ENGAGE Model as an Innovation in the EFL Classroom: Perceptions of Cognitively More and Less Active EFL Learners

Research Article

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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to investigate the perceptions of cognitively more and less active EFL learners about using the ENGAGE Model, as an innovation, in the EFL classroom. The participants of the study were 10 intermediate level male EFL learners in a language institute in Iran who were randomly selected out of 60 homogeneous participants of the

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study. Of the 10 participants, 5 were cognitively more active and 5 cogni-tively less active individuals. They were selected based on their answers to a validated cognitive profile questionnaire. An interview guide was used to elicit the perspectives of cognitively more and less active EFL learners on the ENGAGE Model in the EFL classroom. The findings of the study showed that the cognitively more active learners enjoyed the EN-GAGE Model class more than the cognitively less active ones. Likewise, the cognitively more active learners benefited from the course more than their counterparts in the cognitively less active camp. They assessed themselves more positively in terms of L2 speaking and writing. Both cognitively more and less active learners mentioned that they liked the ENGAGE Model classroom and found it more engaging than the other methods they had experienced before. However, the cognitively less ac-tive learners reported exhaustion, saying that the assignments were be-yond their ability and that they could not cope with all of them. The find-ings have practical implications for EFL classrooms.

Keywords: cognition, ENGAGE model, speaking performance, writing performance, EFL learners

Introduction

Foreign language educators have been concerned with the understanding of challenges in learning foreign languages for a long time. According to Baker (2015, p. 424), teaching EFL students the literacy skills, which they will require for their success in tertiary institutions abroad has attracted more attention in recent years. Other studies (e.g., Baker, 2015; Kim & Craig, 2012; Kozulin, 2002; Kung, 2013) have noted that writing and speaking skills are most problematic for EFL students.

A lot of research studies (Borich, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2016; Muijs & Reynolds, 2017; Nilson, 2016; Rivers, 2018) have been done by educational researchers to help students gain the required skills. However, we cannot rely on one methodology exclusively, as Kumaravadivelu (2003) acknowledges, "there is no best method there ready and waiting to be discovered (p. 12)." He goes on further to believe that it is futile to look for one best method.

Hodge et al. (2009) have stressed that students entering colleges are not competent enough in terms of authority and concern with the social context. They have warned that such learners are poor in terms of self-authorship and critical thinking and suffer from weak social relations in the academic context. Hodge et al., (2009, p. 18) have also stated that "self-authorship enables learn-ers to evaluate information critically, form their own judgments, and collabo-rate with others to act wisely." The lack of a well-sequenced, centralized, and strong educational method in teaching L2 in the world in general and in the Iranian context in particular has created many problems for L2 teaching and learning (Akbari, 2015; Hyland, 2018).

Halsey (2011) presented her naturalistic-oriented educational proposal, namely the *Energizing, Navigating, Generating, Applying, Gauging*, and *Extend-*

ing(ENGAGE) Model, in her book titled "*Brilliance by Design"*, which paved the way for the emergence of educational program changes in America, especially in California, where Halsey and Halsey (2017) and also Halsey et al. (2018), used the model to develop an educational program stressing the environmental issues. The program, which starts from the kindergarten period and continues to the end of the high school, focuses on learners, not teachers, for the instructional design and delivery (Halsey, 2011). Though old traditional and modern methods of language teaching have found their ways to the Iranian educational system (Safari & Rashidi, 2015), to the knowledge of the present researchers, the ENGAGE Model has not been employed as a teaching method in the English Language Teaching (ELT) domain in the Iranian context yet.

Besides, cognition, which has been defined as "the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses" (https://www.goodreads.com/genres/cognition), plays a significant role in the learning process in general and in L2 development in particular. In this regard, attitudinal cognition has focused on both cognitively more and less active learners. It has emphasized that cognition has a significant position in attitude change (Rosenberg & Abelson, 2017). Likewise, Housen and Simoens (2016) argue that cognitive status and perspectives of learners affect their L2 acquisition. Wang et al. (2015), who investigated learner's cognitive behavior in discussion settings, also found that less cognitively active learners need more time to develop L2 compared to their cognitively more active peers. So, failure in fulfilling some of the educational objectives of L2 learning programs might have its roots in the lack of compatibility between the programs and the learners' cognitive profiles, and a consideration of this issue might be of help. Therefore, the present qualitative study aimed to investigate the perceptions of cognitively more and less active EFL learners about using the ENGAGE Model, as an innovation, in the EFL classroom.

Literature Review

Cognitively more and less active learners might differ in their L2 language performances as they enact differently in other fields (Eysenck & Keane, 2018). The ENGAGE Model activities proposed by Halsey (2011) and expanded by Halsey and Halsey (2017) can pertain to learning EFL and constitute a different mechanism of instruction which would impact how students learn, what they learn, how they use the learning outcome in their personal life and the social context in which they live as well as the immediate environment around them.

The ENGAGE Model

Halsey (2011) presented the ENGAGE Model as a naturalistic-oriented educational proposal in California, where Halsey and Halsey (2017) and Halsey et al. (2018) used it to develop an environmental education program. The primary instructional focus of the program is on the learners (Halsey, 2011). As Halsey

(2016) stated, the human brain does a lot of things when subjected to a lecture, and this is frequently done by it. Since the traditional approaches toward teaching are not able to engage the learners' minds, Halsey and Halsey (2017) suggested the employment of active learning techniques through naturalist education programs. The ENGAGE Model proposed by Halsey (2011) is an example of these strategies with the potential to take a six-step approach to teach the content with the use of active learning strategies together with the utilization of meaningful interpretations (Halsey & Halsey, 2017, p. 3). It is argued that the ENGAGE Model is a model where students are actively involved in mastering knowledge and skills and applying them to real problems utilizing technological tools available. Halsey and Halsey (2017) suggested that the ENGAGE Model works regardless of the fact that single modality teachings such as lectures are not efficient due to their passive nature. This model can be employed by a single interpreter, who works with a group on the trial or at the time that the content is taught in conventional settings.

