

ceived by learners to be more efficient in increasing or decreasing their motivation. It can be of great help to teachers in making up their minds in dealing with discipline problems and consequently lessening their stress and anxiety in how to manage their classes, for any failure on teachers' part to satisfactorily manage students' classroom misbehavior can result in stress, and in the extreme cases, burnout (Lewis et al., 2008).

Other than this, since managing a classroom is one of the major problems for beginning teachers, in-service training programs may benefit from the results of this study. These programs may enhance the quality of English teachers' first year experiences so that they do not experience job stress and burnout in their future career. As experienced teachers attend such courses, the discussion sessions would become more educational and efficient to empower participants professionally through peer coaching.

Moreover, educational workshops should be held for teachers on the way they have to manage their classes and how to deal with disruptive behavior. School counselors can work in close cooperation with teachers and guide them on how to deal with students' misbehavior while not having destructive effect on students' learning.

The final suggestion of this study goes to material designers that in the foreword pages of the books or teachers' manuals, should provide comprehensive guidelines on classroom management and discipline issues in EFL classes, student-teacher relationship, the importance and necessity of building a good rapport with the students and adopting a humanitarian approach to language teaching and learning.

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motivation in a number of ways.

First, two of the classroom discipline strategies naming punishment and aggression are inversely correlated with motivation. The findings show that students' motivation for learning English is likely to decrease if teachers use punishment and aggression when dealing with misbehavior. This is in line with the evidence that teacher aggression distracts students from their school work (Lewis et al., 2008) and diminishes rather than enhances student learning and does not foster a sense of responsibility in students (Sava, 2002). Similarly, Henderson in a series of studies, demonstrated that students who perceived their teachers as admonishing and strict had more negative attitudes towards the subject being taught (e.g., Henderson, Fisher, & Fraser, 2000). The result implies that using such strategies by English teachers makes students anxious and creates a threatening atmosphere that prevents students' self-initiation and causes loss of motivation.

Second, recognition/reward, involvement, discussion, and hinting are positively related to motivation. The findings confirm the literature in the sense that the most useful discipline techniques for generating positive reactions among students are recognition of responsible behaviors and discussions with students where a negotiated outcome is achieved (Lewis et al., 2008). Many educators and researchers argue that inclusion of, and negotiation with, students increases their sense of competency and belonging (Anderman, 2002). Teachers become a good support in the eyes of the students if they recognize students' appropriate behavior, discuss with them what is expected of them, involve them in decision making and organizing class rules, and give them some

hints on their misbehavior.

Third, this study represents the result of an attempt to establish a link between classroom discipline and students' motivation in learning English. Through regression analysis of the data three classroom discipline strategies namely involvement, hinting, and recognition were found to be significant predictors of students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. This shows that providing emotional and academic support to students creates a positive classroom social climate and constitutes a motivational factor for students to instigate and pursue learning more seriously (Patrick et al., 2007). The finding is in accord with what Dornyei's (1994) *learning situation level* under which teachers' classroom discipline can be subsumed.

It was also found that punishment was a hindrance to students' motivation. It is evident in the literature that teachers' coercive behavior towards students is one of the most common stressful school situations for students (Pierkarski, 2000). As mentioned by Sava (2002 P.1610) "when students perceive their teachers as misbehaving several negative outcomes can occur. Mainly, there are three categories of negative effects: educational, psychological, and somatic outcome". The most relevant of these is a general lack of motivation and a specific negative affect toward course material (Gorham & Christophel, 1992). The finding raises the awareness of language teachers toward the use of such strategies in their classes in a more judicious manner.

## Implications and Applications

The findings of the current study can assist EFL teachers to recognize those classroom discipline strategies that were per-

## Attitude/Motivation Test Battery

To obtain measures of students' motivation, the short form of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery translated and validated by Ghorban Dordinejad and Imam-Jomeh (2011) was utilized. The scale had 37 items that were clustered under 4 factors. The respondents were asked to rate themselves regarding each item of the questionnaire on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (4). The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the questionnaire in this study turned out to be .88.

## Results

### Inter-correlation among variables

Correlation method was used to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' discipline strategies and students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language. The result of correlation showed that motivation was significantly and positively related to recognition/reward ( $r=.34$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), discussion ( $r=.156$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), involvement ( $r=.37$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and hinting ( $r=.33$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Further, motivation was inversely and significantly related to punishment ( $r= -.27$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and aggression ( $r= -.24$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

### Predictors of motivation

In order to determine the proportion of the variance in students' motivation in learning English that could be explained by their teachers' classroom discipline strategies, multiple regression analysis was performed. The summary of the regression results is presented in Tables 1 and 2. The results indicated that more than 21% of the variance in students' motivation in learning English was explained by the independent

variable of this study (teachers' classroom discipline strategies). The test statistic was significant at the 0.05 level of significance ( $F = 17.753$ ;  $p=0.000$ ).

