INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

An International Open-Access Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal

EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTUAL CURIOSITY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: CORRELATION STUDY

Asmaa Abd Al-Nabi, Dr. Shoaib Saied Fahady

University of Mosul, College of Basic Education, Iraq

DOI: http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v12i03.021

ABSTRACT

This study aims to know the level of EFL students' Perceptual Curiosity . The level of EFL students' language proficiency. The correlational relationship between Iraqi EFL student's perceptual curiosity and their Language proficiency. To achieve the aims of this study, the researcher adapted Berlyne's questionnaire to measure the level of perceptual curiosity for the students of the University of Mosul, the Department of English Language 3rd stage and the researcher adapting proficiency test from Kattab's study. After analyzing the data statistically, the study was found that the students of the University of Mosul, the Department of English, have a level of perceptual curiosity in addition to a level of language proficiency. Also this study found that there is correlation between students' perceptual curiosity and their Language proficiency.

 Keywords: *Perceptual curiosity, Language proficiency, Correlation.*

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

As a concept which is involved in human nature, curiosity is the desire to learn things. Reflections of acts of curiosity can be observed in almost all areas of human life. As a matter of fact, the present state of developments in all branches of science and technology may be defined as the extent that human curiosity has achieved up to now. Leaving aside coincidental inventions, almost everything invented for human use is a product of one or some curious minds. Viewed from this perspective, curiosity may be seen as the hunger to do something. The instructional process is not an exception because the hunger in education is closely related with the eagerness and desire of learners to learn. Of course, there are a number of other essential factors to be considered for the success of education. However, what makes curiosity unique is that it plays a key role in stimulating further learning.

Since it is one of the fundamental and specific areas of education, language education can be said to have been affected by the natural human trait of curiosity. Covering a number of components ranging from the language-related to the culture-related aspects belonging to particular languages, language education is an area in which curiosity can serve for the purposes of a motive encouraging language learners to follow their language studies in the long-lasting and demanding process of language education.

Language proficiency (henceforth LP) is an indicator of someone ability to speak a language. LP is a measurement of how well an individual has mastered a language. Proficiency is measured in terms of receptive and expressive language skills, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, and other areas that demonstrate language

abilities. There are four domains to LP: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. LP is measured for an individual by each language, such that the individual may be proficient in English and not proficient in another language.

The current study attempts to identify the correlation among these variables; viz., perceptual curiosity (henceforth PC) and LP.

AIMS:

The current study aims at identifying

1- The level of EFL students' PC.

2- The level of EFL students' LP.

3- The correlational relationship between Iraqi EFL students' PC and their LP.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In the light of the aims set above, the researcher set the following null hypotheses:

1. EFL college students have moderate level of PC.
2. EFL college students have moderate level of LP.
3. There is no significant correlation between students' PC and their LP.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
Perceptual curiosity

Curiosity is a basic biological drive in both animals and humans, and has been identified as a key motive for learning and discovery. In the 1950s and 1960s, curiosity and related behaviors were topics of intense investigation among experimental psychologists, resulting in an extensive theoretical framework for understanding curiosity and related behaviors (e.g., Berlyne, 1954, 1960, 1966; Loewenstein, 1994). As an inherent part of humanity, the concept of curiosity has received different definitions. It has been described as the need to explain unexpected by Piaget (1969), the desire to resolve uncertainty by Kagan (1972) and the desire to receive information by Haughton (2014). A more comprehensive definition is offered by Arnone, et al. (2011) who suggest that curiosity is "a basic instinct, an innate mechanism that enabled intelligent species to learn about and master new things in their environments, promoting survival, use of tools, and ultimately technological advances" (p. 181).

In line with its relation to learning and, therefore, mastering novel things, curiosity has multidimensional connections with various concepts. While White (1959) relates curiosity with competence,

350

Kashdan and Yuen (2007) point at the relationship between curiosity and academic achievement. Regarding the search for learning new things, Arnone, et al. (2011) refer to the connection between curiosity and exploratory behavior. Taking the scope of curiosity into account, Reio, et al. (2006) propose a three-dimensional model involving cognitive curiosity, physical curiosity and social curiosity. The strong association between curiosity and learning has also attracted attention in the educational arena (Baruch, et al., 2014).

