

*In the name of God*

*The Beneficent, The Merciful*



**Shahrood University of Technology**

**English Language Department**

**M.A. Thesis in Language Teaching**

**EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Cyclical Presentation of Materials**

**By: Maryam Gholami**

**Supervisor:**

**Dr. Seyyed Ali Ostovar-Namaghi**

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## **Dedication**

*This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents who their existence have been the source of peace, hope and motivation in my whole life.*

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## تعهد نامه

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### EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Cyclical Presentation of Materials

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#### مالکیت نتایج و حق نشر

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## **Abstract**

Concerning the importance of employing an effective syllabus design in EFL/ESL learning rooms, this study aims at exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of cyclical presentation of materials. By the methodology of grounded theory, the researcher theoretically sampled concepts through interviewing 15 teachers who taught English in public schools. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Then they were analyzed by applying open, selective and axial coding. Besides interviews, memo writing was also applied to collect more data. The process of data collection was continued until the data saturation, in other words until no more data elicited. Analyzing the driven data through grounded theory revealed two major categories; advantages of cyclical syllabus and the techniques to apply cyclical syllabus. The first category covered the following sub-categories: 1) internalizing, 2) reducing tension and stress, 3) increasing students' self-esteem, 4) functioning as remedial teaching, and 5) motivating. Techniques which are suggested to be applied in terms of cyclical syllabus are: 1) techniques contributed to teaching reading cyclically, 2) techniques contributed to teaching language items cyclically. The findings of present study emphasized the importance of an appropriate syllabus in the process of learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, the finding can be precious for language teachers, syllabus designers, and language learners as well as textbook writers.

**Keywords:** cyclical syllabus, teachers' perceptions, grounded theory, Language items, techniques

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**Chapter One:**  
**Introduction**

## **1.1. Overview**

The educational system of any country is responsible for providing a viable language learning context for language learners. Actually, textbooks play an important role in educating knowledgeable students. So, textbook writers need to apply an effective syllabus through which the materials are presented effectively in order to create viable learning context. There are two approaches toward the presentation of language materials: linear and cyclical. The former covers its teaching items once only. In contrast, the latter covers teaching items more than once, enabling them to be treated at different levels of complexity. Basics may be introduced in the first cycle, with later cycles providing revision and coverage of the more difficult points.

The Spiral Curriculum was first proposed by Bruner (1960) who was an educational psychologist. He suggested that in a course of study, as the students “spiral upward” a linkage between each lesson should be provided. To this end, certain skills and prerequisite knowledge must be first mastered. This teaching and learning style is less familiar to most of us. In terms of how this is reflected in teaching and learning, it means that just as we pass through the seasons every year, our learning will pass through these same areas of study repeatedly over time. Our learning, therefore, spirals continually deeper with every cycle we are part of. The definition of a spiral curriculum as a course of the study is a process in which the same topics are reintroduced throughout students’ school career and the previously learned topics are reinforced and the complexity of them increases with each encounter.

The spiral approach as a technique which is used in teaching is a process in which the first basic facts of a subject are introduced to the learners, without worrying about details. Then, as learning progresses, more and more details are introduced, while at the same time they are related to the basics which are reemphasized many times to help them enter into long-term memory. In other words, a spiral curriculum design is one in which key concepts are presented repeatedly throughout the curriculum, but with deepening layers of complexity. After a mastery of the initial topic, the student “spirals upwards” as the new knowledge is introduced in next lessons, enabling him/her to reinforce what is already learned. In the end, a rich breadth and depth of knowledge is achieved. Bruner (1960) emphasized the gains that

can be acquired by developing students' powers of analysis, judgment and memory in order to increase capacity to transfer learning. His idea was that transfer of thinking processes from one context to another required students to learn the fundamental principles of subjects and to explore ideas on a deeper level rather than just mastering facts and rote learning procedures. Therefore, main purposes of the cyclical syllabus can be mentioned as that the previously learned concept is reviewed, hence improving its retention and the topic may be progressively elaborated when it is reintroduced leading to a broadened understanding and transfer of learning.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Nowadays, Language teachers, syllabus designers, and policymakers are constantly worried about their dilemmas in selecting and sequencing the most appropriate materials in order to educate knowledgeable language learners. Actually, without employing appropriate syllabus and teaching materials language learners may not be able to make use of their language knowledge effectively in the future. Despite studying English for some years at school in Iran, students are not able to learn all teaching items. This leads to lack of attention and motivation of the learners. Some of the specialists believe that it is because of the inefficiency of syllabuses and techniques applied by language teachers and instructors. In addition, forgetting may be another cause for this failure. All of these reasons may be true, but the fact is to know what the most efficient ways of presenting teaching items to the students are. It may help students overcome these difficulties. In addition, most of the language learning course books have been written in a linear style. So, the course book writers also need to get aware of the advantages and disadvantages of other teaching styles and syllabuses which will result in effective language learning experience for students. Unfortunately, since most of the teachers are servants of the assigned course books by the education system and the syllabus design of such books are linear, the students are educated with only a bunch of language items accumulating on each other without knowing ways of applying them in other contexts. The reason can be lack of knowledge about the rationale behind other syllabus designs.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

To remove the dilemma of language teachers towards choosing the most appropriate syllabus through which the educated students will be able to make use of their language proficiency in future, this study aims at exploring the rationale behind one type of syllabus design other than linear one. The main purpose of this study is to investigate Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes, opinions, ideas and suggestion about cyclical syllabuses. Such perceptions are going to be extracted from those language teachers who have had experiences in applying such kind of syllabus design. To this end, the following question is going to be answered by teachers:

1. What are your perceptions of the merits and demerits of the cyclical approach and your suggestions for the effective implementation of this approach?"

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Since the English language is an international language and language learners devote much time to learning it, the main concern of education system is applying a specific syllabus that results in educating knowledgeable students. Therefore, it is essential for authorities in the educational system and language teachers to understand the philosophy and rationale behind different types of syllabuses so that they are able to choose the most appropriate syllabus design and teaching style for students. The selected syllabus design or teaching style in this study to explore its different dimensions is the cyclical syllabus.

#### **1.5. Limitations of the Study**

Although there are lots of language teachers who are servants of course books and their teaching style is exactly a mirror of the books' syllabus design, some other teachers prefer to follow their own teaching style. The main concern of this study is to get an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of those teachers who have experienced teaching course books designed cyclically; no matter teachers in public schools or language institutes. Looking for teachers' perceptions on cyclically designed course books led the researcher to ask language teachers who have had experiences of teaching such sort of course books to express their ideas in this regard. Since any language institute has its own teaching style and there is also competition among different language institutes, the authorities of any language institute were reluctant to talk about their policies in teaching foreign languages. So, getting

accessed to the teachers of language institutes who have taught cyclically designed course books was pretty problematic for the researcher.

### **1.6. Delimitations of the Study**

To delimit some limitations of the study, the researcher interviewed only public school teachers who were willing to share their ideas with the researcher. The researcher narrowed down the sampling scope to accessible teachers who are from Shahrood. Since the perceptions on cyclically designed textbooks were restricted to the textbooks taught in public schools, the researcher tried to interview those teachers who have experienced teaching cyclically designed course books either in schools or anywhere else.





**Chapter Two:**  
**Review of the Related Literature**

## **2.1. Overview**

This chapter concerns the theoretical perspectives and empirical findings of the cyclical or spiral curriculum. In addition, different studies discussing different forms of spiral curriculum are also presented in this chapter. In other words, some scholars have considered specific types of repetition as some sorts of spiral curriculum whose studies are brought here, too.

## **2.2. Theoretical Perspectives**

### **2.2.1. Spiral Curriculum**

At the initial stage, it is better to differentiate between a linear syllabus and cyclical one. The linear syllabus attempts to extend learners' knowledge to see more learning in them through adding new blocks of information. "The language teaching process is usually "linear", i.e., new points are strung along in a line and each one is, so to speak, sucked dry before moving on to the next one. The pupil must make an enormous effort to assimilate each new point the first time it appears because when he turns the page he will go on to something else" (Howatt, 1974, 20).

However, a spiral curriculum is one in which the learners are challenged with the repetitive revisiting of topics, subjects or themes all over the development. A spiral curriculum is not simply the repetition of a topic taught, though it furthermore involves the deepening of it. This thought was termed former by Bruner (1960) for instance he perceived that teaching extremely structured bodies of knowledge identical mathematics, physical sciences, and even the field of history habitually followed spirally where a set of ideas or operations were introduced at the initial stage and formerly revisited and reconstructed in a more formal or operational way, at that point being associated by other knowledge. Through following such processes, the mastery of the materials raised up to a broader level of abstraction and comprehensiveness. Necessitates the continually revisiting and reexamining of the fundamental ideas, just the once identified, that understanding deepens over time (Bruner, 1960). This notion of revisiting and reexamining fundamental ideas over time is what has become known as a spiral curriculum. As time goes by, students return time and again to the basic concepts, building on them, making them more complex, and

understanding them more completely. Based on Bruner's (1960) claim, such a kind of curriculum is better to be structured everywhere the great issues, principles, and values that a society considers worthy of the repeated concern of its members.

According to Skehan (1996) and Howatt (1974) believe that language acquisition process would not benefit from a cyclical syllabus. Skehan (1996) believes that language acquisition process is much more of an organic, natural process that would benefit from a recycling syllabus, although you can hardly ever see cyclically designed syllabi and lessons. Similarly, Howatt (1974) believes that following cyclical approach to teaching grammar is preferable as it leads to the gradual acquisition of grammar that is in harmony with what is known about interlanguage development.

In a similar direction, Veselinovska, Gudeva, and Djokic (2011) believe that creating new circumstances leads to new learning experiences which educate more autonomous, self-conscious, creative, and active language learners. The spiral learning model aims at promoting a teaching and learning model. It is an active instructional model which has great goals such as the socio-cultural growth of values and learners' developers. Using active teaching models is considered teachers' skill and ability. It is the teacher's ability to perform these models and change instruction for growing setting.

Dowding (1993) and Kabara (1972) emphasized the role of the spiral curriculum as it leads to the reinforcement for what is already known as new knowledge and skills are introduced in subsequent lessons. The main reason of such reinforcement is the linkage between the lessons. They verified that spiral curriculum pays attention to the sequence of topics and can be applied to all courses.

Furthermore, some features of the spiral curriculum were introduced by Harden (1999). The first feature is that topics, themes, and subjects are revisited on a number of occasions during a course. The second feature is that the topics visited are addressed in successive levels of difficulty. Fresh learning opportunities are provided by each return visit and finally lead to the final overall objectives. In addition, new knowledge or skill relating to the revisited theme or topic is built. The advanced and repetitive applications of previously covered areas result in increased proficiency. The third feature is the relatedness of new

information or skills to the learning in previous phases of the spiral. In other words, previous learning is a prerequisite for the later learning. The fourth and the last feature is the increase of the students' competence through each visit of the theme or topic until the final overall objectives are achieved.

### **2.2.2. Task Recycling as One Form of Spiral Curriculum**

As one type of spiral syllabus, Helgesen (2003) suggested ways to implement task recycling in the classroom to expand our teaching repertoire to present a rationale for task recycling. He believes that task recycling is a useful tool in the classroom and can be implemented both by adapting textbook tasks and through the use of fluency frames. He argues that task recycling can help language learners work on their fluency and accuracy.

Recalling or recycling the previously covered materials is further strengthened if an item is encountered in different, novel contexts each time it is practiced, a process is known as differential or variable encoding. Sometimes referred to as “secondary” rehearsal, it contrasts with “primary” rehearsal, which is another term for simple rote repetition. Variable encoding tends to increase the number of available retrieval routes for an item (Elmes & Bjork, 1975).

Similarly, recycling approach leads to metacognition improvement of the students as they are able to see the same task in different contexts and from different angles. So, the frequent use of a particular theme or topic in varied lexical settings should be involved in the training system rather than a merely frequent use of that particular theme or topic (McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996).

Additionally, a technique used by Levy and Kennedy (2004) that called Stimulated Reflection and defined a task-cycling pedagogy for language learning. The objective of presented approach was developing a balance between attention to fluency and meaning, and form and accuracy. The believed that this technique is the most suitable if students get used to task-cycling.

In a particular sense, Martin (1978) stated that grammar can be spiraled by recycling grammatical constructions so as to provide repeated practice in various contexts. In addition, two major classes of items can be given a spiral treatment. The first one is the class which is too complex, either syntactically or semantically or both, for easy assimilation, such as the conditionals and the modal auxiliaries. The second class consists of the integration of syntactic rules and semantic concepts, such as the reporting of speech acts.