Nevertheless, individuals' engagement in the learning process cannot take place easily. Significant confidence and courage will be required by the trainers to help learners engage in the proposed activities by the model and keep their willingness at its highest, because most individuals are used to sit-and-get passive presentations. Yet, learners' involvement can be considered a crucial factor to make them remember teaching content and use the obtained knowledge in changing their behaviors (Halsey & Halsey, 2017).

Rundel (2018) employed the ENGAGE Model in training awareness toward ecosystem issues and stated that in case students find something valuable, and in danger, they will learn to protect it throughout their life. Halsey and Halsey (2017) recommend to work through the six steps of 1) Energizing learners, 2) Navigating content through short discussions, 3) Generating meaning for the content by employing meaningful interpretation, 4) Applying learning to the real -life, 5) Gauging and celebrating learning through self-evaluation, and 6) Extending learning to action.

Kim et al. (2017) used the ENGAGE Model in the domain of nursing practices and found the benefits of a regional evidence-based practice (EBP) fellowship program. In this regard, they found "improvement in the EBF beliefs had direct effects on improvements in job satisfaction of the participants" (p. 90). Likewise, Glance et al. (2018) have developed a model for teaching clinical skills in the assisting professions, namely learn, expand, and engage (LEE), which has been inspired by Halsey's (2011) ENGAGE Model. They have presented their teaching model based on the principles in constructivist philosophies, learner-based, and flipped-classroom pedagogy concepts. The use and incorporation of the advantages of multiple helping professions facilitate the objectives of this model to help postsecondary educators establish learning contexts that allow the students to achieve the high levels of knowledge, which has been illustrated in the modified version of Bloom's Taxonomy (Brown, 2007). Halsey et al. (2018) also proposed that the ENGAGE Model can be used for curriculum development in the educational settings aiming at paving the ground for more

awareness toward the environment, wildlife, global issues, and consequently more responsible life-long learning.

Cognitive Learning

Psychologically speaking, the term cognition is often accompanied by information processing within the domain of cognitivism (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2009). As Eysenck and Keane (2018) argue in their seminal book "*Cognitive Psychology"*, human cognition could be considered as *conscious* and *unconscious, concrete* or *abstract*, and *intuitive* (such as knowledge of a language) and *conceptual* (such as a model of a language). Also, Jordan et al. (2008) argue that individuals might be cognitively more or less active in the learning process. In this regard, Coltheart (2001), who clearly described the basic theoretical assumptions of cognitive neuropsychology, argues that cognitively more active learners employ specific strategies in the storage of data in certain places of their brains. One fundamental presumption is associated with modularity, according to which the cognitive system includes different modules or processors that operate comparatively in an independent or separate way from each other (Chomsky, 1979; Eysenck & Keane, 2018). It is assumed that these modules indicate features of domain specificity, which means they respond to just one special class of stimuli. For instance, a face-recognition module can potentially exist with reactions when a face is presented (Eysenck & Keane, 2018). Nevertheless, Fodor (1983) has stated that human beings have different input modules engaged in encoding and identifying perceptual inputs. Multiple dimensions of visual stimuli (e.g., color, form, and motion) are processed in special brain areas and seem to have the characteristics of domain-specificity. In contrast, several evolutionary psychologists point out that a great number of systems, processing information, are modular, and they have named this the "massive modularity hypothesis" (see Barrett & Kurzban, 2006, for a review). Accordingly, it is argued that complex processing may have higher efficiency in the case that we have access to different special modules compared to the situation that fewer general processing functions are available. The debate still goes on, but human beings may possess some general processors for coordination and integration of the outputs of the special modules or processors which work independently from the domain (Eysenck & Keane, 2018).

Application of cognitive neuropsychology generally takes place on special dimensions of cognitive functioning, including the studies on language (Eysenck & Keane, 2018; Page, 2006). Numerous studies have been conducted on the reading and spelling of individual words by patients whose brains have been impaired, but fewer studies have been carried out regarding text comprehension (Harley, 2004). Nevertheless, professionals in cognitive neuropsychology have currently taken more general aspects of cognition into account, among which thinking and reasoning can be mentioned (Eysenck & Keane, 2018; Page, 2006).

Cognitive learning research has vastly relied on studying language development among human beings (Adams, 2015; Barrett & Kurzban, 2006; Burri et al., 2017; Chomsky, 1979; Coltheart, 2001; Gilabert & Barón, 2018). In this regard, Housen and Simoens (2016) argue that the cognitive status of learners plays a significant role in the L2 learners' development concerning the difficulty and complexity of second language acquisition. In their study on student's cognitive behavior, Wang et al. (2015) found that less cognitively active learners need more time to develop L2 compared to their cognitively more active peers. Robinson (2001) investigated differences of individuals, cognitive capabilities, aptitude complexes, as well as learning conditions in second language acquisition and specified the necessity of differentiation between high and low aptitude learners in the studies pertained to cognitive learning and learning abilities.

Goh (2008), who studied metacognitive instruction for second language listening development, found that metacognition helps L2 learners gain a more comprehensive approach to improving their abilities. It can help L2 learners develop metacognitive processes that could improve their listening. Poehner and Swain (2016), in their theoretical arguments concerning L2 development as a cognitive-emotive process, stated that the cognition and emotion can be found in dialectic association with each other and accordingly, their presence is always evident in psychological activities, such as L2 development (p. 219). Sato (2017) studied interaction mindsets, interactional behaviors, and the development of L2 to provide an affective-social-cognitive model. The results showed that the learners' interaction mindsets had mediating effects on the development of L2, and their interactional behaviors were affected subsequently. Rassaei (2015) examined recasts, field dependence/independence cognitive styles, and L2 development. In this regard, it was hypothesized that learners with field independence and field dependence cognitive styles took different benefits from recasts. Leonard and Shea (2017) investigated the development of L2 speaking over studying abroad and concentrated on fluency, accuracy, complexity, as well as underlying cognitive factors. The researchers adopted a multidimensional attitude toward developing L2 speaking ability. Moreover, the way through which changes in the fundamental cognitive variables of linguistic knowledge and processing speed interacted with complexity, accuracy, and fluency throughout a 3-month Spanish study abroad session was also examined. Learners having higher levels of L2 linguistic knowledge and possessing higher speed in L2 processing before their experience of study abroad gained more significantly in accuracy and syntactic as well as lexical complexity throughout studying abroad.