The perusal of the literature reveals that curiosity in language education has been mostly examined in line with motivation which has relevance with curiosity. Regarding the significance of motivation in the maintenance of the desire and dedication to learn a language, Dörnyei (1998, p.117) suggested that "motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" and underlined the dynamic relationship between motivation and other factors, which is curiosity for the purposes of this study, stating "all the other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent". The strong connection between motivation and curiosity is also stressed by Ciampa (2016) and Lin, et al.(2012).

Curiosity has become a topic of investigation from different perspectives involving its existence and effects on young learners of various ages. The concept of curiosity can be said to promote cultural and pragmatic development.

According to Jepma, et al. (2012), there are two different types of curiosity: perceptual and epistemic. In addition, there are two categories of each type of curiosity, specific and divertive. PC is aroused by sensory factors that are novel, while epistemic curiosity is driven by the desire to learn and acquire information. Therefore, epistemic curiosity leads to intentional learning and PC leads an unintentional way of acquiring information. Furthermore, specific curiosity involves seeking information about a particular topic, and divertive curiosity involves the desire to learn about general information (Collins, et al, 2004). The term curiosity is used both as a description of a specific behavior as well as a hypothetical construct to explain the same behavior. PC is aroused by novel, strange or ambiguous stimuli, whereas epistemic curiosity refers to the desire for knowledge or intellectual information which applies mainly to humans (Jepma, et al. 2012 p. 5).

Basics of perceptual curiosity

PC involves interest in and giving attention to novel perceptual stimulation, and motivates visual and sensory-inspection. PC evoked by complex or ambiguous patterns of sensory stimulation (e.g. Sights, sounds), motivated behaviors such as visual inspection in order to acquire new information. (Collins, et al, 2004).

1. Perceptual Curiosity and Knowledge

Berlyne categorized curiosity along several dimensions: "epistemic and PC", where the former refers to the drive and desire for knowledge, and PC which refers to exploratory behaviour that enhances perception of the environment (Berlyne, 1954). Another dimension introduced by Berlyne (1960) was "specific and divertive curiosity", where specific curiosity relates to the desire to reduce uncertainty by searching for a particular piece of information that is lacking. In contrast, divertive curiosity refers to the seeking of information or stimulation that is novel, complex or surprising in order to reduce feelings of boredom and increase arousal. (Berlyne, 1960) suggested that complexity, surprise, uncertainty and novelty, activate the 'curiosity drive' and subsequently increase aversive arousal levels. The desire to resolve uncertainty is thought to be fulfilled through information-seeking, a

behaviour that is proposed to reduce arousal and satisfy curiosity (Collins, et al, 2004).

PC is one of the most basic types of curiosity that applies to both animals and humans (Jepma, et al. 2012 p. 5). PC as defined by Berlyne 1954 involves interest in and giving attention to novel perceptual stimulation and motivates visual and sensory inspection. (Collins, et al, 2004). Berlyne's distinction between divertive and specific exploration, and his association of curiosity with only the latter, suggests that such exploratory, or orienting, phenomena should not be treated as manifestations of curiosity. That is not to say that information seeking by nonhuman animals should never be interpreted as specific exploration and curiosity per se; anyone who has observed the propensity of cats to explore anything they have restricted access to-that is, from which they have experienced "receipt of partial information"-will be unlikely to blithely dismiss the idea that nonhuman animals engage in specific exploration. (Markey and George , 2014 p. 238).

2. Perceptual Curiosity and Self-Regulation

The concept of self-regulation refers to an individual's conscious awareness of the task of performance and work and the ability to test oneself at regular intervals

(Schraw, 1994 p.14). PC can be conceptualized as a positive system of sensory-emotional stimulation associated with the pursuit of self-regulation (Kashdan & Roberts, 2004 p. 801). It consists of such dimensions:-

1-Exploration, which indicates the endeavors and desire to search for new.

2-Challenge.