Masters and Gibbs (2007) stated that students are somewhat aware of the spiral curriculum. Although students do not know the rationale behind the educational value of the spiral, they often review the previous online material in order to build knowledge in the spiral. Thus, retaining the previously learned material is aligned with principals of the spiral curriculum and it brings considerable benefits to the students, to the extent that it serves as a confirmation of the spiral curriculum's success.

Therefore, retaining previously covered materials is the main key to benefiting from the spiral curriculum. To this end, different kinds of repetition practice which lead to better maintenance of previously taught themes or topics and also play a role in the spiral curriculum would be discussed.

### **2.2.3. Repetition as another Form of Spiral Curriculum**

Brown (2000) specifies the differences between the pedagogical value of planning, repeating, and recycling activities in the language classroom. He argues that planning aims at fostering more complex language use and greater fluency and accuracy. Repetition is effective in promoting greater language fluency and larger active vocabularies. Giving chance to students repeat an activity and also giving them more chances to succeed and excel. Reutilizing of well-planned (teacher and student) activities is a good thing for a determinate set of class task types that can be familiar to various levels and language points and it is important understand the difference between doing the exact activity twice and doing a similar activity repeatedly.

Specifying the role of revisiting and repetition of themes or topics, Skehan (1998) claimed that L2 learners do not make progress merely by the accumulation of memorized features without explicit instruction and that is repeated practice of task which leads them to

analyze memorized features. In task repetition, the first time that a task is performed is called pre-task activity, which is preparation for the further performances (Ellis, 2005).

According to Bygate and Samuda (2005), task repetition requires two phases. The first phase concerns organizing the cognitive content of the task and producing “an experientially derived multi-level schema to support subsequent linguistic work” (p.45). In the second phase, the performance of the learners is built upon the previous one.

In addition, from the Schmidt, McKnight, and Raizen’s (1996) point of view, it is highly probable that spiral approach in curriculum degenerates into mere repetition; However, its potential to bring students to higher levels of abstraction and deeper levels of understanding, particularly in science education still remains in force (DeBoer, 1991).

Moreover, James (1899) believes that “the same thing recurring on different days, in different contexts, read, recited on, referred to again and again, related to other things and reviewed, gets well-wrought into the mental structure. This is the reason why you should enforce on your pupils habits of continuous application” (p. 129).

Craik and Watkins (1973) argue that it is necessary to distinguish between primary rehearsal and secondary rehearsal. In primary rehearsal as a maintenance operation a set of items are repeated an a cycle; in contrast, secondary rehearsal as a constructive, elaborative process involves various mnemonic activities by means of which items within the set being rehearsed are associated or integrated. Increasing the amount of primary rehearsal has little, if any, effect on long-term recall; on the other hand, long-term recall benefits substantially from increases in the amount of secondary rehearsal. Massed repetitions tend to result in a primary rehearsal of the second presentation, whereas spaced repetitions tend to yield secondary rehearsal of the second presentation.

Additionally, Bygate (2001) and Helgesen (2003) believe that repeating a specific task or activity by the learners improves their conceptualization and articulation. Bygate (2001) suggests that repeating language tasks leads to accuracy and fluency of the learners. On the other words, when learners redo specific activities, they are clear about what they want to say, and they say it better. In addition, when the new versions of a task are done within the same framework, learners can easily deal with the task variations.

Although, DeKeyser (1997) claimed that repeated practice of rules with explicit rule instruction leads to the effective automatization of rules of oral fluency and the development of highly specific skills, he did not specify what kinds of repetition play(or plays) effective role in the spiral curriculum.

Regarding the effects of task repetition on the acquisition, there are different attitudes and beliefs towards it. For example, Sheppard (2006) believes that learners need to receive feedback on the initial performance of a task otherwise task repetition cannot have significant effect on their acquisition. Or, Bygate (2001) hypothesizes that different types of massed repetition practice such as repeating the same task or the same task with a slight change is required for acquisition to take place. While, Thornbury (2002) claims that students remember words which are repeated at least seven times over a spaced interval.

Baddeley (1990) and Nation (2001) characterize massed repetition as spending an uninterrupted period of time rehearsing or studying material that one wishes to learn and remember. Such as, studying a vocabulary list for 30 minutes but then again with no later reviews would be considered massed repetition study. Spaced repetition includes spreading out review sessions completed an extended period of time with increasingly lengthy intervals between for each review session.

According to one prominent theory, repeating an item potentially helps the learners remind its prior occurrence, which prompts retrieving the previous presentation of the item, a process that enhances memory (Wahlheim, Maddox, & Jacoby, 2014). Massed repetition eliminates the retrieval process—there is no need to retrieve from memory because the same item was just presented.

Jacoby (1978) linked the encoding process to solving a problem and assumed that the effect of repetition is related to the students' ability in retrieving the information of the first presentation by engaging in the second presentation. If the repetitions are massed, the students need not fully process the second presentation. So, they are not engaged in the encoding activity which requires producing high memory. In contrast, as the spacing between repetitions increases, retrieval of the first presentation will become more difficult, and

learners will be more likely to resolve the problem (i.e., engage in full encoding processes), thereby producing better memory for the repeated information.

Similarly, Carroll (1973) states that mere repetition of an item does not produce improved recall. If practice is distributed. If there is extraneous material intervening between the rehearsals of an item, retention is better than if the item has been practiced sequentially. Retrieving an item from intermediate memory after the mind has been occupied with other matters results in transferring the item to long-term memory. In addition, Baddeley and Longman (1978) argue that a potentially more powerful manipulation could be achieved by spacing practice repetitions across days rather than only within days.

In a same direction, Underwood (1970) believes that simple repetition or even review of grammar points in their original contexts will not contribute significantly to learning. As a matter of fact, there is some evidence that massed practice of grammar points leads to the inattention on the part of the students and consequently, the processing mechanism of the students is turned off.

Furthermore, spaced practice promotes not only accurate recall of multiplication facts in children but also faster retrieval of target responses (Rickard, Lau, & Pashler, 2008). Also, possessing adequate prior knowledge can facilitate subsequent learning and comprehension (Mayer, 1977). In short, the spaced practice can improve students' memory for essential facts and concepts, which in turn facilitates more complex learning and problem-solving.

Another theory emphasized the effectiveness of the spaced repetition was proposed by Glenberg (1979). With spaced repetitions, the context that gets encoded in memory with each presentation of an item is likely to be more variable (compared with massed repetitions that are close together in time and context); the variable contexts that are stored in memory then serve as more effective cues for subsequent retrieval of the item (Glenberg, 1979).

Furthermore, contextual information is stored automatically as the spacing between repetitions increases (Greene, 1989). Different contextual information becomes more likely to be stored as a result of each presentation. As a consequence, more various contextual information is supposed to be encoded automatically for spaced repetitions than for massed repetitions. This runs a retrieval benefit for spaced repetitions in free recall which is supposed



to depend heavily on contextual cues. On the other hand, the encoding of different contextual information does not facilitate recognition which does not depend heavily on contextual cues.

Besides, the spacing effect would result in better performance in learning tasks if the spacing of repetitions is distributed, as opposed to massed spacing. Consequently, it has been proposed that the optimum inter-repetition intervals used in learning are the longest intervals that do not result in forgetting (Bahrick & Phelps, 1987).

As same as previous studies, Bjork (1970) assumes that spaced practice increases either the amount of consolidation or rehearsal devoted to the item, or increases the independence of the encoding processes during the first and second presentations of the item and, hence, increases the average number of encodings.

### **2.3. Empirical Findings**

Veladat and Mohammadi (2011) tested spiral learning teaching method to show the significant difference in learning performance of second grade elementary school students in a biology course taught by a spiral learning teaching method in comparison with traditional methods. The results showed the significant difference of the spiral method in increasing the students' learning and the durability of that learning, in second grade students of the elementary school in a given biology course. The spiral is an offer for teachers and educators to increase the learning quality of students as the human investment for the future.

As an effective way of benefiting from the spiral curriculum, Kang (2016) addressed how the available instructional time might be optimally utilized via the scheduling of review or practice. Hundreds of studies in cognitive and educational psychology have demonstrated that spacing out repeated encounters with the material over time produces superior long-term learning, compared with repetitions that are massed together. Spaced review or practice enhances diverse forms of learning, including memory, problem-solving, and generalization to new situations. Spaced practice is a feasible and cost-effective way to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of learning, and has tremendous potential to improve educational outcomes.

Furthermore, Lynch and Maclean (2000) compared the performances of learners by providing them with opportunities for recycling communicative content as they repeated complex tasks. The authors found that the learners benefited from the poster carousel task which led to linguistic changes in their output and different areas of their interlanguage, especially the vocabulary area, were developed, too.

Similarly, Baleghizadeh and Asadi (2013) aimed at scrutinizing the effects of task repetition and task recycling on learners' fluency, accuracy, and level of complexity. Results indicated that the only measure on which task recycling did have a viable impact was fluency in individual performances and overall performance, but not the pair work. Finally, the results revealed a significant difference between task repetition and task recycling on how they influenced oral performance. It was concluded that task repetition outweighed task recycling in the students' proficiency improvement.

Moreover, Mukundan and Aziz (2009) attempted to analyze the load, distribution, and recycling efficiency of the 2000 high-frequency words in the textbooks. The results showed that 71.9 percent of the words in the list (1438) were repeated at least seven times in the entire textbooks, 21.2 percent of the words (423 words) were recycled less than seven times, while 6.9 percent of the words (139 words) were not found in any of the textbooks.

In the same manner, Mojavezi (2013) aimed to investigate the way task repetition correlates with language proficiency and the differential effects that task repetition might have on the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of L2 learners with different levels of proficiency. Results revealed that, compared to the participants with lower L2 proficiency, participants with higher levels of L2 proficiency produced more complex, accurate, and fluent speech on the second encounter with the same task.

With common qualities, Ahmadian and Tavakoli (2011) reported the positive effect of task repetition on the complexity and fluency of L2 speech and, more recently, Hawkes (2012) found that task repetition could be used as a pedagogical tool to direct L2 learners' attention towards form.

Following the similar direction, Takimoto (2012) tested the relative effectiveness of repeating the same task and the same type of task on recognizing and producing English by

EFL learners. The results showed that the learners performed better by practicing the same task repetition than the same type of task repetition. Through the identical task repetition, the learners built pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connections which improved their L2 pragmatic proficiency. Overall, both types of repetition helped learners to recycle the already acquired materials.

Correspondingly, Gass et al. (1999) attempted to find the effects of task repetition on linguistic output. They found some evidence that task repetition resulted in improvement in overall proficiency, selected morphosyntax, and lexical sophistication.

To narrow down the effectiveness of recycling and repetition as specific types of spiral curriculum, Gardon (1925) asked college students to learn the Athenian Oath in order to illustrate a specific instance of such kind of curriculum. Students heard the oath read in different ways. One group of students heard the oath read 6 times in a row; another group heard the oath in 3 days interval which means 3 times on 1 day and 3 more times 3 days later. The first group could recall the oath read immediately after hearing the oath for the sixth time. On the immediate test, the first group that received massed repetition and heard the oath 6 times recalled more than the group that received spaced repetition. But on the delayed test that was given 4 weeks later, the second group or spaced group outperformed the massed group. The result showed that massed practice was more effective than spaced practice in the short term. On the other hand, spaced practice produces durable long term learning.

In a similar path, Reynolds and Glaser (1984) aimed at testing the effect of spaced review upon retention of meaningful material. The consistent superiority of the group followed spaced review over the other group in retention of the experimental material, even with the length of the forgetting interval between last practice and testing equated, confirmed that the spacing of review sequences has a facilitating effect upon retention of material learned in a programmed sequence.

An Exact repetition of a task was the focus of a study by Bygate (1996) which analyzed two performances by one subject who was shown a video extract and then asked to retell the story. The task was repeated without warning three days later. Bygate (1996) found that this form of repetition led to some improvement in fluency and accuracy, and a marked

improvement in the repertoire – for example, a 75 percent increase in subordinate clauses. He argued that these findings supported the hypothesis that during the initial task the learner was concerned primarily with the heuristic planning of the content, and was under pressure of time when seeking the linguistic resources to communicate it. On the second attempt, the content of the task was more familiar, she was more concerned with giving attention to the linguistic formulation. Bygate (1996) also noted the possible pedagogic value of manipulating task variables, such as repeating the task with different partners: “different people will do tasks in different ways and a variety of partners could provide different learning opportunities” (Bygate, 1996, 145).