Burri et al. (2017) found that the joint development of student teachers' cognition and identity could "foster the process of learning to teach pronunciation" (p. 128). Furthermore, Zabihi (2018) studied the role of cognitive and affective factors in measures of L2 writing and found that higher working memory capacities could help in the direct prediction of higher L2 writing scores considering complexity and fluency, while it had negative effects on the learners' accuracy scores. Similarly, Doughty (2019) argued cognitive language

aptitudes and considered two analyses from a longitudinal study with the use of aptitude for the prediction of achievement in language learning. From his perspective, the conceptualization of aptitude was regarded as a specific capacity for learning languages and a ceiling on success (p. 101). It means that, for any given individual, if there is considerable motivation, alignment of the personality aspects will be observed along with the excellence of the learning conditions. The eventual achievement is determined by aptitude differences.

The present study can take significance from different perspectives: Firstly, since instructing learners with the ENGAGE Model strategies has proved successful in other disciplines (Halsey & Halsey, 2017; Halsey et al., 2018; Kojuri et al., 2015), it could be worthwhile to check the merits of the method in the ELT domain and in an EFL context such as Iran, an environment in which learning English has become synonymous with experiencing a lot of problems, though it is felt and considered a necessity. Halsey (2011) asserts that "teaching, in any forum, is the art and science of bringing out the brilliance that drives transformations" (p. xi). With this knowledge, educators will have a basis for making program changes. Secondly, in every educational setting, some learners are susceptible to suffer from low cognitive perceptions of the world around them. Foreign language learners are not exceptions (Bygate, 1987, 2018; Hyland, 2018). Thirdly, materials developers, language teachers, and EFL learners would benefit from the outcomes of the present study and invite the positive effects of the ENGAGE Model into the ELT settings, and this way promote the quality of EFL teaching/learning. EFL students need a more student-centred approach, which fosters collaborative learning incorporating peer tutoring and group work (Ockey et al., 2015). In this regard, the researchers tried to adopt an approach to teaching embedded in naturalist theories focusing on the active engagement of learners in the learning process, like the one introduced by Halsey (2011) called the ENGAGE Model. Indeed, the principal message of the ENGAGE Model is that individuals' learning will be the best when they contribute actively and critically to the learning process and employ their learning in their real-life conditions (Halsey & Halsey, 2017, p. 4). Informed by the previous research on natural learning, which mainly focuses on helping people to get involved in their learning (Bowman et al., 2015; Caine, 2018; Cambourne, 1988), this study investigated how Iranian EFL learners would identify with the ENGAGE Model during speaking and writing development period and the ways they would benefit from this experience. Therefore, this study aimed to answer the following research question:

What are the perspectives of cognitively more and less active EFL learners on employing the ENGAGE Model in the EFL classroom?

Method
Participants

The participants of this study were 10 randomly selected homogeneous participants out of 60 intermediate level male adult EFL learners in one of the lan-

guage institutes in Ardabil, Iran. Of the 10 participants, 5 were cognitively more active and 5 cognitively less active individuals based on the results of cognitive profile questionnaire. They were asked for their ideas about employing the EN-GAGE Model in EFL classrooms and the impact it had on their L2 speaking and writing.

Instruments

The data for the current study were collected using a standard version of the Preliminary English Test (PET), a validated cognitive profile questionnaire (Appendix A), and an interview guide. The PET was used to select homogene-ous learners. It should be noted that the distribution of scores on the PET test met the normality assumption. As displayed in Table 1, the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their standard errors were lower than +/- 1.96. The KR-21 reliability for the PET was .91.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics: PET (Subject Selection)

	N	Mean	Std. Devi-ation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis		KR-21
					Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	
PET Normality	80	60.34	5.979	25.330	.508 Ratio	.287 1.45	-.138 Ratio	.566 -.243	.91

The cognitive profile questionnaire was developed and validated by the re-searchers in this study to measure the cognitive profile of the EFL learners. The scale included 30 items and covered six domains of *Engagement*, *Relationship*, *Persistence*, *Critical thinking*, *Planning*, and *Purposive learning*. The reliability of the scale was calculated to be 0.86 based on Cronbach's alpha with 245 Iranian EFL learners. The content validity of the scale was also confirmed by three ex-perts in TEFL relying on expert judgment validity. As it is a cognitive scale, they were knowledgeable in the domain of cognition and psycholinguistics as well. The validity of the scale was also confirmed through factor analysis.

An interview guide was used to elicit the perspectives of cognitively more and less active EFL learners on the ENGAGE Model in the classrooms in which it was employed. According to Jupp (2006), semi and unstructured interviewing lets the interviewee guide the course of the interview, and it prevents limiting the discussion to what has been predetermined by the researcher.

The first items of the interview were developed by the researchers based on a thorough review of the related literature and consulting with educationalists and experts in the field. The final draft was checked with five Ph.D. holders in TEFL who were experienced in the domain of ELT. Hence, it enjoyed expert judgment validity.