Table 1. Analysis of variance

Sources	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	R2	Adjusted R2	p
Model	25213.337	6	4202.223	17.753	.225	.212	.000
Error	86868.933	367	236.700				
Total	112082.270	373					

Table 2. Multiple regressions on dependent variable (motivation)

Variables	B	$\beta$	t	p
Punishment	-.639	-.172	-3.264	.001*
Recognition	.403	.140	2.466	.014*
Discussion	.112	.029	.504	.614
Involvement	.426	.140	2.064	.040*
Hinting	.656	.191	2.928	.004*
Aggression	-.266	-.085	-1.594	.112

As table 2 illustrates, four types of classroom discipline strategies can explain the variance in the motivation. These strategies in order of predicative value are hinting ( $\beta=.191$ ,  $t=2.92$ ), punishment (hindrance of motivation) ( $\beta=-.172$ ,  $t=3.264$ ), recognition/rewarding ( $\beta=.140$ ,  $t=2.466$ ) and involvement ( $\beta=.140$ ,  $t=2.064$ ).

## Discussion

This study was an attempt to find the relationship between EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies and students' motivation in learning English. The results suggest that not only is there a relation between strategies applied by language teachers in maintaining discipline in their classrooms and students' language learning motivation but also classroom discipline has the power of predictability for students' motivation in the EFL context. The findings contribute to the area of students'

concerns such as teaching large classes, teaching multiple proficiency levels in the same class, compromising with the institution, discipline and cheating (Brown, 2001). According to Wadden & McGovern (1991) factors such as the large numbers of students who are not in the classroom by choice; the number of students per class; the lack of importance students give to English in the school curriculum when compared to other school subjects such as math or science, and the fact that, in the same group, EFL teachers work with students from different cultural and academic

**English classes composed of various activities that require students' active participation, so "students usually have more opportunities in an EFL class than classes of other subjects to speak, to talk, to read aloud or even to argue with each other"**

backgrounds, can affect discipline in class. According to Brown (2001), grappling with classroom management is one of the key elements of interactive language teaching because in a poorly managed classroom, teachers struggle to teach and students usually learn less than they should, and there is abundance of discipline issues while a well-managed classroom provides an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish.

Despite recent advances in research and theorization on the relationship between learning and classroom management styles of teachers, motivation theories have seldom been linked to management practices in classroom settings particularly

in EFL classes. Based on the rationale provided, the following research questions are studied:

1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies and students' learning motivation?
2. Are EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies the predictor of their students' English learning motivation?

## Method

### Participants

A total of 374 male and female students from 9 junior high-schools in Sari participated in the study. Of the sample, 148 (39.6%) were female and 226 (60.4%) were male.

### Instruments

- Classroom discipline strategies questionnaire

To measure teachers' classroom discipline strategies, the 24-item questionnaire of classroom discipline developed by Lewis (2001) was used. The scale assesses six frequently discussed discipline techniques used by teachers including: punishment, recognition/reward, involvement, discussion and negotiation, hinting, and aggression.

In order to assess teachers' discipline strategies, students were asked to indicate, how frequently the teacher acted as described in the statement when trying to deal with misbehaviors on a 6-point Likert type scale from nearly always 6 to never 1. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the whole scale was found to be .81.

Demographic information of the participants (age, grade, school type) was also gathered by a separate form.

classroom-friendly model in which L2 motivation is conceptualized on three levels. The *language level* addresses the social side of L2 motivation, subsuming Gardner's integrative and instrumental concepts. The *learner level* represents individual characteristics of the learner, and concerns internal desire for achievement and issues related to self-confidence. The *learning situation level* is associated with classroom specific motivational factors: course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific motivational components. According to this model, three key components of the teacher's role that impact on L2 motivation are specified: the *affiliative motive* (i.e., students' desire to please the teacher), *authority type* (i.e.

### **In English classes, classroom management raises key issues, and the biggest challenges EFL teachers face is how to maintain discipline while they teach**

authoritarian, democratic or laissez-faire teaching style) and *direct socialization of student motivation* which includes modeling, task presentation and feedback.