In addition, studies in vocabulary learning (Bloom & Shuell, 1981) have confirmed that the students following the spaced repetition method would have much better retention of the words than the other student who followed the massed repetition method, even though the total amount of time on task was equal for each learner. This phenomenon is based on the principle that periodic reviews keep new information from being forgotten. With each review, the information is strengthened in the memory (Baddeley, 1990).

Likewise, Miles and Kwon (2008) examined benefits of using CALL vocabulary programs to provide systematic word recycling. For both receptive and productive use of vocabulary, students using the CALL vocabulary system with the benefits of spaced repetition presentation far out-performed groups which followed more conventional methods of study.

Dempster (1987) has also demonstrated that when there is a time gap between practice sessions, known as ‘distributed’ practice, long-term memory for studied materials tends to be better than when practice is ‘clustered’ or ‘massed’; that is when little or no time intervenes between sessions

Pimsleur (1967) developed a repetition schedule that would potentially maximize the effects of spaced repetition as well. This is based on the tested principle that most forgetting occurs early on, and thus the need for review sessions is greatest over the first few days. However, with each review, the learning and memory of the word gets stronger and thus the intervals between review sessions can get progressively longer.

Similarly, Toppino, Kasserman, and Mracek (1991) examined spaced-repetition effects in recognition memory from a developmental perspective. The findings indicated that children from the ages of 4 to approximately 9 years old manifest a spaced-repetition effect in recognition. Most importantly, preschoolers' recognition showed a relatively large monotonic increase as a function of spacing, leaving little doubt that these children exhibit an effect of spacing repetitions. To the extent that sophisticated strategic processing can augment more basic processes in producing a spaced-repetition effect, the effect might be expected to become greater with increasing age.

Additionally, Ausubel and Youssef (1965) were concerned with the effect of spaced repetition on the meaningful retention of connected discourse. To this end, they provided another opportunity for the learners to interact with the material and to relate the potential meanings it embodies to their structures of knowledge. The learners had another opportunity to acquire meanings potential in the material that they partially or completely missed on the first trial, as well as to consolidate meanings initially established at that time.

Like the previous studies, across 254 studies comparing massed versus spaced practice on later memory for verbal information (e.g., words, sentences, facts, passages), spaced practice dominated massed practice in recall performance (Cepeda et al., 2006). Pyle (1913) reported a study in which the results were clearly in favor of the group in which practice was distributed over more days, too.

Similarly, Ebbinghaus (1864) found that learning and memory are significantly improved when repeated trials are distributed over time (spaced repetitions) compared to massed repetitions. In addition, he declared that such phenomenon known as the spacing effect (SE) has been shown to enhance learning and memory with verbal and non-verbal materials across different age groups and in different memory paradigms (e.g., recognition, recall).

In a similar direction, Hillary et al. (2003) aimed at examining whether persons with moderate and severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) would benefit from the spaced effect (SE). The study was designed to determine whether spacing of repetitions effects learning and memory of after moderate and severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) compared to non-spaced

presentations. The results of the investigation clearly illustrated that persons with moderate to severe TBI can significantly improve their memory performance by altering the manner in which learning takes place. Employing the spacing effect (SE) during learning can significantly improve subsequent recall and recognition performance in persons with TBI.

Exactly same as the above findings, the purpose of the experimental study of Shea et.al (2000) was to determine the impact of spacing practice sessions across days relative to within days. The results indicated that spacing practice sessions across relatively long intervals (days) resulted in enhanced performance relative to spacing practice sessions across much shorter intervals. More importantly, the advantage of spacing practice across days was also significant on the retention test.

#### **2.4. Summary of the Empirical Findings**

Some scholars like Veladat and Mohammadi (2011) concerned with the effectiveness of applying the spiral method in EFL contexts. With a similar concern, some other scholars tested different aspects of spiral curriculum such as recycling, reviewing, and repetition of the already taught materials to invoke relative conditions to teach new language points (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; Baleghizadeh & Asadi, 2013; Gass et al., 1999; Kang, 2016; Lynch & Maclean, 2000; Mojavezi, 2013; Mukundan & Aziz, 2009; Takimoto, 2012). To narrow down such aspects, some researchers emphasized and proved the effectiveness of a specific type of review and repetition, spaced practice, over another type, massed practice (Ausubel & Youssef, 1965; Bloom & Shuell, 1981; Bygate, 1996; Cepeda et al., 2006; Dempster, 1987; Ebbinghaus, 1885; Gordon, 1925; Pimsleur, 1967; Pyle, 1913; Reynolds & Glaser, 1984; Shea et.al, 2000; Toppino, Kasserman, & Mracek, 1991).

Having reviewed the above studies helped the researcher to find the gap between the purpose of the current study and the findings of the reviewed studies. Although all of the above studies have discussed the characteristics and effectiveness of the spiral curriculum in general and its different forms such as recycling and repetition in particular, none of them concerned teachers' perceptions on employing spiral curriculum in EFL contexts. Since EFL teachers are the main member in charge of employing the spiral curriculum in the classroom,

so their opinions and perceptions regarding such approach are of high importance which has not been investigated by any researcher.





# **Chapter Three:**

# **Methodology**

### **3.1. Overview**

This chapter regards some explanations about research methodology. Grounded theory was used to help the researcher in different phases such as sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, and finally generating theory. At the initial stage, different attitudes and ideas towards grounded theory methodology have been presented in order to help the researcher to get aware of how she can accomplish her study based on the rules of such methodology.

### **3.2. Research Method**

Grounded theory is a research methodology that is primarily associated with qualitative research. It was first proposed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. According to its founders, an innovative methodology is constituted by grounded theory, facilitating ‘the discovery of theory from data’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1). This implies that in grounded theory the researcher is not supposed to test hypotheses taken from existing theoretical frameworks, but rather develops a new theory grounded in empirical data collected in the field.

Accordingly, Strauss and Corbin (1998) have presented their own criteria for judging the quality of a GT study. The first set of seven criteria is designed to explain the detailed procedures that were followed in implementing the study and carrying out the analysis in particular. These include (a) the original sample selection basis, (b) core categories that appeared in the first stage of data analysis, (c) indicators that purposed core categories, (d) the ways that theoretical sampling is directed by these categories, (e) how the relationships among categories are hypothesized, (f) the ways of scrutinizing and modifying the hypothesized relationships and modified, and (g) how the core category is selected. These criteria obviate the importance of theoretical sampling in the GT approach, in that emerging categories from early analysis clearly guide the investigation and unification of subsequent data. Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) second set of eight criteria focuses on refining the theoretical ideas is as follows:

- (a) How concepts were derived and labeled, with clear indication that they are grounded in the actual data
- (b) What the systematic linkages are among concepts
- (c) How well the categories are developed with many properties and dimensions and conceptually related
- (d) How well variation is incorporated into the theory
- (e) How well the conditions such as contextual factors that cause variation are built into the study and explained
- (f) Whether process in the phenomenon of interest has been incorporated into the theory
- (g) Whether the theoretical findings are significant to contribute new knowledge or produce guidelines for action
- (h) Whether the theory stands up to continued examination and becomes part of the scholarly discourse in its relevant arena.

Three types of grounded theory consist of classic grounded theory, reformulated grounded theory and constructivist grounded theory. Glaser is the organizer of a branch of grounded theory which is regarded as “classic grounded theory” (Hallberg, 2006). The grounded theory is a methodology that needs the high consideration of researchers to analyze the concepts and ideas by constant comparison and conceptualization (Glaser, 2002). He also believed that the GT is the conclusion of developing conceptual categories and their extents incorporated into hypotheses resulting in a multivariate theory. Three criteria for increasing the quality of the grounded theory studies have proposed by Glaser (1978): (a) Fit and relevance, which means the level of relationships between categories and its relevant data, (b) Workability which is the integration of categories into the emerging core category, and (c) Modifiability which is defined as incorporation of the concepts into the theory using constant comparative method.

A book that published by Strauss and Corbin (1990), under the title of “Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and techniques” was the beginning of

“reformulated grounded theory”. They recommended a new method in grounded theory methodology which was supplementary to Glaserian Classic GT. The perspective of these two authors about grounded theory is more pragmatic than Glaser’s “classic GT”, and the positivist perspective of Glaserian is rejected and not included in the methodology anymore (Hallberg, 2006). In fact, doing analysis is making interpretations (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 59). Furthermore, they believe that reality can always be interpreted, instead of fully known.

A constructivist model of the grounded theory, has presented by Charmaz (1995, 2000, 2006) which can be seen as an approach between positivism and postmodernism. Constructivism accepts that there are multiple social realities simultaneously before the one and only “real reality”. In a constructivist grounded theory, it is worried that data is created through an on-going interaction between researcher and participant. It is also supposed that action and meaning are dialectical; meaning shapes action and action affects meaning. The researcher takes a reflexive stance and studies how, and sometimes why, participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz claims that grounded theory should focus on meaning, action, and process in the studied social context. He moreover differentiates between an objectivist and a constructivist view of grounded theory. He argues that objectivist grounded theory, signified by Glaser’s classic mode of grounded theory, starts out with the conception that data represent facts nearby the social reality and that meaning is essential in the data, and that the researcher’s aim is to discover this meaning. The process of grounded theory explained as follows according to Charmaz and Henwood (2008): We gather data, compare them, continue open to all likely theoretical understanding of the data, and develop tentative interpretations of these data through our codes and nascent categories. At that time we turn back to the field and gather more data to check and improve our categories (p. 271).

Constructivist grounded theory has some characteristics which is suitable for qualitative studies to be reliable and valid. A number of grounded theories’ characteristics as follows has been proposed by Charmaz (1995): (1) The collection and analysis of data are simultaneous; such as the researcher collects data, he should analyze it to collect more data, (2) The generation of analytic codes and categories is from the data and not from pre-existing

concepts; the theory should be generated from the raw data and not from the literature, (3) It helps the researchers to comprehend the underlying social processes in the data; this is obliging in exploring social phenomenon, (4) The intellectual groupings are constructed inductively; groupings are generated founded on experience and knowledge of researchers (5) Emerging the categories by theoretical sampling, (6) Analytical notes are written between coding and writing stage, and (7) Categories are combined into the theoretical framework.

The coding in grounded theory is described by Walker and Myrick (2006) as “the primary intervention into the data” (p. 550). For Jeon (2004), “coding is the defining aspect of analysis within the grounded theory method and is a means by which the quality of emerging theory can be determined” (p. 253). Furthermore, Strauss and Corbin (1998) define coding as “the analytic processes through which data are fractured, conceptualized, and integrated to form theory” (p. 3). The literature on grounded theory shows that the data have to be analyzed and coded to generate categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Categories can be described as “a type of concept, usually used for a higher level of abstraction” (Glaser, 1992, p. 38), or as “concepts, derived from data that stand for phenomena” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 114). Bryman (2008) defines a category as “a concept that has been elaborated so that it is regarded as representing real-world phenomena” (p. 544).

Conceptualization is the core category of Grounded Theory. The conceptual license that GT offers is that the researcher can use his or her own concepts generated from the data instead of using the prepared concepts of others (Glaser, 2002). According to Glaser (2002), the two most important properties of conceptualization for generating GT are that concepts are abstract of time, place, and people, and that concepts have the capacity to be persisted over time. GT generates conceptual hypotheses that are applied to any relevant time, place, and people with the emergent fit and then is modified by constant comparison with new data as it explains what behavior obtains in a real area.

Glaser (1978) proposed Theoretical Sensitivity through which he argued that many concepts are "in vivo" concepts; that is, they come from the words of the participants in the substantive area. The participants usually just give concepts based on one incident or even a groundless idea. They may have many concepts that do not fit or work. GT discovers which

"in vivo" concepts do fit, work, and are relevant. It is important in a grounded study to remain theoretically sensitive and the researcher must not enter the research process with the preconceived notions of what she or he may find. Interview questions should be evolved from the data throughout the course of the study on the basis of ongoing comparative analysis of the participants' view. Comparisons are essential in identifying and categorizing concepts in this method. In order to make these necessary comparisons, the researcher must avoid personal knowledge, professional knowledge, and the technical literature in the field (Strauss & Corbin, 1990.). Strauss and Corbin (1990) define theoretical sensitivity as the ability to recognize what is important in data and to give it meaning, and they include personal experience as the source of this theoretical sensitivity.