Procedure

The study, based on which the present paper is written, enjoyed a sequential mixed methods design with two quantitative and qualitative phases. In the quantitative phase, which was a quasi-experimental study, 60 homogeneous male EFL learners were randomly selected out of 80 intermediate participants. The results of a standard Preliminary English Test (PET) was used to select the participants. The pretests' result of speaking and writing were also used to form the two experimental (ENGAGE Model) and control (TBLT)groups of the study. Both groups comprised of cognitively less and more active learners in equal numbers. They went through the stages of pretesting (as mentioned above), intervention (as presented below), and post-testing. The treatment period lasted for 10 sessions in which the researchers used principles of the ENGAGE Model (Halsey, 2011) in the experimental group and TBLT in the control group. A summary of the ENGAGE Model used in the quantitative phase of the present study is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2.
A Summary of the ENGAGE Model in the EFL Classroom

Step	Learning Process	Activity Types	Examples	Homework
1	Energizing Learners	Warm ups, ice-breaking discussions, talking about daily life issues, and motivating students through using gestures and postures	●Think about what it has taken for you to give up work, family, or private time to learn something new. ● What do you remember about a particular class you attended that motivated you to feel excited before you even got there?	●Do a quick Internet search on your subject (making friends). ●Interview two people before your class. ●Develop interview questions and bring them to the class.
2	Navigating Content	Asking the students to navigate what they have gained in the energizing session and develop the new content.	● Teachers and learners negotiate on decisions to be made about assignments, activities	•Use stories that embed the learning. •Think/pair/share-think about something, then pair up with someone and share it with them. •Practice a skill and then describe to a partner what they are actually doing as they are doing the skill
3	Generating Meaning	Asking the students to present oral reports to the classroom about the current events, their life and their feelings about recent events in the immediate	● Which objective is most important to you? Creating dynamic meetings or Creating a one-day workshop. ● Now think about why this is important for you.	Discuss the following topics for the next session. ● When was the last time you remember someone helping you to generate meaning regarding your learning?

Step	Learning Process	Activity Types	Examples	Homework
		social context and the like.	● How will your knowledge of the im-portance of generating meaning impact your future learning endeavors?	● What did the facilitation do to help you discover the value of the new con-cepts in your life?
4	Applying to Real World	Asking the students study about the topic selected in the class-room.	● Use the internet, get involved in the social media, collect infor-mation about a specific issue, and then present your own perspectives in the classroom. ● Students will cover an article about giving advice. Should the students be interested in this issue, the researcher may decide to use it for an interview or conversa-tion topic.	● Talk about the effect of making new friends and having a network of peo-ple around.
5	Gauging and Cele-brating	Employing self- as-sessment (SA) in the classroom context. Teaching SA princi-ples and how to de-velop self-assessment speaking and writing check-lists. Practicing self-assessment on the speaking and writing activities and tasks. Scoring self- perfor-mance based on the checklist.	Students are asked to assess themselves at the end of each session of the classroom and see how well they learn what is taught. Students receive rela-tive feedback by the teacher, something which is decreased as the learners increase in the quality of their self-assessment. Various quizzes and classroom discussions will be presented in the intervention ses-sions.	●Record a talk and send it to your friends and re-ceive responses. ●Use the sentences of from different sources and the internet to make questions and asks each other to complete the exam papers they have developed. ●Evaluate yourself as being excellent, good, bad, or in need of more work.
6	Extending Learning to Action	Asking the students to use what they have learned in speaking and writing about different is-sues.	Lecture about various topics, take part in debates and discus-sions in English and if possible use what you have learned in the social media to find international friends, watch films, and solve the daily life issues and enjoy living through the English language world.	● How will you extend your learning so you have a greater transfer from learning to achieving business results through application of new skills? ● What other great ideas keep learning alive for you?

In the control group (the TBLT group), the researchers focused on TBLT, an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. The TBLT group in the present study was exposed to real-world language. The research-

ers did not interrupt learners while they were speaking. Nor did they fine-tune their production. This resulted in a less stressful situation for the learners. After the intervention, the participants in the experimental and control groups received the speaking and writing posttests which were the same as the pretests.

In the first phase of the study, the results of different data analyses indicated that cognitively more and less active EFL learners significantly differed in their L2 speaking and writing performance in response to being taught with the TBLT or the ENGAGE Model. Also, cognitively active learners could outperform the cognitively less active ones in both the experimental and control groups (Esfandiari, 2020).

Following the quantitative phase of the study in which the experimental and control groups received treatments on their speaking and writing abilities using the ENGAGE Model and TBLT respectively, in the qualitative phase of the study whose results are reported in this article, the researchers conducted an interview with 10 of the participates (5 cognitively more active and 5 cognitively less active EFL learners) to elicit their perspectives on employing the ENGAGE Model in EFL classrooms. As the first step in qualitative data analysis, following principles of the grounded theory, the data collected through interviews were coded using open and axial coding procedures (Creswell & Clark, 2017) to find the points of view and perspectives of cognitively more and less active EFL learners in terms of employing the ENGAGE Model in EFL classrooms. As the second step, labels in the cognitive profile questionnaire were grouped together based on the similarities of the processes they signified to come up with a smaller group of cognitive processes. Then, the scores assigned to these categories by the participants were well inspected and interpreted to see if any patterns could be identified for the cognitively more and less active participants.

Results

The interview was a face to face semi-structured interview involving 10 randomly selected participants. Of the 10 participants, 5 were Cognitively More Active (CMA) and 5 Cognitively Less Active (CLA) individuals based on the results of their cognitive profile questionnaire. The data were analyzed and categorized through open coding (general related views) and axial coding (specific issues) as follows:

Item One:

How do you feel about the method your teacher used in the classroom this term?

As Table 3 below shows, cognitively more active learners enjoyed the class more than the cognitively less active ones. To put it more accurately, the cognitively less active learners found the ENGAGE Model classroom boring. The reason they have mentioned reverts back to the number of tasks they had been assigned.

Table 3.

Participants' Viewpoints about the ENGAGE Model in EFL Classroom

	Viewpoint	Frequency		Percentage	
		CMA.	CLA.	CMA.	CLA.
1	We felt in ease as the class was very friendly.	5	5	100%	100%
2	The teacher was energetic and through energizing the students at the beginning of any classroom session he motivated us to learn more.	5	3	100%	60%
3	Sometimes the students talked about their experiences which was really interesting and we did not feel we were in the class.	5	3	100%	60%
4	It was interesting as almost all the students were involved in the classroom activities.	5	2	100%	40%
5	We had to read a lot even outside the classroom to be well-prepared and play a significant role in the classroom discussions.	5	3	100%	60%
6	The think aloud protocols and brainstorming techniques we used were really valuable as we could think of various dimensions of an issue.	5	2	100%	40%
7	Not only could we improve our English but also our understanding of the world around.	5	3	100%	60%
8	The class was boring and we had to study a lot of material outside the book.	0	5	0.00%	100%

Item Two:

How well have you learned to improve your writing from the feedback provided by the teacher?