3-Comprehension through actual participation in new activities. According to Kashdan, (2004) Cognitive curiosity leads to positive subjective experiences in personal growth through:

a-Increasing the distribution of attention and directing it towards new stimuli

b-Searching for rewarding behavioral and cognitive stimuli that the individual gets to reward.

c-Merging new experiences with the experiences that the individual possesses through assimilation, and he also believes that each step of this process is a self-regulation of the individual's experiences. (Kashdan & Roberts, 2004 p.322).

Language Proficiency

What is LP

Proficiency is characterized as a person's ability to communicate or act in a learned language (Chastain, 1998). English proficiency can be described as the ability to comprehend spoken and written English. In addition, the ability to do something in a language and the understanding of it are also included in the concept of LP in a second language. As a consequence, LP includes the communicative ability, knowledge structures and skills of a learner or user. In a foreign language, the concept of proficiency contains aspects of the ability to do something with the language (knowing how) as well as knowing about it (knowing what). Accordingly, LP involves communicative abilities of learner or user of a language, knowledge systems, and skills (Canale, 1983).

Stern (1991, p. 542) argues that the goal of foreign language teaching is to help learners of a language obtain proficiency in that language. He believes that the description and conceptualization of proficiency is an important phase in learning a foreign language. He suggests that LP levels could be; elementary proficiency, limited working proficiency, minimum professional proficiency; full professional proficiency: and native or bilingual proficiency. He then mentions that LP of a variety of foreign language learners "ranges from zero to native-like proficiency. The zero is not absolute because the second language learner as the speaker of at least one other language, his

353

first language, knows language and how it functions".

Brumfit (1984, p. 543) used fluency instead of proficiency and introduced it as, "the maximally effective operation of the language system so far acquired by the student".

Research in language education, similar to applied linguistics, proposes a new way of comprehending LP in terms of communicative academic LP and basic interpersonal communication skills. It denotes academic knowledge and language skills are acquired or taught through formal instruction. As a result, it is a skill that is required to complete academic tasks such as assessing. Basic interpersonal communication skills, on the other hand, refer to the skills required to communicate with others in everyday situations. These two levels of LP suggest that LP in formal school settings is described as an explicit mastery of language aspects, and It can be measured by various language tests such as LP test (Claudia, 2017, p. 251).

The scope of LP in English listening, speaking, reading, and writing is referred to as English proficiency. The way we think about LP has a great influence on a lot of legal and hypothesized problems in learning (Allen et al, 1990, p. 7).

Listening is a communication method in which the listener is required to comprehend, interpret, and assess what they hear. Obviously, listeners rarely have the opportunity to listen repeatedly to the exact the same language or text as they wish. Therefore, the listening process entails greater efforts than reading or writing (Alderson, 2005, p. 138). Moreover, listening is seen as a fundamental skill of language that has a considerable impact that affected the development and appearance of reading and writing to a great extent (Manzouri et al, 2016, p. 30).

In the oral mode, speaking is the most productive skill. It is more complex than it seems at first, and it entails more than just pronouncing terms, as with the other skills. Speaking, according to (Chastain, 1998, p. 332), is a productive ability that includes multiple elements such strategy as, grammar, psycholinguistics, and discourse. For him, speaking entails more than just selecting the appropriate sounds, choosing the right words, and correctly constructing sentences.

Reading, according to (Kose,2006, p. 2), is a cognitive ability used by a person as a means of interacting with the written text. Reading skills contain: identifying word meaning, identifying writer's technique, drawing inferences, finding

answers to questions, and recognizing mood of passage. Thus, the main idea of reading something is to perceive and comprehend the purpose and the author's intention. Reading involves two categories of reality: one can be seen by the reader and the other cannot be seen. Accordingly, the goal of reading is to make the invisible category and underlying meaning visible and obvious. Moreover, fluent readers have to use their literacy, experiences and expectations to hypothesis and predict meanings. Accordingly, learners need to focus on the constituent letters, symbols or words formed in the text but on meaning.