This study aims at employing grounded theory methodology to build its own theory in the intended field. Since, Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Razavieh (2010) believe that the goal of this methodology "is to inductively build a theory about a practice or phenomenon using interviews and observation as the primary data collection tools" (p. 463), this study also attempts to build a theory about the EFL teachers' perception on employing spiral syllabus. Punch (2001) refers to grounded theory as a research strategy aimed at generating theory from data. Wiersma and Jurs (2005) emphasize that "if a theory develops based on the data, we have "grounded theory," that is, a theory grounded in the data rather than based on some a priori constructed ideas, notions, or system" (p. 14).

Therefore, this study obeys the proposed procedures of grounded theory methodology in terms of sampling procedure, data collection, and data analysis in order to develop its own theory based on the intended topic. Based on the presented rules of grounded theory methodology, the researcher ignores her own and others' ideas and notions in terms of applying spiral syllabus in EFL classrooms. For example, using interviews and observation are the two main selected ways of gathering data as supported by Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Razavieh (2010) who stated that "Grounded theory has its roots in sociology.

### **3.3. Sampling Procedure and Participants**

Grounded theory uses non-probability sampling, where the sample numbers or data sources are unknown at the starting point of the study (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss

& Corbin 1990). In accordance with the prescription of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1998), the sampling then becomes theoretical, rather than purposive, in that the sampling is determined by the emerging theory.

Initially, the researcher will go to the most obvious places and the most likely informants in search of information. However, as concepts are identified and the theory starts to develop, further individuals, situations and places may need to be incorporated in order to strengthen the findings. This is known as 'theoretical sampling' which is "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses the data and decides what data to collect next and where to find it, in order to develop the theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is 'controlled' by the emerging theory" (Glaser, 1978 p.36).

### **3.3.1. Theoretical Sampling**

Sampling procedure based on grounded theory methodology is theoretical sampling. A definition of theoretical sampling was proposed by Glaser (1978) as "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (p. 36).

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008) when researchers are doing theoretical sampling they have to take one step at a time beginning with cycles of data gathering and analysis. For Punch (2001) the initial stage is for researchers to collect a small set of data "guided by the initial research questions" (p. 167). This set of data is analyzed before another set of data is collected with the guidance of the emerging directions coming from that initial analysis. This cycle of alternation between data collection and analysis must be continued and stopped only when there is evidence of theoretical saturation. Punch (2001) explains that sampling procedure is theoretically saturated when additional data does not show any new information and the already existing information are repeated. Corbin and Strauss (2008) stress that in doing theoretical sampling, researchers should ensure that the research is guided by analysis. This process requires researchers "to ask questions and then look to the best source of data to find the answers to the questions" (p. 146).

In addition to theoretical sampling, a fundamental feature of grounded theory is the application of the 'constant' comparative method (Spiggle, 1994). As the name implies, this involves comparing like with like, to look for emerging patterns and themes. "Comparison explores differences and similarities across incidents within the data currently collected and provides guidelines for collecting additional data..... Analysis explicitly compares each incident in the data with other incidents appearing to belong to the same category, exploring their similarities and differences" (p. 493). This process facilitates the identification of concepts. Concepts are a progression from merely describing what is happening in the data, which is a feature of open coding, to explaining the relationship between and across incidents. This requires a different, more sophisticated, coding technique which is commonly referred to as 'axial coding' and involves the process of abstraction onto a theoretical level (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### **3.4. Data Collection**

Strauss and Corbin (1998) insisted on the importance of listening to the voice of participants as a source of data collection. Though, semi-structured, in-depth interviews and focus groups are the best qualitative techniques of data collection in grounded theory. Various types of data collection including interviews, field notes, and information in reports and records as well as other sources for data collection such as observations, materials, and interactions counts by Charmaz (2014).

Although most of GT researchers use interviewing as the primary data collection method, unfortunately so little has been written about interviewing techniques and decisions in GT (Creswell, 1998). According to Patton (2002), there are wide variations in the intent and structure of interviews. For instance, the approach to interviewing in the GT literature appears to use at least some degree of structure in organizing and presenting questions to participants but allows them to tell their stories largely in their own words as they react to mostly open-ended questions presented in a flexible interviewing style on the part of the researcher and in the established context of the study. Strauss and Corbin (1998) have suggested a funnel-like approach, moving from broader to more specific questions during the course of the interview. Rennie (1998) agrees with this idea and applies it to studies involving



repeated interviews with participants by recommending increasingly directive questions based on an emerging theory being verified by the researchers.

According to Patton (2002), a qualitative interview should be open-ended, neutral, sensitive, and clear to the interviewee. In-depth qualitative interviews are generally flexible and exploratory in nature. For example, the researcher adjusts later questions depending on how the interviewee answers earlier questions, to clarify the responses, to follow promising new lines of inquiry, or to probe for more detail. The interview style is unstructured and conversational, and the questions are generally open-ended and designed to elicit detailed, concrete stories about the subject's experiences (Whyte, 1982). The purpose of such interviews is not to identify objective truth or to conclusively test hypotheses but to help the researcher understand the experiences of the respondents.

The primary advantages of qualitative interviews are the flexibility they offer and the rich, detailed data they can provide. However, there are two main disadvantages associated with qualitative interviewing (Fontana & Frey, 1994). First, due to the large amount of time and effort they involve, qualitative interviewers cannot usually study a very large sample of people and thus cannot be generalized to other similar populations. Making a claim that the findings of such a study can be generalized is not appropriate to, nor the desired outcome of, qualitative research.

Memo writing is known as another type of data collection in qualitative studies. Memo writing on the part of the researcher occurs continually throughout the research process and provides a record of conceptual, procedural, and analytic questions and decisions (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Memo writing captures the evolving ideas, assumptions, hunches, uncertainties, insights, feelings, and choices the researcher makes as a study is implemented and as a theory is developed, providing a means for clarifying the interpretive, constructive processes of the researcher. Memos become part of the data record and are incorporated into the analytic procedures as well as into the final products resulting from the inquiry (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Memos are notes written immediately after data collection as a means of documenting the impressions of the researcher and describing the situation. These are vital as they provide a bank of ideas which can be revisited in order to

map out the emerging theory. Essentially, memos are ideas which have been noted during the data collection process which help to redirect the researcher at a later date (Goulding, 2002).

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

According to Glaser (1978), after transcribing the interviews and recording the memos the next stage is to analyze the data line by line looking for codes in each sentence. At this stage, the coding is unfocused and 'open'. Coding is the process of analyzing data. At this point, hundreds of codes may be identified by the researcher. These codes could have potential meaning and relevance. However, as a result of constant comparison of subsequent data, these are reduced and grouped into meaningful categories.

The building blocks of theory are codes. It begins by fracturing the data into analytical pieces which can then be raised to a conceptual level. According to O'Callaghan (1996) questions that need to be constantly addressed include:

- “What is happening in this data?
- What is the basic socio-psychological problem?
- What accounts for it?
- What patterns are occurring here?” (p.25)

According to Goulding (2002), as the data are collected they should be analyzed simultaneously by looking for all possible interpretations. This involves utilizing particular coding procedures which normally begins with open coding. Open coding is the process of breaking down the data into distinct units of meaning. As a rule, this starts with a full transcription of an interview, after which the text is analyzed line by line in an attempt to identify key words or phrases which connect the participant's account to the experience under investigation. Spiggle (1994) stated that early concepts must be developed in this process and the development of the concept consists of "identifying a chunk or unit of data (a passage of text of any length) as belonging to, representing, or being an example of some more general

phenomenon" (p. 493). In addition to open coding, it is important to incorporate the use of memos.

Even though, the three types of coding (open, axial, selective) are discussed sequentially in most GT accounts, they essentially follow in a repetitive manner allowing to a method of continuous comparison, anywhere to each new piece of data is compared to existing data to make coherent categories of meaning (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). When researchers over and over again come across difficulties with GTM, they start to code their materials. Understandably, they want to know the precise steps to follow. Three phases of data analysis namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding specified by Strauss and Corbin (1998).

**Open coding:** The first level of coding is open coding, in which transcribed data are broken down into units of meaning (concepts), and then labeled with words close to those of the participant, and interrogated for alternative interpretations, conditions surrounding the meaning, and gaps left unfilled. Glaser (1978) characterized open coding as “running the data open” (p. 56), whereas Strauss and Corbin (1998) described it as a procedure where “the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena reflected in the data” (p. 62).

The codes or units of meaning are compared to other coded units of meaning, the concepts gradually being grouped together into categories that encompass those concepts. As additional data are gathered, coded concepts continue to be compared to existing data and categorized. The categories constantly undergo modification to incorporate new information and are continually examined for coherence and explanatory capacity (Fassinger, 2005).

**Axial coding:** According to Strauss (1987), axial coding, consists of “intense analysis done around one category [i.e., variable] at a time, in terms of paradigm items (conditions, consequences, and so forth)” (p. 32). The phrase “paradigm items” was a conceptual device that Strauss (1987) said is “especially helpful to beginning analysts” and “part and parcel of the analyst’s thought processes.” Its function is to serve “as a reminder to code data for relevance to whatever phenomena are referenced by a given category,” with special attention to “conditions, interactions among actors, strategies and tactics,

consequences” (pp. 27–28). Subcategories also are categories, but they are categories that answer the questions of “when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences” around a focal category (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 125). Thus, axial coding puts the fractured data back together in the form of categories and their interrelationships which is the next step in generating theory. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), a constant comparison method is used, with four different kinds of comparisons: (a) comparing and relating subcategories to categories, (b) comparing categories to new data, (c) expanding the density and complexity of the categories by describing their properties and dimensions, and (d) exploring variations in the data and conceptualizing the categories and their relationships as necessary. Data collection and incorporation stop when categorical saturation is reached, that is when no new information is being discovered about the categories or their properties, when the categories are dense and complex enough to capture all of the variations in participants’ experiences, and when the relationships among categories have been specified satisfactorily (Fassinger, 2005).

**Selective coding:** The final stage of analysis in GT involves the creation of substantive and independent theory. This analytic stage begins with “selective” coding, in which a central or “core” category is selected that contains all of the other categories “an explanatory whole” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 146). A core “story” is generated, which is a brief narrative of the most important aspects of the data, subsuming all of the other categories and articulating their relationships to the core story. As in previous stages of analysis, the emerging theory is constantly compared to the data to ensure that it is grounded in participants’ experiences, and it also is compared to the existing literature to enrich understanding and explanatory power.

According to Bengtson et al. (2005), the difference between open coding and axial coding appears to be in the difference between a typology and a theory. In open coding, the researcher, for the most part, is developing variables. The variables may be very elaborate, but the interrelationship among them are still unexplored. In axial coding, the relationship between or among variables is explicitly examined. Axial coding is the phase at which GTM research begins to fulfill its theoretical promise if the development of theory is said to rest heavily though not entirely on explanation and if explanation is said to rest on empirically or

logically establishing how variables are interrelated (Bengtson, Acock, Allen, Dilworth-Anderson, & Klein, 2004).

### **3.6. The Study**

#### **3.6.1. Research Design**

The characteristics of grounded theory methodology helped the researcher to find it as an effective and useful method to fulfill her study. In this regard, building a theory is the ultimate goal of this study which has become a reality by following the proposed procedures of grounded theory. This study is a qualitative research founded on Strauss and Corbin's Grounded Theory methodology. The data is gathered through cyclical interviews. Data collection and data analysis follow simultaneously. The data analysis is based on a series of open, axial, and selective coding techniques to identify concepts and formerly to build the theory. "Constant comparison" is an extra process that used to compare the data that have already been collected and to emerge the new concepts. For interpreting the data, the analyzing process is used intuitively and subjectively by the researcher. Nevertheless, theoretical sampling and saturation is for controlling the sampling size, should be between 15 to 50 participants.

#### **3.6.2. Participants**

The participants of this study involve 15 Iranian EFL teachers of public schools who have employed cyclical or spiral approach in their classrooms in order to catch their perceptions in the field. The participants were male and female EFL teachers with the minimum experience of 5 years. Among the participants, 8 had B.A degree and 7 had M.A degree in language teaching. The aim of selecting those participants was to verify the validity of their perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages of spiral curriculum which was proved over the years.

In line with the guidelines of theoretical sampling, fifteen participants were selected to share their ideas and experiences about cyclical syllabus with the researcher. Table 1 presents the participants' characteristics.

