds of the speech of a non-native speaker also occurs in the structure and meaning of lexicon that the Persian student is trying to grasp or convey. In both cases, he/she is substituting the units and patterns of his/her native language and culture. In other words, the logic of lexical items in each language is a clear illustration of the culture and the customs of that language. Such differences are, in large part, parallel to those which exist between fashion of dress, of food, of architecture, of social behavior, of literature, of politics, and so on; and the distinction between these differences, along with their applications for teaching, cannot be determined by linguistic justification alone, namely that a good understanding of the nature of error is necessary before a systematic means of removing them could be found.

To give the students the control of a lexical item, the teacher has to be aware of the theoretical justification which claims that a good number of learners' errors is part of the transfer of the learners' language which is itself necessary to an understanding of the process of foreign language acquisition (Corder, 1986). We come to believe that lexical semantics-similarities and dissimilarities in word forms, along with similarities and dissimilarities in word meanings-play a major role in how quickly a particular foreign language may be learned by speakers of another language. We need to have such knowledge if we are to make any well-founded proposals for the development.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the analysis presented here is very general in character and does not pretend to cover the entire pedagogical problems connected with **transfer** of Persian lexical features in learning English as a foreign or second language. Other more detailed analyses will probably be better produced in the framework of contrastive approach presented here. As it is my conviction that this will be an extremely useful undertaking, let us hope that we will not have to wait for it too long.

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An Investigation of Construct Validity of Cloze Test as a Measure of Communicative Competence

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چکیده

آزمون کلوز به خاطر سادگی تهیه، ساخت و نمره دادن به آن، به طور گسترده‌ای مورد استفاده قرار می گیرد و از طریق آن می توان توانش زبانی دانشجویان و دانش آموزان اندازه گیری کرد. در این تحقیق، اعتبار تهیه و ساختار **کلوز**، تحلیل موارد و سؤال ها مورد بررسی قرار گرفته است. داده های این تحقیق از سه آزمون زبان یعنی **کلوز**، **مهارت ارتباطی و مهارت زبانی** استاندہ (MELAB) به دست آمد. عملکرد ۷۶ آزمودنی در این آزمون ها با استفاده از نرم افزارهای فاست (FACETS) و اس پی اس اس (SPSS) مورد بررسی و تحلیل قرار گرفت. نتایج به دست آمده نشان داد که آزمون کلوز برای سنجش مهارت زبان معتبر است و می تواند جنبه های دیگر زبان و بخصوص مهارت ارتباطی را اندازه گیری کند.

لغات کلیدی: کلوز، مهارت زبانی، مهارت ارتباطی، سنجش.

Cloze procedure, due to its ease of construction and scoring is widely accepted and applied in the design of language proficiency tests. Cloze procedure holds potential for measuring aspects of testees' language proficiency (Bachman 1990), yet the range of traits it can tap is not clear. This study investigates the construct validity of cloze test: also it examines whether cloze test can measure the testees' communicative competence. A priliminary investigation into the item analysis of cloze tests were also represented using Rasch measurement. Data for this study come from a trail of three tests of language: three cloze tests, a test of communicative skill, and a standard language proficiency test (MELAB). The performances of 76 candidates on the test battery were analysed, using FACETS (ver. 2.62, 1993) and SPSS (ver. 6. 1998). The results indicated that cloze test would be a valid measure of language proficiency and can measure aspects of testees, communicative competence.

Key Words: communicative competence, measurement, language proficiency, cloze test.

I. Introduction

1. Background

The nature of tests of language proficiency has been the object of much theoritical discussion and empirical investigation for approximately 50 years. Alderson and Skehan (1991) argue that although language testing has made progress in some areas, on the whole there has been relatively little progress in language testing until recently.

In the late 1970s "the Unitary Competence Hypothesis" (Oller 1979), which claimed that language proficiency consists of a single global ability, was widely accepted. By 1983, this view had been challenged by several empirical studies and abandoned by its chief component. The unitary trait has been replaced, through empirical research and theorizing, by the view that language proficiency is "Multicomponential" consisting of a number of interrelated specific abilities (s-factor) as well as a general ability (g-factor), Farhady (1983).