The most frequently mentioned viewpoints in this regard are categorized in Table 4 below. It is worth mentioning that the present researchers realized that for the students to understand the written feedback, individual feedback conferences could be beneficial. These conferences were held each session about the returned assignments, and the students used the opportunity of reading what the teacher had written on their papers. The conferences were held in classroom environment and usually continued between one to five minutes. Throughout these conferences, the teacher illustrated some errors the students had made, while focusing on recurring mistakes. Opportunities were also provided for the students to raise their questions about their assignments and the feedback that the teacher had provided. The conferences were conducted mainly in English, though for some clarifications, Persian was also used whenever required.

Table 4.

Students' Viewpoints about the Teacher's Feedback on their L2 Writing

	Writing Conference Questions		
	Very Confident	Confident	Not Confident
1. Feeling about writing in English	CMA (80 %)	CMA (20 %)	CMA (0.00 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (70 %)

2. The amount of effort one makes on the writing assignment.	Significant Effort	Appropriate Effort	Inadequate Effort
	CMA (80 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (10 %)	CLA (80 %)
3. Understanding the feedback on the writing assignments	Mostly Understand	Somewhat Understand	Inadequately Understand
	CMA (90 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (0.00 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (70 %)
4. Understanding the teacher's comments on the assignments.	Mostly Understand	Somewhat Understand	Inadequately Understand
	CMA (90 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (0.00 %)
	CLA (20 %)	CLA (10 %)	CLA (70 %)
5. Ability to correct mistakes using the feedback from the teacher	Yes	Maybe	No
	CMA (90 %)	CMA (0.00 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (20 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (60 %)

When the students were required to explain about their confidence level regarding English composition, a significant number of cognitively less active learners (70%) reported a lack of confidence. Despite the teacher's surprise by the considerable number of students lacking confidence, studies have indicated that EFL students are sometimes willing to evaluate their writing skills at a level which is significantly lower than what their teachers believe to be (Matsuno, 2009). In the same way, most of those students (80%) did not believe they had put in enough effort for the assignment.

The students' ideas about cases three and four concerning the degree to which they could figure out the teacher's feedback and comments were quite dissimilar. Seventy percent of cognitively less active students answered that they understood only 50% or less of the feedback and comments the teacher had given. In contrast, 90% of the cognitively more active students said that they understood 50% or more of the feedback and comments the teacher provided. Finally, only one student of the cognitively more active group said that he could not correct his mistakes by utilizing the feedback provided by the teacher, possibly due to the lack of understanding of the code the teacher used. In contrast, more than half of the cognitively less active students (60%) reported having missed this ability.

Item Three:

How well have you learned to improve your speaking from the feedback provided by the teacher?

The most frequently mentioned viewpoints by the students concerning their L2 speaking development stemming from the feedback provided by the teacher are categorized in Table 5 below. When the teacher asked the students about their confidence level with regards to speaking in English, the vast majority of cognitively less active learners (80%) indicated that they did not feel confident about their speaking skills. The majority of the cognitively less active learners

(90%) did not feel they had made enough effort on their speaking assignments, either.

Table 5.
Students' Viewpoints about the Effect of their Teacher's Feedback on their L2 Speaking Development

1. Feeling about speaking in English	Very Confident	Confident	Not Confident
	CMA (70%)	CMA (30%)	CMA (0.00%)
	CLA (10%)	CLA (10%)	CLA (80%)
2. The amount of effort one makes on speaking assign-ment	Significant Effort	Appropriate Effort	Inadequate Effort
	CMA (70%)	CMA (20%)	CMA (10%)
	CLA (0.00 %)	CLA (20%)	CLA (90%)
3. Understanding the feedback on the assignment	Mostly Understand	Somewhat Under-stand	Inadequately Under-stand
	CMA (80%)	CMA (20%)	CMA (0.00%)
	CLA (0.00%)	CLA (20%)	CLA (80%)
4. Understanding the teacher's comments on the assignment	Mostly Understand	Somewhat Under-stand	Inadequately Under-stand
	CMA (90%)	CMA (10%)	CMA (0.00%)
	CLA (10%)	CLA (10%)	CLA (80%)
5. Ability to correct mistakes using the feedback from the teacher	Yes	Maybe	No
	CMA (90%)	CMA (10%)	CMA (0.00%)
	CLA (20%)	CLA (30%)	CLA (50%)

The students' ideas about the degree to which they could understand the teacher's feedback and comments were as follows: Eighty percent of cognitively less active learners answered that they did not understand the feedback the teacher provided and the teacher's comments well, while 90% of the cognitive-ly more active students indicated that they understood the feedback the teacher provided and the teacher's comments fairly well. Finally, only one student of the CMA group answered that he was moderately able to correct his mistakes by using the feedback provided by the teacher, while the rest (90%) were quite successful in this regard. In contrast, more than half of the CLA students (60%) reported to have missed this ability.

Item Four:

Both you (as students) and your teacher negotiated on decisions to be made about assignments and activities. How do you feel about that?

As Table 6 below shows, in terms of taking the responsibility of learning, which is one of the most significant factors in the negotiated syllabus focused on in the ENGAGE Model, more than half of the cognitively less active learners (60%) indicated that they could not take the responsibility for their learning. Similarly, the majority of the cognitively less active learners (70%) did not feel they could be autonomous in learning and promoting their power of learning.