Table 1. Participants' demographic information

Teacher Participants	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	Years of Teaching
T.P. 1	Female	27	B.A	Teacher	6
T.P. 2	Female	38	B.A	Teacher	11
T.P. 3	Female	30	B.A	Teacher	6
T.P. 4	Male	34	B.A	Teacher	12
T.P. 5	Male	26	M.A	Teacher	6
T.P. 6	Female	42	B.A	Teacher	21
T.P. 7	Female	29	M.A	Teacher	6
T.P. 8	Female	26	M.A	Teacher	5
T.P. 9	Female	31	M.A	Teacher	7
T.P. 10	Female	31	B.A	Teacher	5
T.P. 11	Female	24	M.A	Teacher	5
T.P. 12	Male	44	B.A	Teacher	17
T.P. 13	Female	25	M.A	Teacher	5
T.P. 14	Female	29	M.A	Teacher	9
T.P. 15	Female	40	B.A	Teacher	14

### 3.6.3. Data Collection

Based on the proposed ways of data collection in grounded theory methodology, the researcher started with an open-ended interview to gather initial data. The content of interviews were teachers' experiences and perceptions about employing cyclical syllabus in EFL classroom. As soon as collecting initial data, the researcher applied memo writing technique to record her ideas, assumptions, and feelings towards the teachers' expression. Then, further interviews were done to elaborate on the emerged concepts from the first interviews. In addition, the interviews of the further participants were not wholly based on open-ended questions like the interviews in the first phase. But rather, they were mostly based on the recorded concepts and the researchers' memo writing. In other word, each question

led to pose another question until there was no more new data. It is worth mentioning that the interviews were recorded with the participants' permission by assuring them that their names would certainly remain secret.

#### **3.6.4. Data Analysis**

The primary interviews which contained open-ended questions tried to elicit the participants' experiences and perceptions in the field. Then they were analyzed and initial codes emerged. Next, more interviews were recorded by using more specific questions with respect to the emerged codes. Besides interviews, memo writing was also applied to collect more data and then analyzed by the researcher to find more relative codes. Therefore, coding constitutes the most basic as well as the most fundamental process in grounded theory. Coding process was carried out line-by-line, sentence-by-sentence, paragraph-by-paragraph, page-by-page, section-by-section, and so on. The researcher tried to array the emerged concepts rather than just grouping them together. Two or three similar concepts were taken and the researcher thought of how they might be subsumed under a higher level heading means moving from one level of abstraction to another level of abstraction, while still remaining in the realm of concepts. Having identified the core categories and their subcategories, the ultimate theory was created in accordance with the core codes which concerned closely the implementation of cyclical approach in EFL classrooms by the teachers.

#### **3.6.5. Establishing Trustworthiness of the Findings**

To establish trustworthiness, the study benefited from member checking strategy. After transcribing the recorded interviews, the original transcripts were sent back to the participants to check whether their word match with what they intend or not. The researcher gave participants the opportunity to correct their wrong interpretations. When the initial codes and categories were extracted, the findings of the study was shared with the participants. Some categories were approved by the participants and a few categories were removed. As a result, the validity of the data analysis increased.

#### **3.6.6. Ethical Considerations**

Before anyone participates in a study, they should give their informed consent to the researchers in charge of the study. Giving informed consent involves more than just accepting to take part as the decision must be based on a full understanding of what is involved. As the major ethical issues in conducting research are informed consent, beneficence- do not harm, respect for anonymity and confidentiality, and respect for privacy, the researcher tried to consider the participants' ethical issues such as informing them about the objectives of the study and different processes of it. In addition, the participants were made sure that their real names were not supposed to be revealed throughout the research.



# **Chapter Four:**

# **Results**

## **4.1. Overview**

This chapter presents an abstraction and conceptualization of the participants' perspectives on the cyclical syllabus. Analysis revealed two categories: 1) advantages of the cyclical syllabus, 2) techniques to apply the cyclical syllabus. Internalizing, reducing tension and stress, increasing students' self-esteem, functioning as remedial teaching, and motivating were among the advantages of cyclical syllabus. Techniques which are suggested to be applied in terms of cyclical syllabus are techniques contributed to teaching reading cyclically and techniques contributed to teaching language items cyclically.

## **4.2. Advantages of Cyclical Syllabus**

The cyclical syllabus has been advocated by most of the interviewed teachers because of its advantages which have been brought as follows. Cyclical syllabus tries to expose students to a wide variety of ideas in different contexts through different language skills several times.

### **4.2.1. Internalizing**

Forgetting is very common among EFL students, especially when they do not use English language outside their classrooms. Language is limited to the classroom; so students need to apply some useful techniques so as not to forget what they have learned. Actually, teachers are first in charge of providing students with effective tools and strategies to help them reduce forgetting. Reviewing and reappearing the previously taught materials in the textbooks is one of the effective ways of internalizing the material. As one of the interviewed teachers said:

*Students are highly dependent on their textbooks and it is not possible for them to practice English out of the classroom. Hence, they're likely to forget their language knowledge very soon because they do not have any speaking and writing practice and also they surely make less use of watching movies and listening to audios. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to them because language is forgotten very soon if students do not review what they have already learned. (T.P. 11)*

Lack of social function has been considered as another way of resulting in forgetting the language. Recurring materials can prevent students' forgetting. In fact, language element may gradually be forgotten due to lack of exposure nature. The previously learned materials should reappear in their textbooks in different manifestations because of the absence of exposure outside the classroom. So, the school textbooks are one of the useful tools to reintroduce materials. If it does not happen in schools, students will forget what they have learned.

Some teachers appreciate cyclical syllabus to help students learning English language and retrieving the previously learned materials from long-term memory. However, they complain that textbook writers underestimate cyclicity in presenting important materials. One of the teachers stated her claim as follows:

*The textbooks of the seventh and eighth grades just focus on vocabularies. However, the vocabularies are not repeated as much as needed. The extent to which the vocabularies are reappeared in both the textbooks and workbooks does not lead students to learn them deeply and keep them in their long-term memory. The main reason is that the subjects are changed without containing any important vocabularies from the previous lesson. I think if the writers of such books include the previously presented vocabularies in the following lessons with different subjects, then students can have much gain in their learning. (T.P. 14)*

Forgetting the previously learned materials impedes language learners to have progress in their further levels of language learning. The next levels of language learning seemed to be difficult to learn by the students due to their lack of ability to retrieve what they have already gained in previous levels.

*Students constantly complain about the difficulty of the ninth grade textbooks. The book in this grade contains lots of grammatical points which are beyond their knowledge. Actually, since they cannot review what they have learned in the following lessons, they forget the grammars very soon and consequently, the lessons seemed to be difficult for them. (T.P. 9)*

Students who study English language in language institutes for at least six years claim that they have achieved their purpose. They believe in their language knowledge because they maintain what they have acquired is due to high rate of repetition and revision of language points during the six years. There is a difference between English textbooks in language institutes and the textbooks in schools. The former group presents language points cyclically but the later one linearly. That is the major difference between textbooks in language institutes and schools.

Practice makes perfect is one of the most applied statements by most of the language teachers. Since students repeat most of the language points through the cyclical syllabus, their practice in this way makes them be perfect in their field. As T.P. 5 said:

*The language points that are taught in the eighth grade are neither presented twice in the books of that grade nor in the books of ninth grade. So, it is clear that they are surely forgotten because they are taught linearly. On the other hand, when the language points are repeated for the students, their learning rate is increased and they become perfect through such kind of practice. In some occasions, the language teachers follow cyclical approach in their teaching innovatively since they know that the designs of textbooks are completely linear and would not be changed for a long time.*

The language points are forgotten very soon unless they stick in mind. Students should be able to remember what they have learned before; otherwise, they have wasted their time on learning language. Cyclical syllabus is one of the effective ways through which students can remember what they have learned before and prevent them from wasting their time.

*When language materials are not stuck in the students' mind, they surely forget them. Syllabus designers and curriculum developers should be careful on this important issue that students cannot remember what they have learned if they are only taught through the linear syllabus. For example, when students are finished with their seventh grade in school, it does not mean that*

*they have learned all of the presented points completely. Then, when they start their eighth grade, they cannot remember anything from the last year and consequently, the new textbook seems to be difficult for them. (T.P. 1)*

Language learners should be referred to the previously acquired materials to prevent their forgetting. If they are not re-presented with the taught materials in the following lessons or years of studying, then they surely forget what they have been taught because they possibly do not learn the taught materials completely only by teaching them for one time. All language teachers are aware of the usefulness of cyclical syllabus but they complain about other factors influencing cyclical approach. For example, one of the T.P. 7 said:

*Students should be provided with some methods through which they can remember what they have forgotten. But, the major problem of applying such methods is lack of time. We have to teach all of the skills and sub-skills in the grade nine. So, we do not have extra time to make students have any revision. That is why the students forget what they have learned very soon. The book of grade nine aims at presenting a large amount of language points and does not leave any room for review part. Therefore, all of the materials in this book are taught linearly and at the end of the year, after the final exam, the students can rarely remember them.*

#### **4.2.2. Reducing Tension and Stress**

The next sub-category of the advantages of the cyclical syllabus is the reduction of students' stress. Learners are afraid of failing to learn; the students should be warmed up by discussing the previously taught materials in order to feel free and relax towards learning the new lesson. In this manner, they build a bridge between their old and new knowledge through revising and reviewing the earlier learned materials. In this regard, one of the teachers stated:

*Cyclical syllabus really helps the students since they do not devote much time on practicing the English language out of classrooms and the only way through which they can reinforce their language knowledge is making benefit from cyclical syllabus and approach in classrooms. They review large amounts of language points and also do not suffer from the stress and tension*

*of learning a new lesson since they become aware that the new lesson is something related to what they have learned previously. Following this approach leads the students to move from known to unknown materials step by step. But, when we face the students with a new lesson suddenly without activating and reminding them what they have already known, then they get shocked and disappointed. So, they are relaxed and feel free to learn new lesson if the language points are reviewed for them. (T.P. 2)*

As language learners have stress to enter the unknown world of the new lesson, the cyclical approach of textbooks is a kind of preparation for them. Such approach prevents them to start the new lesson with a blank mind. As one of the teachers said:

*Learning new lessons and materials is always accompanied by learners' stress and tension. I think such tension is due to the fact that learners are forced to start a new subject that they do not know anything about it. In addition, although it is the teachers' duty to prepare them by reviewing and recycling the already taught points, the class time is so short that the teachers cannot do so. Thus, it seems that the students are going to enter an unknown world of the new lesson. The cyclical approach of the text books can be a valuable remedy for this problem. Furthermore, it helps the students to learn the previous taught materials more deeply and get familiar with the different applications of them. Overall, the cyclical syllabus reduces the stress of the students by enriching their background knowledge and consequently learn the new lesson better. (T.P. 7)*

The cyclicity of the textbooks makes a connection between the presented materials in sequential years. Since students are constantly worried about their ability to understand the newly presenting materials, it is better to make a connection between the new points and what they have already known about it. Another teacher appreciated cyclical syllabus as follows:

*One of the problems in the non-cyclical approach is that the books in seventh and eighth grade are totally concerned with speaking skill and do not present*

*any grammatical point. But, in the ninth grade the students are faced with a lot of grammatical points. It is obvious that they get shocked and their worry is increased because they do not have any previous knowledge of the grammar rules. To this end, the cyclical syllabus helps the students to make a connection between the new points and what they already know. (T.P. 13)*

The cyclical approach also eliminates the ambiguities in the learners' mind so that they have no longer any stress towards learning the new lesson. The main reason of students' stress reduction is that they make sure about their acquired materials and consequently their self-confidence is strengthened. As T.P. 15 expressed:

*When you repeat a specific point constantly, it leads to the elimination of ambiguities in your mind and you become sure about that point. When you have no ambiguity about your knowledge, then your self-confidence is increased which ultimately leads to the stress reduction. It has been proved that when you learn something completely and you are sure about your learning, then you have no stress towards learning new things connected to your already knowledge. Therefore, when the syllabus is cyclical, then no ambiguity is remained for the students and not only they do not have any stress to learn a new lesson, but also they welcome it greatly as they want to enrich their language knowledge.*

Therefore, cyclicity makes learning the new lesson easier for the students. Without cyclicity, the new lessons seem to be difficult for the learners. In other words, they experience some degree of academic failure due to their sudden encounter to new language points. One of the teachers said:

*Cyclical syllabus results in students' stress reduction. At the first levels of language learning, the materials are somehow easy and students do not any have problem in acquiring them. In other words, these first levels act as building blocks of further learning. But, in the eighth grade, the students are encountered with totally different language materials about which they have no previous knowledge. Actually, there is no connection between the current*