MacIntyre et al., (2002) hold a similar viewpoint by indicating three components that make up the motivation of L2 learning: the desire to learn L2, motivational effort, and attitudes toward learning L2. It is suggested that the frequency of using L2 can be influenced by the motivation components and learners' willingness to communicate (WTC). When students are not affectively and effectively prepared, their desire to communicate will not produce WTC, but will result in unwillingness to talk (UTT).

Many recent studies on the role of lan-

guage teachers in motivating their students to learn support the fact that the teacher is of great significance in developing students' affective learning. It is also suggested that students are motivated to communicate and participate when teachers are responsive and caring and avoid placing anxiety on students. The study conducted by Yi (2006) revealed that teachers who demonstrated more leadership, as well as friendly and understanding behaviors in their interactions with learners, were found to foster greater learner achievement and to create positive attitudes towards the subject of study. Teachers who had more uncertain, dissatisfied and admonishing behavior produced the reverse effect.

#### **● Classroom discipline in language classes**

English classes are composed of various activities that require students' active participation, so "students usually have more opportunities in an EFL class than classes of other subjects to speak, to talk, to read aloud or even to argue with each other" (Yi, 2006, p. 132). Therefore, if the class is not going to be managed by the teacher appropriately, there is the risk of chaos and disruptive behavior. Research shows that too much noise in the classroom intervenes with cognitive processing of information and thus minimizes learning outcomes and motivation. Further, many students may associate the noise produced by group work with a lack of classroom management skill on teachers' part. This raises doubt about language learning and teachers' ability and consequently lowers students' motivation.

Another important aspect of classroom management centers on the issue of how to teach under 'adverse circumstances' which implies a number of management

in one's career.

Deci and Ryan (1985) classified motivation into *intrinsic motivation*, the desire to engage in activities in anticipation of internally rewarding consequences such as feelings of competence and self-determination, and extrinsic motivation, the desire to engage in activities in anticipation of a reward from outside of and beyond the self.

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) broadened the definitional framework of motivation and suggested that motivation should include four major determinants: (1) interest in learning the language, (2) relevance

which involves the perception that personal needs are being met by the learning situation, (3) expectation for success or failure, and (4) extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Supporting the perception of motivation as a multifaceted complex of factors, Brown (1994) proposed a two-by-two matrix representing the combination of the intrinsic-extrinsic dimension with the conventional integrative-instrumental dimension to show that it is difficult to divide language learning motivation into two distinct types such as integrative-instrumental motivation or intrinsic-extrinsic motivation.

Dornyei (1994) developed an extended,



ply a range of rewards and recognitions for good behavior as well as punishments for misbehavior (Canter & Canter, 2002). Others argue that the aim can only be attained by less emphasis on student obedience and teacher coercion, and more on student self-regulation. This is facilitated by techniques such as negotiating, discussing, and contracting (Vitto, 2003). The third orientation favors group participation and decision making, whereby the group takes responsibility for ensuring the appropriateness of the behavior of all its members (Edwards & Mullis, 2003). In practice, however, most programs addressing classroom behavior management combine techniques from all three approaches with varying emphases.

Based on self-determination theory, social-contextual conditions that provide people with the opportunity to satisfy their basic needs lead to enhanced motivation, optimal functioning, and psychological well being, whereas environmental factors that thwart these basic needs result in opposite outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is suggested that classroom discipline can lead to developing an effective classroom man-

agement style which maximizes students' academic performance and keeps them on task by developing a sense of responsibility in them. In doing so, an effective style of classroom discipline minimizes problems and disruptions in the classroom (Lewis, et al., 2008).

#### ● **Language learning motivation**

Over the past few decades, there has been a growing interest in exploring learning motivation to understand why people learn a second or a foreign language.

The formulation of second language motivation which was first proposed by Gardner and his associates has inspired a lot of research in this field. Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggested that language learning motivation can be divided into two types; *integrative motivation*, and *instrumental motivation*, the former is the stimulus for learners' further language studies stemming from their desire to communicate or interact with L2 people or culture and the latter is the external influences that make learners study more such as studying English to pass an entrance examination or having adequate English ability to progress



## Introduction

Motivation is the primary impetus to initiate second or foreign language learning and it is the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process. For English teachers, students' motivation has continually become a major concern because students' motivation is critical to make the process of teaching and learning more effective.

Teachers are identified as a key factor in making learning effective and students' learning relies so much on teachers' instructional behavior. Due to this fact, students' learning attitude and learning motivation are influenced both by their perceptions of what their teachers do in the class and directly by teachers' actual behaviors (Allen et al., 2006).