Table 6.
Students' Viewpoints about their Teacher-Student Negotiations on Decision Making

	Much to Very Much	Moderately	Little to A little
1.Taking the responsibility of learning	CMA (80 %)	CMA (20 %)	CMA (0.00 %)
	CLA (30 %)	CLA (10 %)	CLA (60 %)
2.Feeling autonomous in learning and promotion of the power of learning	CMA (80 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (70 %)
3.Accurate mastery of language forms	CMA (80 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (70 %)
4. Application of learned material to new contexts	CMA (80 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (10 %)	CLA (10 %)	CLA (80 %)
5. Understanding of language rules	CMA (80 %)	CMA (10 %)	CMA (10 %)
	CLA (20 %)	CLA (20 %)	CLA (60 %)
6.Facilitating the learning process	CMA (90 %)	CMA (20 %)	CMA (0.00 %)
	CLA (20 %)	CLA (10 %)	CLA (70 %)

Concerning the accurate mastery of language forms, a large majority of the cognitively more active learners (80%) thought that teacher-student negotiations on decision making had helped them gain proper mastery over language forms, while only a small minority of the cognitively less active individuals taking part in the study (10%) supported this idea. In addition, the majority of CMA learners (80%) stated that teacher-student negotiations on decision making had helped them apply the learned materials to new contexts, while only a minority of the CLA individuals taking part in the study (10%) supported this idea.

In terms of understanding language rules, only a small number of CLA learners (20%) felt that teacher-student negotiations on decision making had helped them understand language rules well, while the majority of the CMA individuals taking part in the study (80%) supported this idea. Likewise, only a minority of CLA learners (20%) remarked that teacher-student negotiations on decision making had facilitated the learning process for them, while a vast majority of the CMA individuals taking part in the study (90%) supported this idea.

Item Five:

Do you think you can employ your classroom learning in your daily life?

As it is evident in Table 7, both cognitively more and less active learners, who were interviewed presented similar ideas in this regard. They believed that in case they lived in a situation where English was spoken in the social context and consequently it could be used in commerce, educational settings, and tourism industry, the classroom learning could be more useful. Meanwhile, in term of being sensitive to the environmental issues, air pollution, wildlife, and humanitarian concepts, both groups evaluated the classroom method very useful.

Table 7.

Participants' Viewpoints about Employing Their Classroom Learning in Daily Life

	Viewpoint	Frequency		Percentage	
		CMA.	CLA.	CMA.	CLA.
1	We used classroom learning in case it were spoken in the social context.	5	5	100%	100%
2	We used classroom learning in case it were spoken in commerce.	5	4	100%	80%
3	We used classroom learning in case it were spoken in educational settings.	5	4	100%	80%
4	We used classroom learning in case it were spoken in tourism industry.	5	5	100%	100%
5	We used classroom learning in case it were sensitive to the environmental issues such as wildlife and air pollution.	5	5	100%	100%
6	We used classroom learning in case it were sensitive to humanitarian concepts.	5	5	100%	100%

Item Six:

Do you think you can assess your own writing?

Table 8displays the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of the types of errors to be focused on while assessing their writings. The results showed that:

1. Cognitively less active students (50%) preferred task achievement errors to be focused on more than the cognitively more active group (30%).
2. Cognitively more active students (40%) preferred vocabulary and expression errors to be focused on more than the cognitively less active group (10%).
3. Cognitively less active students (50%) preferred grammatical errors to be focused on more than the cognitively more active group (20%).
4. Cognitively more active students (50%) preferred errors related to content and ideas to be focused on more than the cognitively less active group (10%).

Table 8.
Frequencies and Percentages of Types of Errors to be Focused on in Assessing L2 Writing

			Cognition			Total
			CMA	CLA	Neutral	
Errors to be focused on in assessing L2 writing in the self-assessment process	Task achievement	N	3	5	2	10
		%	30%	50%	20%	100.0%
	Vocabulary/ Expressions	N	4	2	4	10
		%	40 %	10 %	40 %	100.0%
	Grammatical	N	2	5	3	10
		%	20 %	50%	30%	100.0%
	Content/Ideas	N	5	1	4	10
		%	50%	10%	40%	100.0%
Total		N	14	13	13	40
		%	35%	32.5 %	32.5 %	100.0%

Item Seven:

Do you think you can assess your own speaking?

Table 9displays the frequencies and percentages of the participants' preferences of the types of errors to be focused on while assessing their own speaking. The results show that:

1. Cognitively more active students (50%) preferred pronunciation errors to be focused on more than the cognitively less active group (30%).
2. Cognitively more active students (50%) preferred lexical item errors to be focused on equal to the cognitively less active group (50%).
3. Cognitively less active group (50%) preferred grammatical errors to be focused on more than the cognitively more active group (30%).
4. Cognitively more active students (50%) preferred errors related to cohesion and coherence to be focused on more than the cognitively less active group (20%).

Table 9.
Frequencies and Percentages of the Types of Errors to Be Focused on in Assessing L2 Speaking

			Cognition			Total
			CMA	CLA	Neutral	
Errors to be focused on in assessing L2 speaking in the Self-assessment process	Pronunciation	N	5	3	2	10
		%	50%	30%	20 %	100.0%
	Lexical items	N	5	5	0	10
		%	50 %	50 %	0.0 %	100.0%
	Grammatical Accuracy	N	3	5	2	10
		%	30 %	50%	20%	100.0%
	Cohesion and Coherence	N	5	2	3	10
		%	50%	20%	30%	100.0%
Total		N	18	15	7	40
		%	45 %	37.75%	17.250 %	100.0%

Item Eight:

Is there anything you would like to say about the ENGAGE Model?

Both cognitively more and less active learners mentioned that they liked the ENGAGE classroom and found it absolutely friendly compared to the previous classes and methods. Also, they emphasized that the knowledge or information they could receive throughout the semester was more than what they had received in previous semesters. In addition, they felt highly motivated in the classroom and could connect the classroom learning to their extracurricular activities and studies. However, the cognitively less active learners reported to have got tired as the classroom assignments were beyond their ability and they had not been able to cope with all of them.