*level of language learning and the previous ones. Therefore, the students experience some academic failures and consequently the sense of stress and tension is activated in them. In my ideas, the reason is lack of enough encounter to essential vocabularies and grammar points as they are needed to be reinforced before starting any new lesson. It is also logical that the students' stress is increased by experiencing academic failure. (T.P.2)*

#### **4.2.3. Increasing Students' Self-Esteem**

Cyclical syllabus helps language learners to learn any foreign language easily because of the high degree of revision and repetition occur in this method. The high degree of revision and repetition result in sticking the language materials in the students' minds and therefore increase their learning. When language learners are sure about their language knowledge and they can show off themselves in terms of their language knowledge, their self-confidence is increased consequently. One of the teachers expressed her idea as follows:

*The advantage of the cyclical syllabus is that students can easily learn large amounts of language points that has positive effect on their self-confidence. The other advantage is that they are completely aware what they are learning since the materials are presented for them step by step and the students also know the relationship between the old and new taught materials. In grade seven of school, all of the students and their parents complain that the students do not learn anything. That is actually because of the textbook's syllabus design that presented all of the points linearly. So, the learning rate of the students is decreased. (T.P. 1)*

The positive effect of the cyclical syllabus on the students' self-confidence is advocated by most of the teachers. In addition, they considered cyclical syllabus as a useful way of encouraging the students to use the English language to show off themselves that is because of their increased self-confidence. As T.P. 8 said:

*When syllabus is cyclical and the language points are related to each other, the students' self-confidence increase due to their higher rate of learning. Their high self-confidence causes them to feel free towards expressing what*



*they have learned. Consequently, they are encouraged to show their language knowledge to show off themselves because they believe enough in their knowledge.*

One other advantage of cyclical syllabus is increasing students' class activity by increasing their self-confidence. Therefore, their learning rate is also increased in this way. As one of the teachers said:

*When students' self-confidence is increased by applying cyclical syllabus in classrooms, their class activities are also increased to show themselves off. Actually, when they find themselves really successful in learning the English language effectively, they increase their activities in classrooms and become eager to learn more. (T.P. 10)*

Regarding the increase of students' class activities and participation, some other teachers believed that cyclical syllabus is really helpful for those students who do not go to any language institute and they just learn English at school because they can show their language knowledge by participating in class activities.

*Some students' motivation to participate in class activities is increased unconsciously when they see that they know something from before when the teacher is writing some previously taught materials on the board. For example, they can answer teachers' questions and show off themselves while reviewing the grammar rules. Those students who do not go to any language institute and they are always silent in English class at school can make benefit from cyclical syllabus very well because they know lots of materials when the teacher is reviewing the previous language points. So, the students' class activities are increased in this manner. (T.P. 1)*

Cyclical syllabus helps language learners to be communicatively competent and they can make use of their language knowledge in future. The students who are taught through cyclical syllabus have a major improvement in different language skills since they use all of the taught materials in different skills to be reviewed for them. As one of the teachers said:

*The cyclical syllabus can increase the students' skill in speaking and they can speak with high self-confidence. Actually, the increase of their language knowledge causes them to speak more effectively. At the first time that the language points are taught, the students get aware of their application. Then they use those materials in different contexts through different language skills. When they use language more and more, their language skills are improved that is much better than studying language linearly to be applicable only for the final exam. Therefore, the cyclical syllabus is a very helpful method for those students whose aim of language learning is to apply it in future. (T.P.12)*

The cyclical syllabus is also for teachers' benefit in a sense that they feel more relief when they see students learn better by reviewing the language points for them. In fact, when students' learning rate is increased through a cyclical syllabus and consequently their self-confidence is also increased, then the students become more active in class and teachers do not have difficulty in teaching the new lessons. In this regard, one of the teachers claimed:

*Through cyclical syllabus, the students become more active and have more motivation to learn more. The way through which cyclical syllabus influences the students' class activity is that the students remember the language points which were taught before. Therefore, the students' self-confidence is increased because of their belief in their ability to express themselves. In other words, the students are themselves motivated to participate in class activities and the teachers are not worried anymore about the students' shyness and silence in the classrooms. (T.P. 5)*

Cyclical syllabus prevents the discouragement of students. Being proud of themselves is one of the advantages of cyclical syllabus. The relatedness of the language materials in the cyclical syllabus results in effective learning that is highly for the students' benefit. One of the teachers' statement is as follows:

*Through cyclical syllabus, the students get to high self-esteem and they dare to speak in the class and they are firm in their speaking. All of the teachers want the students to be proud of themselves when they go out of class and to*

*show others that they are knowledgeable persons and have something to say. But, now in grade nine, the students are so loose towards their language knowledge because of the linear syllabus that caused them to learn anything only at the time of teaching that point and they cannot use it in future to show their language knowledge. Actually, the disconnection between the presented materials through linear syllabus really discourage the students. (T.P. 6)*

Activating the students' background knowledge is another advantage of the cyclical syllabus that affects their self-confidence. As it was mentioned earlier, finding the relationship between the background knowledge and the newly presented points is the key to have progress in language learning since the students' motivation towards learning new and more materials is increased to find more relationship between what they already know and what the teacher is teaching. To this regard, T.P. 7 said:

*When the students see that they already know something and have some background about the lesson that the teacher is going to teach, then they learn the new lesson easily and become more motivated to understand it completely. When the teacher explains something from previous lessons before starting the new lesson, they actually are motivating the students to follow their teaching eagerly to find relationships between their background knowledge and the new lesson. In this manner, the learning rate of the students is increased which ultimately lead to their higher self-confidence because they find themselves as students who already know many things at the time of learning new points.*

Generally, the cyclical approach guarantees the students' success in their learning process since they learn the materials in better ways. The more sense of success they students feel in their learning process, the more sense of self-confidence they achieve in this process. Therefore, the cyclical approach is one of the main reasons of increasing the students' self-confidence. As one of the teachers said:

*The cyclical approach results in the students' better learning and actually increases their achievement. Whatever the students learn better, they make*

*use of it more and more and consequently their success is guaranteed. Such kind of success results in their self-confidence development. When a student sees that he can learn a second language and can transfer his message successfully, then his self-confidence is increased. In my idea, cyclical syllabus and approach is the effective way of inspiring the sense of success in language learners. (T.P. 3)*

#### **4.2.4. Functioning as Remedial Teaching**

Due to several educational policies, teachers are not able to present all of the principles in details and also allocate specific time to review the materials for the students. So, the cyclical syllabus can be regarded as a remedy for such shortcoming. On the other hand, since allocating only two hours in a week to teach English in schools is so little for the students to master the English language, the cyclical syllabus can be a solution to this problem in such a way that the students can benefit from it on their own. As the T.P. 4 said:

*Due to lack of time and the high number of students in the classrooms, the teachers cannot work effectively and review all the materials for them and also check each students' mastering the language. Therefore, during a week that students do not have any English class, the materials are forgotten by them. To this end, if the textbooks are designed cyclically, then the students can review and recycle large amounts of language points in such a way that the previously presented materials are represented through new lessons in the forwarding chapters. So, most of the language points are reviewed for the students unconsciously. Actually, textbooks and teachers should be complementary to each other so that if teachers cannot fulfill their duty, in any case, the textbooks can solve this problem.*

Being forced to present all aspects of a specific skill at once makes it difficult for language learners to master the points clearly. The cyclicity of the textbooks can solve this problem as the P.T. 14 argued:

*I have always had a problem with the students in grade seven, eight, and nine regarding their difficulty in understanding the taught points because their*

*textbooks are designed in such a way that all of the points about a specific rule are presented all together through a single lesson. But, if the textbooks are designed cyclically, then the teachers do not have to present that load of materials one-off. Lack of cyclicity has made teachers rely only on surface teaching. More importantly, the cyclically designed textbooks are good resources for students' questions in further lessons since they are sometimes exposed to similar points that they had acquired in previous lessons.*

Therefore, the cyclical syllabus has been regarded as a solution to the shortcomings of the educational system. Teachers are in the core of such shortcomings as they rely only on following the textbooks' instructions and they do not employ any cyclical approach in their teaching process. So, designing textbooks cyclically is one way of making the teachers to present the language points cyclically through different lessons. Regarding this issue, the following expression of one of the participants has been brought:

*I think the cyclical syllabus can solve many problems of our educational system not only in language teaching area but also in teaching different subject areas. In my idea, one of the shortcomings of our educational system is due to the teachers for the reason that they do not have enough knowledge in speaking skill although the focus of teaching in grade seven, eight, and nine is on speaking skill rather than other skills. If the books are designed linearly, then the teachers obey the order of lessons and only present some general points due to lack of time. On the other hand, when the textbooks are cyclically designed, the teachers have to review the taught materials for the students in the next lessons. Therefore, the materials are taught more deeply and in more details. (T.P. 2)*

As already mentioned, the cyclical syllabus is a kind of compensation for different problems with educational system and teachers. Sometimes, some educational policies are the reason of presenting a specific point at once through a single session, and in some occasions, teachers are the cause of such problem; for instance, they resist to follow the

cyclical approach in their own teaching process and rely only on the presented instructions in the textbooks. As another participant said:

*If a teacher cannot teach the whole aspects of a specific point in a single session, the cyclical syllabus can solve this problem by presenting different aspects of a specific rule in different lessons and therefore that rule is reviewed and completed through different sessions. (T.P. 13)*

#### **4.2.5. Motivating**

Cyclical syllabus increases students' motivation to learn English language because of enabling them to use the language more effectively to communicate with others. When students found themselves as competent persons in their communication, they become more motivated to increase their already boxes of knowledge in order to have more effective communication. As one of the teachers considered the effect of the cyclical syllabus on the students' motivation as follows:

*By applying cyclical syllabus, students can see their progress in learning. They can see that they are able to use language in their communication like other competent persons. Therefore, their motivation to learn more is increased in order to be successful in their communication. (T.P. 12)*

Cyclical syllabus makes students to get motivated to participate in class activities since the activities in the next lessons are the review of what they have acquired before. Therefore, their level of learning is increased and they get more and more motivated to apply what they have acquired. As the T.P. 5 stated:

*If the textbooks and teaching style are cyclical, the students are more active in the classrooms and consequently, they get more motivated to learn. The reason is that through the cyclical syllabus, the previously taught grammars and vocabularies are reviewed for them in higher levels and they can use them easily. Therefore they get more motivated to participate in class activities because they have already knowledge about the presented points in class activities.*

Unconscious increase of students' motivation has been regarded as one of the outcomes of the cyclical syllabus. It has been argued that the students are motivated to participate in classrooms' discussions when they see what the teacher is going to teach is somehow related to what they have acquired before. So, students are motivated to show their knowledge. As one of the participants said:

*When the students see that they know something about what the teacher is writing on the board and they can answer the teachers' questions, their motivation is increased unconsciously. Actually, they want to show off themselves. Cyclical syllabus can be very helpful for the students who have not attended any language institute to learn English and they are mostly silent in the English classes of schools. That is they can participate in class activities since the current points under teaching are related to what they have already learned before in previous lessons. Therefore, their motivation to learn and practice more is increased. (T.P. 8)*

The cyclical syllabus can also solve the problem of shy students who are reluctant to notify the teachers that they do not learn what he is teaching. Increasing the exposure rate of such students to the language points in following lessons can make them sure that the materials will be presented again in following lessons and they have time to learn them. Therefore, their motivation to continue their learning process is increased as one of the participants expressed:

*An important issue about linear syllabus is that since shy students cannot express their feelings about misunderstanding the presented taught materials and the materials are not supposed to be repeated for them in next sessions, there is a sharp decrease in the learning rate of such students. Without understanding the current presented materials, the shy students lose their motivation to learn more language points. But, since the points are taught again in the next sessions through cyclical syllabus, such weak point of shy students is removed because they are sure that they will be exposed to the taught materials again in the next sessions and then they can learn them.*

*Therefore, their motivation to learn the language not only is not changed but also it is increased to participate in class activities. (T.P. 7)*

Generally, lack of cyclicity within and among the textbooks in schools prevents the students to achieve their intended purposes. By observing themselves in a position far from what they supposed before start learning a foreign language, the students become disappointed and consider what they have already been taught as useless materials. Regarding such problem, the T.P. 1 expressed:

*The writers of the textbooks have claimed that after six years of studying English, the students should be able to gain at least the score of 5 in IELTS exam. Well, when the students see that they cannot achieve to what they aimed for, they get disappointed. In addition, the students in grade nine are aware that what they have been taught in grade eight does not relate to what they are going to be taught in grade nine. So, they put it aside completely as they do not think if it will be useful for them at any time for future. The main reason of such issues are lack of cyclicity among the textbooks.*

### **4.3. Techniques to Apply Cyclical Syllabus**

Regarding the importance of cyclical syllabus in language teaching, some applicable techniques have been suggested by the participants.