A number of empirical studies conducted in late 1980s and early 1990s clearly demonstrated that the kind of tasks used can effect test performance as well as abilities we want to measure. Bachman (1991) argues that the major consideration in both the design and use of language tests is the extent to which the specific test tasks we include. What this implies is that in order to investigate and demonstrate the validity of the uses we make of test scores, we need a theoritical framework within which we can describe language test performance as a specific instance of language use.

2. Cloze procedure

Cloze procedure, initially introduced by Taylor (1953), was used to determine the readability of texts in the reader's native language. Later, it gained importance as a good testing device; and it is now one of the most popular testing techniques, especially for assessing general language profeciency of ESL/ EFL learners.

Bachman (1990) and Chapelle (1990) argue that although cloze procedures do not produce tests of overall language proficiency, they do hold potentials for measuring aspects of students' second or foreign language competence. Cloze testing appears to measure the integration of linguistic rules with contextual knowledge; how much this underlying construct of integration exists would be the major concern of scholars in the present decade, Bachman (1996).

What cloze testing really measures has been the object of many empirical researches.Oller (1979) claimed that it assesses the "Pragmatic Expectancy Grammar" which underlies language performance. Abraham (1990), however, argues that comprehension in cloze test results from "interaction" between text and reader. Jonz (1990) and Bachman (1990) also demonstrate that cloze procedure challenges universal processing mechanism at all levels from word recognition through concept building; and that cloze scores reflect not only lower-order phrase processing, but complex skills ranging along a hierarchy of lower-order to higher-order human language processing capabilities.

Also studies have been conducted on the

assessment of testees' communicative competence through cloze procedure. Jonz (1990) and Bachman (1985) believe that there are various mental routes to the comprehension of cloze tests. Jonz assumes that the comprehension processes of non-native speakers rely more heavily on textual cohesion than those of native speakers which rely greatly on extratextual communicative competence.

The present study has been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of cloze procedure in assessing aspects of Iranian students' overall language proficiency and their ability in applying the communicative rules.

II. Methodology

1. Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study consisted of five language proficiency measures: three cloze tests, one standard test of language proficiency, and one interview.

Cloze Tests. The instruments were three cloze tests consisting of 56 four-choice items. To determine the readability of cloze passages, we applied Fog's formula to 36 passages taken randomly from the English students' university textbooks. Out of 7 cloze tests used in the pilot study only 3 cloze tests with 5, 6, and 7 were proved to be valid and reliable.

MELAB (1997). This standard test (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery) consisted of 100 items including grammar (40 items), vocabulary (40 items), and reading comprehension (20 items). This test was taken as criterion and was given to 73 students.

Interview. This was employed in order to measure the subject's communicative ability. This instrument consisted of 15 items to measure fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary knowledge. To increase the reliability, we followed the procedures presented by ACTFL (American Council for Teaching English) and ILR (Interagency Language Roundtable). Also we employed the scoring guide presented by CUTA (Cambridge University Testing Association), 1997.

2. Subjects

The subjects were 270 junior and senior English major students in Ferdosi state university and Islamic Azad university (Mashhad and Torbat-e-Heidarieh branches). Of these subjects 194 participated in validation of cloze tests, and 76 subjects took part in investigating cloze test communicative construct.

3. Procedure

194 subjects participated in the first phase of the study; the purpose of this phase was to select valid and reliable cloze tests. The final product was a package of 3 cloze passages with 5, 6, and 7 deletions. Also, 76 subjects took the final test battery including MELAB and cloze tests. These tests were held in one session and took roughly 90 minutes. Finally, the subjects were interviewed through a 15-item test which took 15 minutes for each interviewee. The interview was handled by two examiners: one of the researchers and a native-like speaker of English.

III. Analysis and Results

To investigate whether a valid cloze test can measure Iranian students' communicative competence, the researchers employed a series of statistical procedures: item response analysis, ANOVA, correlational study, Scheffe' test, and factor analysis.