Table 10.
Participants' Viewpoints about ENGAGE Model

	Viewpoint	Frequency		Percentage	
		CMA.	CLA.	CMA.	CLA.
1	I found this method absolutely friendly.	5	5	100%	100%
2	I found this method more useful than previous classes and methods.	5	5	100%	100%
3	I could receive more information than the pre-vious methods.	5	5	100%	100%
4	I felt highly motivated in the classroom.	5	5	100%	100%
5	I could connect the classroom learning to their extracurricular activities and studies.	5	5	100%	100%
6	I got tired as the classroom assignments were beyond my ability	0	5	0%	100%

An important issue which is worth mentioning is that, in the negotiated syllabus stressed in the ENGAGE Model, a key feature is the matter of shared decision-making which invites all students to participate and have their share in influencing the decisions. However, it is the views of the most vocal which seems to be heard, not of those who keep silent and do not share their opinions. Unfortunately, the cognitively less active learners in the present study belonged to a greater degree to the latter group.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study, i.e., the satisfaction and success of cognitively more active learners in the ENGAGE Model class, are in line with Housen and Simoens' (2016) study of the impact of individuals' cognitive abilities on their L2 acquisition. They asserted that cognitive perspectives of learners affect their L2 acquisition, and this fact plays a significant role in the L2 learners' development concerning the difficulty and complexity of second language acquisition. Hence, cognitively more active EFL learners are expected to enjoy a more fruitful development compared to their cognitively less active counterparts. Likewise, as second language development is mostly a cognitive process (Sato, 2017; Skehan, 1998), more active learners in terms of cognition are assumed to develop their L2 more successfully and faster than the cognitively less active ones. Sato (2017) studied interaction mindsets, interactional behaviors, and L2 development to develop an affective-social-cognitive model. The results indicated that L2 development was mediated by learners' interaction mindsets, which in turn affected their interactional behaviors. Sato's study shows that cognitive processes affect the L2 development of the given learners. The present study is also supported by Halsey and Halsey's (2017) study on connecting Californians with the Chaparral through the ENGAGE Model in which they designed an educational program mainly relying on environmental issues to make students aware of the wildlife, environment, and the ecosystem in which they were living.

As both cognitively more and less active learners in the present study positively reflected on the model in their L2 speaking and writing irrespective of their cognition level, it can be argued that the ENGAGE Model has been helpful in making individuals with different cognitive orientations active in an educational setting. This in itself can take support from cognitive learning assumption of modularity (Chomsky, 1979; Fodor, 1983). In fact, the assumed language module in which both L2 speaking and L2 writing can be placed presumptuously works actively with less reliance on the broad concept of cognition. That is why individuals with different cognitive levels can develop their L1 effectively, if not perfectly in some specific cases (Coltheart, 2001).

Another study which can be referred to in an attempt to justify the success of the ENGAGE Model in both cognitively more and less active learners in terms of their L2 writing and speaking is Zhang and Hyland's (2018) research on student engagement with teacher and automated feedback on L2 writing. They found that the corrective feedback (CF) presented by the teacher can make the learners focus on the errors they have committed and try to avoid them in the coming trials.

The ENGAGE Model, which proved useful in L2 development, can be discussed in terms of its steps and their operationalization in the EFL domain likewise as presented in the following sections.

Energizing learners, as the first step, consists of encouraging learners to concentrate on and stimulating them about training that they are going to experience (such as having a podcast on the topic, distribution of the relevant materials and study guides) (Kilbourne, 2011). At the beginning of the session, energizing can also consist of giving thanks to learners for their participation and engaging them immediately by raising powerful opening questions, carrying out interactive activities, or illustrating key training objectives (Halsey et al., 2018). In the L2 speaking classroom, based on the ENGAGE Model warm-ups, ice-breaking discussions, talking about daily life issues, and motivating students through using gestures and postures are taken into consideration (Scrivener, 2012; Sert, 2015). Also, this step deals with motivation, both internal and external, which has been proven to be hugely influential in L2 development (Csizér, 2017; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017).

Navigating content, the second step in the ENGAGE Model, focuses on the use of different strategies (such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic) to make various brain parts involved. The trainer uses alternative techniques of teaching and reviewing the content by role-playing, games, or group activities (Halsey, 2018). In the L2 speaking class, asking the students to navigate what they have gained in the energizing session and develop the new content is of paramount significance. Likewise, the teacher and learners negotiate on decisions to be made about assignments and activities. This indicates the application of a process-based syllabus (Breen, 1987) and a negotiated syllabus (Clarke, 1991) in the EFL pedagogy.

Generating meaning, as the third step, urges the learners to clarify the value of the new information they have learned and the way it will assist them, for example, learning more successfully and diagnosing the problem while learning (Halsey, 2011). In the L2 speaking and writing class, this step is operationalized through asking the students to present oral reports to the classroom about current events, their life and their feelings about recent events in the immediate social context and the like. This is partially in line with TBLT principles proposed by Ellis (2003), especially the real-life language tasks.

Applying to the real world, as the fourth step, signifies that learners need opportunities during the teaching/learning process to show their mastery of the new abilities (e.g., learning pronunciation, intonation, lexical resources, or real-world practice). In the L2 class, this notion is implemented through asking the students to study the topic selected in the classroom, use the internet, get involved in social media, collect information about a specific issue, and then present their perspectives in the classroom. Such tasks have been employed in action research (Smith & Rebolledo, 2018).

Gauging and celebrating, as the fifth step of the ENGAGE Model, concentrates on learners' assessing their learning and development and the degree to which they have learned-through a quiz, crossword puzzle, or lecturing to others-and celebrating their accomplishment. This concept is operationalized by employing teaching self-assessment principles and how to develop self-assessment speaking and writing checklists in the classroom context.

Extending learning to action, as the sixth step of the ENGAGE Model, pertains to follow-up activities (e.g., e-mail reminders or buddy systems) to help ensure that learners act on their intentions to make use of their new knowledge or abilities (Halsey, 2011). This step is applied to the L2 speaking and writing classes by asking the students to use what they have learned in speaking and writing about different issues. They are encouraged to talk about various topics, take part in debates and discussions in English, and, if possible, use what they have learned in social media to find international friends, watch films, solve daily life issues, and enjoy living through the English language world. This is in line with competency-based learning in the ELT domain (Nodine, 2016; Waddington, 2017).