#### **4.3.1. Techniques Contributed to Teaching Reading Cyclically**

One of the techniques that has been suggested is splitting each topic into several segments and presenting each segment through different chapters with different level of difficulty. The rationale behind this suggestion is that different phrases and vocabularies which are specific to each topic are reintroduced through different sessions. In addition, all the materials are integrated and the students are exposed to both previously learned phrases and new phrases. Therefore, students can deepen their knowledge of the language. As the T.P. 14 said:

*In the textbooks of grade nine and ten, some fixed phrases are presented at the start of each chapter which are related only to the targeted topic of that chapter. After finishing a chapter, the students are not exposed to that phrase*



*anymore. Since the topic of each chapter is totally different, the students forget the previously learned phrases and structures by getting involved in learning new phrases and structures. My own suggestion is that all chapters should present one topic with different phrases and structures. To this end, each topic has to be broken in parts and each part should be presented through different chapters so that the specific phrases for each topic are reintroduced in the following chapters.*

Providing students with topic-related readings is considered to be effective as it causes students to review most of the acquired vocabularies. In this regard, another participant stated:

*Another way is presenting topic-related readings which have many vocabularies and structures in common. Every reading can introduce different new phrases which will be reappeared in the next readings. By doing so, the teaching has a chaining style through which different new words or structures are added to the already completed readings but with a slight difference that the rate of repetition in further readings is higher than presenting new words or structures. (T.P. 3)*

Regarding the effect of cyclical approach in listening comprehension, the same technique has targeted the listening skill to be taught cyclically. Both teachers and textbook writers can make use of this technique in a way that students expose to the patterns that reappeared in the subsequent listening activities. One of the participants explained this technique as follows:

*I choose a 20-minute audio and split it into 5 audio files. In fact, we have five weeks to listen and comprehend this audio. At the end of the fifth week, we listen and review the whole audio again. Then they are given another related audio to listen. My students know that they need to refer to what they have learned in the first session. Then, they are asked to give a presentation about*

*the whole audio so they need to go back time and time. I think textbook writers can make use of this technique in listening activities. (T.P. 15)*

Storytelling as a method of EFL language teaching can help the authors of the textbooks to apply this cyclical technique to the textbooks. As one of the participants said

*I think the content of each lesson should be cycled. That is, each lesson should include the items, phrases, and patterns of the previous lessons. To this end, we can split a story into different chapters. The story of the second chapter must contain parts of the previous chapters. Therefore, the materials are chained together and as the story goes on, students learn more. The students know that the new chapter is the continuation of the previous story with some new words and grammatical points. (T.P. 8)*

#### **4.3.2. Techniques Contributed to Teaching Language Items Cyclically**

Vocabulary, phrases, and chunks are key elements in speaking English. Therefore, improving students' vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of language learning. Another type of cyclical technique is reintroducing phrases, chunks, and vocabularies in different activities and tasks. One of the participants explained this technique as follow:

*Remembering phrases and words is one of the biggest problems that our students face. My suggestion is presenting chunks cyclically in textbooks. I explain the technique, which I think can improve students' vocabulary as follows. The phrases, chunks or vocabularies which are introduced through a conversation should be used in reading, listening and writing sections of that unit again. For instance, in the writing section, I want students to use those chunk and phrases again. In this way, they learn how to use chunks in different contexts. (T.P. 6)*

Cyclic conversations provide students with more opportunities to learn new language items. Returning periodically to a conversation with different levels of difficulty is a technique that was suggested by the T.P. 10:

*In my opinion, even conversations can be presented cyclically. I apply my own technique and material in speaking classes. For instance, students practice a simpler conversation in a particular context. After fully mastering the conversation, the same longer conversation with new words and phrases is given to the students. In fact, the conversations are in the same context, but new language items are added.*

Techniques of cyclical presentation of language items can be applied in textbook series. In this technique, each book is considered as a cycle. In other words, students after studying a book go back to the start point. One the T.P. 8 explains this technique as follow:

*I noticed a big difference between the textbooks of our educational system and the books which are taught in English institutes. Every year, students are provided with completely different books in our schools. Consider an intermediate book which is taught in a language institute. The material that is presented in the first unit of this book is reintroduced in the first unit of the upper-intermediate book with more complexity. In fact, when language learners studied a book they return to the start point to reinforce their language. This is what the authors of school books have ignored.*

There are different kinds of syllabuses based on communicative approach such as the situational syllabus, the functional-notional syllabus and the task based syllabus. Using dialogues and meaningful conversations in a specific context is the main characteristic of these syllabuses. Language teaching syllabuses are not distinct from each other. They are combination of two or more syllabuses which one is basis. In this regard T.P. 6 explains the technique of integrating cyclical syllabus with other syllabuses. She expresses that situations and conversations can be cyclical using different sentences.

*When we talk about cyclical syllabi, everyone thinks about structural syllabus. It seems to me that one of the most practical techniques is the integration of different syllabi to each other. In other words, the situations that through which students learn how to communicate can be cyclical. For example seeing*

*a dentist as a situation can be repeated with more complex in next lessons.*

*We can present the same situation with different and more difficult sentences.*

Having explored the advantages of the cyclical syllabus through analyzing the gathered data from the teachers' statements revealed that the brightest advantage of employing cyclical syllabus in EFL/ESL classrooms is that the students revisit the taught language points several times by applying them to later course objectives. Therefore, it has resulted in improved learning outcomes. Cyclical syllabus helped the students to return to the previous courses and they benefit from having access to the previous courses since their already learned materials were reinforced. Having reinforced the students' language knowledge through enabling them to access to the previous courses, their class activities were increased and ultimately resulted in their high self-confidence because they could show off themselves easily by practicing more and more.

# **Chapter Five:**

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

## **5.1. Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is presenting the whole conclusion of different perceptions on applying cyclical syllabus in EFL/ESL contexts. In addition, related discussions to each finding are also presented through this part.

By making use of the principles of data analysis in Grounded Theory research design, the researcher could extract two main categories regarding cyclical syllabus. The first categories were the advantages of applying cyclical syllabus with five subcategories such as internalizing, reducing tension and stress, increasing students' self-esteem, functioning as remedial teaching and motivating. The second category presented different approaches and techniques contributed to the application of cyclical syllabus.

## **5.2. Discussion**

The findings revealed that the first subcategory of advantages of the cyclical syllabus was expressed by participants in different ways. One of the expressions regarding the materials' sticking in mind confirmed Bruner's (1960) argument as he believed that as time goes by, students return again and again to the basic concepts, building on them, making them more complex, and understanding them more fully. This argument is the same as what the participants expressed that through cyclical syllabus the mastery of the materials elevated to a broader level of abstraction and comprehensiveness.

Another finding revealed that repeating the materials in students' school textbooks can prevent students' forgetting. The materials that students have acquired previously should be repeated in their textbooks because they do not deal with them in their routine life. So, the school textbooks are one of the useful tools to repeat some useful materials and expose students to them repeatedly. If it does not happen in schools, students will surely forget what they have learned. Such conclusion was consistent with Dowding (1993) and Kabara (1972) who emphasized the role of the spiral curriculum as it leads to the reinforcement of what is already known as new knowledge and skills are introduced in subsequent lessons. The main reason for such reinforcement is the linkage between the lessons.

In addition, some teachers believe cyclical syllabus help students learn English language deeply and transfer it to their long-term memory. However, they criticize textbook writers who underestimate cyclicity in presenting important materials. The main reason is that the subjects are changed without containing any important vocabularies from the previous lesson. Harden's (1999) statement was verified through this finding as he believed in the relatedness of new information or skills to the learning in previous phases of the spiral. In other words, previous learning is a prerequisite for the later learning. Another feature of Harden's (1999) argument is the increasing of the students' competence through each visit of the theme or topic until the final overall objectives are achieved that is also proved by some participants' expressions.

Furthermore, the statements of the participants indicated that cyclicity prevents forgetting. They argued that the more you repeat something, the more it stays in your minds. One way of keeping English language in our mind is repetition and one other way is elaborating on it which are not covered and supported appropriately in school textbooks. Such argument is in accordance with the first feature of spiral curriculum introduced by Harden (1999). The first feature is that topics, themes, and subjects are revisited on a number of occasions during a course. Recalling or recycling the previously covered materials is further strengthened if an item is encountered in different, novel contexts each time it is practiced, a process known as differential or variable encoding. In addition, the argument of Elmes and Bjork (1975) proves the expressions of the participants in the current study as the authors believe that variable encoding refers to as "secondary" rehearsal, it contrasts with "primary" rehearsal, which is another term for simple rote repetition. Variable encoding tends to increase the number of available retrieval routes for an item.

Likewise, findings indicated that continuous learning is much more effective than linear learning. The possibility of forgetting is higher in linear learning than continuous learning. Through continuous learning large amount of materials are repeated for students. The participants believed that if students are taught linearly, the new lesson will be forgotten when they have an exam and surely they will not remember it in the next year. On the other hand, if learning is continuous, then the materials are stuck in their minds unconsciously and they can make use of them in further times. Similarly, McLaughlin and Heredia (1996)

express that recycling approach leads to metacognition improvement of the students as they are able to see the same task in different contexts and from different angles. So, the frequent use of a particular theme or topic in varied lexical settings should be involved in the training system rather than merely frequent use of that particular theme or topic.

Another perception on cyclical syllabus and approach is that forgetting the previously learned materials impedes language learners to have progressed in their further levels of language learning. The next levels of language learning seemed to be difficult to learn by the students due to their lack of ability to retrieve what they have already gained in previous levels. Also, Harden (1999) in his fourth feature of spiral curriculum states that the students' competence through each visit of the theme or topic is increased until the final overall objectives are achieved. Specifying the role of revisiting and repetition of themes or topics, Skehan (1998) claimed that L2 learners do not make progress merely by the accumulation of memorized features without explicit instruction and that is repeated practice of task which leads them to analyze memorized features. Preparation (or pre-task activity) is the first performance of the task.

The participants thought that if teaching is cyclical, students' learning is increased because the materials are reviewed and repeated for them every year. In grade seven and eight the students are taught specific points and in grade nine they suddenly encounter grammatical points. So, it is obvious that they forget the materials very soon. But, if they are taught all the skills cyclical from grade seven, then they learn grammar rules gradually and do not forget them in future. For example, if they are taught present progressive in seventh grade and this grammar rule is repeated in their readings in eighth grade, then they do not forget it. Such argument by the participants of the current study is in line with the arguments of McLaughlin and Heredia (1996) who stated that language materials should be re-explained for language learners in order to increase their learning. If each language point is just presented and taught through one skill, students will forget it very soon. So, it is better to explain every language point through different skills and increase their repetition rate in this way. Similarly, recycling approach leads to metacognition improvement of the students as they are able to see the same task in different contexts and from different angles.



Masters and Gibbs (2007) stated that although students might not be fully conversant with the educational value of the spiral, they are at least somewhat aware of the spiral curriculum, and often return to previous online material for the purpose of building knowledge in the spiral. Thus, the practice of retaining previous courses is closely aligned with the philosophy of the spiral curriculum and delivers great benefits to the students, to the extent that it serves as a confirmation of the spiral curriculum's success. Therefore, it can be concluded that the frequent use of a particular theme or topic in varied lexical settings should be involved in the training system rather than merely frequent use of that particular theme or topic

In addition, it was found that the textbooks that are taught in language institutes contain every language points in each level and each language point is embedded in different skills. In other words, all of the language points are repeated through different skills. Also, the taught materials of each level are presented in the textbooks of the next level again. But, the textbooks of our schools do not have this advantage. That is why the students of school do not gain much from their language learning. Regarding the importance of textbooks' syllabus design, Martin (1978) stated that grammar can be spiraled by recycling grammatical constructions so as to provide repeated practice in various contexts. Moreover, James (1899) believes that "the same thing recurring on different days, in different contexts, read, recited on, referred to again and again, related to other things and reviewed, gets well-wrought into the mental structure. This is the reason why you should enforce your pupils' habits of continuous application" (p. 129).