Factors such as teachers' personal characteristics, strategies they use in the classroom and how well they support and care for their students all combine to determine how teachers can motivate or demotivate their students. Classroom discipline is one of the most significant issues related to teacher role and it is clearly of concern not only to teachers but also to many students and even parents (Longdon, 1996).

It is evident that motivation for learning increases when fear in the classroom is minimized (Boyle, 2000). In a supportive classroom climate where a teacher creates an atmosphere of warmth, safety, acceptance, and genuineness with his or her students, the students are more likely become more self-initiated, self-confident, self-directed, and less anxious learners. One way to create this atmosphere is to manage the class appropriately (Lewis, 2001). When teachers act offensively and coercively, learning is negatively affected and students report more psychological

and somatic complaints (Sava, 2002).

In English classes, classroom management raises key issues, and the biggest challenges EFL teachers face is how to maintain discipline while they teach (Linse & Nunan, 2005). On the one hand, a language teacher tries to be a kind and loving caregiver task master so that a genuine communication can take shape in the classroom (William & Burden, 1999). On the other hand, in order for the instruction to take place, the teacher should maintain order in his/her classroom. It is not, therefore, easy for an EFL teacher to create the balance between these two, that is, a caring environment and a controlled one.

### ● **Classroom discipline**

While one disciplinary view is that discipline is punishment and control (Rowntree, 1981), Harmer (1983) believes that discipline does not mean punishment applied to misbehaving students but refers to a contract which binds a teacher and a group of students together so that learning can be more effective. According to Lewis (2001), discipline is generally represented as what teachers do in response to students' misbehavior.

**Classroom discipline is one of the most significant activities that comprise the role of a teacher and it is clearly of concern not only to teachers but also to many students and even parents (Longdon, 1996)**

There are at least three main approaches to classroom discipline, each advocating particular techniques.

Some educationalists argue that in order to promote responsibility in children, teachers need to develop clear expectations for student behavior and then judiciously ap-



# The Role of Teachers' Classroom Discipline Strategies in Motivating Students' to Learn English as a Foreign Language

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## چکیده

هدف پژوهش حاضر، بررسی ارتباط راهبردهای انضباط کلاسی دبیران زبان انگلیسی در مدیریت رفتارهای ناهنجار و بی انضباطی در کلاس زبان با انگیزه یادگیری زبان دانش آموزان بود. ۳۷۴ دانش آموز دختر و پسر پرسشنامه راهبرد کلاسی دبیر زبان را تکمیل کردند که راهبردهای انضباطی را در شش محور مورد ارزیابی قرار می داد: تنبیه دانش آموزان، تشخیص رفتارهای مناسب و پاداش دادن به آنها، تبادل نظر با دانش آموزان در مورد بی انضباطی، درگیر نمودن دانش آموزان در روند تصمیم گیری در مورد نحوه برقراری انضباط در کلاس، تذکر دادن به دانش آموزان در صورت بروز رفتارهای ناهنجار، و اعمال خشونت در قبال بی انضباطی. دانش آموزان همچنین آزمون انگیزه-نگرش گاردنر را تکمیل کردند. نتیجه نشان داد که انگیزه یادگیری با چهار راهبرد تشخیص/ پاداش، تبادل نظر، درگیر کردن و تذکر دادن ارتباط مثبت و معنا دار و با راهبردهای تنبیه و خشونت ارتباط منفی و معنادار دارد. از این میان راهبردهای تنبیه، پاداش، درگیر کردن، و بحث و تبادل نظر پیش بینی کننده انگیزه یادگیری زبان هستند.

**کلید واژه‌ها:** انضباط کلاسی، آموزش زبان انگلیسی، انگیزه، معلمان، راهبردها

## Abstract

The aim of this study was investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies and their students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language. To achieve this goal, three hundred and seventy-four junior high-school students completed classroom discipline strategy questionnaire that assessed their perceptions of the strategies their English teachers used to discipline the classroom in terms of the following six factors: punishment, recognition/reward, discussion, hinting, involvement, and aggression. They also filled in Attitude/Motivation Test Battery that assessed their motivation towards learning English as a foreign language. The results revealed that punishment and aggression strategies correlated inversely with students' motivation. Discussion, recognition/reward, involvement, and hinting were positively related to students' motivation. Further, four strategies - punishment, recognition, involvement and hinting - could explain more than 20 percent of motivation in learning English as a foreign language, while punishment was found to be a hindrance to motivation.

**Key Words:** classroom discipline, EFL, motivation, teachers, strategies