In the third place, it was revealed that in L2 speaking and writing, students with a cognitively active profile benefited from the ENGAGE Model. In comparison, cognitively less active students slightly suffered from its implementation. Active learning concentrates on the engagement of learners in activities or tasks, which can help the learners in thinking about and analyzing the information, which has been taught. This learning may potentially take place at any step or level of a lesson, from the students' engagement in the topic, up to their active and conscious participation in the discovery of language and rules, to free, active production. Also, Bell and Kahrhoff (2006, p. 1) stated that during the process of active learning the students have active engagement in the establishment of an understanding of the facts, ideas, as well as skills by completing the instructor directed tasks and activities. Every kind of activity, which leads

to the students' engagement in the learning process can be relevant to this concept. Likewise, Cacioppo and Freberg (2018) argue active planning as a firm step in cognitive learning.

Cognitively more active learners seem to have more tendency toward dealing with active learning techniques, which could affect students' creative thinking, and this demonstrates that creative thinking, as a component of cognition, can be changed via education (Bakır, 2011). In addition, cognitively more active individuals take greater responsibility for their learning, and this promotes their power of knowledge and autonomy in this learning process (Robinson, 2001). This has been enriched in the ENGAGE Model in which a privilege has been given to the negotiated syllabus. Consequently, the ENGAGE Model can be considered as effective and also in line with the cognitive learning concepts such as responsibility-taking and deep thinking.

According to the findings of cognitive psychology, learning in general and language learning in particular, deal with different processes such as attention, perception, learning, memory, problem solving, reasoning, and thinking (Eysenck & Keane, 2018). In this regard, different language skills, including speaking and writing, could be considered as cognitive tasks (Cacioppo et al., 2008).

As the quantitative phase of the study demonstrated, employing the ENGAGE Model influenced the EFL learners' speaking and writing performance though the cognitively more active learners benefited more from this model's application (Esfandiari, 2020). Besides, it was revealed that L2 learners benefit more from navigating content and connecting their learning to real-life situations. The model was concluded to be beneficial to the students because it involves them in the various aspects of a problem. The multidimensionality and dynamic nature of the ENGAGE Model (Halsey, 2016) gives rise to the development of scholarship among students. This is what the present study findings are also indicative of. Energizing learners involves getting learners to focus on and get excited about training. In the L2 class, asking the students to navigate what they have gained in the energizing session and develop the new content is of paramount significance. Likewise, the teacher and learners negotiate on decisions to be made about assignments and activities, which is a characteristic of process-based approaches to syllabus design. In addition, task-based language teaching does not take account of learners' cognitive profile, but in the ENGAGE Model cognitively more active individuals take a greater responsibility for their own learning and this promotes their power of learning and autonomy in the learning process (Robinson, 2001). Consequently, the ENGAGE Model can be considered as more effective and also in line with the cognitive learning concepts such as responsibility taking and deep thinking.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study can assist other teachers and researchers who are considering the use of the ENGAGE Model to enhance their course learning outcomes. The idea that a number of students still have a preference for less active models does not make much sense and suggests that teachers, syllabus designers, and researchers need to employ more active models such as the ENGAGE Model and investigate the way they will assist and improve

students' learning. The findings of this study showed that the use of the ENGAGE Model is significant if teachers decide to enhance learning outcomes. Also, the data revealed that cognitively more and less active learners liked the ENGAGE Model classroom and highlighted that the knowledge and information they received were more than what they had received in ordinary classrooms. Another significant finding was that learners felt highly motivated and could connect classroom learning to extracurricular activities. The purport of the findings might be that, syllabus designers need to immerse learners in new ideas and act as an excellent gateway for improving quality content. The findings imply that EFL teachers and stakeholders should increase interaction and higher-order thinking, and make connections to learners' previous learning. All of these components need for new models of English language teaching and learning. Materials developers in the ELT domain also could employ the findings of the present study and those of the similar ones to present tasks in which learners' awareness toward active learning is enhanced. Such tasks may help the learners move towards self-assessment, autonomy, and meaningful learning.

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Appendix A
Cognitive Profile Questionnaire

Please read the following statements and write the numbers that best describe you with-in the cells in front of the statements. This is not a test and you do not even need to write your name on it. This is a study the results of which will be used for improving teaching programs; so, please give your answers sincerely, as only this will guarantee the success of the investigation. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

A. Personal information

Gender	Male☐	Female☐

Age	15–20☐	20–25☐	older than 25☐

Years of studying English	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐	more than 5☐

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	I actively participate in learning activities in the classroom.						
2	I usually discuss important topics with my classmates.						
3	I willingly exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master different skills.						
4	I actively communicate with the native speakers via social networks to improve my language skills.						
5	I usually think to find out how different pieces of information are related to each other either in my own words or when others utter something.						
6	I try to find out how parts of a text are related to each other when I read the text.						
7	I try to see how ideas are related to each other.						
8	I usually put information from different sources together before I draw conclu-sions.						
9	When I learn a new word or structure, I try to find more about it.						
10	Whenever I come up with a problem, it keeps my mind busy until I find a solu-tion for that.						
11	I keep rehearsing new things I have learned in the class.						
12	I do not get bored when I read a book many times.						
13	I usually ask my professors to see if I have understood rightly.						
14	I usually give my best try to difficult concepts.						
15	I never skip sections of the text I am reading unless I am pressed for time.						
16	I revise a lot to deliver my best performance.						
17	I challenge ideas that I do not find convincing.						
18	When I read a book or an article, I usually question the validity of the ideas ex-pressed.						
19	Details are as important to me as the overall message.						
20	I usually analyze complex ideas to understand them.						
21	I usually try to see what the underlying principles are in anything.						
22	I usually think about what to say or what to write before the class.						
23	Before a listening class I usually listen a lot.						
24	I speak to myself to be able to cope with possible challenges.						
25	I think about using different strategies to stay concentrated in the classroom.						
26	I usually program the ways through which I can push myself to remember words before using dictionaries.						
27	I try to find out where I can put to use what I have learned.						
28	I usually classify information to easily remember them.						
29	Where ever possible, I try to find examples for what I have learned.						
30	I try to figure out what purpose or purposes the material I am reading serve.						

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!