In the same direction, students who have studied the English language in language institutes for at least six years claim that they have achieved to their purpose. They believe in their language knowledge because they maintain what they have acquired that is due to high rate of repetition and revision of language points during the six years. Since English is a foreign language and it runs away the students' minds very soon, it is needed to be taught cyclically through which all the language points are reviewed for the students. But, in seventh grade of school, whatever that students learn during the year are not reviewed and re-studied at all. That is the major difference between textbooks in language institutes and schools. To verify such finding, Masters and Gibbs (2007) stated that although students might not be

fully conversant with the educational value of the spiral, they are at least somewhat aware of the spiral curriculum, and often return to previous online material for the purpose of building knowledge in the spiral. Thus, the practice of retaining previous courses is closely aligned with the philosophy of the spiral curriculum and delivers great benefits to the students, to the extent that it serves as a confirmation of the spiral curriculum's success. Additionally, Bygate (2001) suggests giving learners the opportunity to repeat language tasks as a way to make progress in accuracy, fluency, and complexity. When learners redo specific activities, they are able to reuse and improve their conceptualization, formulation and articulation or they are clear about what they want to say, and they say it better. When they do new versions of the task within the same task framework, they become more able to deal with task variations more effectively.

Retaining previously covered materials was found as the main key in benefiting from the spiral curriculum. To this end, different kinds of repetition practice that led to better maintenance of previously taught themes or topics and also played role in the spiral curriculum were discussed by the participants as Carroll (1973) states that mere repetition of an item does not produce improved recall. If practice is distributed. If there is extraneous material intervening between the rehearsals of an item, retention is better than if the item has been practiced sequentially. Retrieving an item from intermediate memory after the mind has been occupied with other matters has the effect of transferring the item to long-term memory. In addition, Baddeley and Longman (1978) argue that a potentially more powerful manipulation could be achieved by spacing practice repetitions across days rather than only within days. In contrast, although DeKeyser (1997) claimed that repeated practice of rules with explicit rule instruction leads to the effective automatization of rules of oral fluency and the development of highly specific skills, he did not specify what kinds of repetition play the effective role in a spiral curriculum.

The language points are forgotten as soon as possible unless they are stuck in mind. Students should be able to remember what they have learned before; otherwise, they have wasted their time on learning the language. The Cyclical syllabus is one of the effective ways through which the students can remember what they have learned before and prevent them to waste their time. According to one prominent theory, repeating an item potentially reminds

the learner of its prior occurrence, which prompts retrieving the previous presentation of the item, a process that enhances memory (Wahlheim, Maddox, & Jacoby, 2014). Massed repetition eliminates the retrieval process—there is no need to retrieve from memory because the same item was just presented.

In addition, the participants expressed that language learners should be referred to the previously acquired materials to prevent their forgetting. If they are not re-presented with the taught materials in the following lessons or years of studying, then they surely forget what they have been taught because they possibly do not learn the taught materials completely only by teaching them for one time. Every language teachers are aware of the usefulness of cyclical syllabus but they complain about other factors influencing cyclical approach. Such kind of repetition was inconsistent with a theory proposed by Glenberg (1979). With spaced repetitions, the context that gets encoded in memory with each presentation of an item is likely to be more variable (compared with massed repetitions that are close together in time and context); the variable contexts that are stored in memory then serve as more effective cues for subsequent retrieval of the item (Glenberg, 1979).

As the second subcategory of the advantages of the cyclical syllabus, the findings revealed that language learners review large amounts of language points and also do not suffer from the stress and tension of learning new lesson since they get aware that the new lesson is something related to what they have learned the previous week. As language learners have stress to enter the unknown world of the new lesson, the cyclical approach of textbooks is a kind of preparation for them. Such approach prevents them to start the new lesson with a blank mind. Since students are constantly worried about their ability to understand the newly presented materials, it is better to make a connection between the new points and what they have already known about it. The cyclical approach also eliminates the ambiguities in the learners' mind so that they have no longer any stress towards learning the new lesson. The main reason of students' stress reduction is that they get sure about their acquired materials and consequently their self-confidence is strengthened. Without cyclicity, the new lessons seem to be difficult for the learners. Therefore, they experience some degree of academic failure due to they are suddenly encountering to new language points.

The third subcategory is about students' self-confidence through which the teachers expressed that the high degree of revision and repetition result in sticking the language materials in the students' minds and therefore increase their learning. When language learners are sure about their language knowledge and they can show off themselves in terms of their language knowledge, their self-confidence is increased consequently. In addition, they considered cyclical syllabus as a useful way of encouraging the students to use the English language to show off themselves that is because of their increased self-confidence. One other advantage of the cyclical syllabus is increasing students' class activity by increasing their self-confidence.

According to the participants' expressions, cyclical syllabus helps language learners to be communicatively competent and they can make use of their language knowledge in future. The students who are taught through cyclical syllabus have a major improvement in different language skills since they use all of the taught materials in different skills to be reviewed for them. The findings of Takimoto's (2012) study were similar to the findings of the current study as he showed that the learners performed better by practicing the same task repetition than the same type of task repetition. Through the identical task repetition, the learners built pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connections which improved their L2 pragmatic proficiency. Overall, both types of repetition helped learners to recycle the already acquired materials. Correspondingly, Gass et al. (1999) found some evidence that task repetition resulted in improvement in overall proficiency, selected morphosyntax, and lexical sophistication.

Findings also showed that cyclical syllabus is also for teachers' benefit in a sense that they feel more relief when they see students learn better by reviewing the language points for them. In fact, when students' learning rate is increased through the cyclical syllabus and consequently their self-confidence is also increased, then the students become more active in class and teachers do not have difficulty in teaching the new lessons.

Activating the students' background knowledge was found as another advantage of the cyclical syllabus that affects their self-confidence. As it was mentioned earlier, finding the relationship between the background knowledge and the newly presented points is the

key to have progress in language learning since the students' motivation towards learning new and more materials is increased to find more relationship between what they already know and what the teacher is teaching. In consistence with such findings, Ausubel and Youssef (1965) provided an opportunity for the learners to interact with the material and to relate the potential meanings it embodies to their structures of knowledge. The learners had another opportunity to acquire meanings potential in the material that they partially or completely missed on the first trial, as well as to consolidate meanings initially established at that time. Also, possessing adequate prior knowledge can facilitate subsequent learning and comprehension (Mayer, 1977).

The final subcategory of advantages of the cyclical syllabus, the participants expressed that cyclical syllabus increase students' motivation to learn English language because of enabling them to use the language more effectively to communicate with others. When students found themselves as competent persons in their communication, so they become more motivated to increase their already boxes of knowledge in order to have more effective communication. The cyclical syllabus makes students to get motivated to participate in class activities since the activities in the next lessons are the review of what they have acquired before. Therefore, their level of learning is increased and they get more and more motivated to apply what they have acquired. The cyclical syllabus can also solve the problem of shy students who are reluctant to notify the teachers that they do not learn what is teaching. Increasing the exposure rate of such students to the language points in further lessons can make them sure that the materials will be presented again in following lessons and they have time to learn them.

The second main subcategory regarding cyclical syllabus was the techniques and approaches contributing to the application of cyclical syllabus. For example, splitting each topic into several components and presenting each component through different chapters can be one of the suggestions. The rationale behind this suggestion is that different rules and vocabularies which are specific to each topic are repeated through different sessions. In addition, the students do not get exhausted to read through only a specific topic during some sequential sessions and not facing them at all in the next lessons.

Another technique is presenting topic-related readings which have many vocabularies and structures in common. Every reading can be included different new words which will be repeated in the next readings again. By doing so, the teaching has a chaining style through which different new words or structures are added to the already completed readings but with a slight difference that the rate of repetition in further readings is higher than presenting new words or structures.

The final techniques are asking students to write about one of the previously discussed topics by applying the new words. In addition, ask them to replace different words in different structures that they have been taught before. Therefore, all of the structures are somehow reviewed for them. For example, make them use different subjects, objects, and adjectives. Furthermore, this technique helps the students to learn new words better because they have to use each new word several times through different structures.

### **5.3. Implications for Practice**

The findings of present study emphasized the importance of an appropriate syllabus in the process of learning English as a foreign language. In addition, some applicable techniques were suggested regarding the importance of cyclical syllabus. The finding of this study can be precious for language teachers, syllabus designers, and language learners as well as textbook writers.

First, the presented techniques help teachers to provide active learning classrooms for language learners. Cyclical syllabus makes language learners be sure about their language knowledge, then their self-confidence is increased, and consequently, they become more motivated to participate in class activities. Therefore, the learning rate of the students is also elevated to the highest degree and teachers do not have any difficulty anymore to involve students in class activities. In addition, the presented techniques by the participants can be applied by any language teacher to bring the advantages of such syllabus for students.

Second, language learners can employ the proposed techniques contributing to the cyclical syllabus in their own self-studies to benefit from its great advantages. In addition, since the language materials are stuck in students' minds through the cyclical syllabus, they can make use of their language knowledge in broader contexts in future. Furthermore, the

findings of the study will help language learners maintain their knowledge of language and retrieve the previously learned materials.

Third, suggested techniques can be applied by textbook writers who are interested in creating appropriate tasks and exercises for language learners. Textbooks as the pedagogical tool are used every day by teachers and students. Therefore, designing materials and integrating different syllabuses to meet students' needs has always been a controversial issue for textbook writers. The findings of the study indicate the flexibility of the cyclical syllabus and suggested some practical techniques that can be integrated with other syllabuses.

Finally, the educational system can make use of cyclical syllabus due to its explored advantages. By exploring the advantages of cyclical syllabus for both language learners and teachers, the educational system should be careful about embedding such approach in the language learning curriculum. Furthermore, the educational system becomes successful in graduating knowledgeable language learners due to the elevation of students' learning rate.

#### **5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies**

Different perceptions on applying cyclical syllabus were explored through this study. Almost, most of the advantages of cyclical syllabus was clarified and presented by the participants. Only a small scale of techniques towards employing cyclical syllabus were introduced by the participants. More techniques need to be explored to be applied for language learners with different language proficiency level in different contexts. Furthermore, the techniques should be tested in order to find their different degrees of effectiveness and also to find the extent to which language learners' proficiency is improved through the application of each specific technique. One more important issue is to see if the application of cyclical syllabus or approach really will result in bringing the mentioned advantages for language learners. Since the data was collected through interviews, the number of participants was small. As a result, further studies can employ other research methods and other facilities to obtain data from a larger population.





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## چکیده

با توجه به اهمیت استفاده از سرفصل درسی موثر در یادگیری انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی یا زبان دوم، این مطالعه با هدف بررسی نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی در ارائه دوره ای مطالب انجام شده است. با روش تئوری گراند، محقق به لحاظ نظری از طریق مصاحبه با ۱۵ معلم زبان انگلیسی در مدارس دولتی، مفاهیم را نمونه برداری می کند. مصاحبه ها ضبط و رونویسی شده اند. سپس آنها با استفاده از کدگذاری باز، انتخابی و محوری تجزیه و تحلیل شده اند. علاوه بر مصاحبه ها، تکنیک یادداشت نویسی نیز برای جمع آوری داده های بیشتر مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. فرایند جمع آوری داده ها تا زمان اشباع داده ها ادامه پیدا کرده، به عبارت دیگر، تا زمانی که داده های بیشتری منتشر نشود. تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها از طریق تئوری گراند، دو دسته عمده را نشان داد. مزایای ارائه دوره ای مطالب و تکنیک های ارائه دوره ای. طبقه اول شامل زیر مقوله های زیر است: (۱) درونی سازی، (۲) کاهش تنش و استرس، (۳) افزایش اعتماد به نفس دانش آموزان، (۴) عملکرد آموزشی به عنوان آموزش اصلاح شده، و (۵) انگیزش. تکنیک هایی پیشنهاد شده جهت ارائه ی دوره ای مطالب درسی عبارتند از: (۱) تکنیک های جهت تدریس خواندن به صورت دوره ای، (۲) تکنیک های جهت تدریس آیتم های زبانی به صورت دوره ای. یافته های این مطالعه تاکید بر اهمیت یک برنامه آموزشی مناسب در فرآیند یادگیری زبان انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان خارجی است. بنابراین، یافته ها می توانند برای معلمان زبان، طراحان سرفصل دروس، و زبان آموزان و همچنین نویسندگان کتاب های درسی ارزشمند باشند.

**کلیدواژه ها:** سرفصل دوره ای، ادراک معلمان، تئوری گراند، ایتیم های زبانی، تکنیک ها



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نگارنده: مریم غلامی

استاد راهنما:

دکتر سید علی استوار نامقی

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