1. Data Analysis for Item Response Study

To validate cloze tests, the experimenters employed a probabalistic model, here *Rasch Model*". Rasch measurement allows the investigator to identify particular elements, items or persons, that are problematic or misfitting.To analyze the data, we used a computer program called FACETS version 2.62 particular elements, items or persons, that are problematic or misfitting. To analyze the data, we used a computer program called FACETS version 2.62 (1993). In this analysis, persons and items were specified as facets of interest, with 76 and 56 elements per facet, respectively. Meanwhile, the first 6 persons and 3 items were eliminated, due to all correct response patterns. The final out put of the analysis were two tables (1&2) illustrating person and item fit statistics.

Table 1

Person Fit Statistics

Person	Σz'	t	Person	Σz'	t
7	4921	-0.84	42	58.19	-0.96
8	63.05	-0.52	43	67.18	-0.14
9	70.19	0.05	44	87.73	1.46
10	56.72	-1.08	45	90.16	1.64
11	49.81	-1.75	46	78.28	0.73
12	79.09	0.79	47	92.13	1.78
13	78.11	0.73	48	83.18	1.12
14	89.83	1.65	49	73.29	0.35
15*	97.29	2.19	50	61.87	-0.61
16	83.21	1.13	51	79.61	0.84
17	61.73	-0.64	52	65.23	-0.29
18	70.62	0.11	53	61.50	-0.64
19	79.14	0.79	54	70.19	0.05
20	78.13	0.72	55	81.29	0.96
21	58.23	-0.94	56	93.81	1.90
22	92.13	1.78	57	74.89	0.46
23	83.90	1.17	58	89.21	1.58
24	69.82	0.05	59	68.11	-0.08
25	86.17	1.34	60	56.72	-1.08
26	49.33	-1.81	61	86.21	1.34
27	61.69	-0.64	62*	98.12	2.25
28	73.59	0.35	63	59.18	-0.87
29*	98.83	2.49	64	87.73	1.49
30	73.13	0.29	65	73.17	0.32
31	68.29	-0.08	66	79.21	0.87
32	66.31	0.20	67	78.13	0.72
33	74.89	0.46	68	69.83	0.05
34	59.93	-0.82	69	56.03	-1.02
35	89.01	1.58	70	72.79	0.29
36	61.50	-0.64	71	70.19	0.05
37	57.09	-0.93	72	68.83	-0.02
38	81.07	0.96	73	79.29	0.79
39*	39.19	-2.93	74	58.23	-0.94
40	68.61	-0.05	75	68.24	-0.08
41	53.31	-1.40	76*	99.83	2.34

* t-value ≥ |2.00|

Table 2

Item Fit statistics

Item	Σz'	t	Item	Σz'	t
4	59.35	0.68	31	53.73	0.15
5	68.24	1.47	32*	77.21	2.20
6	39.23	-1.34	33	69.24	1.54
7	39.87	-1.27	34	51.38	-0.07
8	73.17	1.87	35	49.11	-0.27
9	35.19	-1.82	36*	79.36	2.38
10*	82.21	2.70	37	56.63	0.40
11	62.39	0.93	38	65.11	1.19
12	73.29	1.87	39	62.39	0.93
13	4.39	-1.09	40	73.16	1.54
14	57.28	0.48	41	39.31	-1.37
15	63.29	1.01	42	46.28	-0.27
16	53.48	0.10	43*	85.83	2.88
17	61.01	0.81	44	39.87	-1.27
18	58.23	0.55	45	47.21	-0.48
19*	82.11	2.59	46	69.73	1.60
20	59.33	0.68	47*	77.91	2.27
21	64.28	1.11	48	56.89	0.43
22	49.72	-0.22	49	49.71	-0.22
23	66.45	1.29	50	58.23	0.55
24	69.59	1.57	51	63.21	1.01
25*	78.23	2.28	52	69.79	1.60
26	68.29	1.47	53	41.23	-1.11
27	71.10	1.70	54*	28.11	-2.71
28	59.19	0.63	55	61.83	0.88
29	63.11	1.01	56	70.28	1.65
30	68.93	1.52			

* t-value ≥ |2.00|