One of the most critical goals of foreign language instruction is to improve writing skills. As a result, a significant amount of research has been dedicated to understanding and developing what else is in writing, particularly in academic perspectives. Students' ability to organize sentences and paragraphs intelligibly, use accurate vocabulary and syntax, punctuate and spell correctly, and consider continuity and coherence are all part of writing proficiency (Lines, 2014, p. 83).

Proficiency vs. Competence

Competence is described by Epstein and Hundert (2002, p. 226) as the systematic and judicious use of interaction, experience, professional knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and analysis in everyday practice for the benefit of the person and culture supported. Stern (1983, p. 342) has coined the word competence as an alternative to proficiency. He incorporates the expressions competence and proficiency interchangeably. In his attempt to characterize proficiency and competence, he appears to have different conceptions and notions. Furthermore, Taylor (1988:69) claims that competence and proficiency are closely intertwined, particularly in the field of language teaching, which interacts with language education.

Chomsky (1965, p. 48) emphasizes on the distinction between linguistic competence. He describes competence as an idealized capacity that is located as a psychological or mental property or function and performance as the production of actual utterances. In short, competence involves 'knowing' the language and performance involves 'doing' something with the language. The difficulty with this construct is that it is very difficult to assess competence without assessing performance (Chomsky, 1976, p. 175).

Proficiency, however, is measured in terms of receptive and expressive language skills, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, and other areas that demonstrate language abilities. Accordingly, there are four

355

domains to language proficiency: reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Sarifa, 2020: 104).

PROCEDURES

Population

Population is any set of items, individuals, etc., that have some common and observable characteristics from which a sample can be selected (Richards et.al, 1992, p.282). A Population refers to any collection of a specified group of human beings or non-human entities such as objects, institutions, time, units, etc.(Mills and Gay,2019, p.159). The population in this study comprises the third year students at the department of English/ college of Basic education/ University of Mosul for the academic year 2021/2022. Their number is 268 students; (159) males and (109) females.

Sample

A sample, according to Ary et al. (2010, p.148), is a bunch of individuals chosen from a population for a research, generally in such a way that they represent the larger group from which they are chosen. As for Mills and Gay (2019, p.155) a sample is a group of individuals, items, or events representing the larger group's characteristics from which the sample is drowned.

The sample of the study is selected from EFL students in the third year at the Department of English/ College of Basic Education/ University of Mosul. The reason for selecting third year students as the sample of this study is that these students have already completed about three years of studying English at their colleges. At this stage, students also should be mature enough to respond accurately to the definite scales and familiar enough with the four language skills to go through the proficiency test. The total number of the sample is (100), (57) males and (43) females, as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1 Population and Sample of the Study

College & Department	Grade	Male	Female	Total
College of Basic Education/ Department of English	Population	3rd stage	159	109	268
	Sample	3rd stage	57	43	100

Instruments

The current study involves three sets of instruments. They have been adopted after surveying the related literature. They are; PC, noticing, and LP. A proficiency test has been developed to measure students' proficiency in English. Further elaboration of each instrument is illustrated below:

1. The Perceptual Curiosity Questionnaire (PC)

After reviewing the previous studies on PC, the researcher found two types of curiosity according to Berlyne's theory: Divertive curiosity and Specific curiosity. Divertive curiosity which involved searching the environment for something new and interesting (Litman, 2018). Specific curiosity was involved the detailed investigation of a particular novel stimulus in order to acquire additional knowledge or perceptual information (ibid).

The researcher adopted Berlyne's questionnaire for perceptual curiosity. This questionnaire has been developed by the researcher after it has presented to the jury

members. Some items have modified to suit the nature of the study. The initial version of the questionnaire includes two sections; the first consists of 16 items to measure the nature of perceptual curiosity in general, and the second section consists also of 16 items related to a person's curiosity towards the English language in particular. The modification of these items has been done according to the notes given by the jury members. The scale includes four alternatives (always, often, sometimes, never). To count the total score for the respondents, weights (4, 3, 2, 1) are given to each item concerning the alternative that has been chosen. The total score of the scale is (128), and the theoretical mean is (64).

2. English Proficiency Test

A four-part English proficiency test is adopted from khattab's study . Each part is designed to assess students' proficiency in a definite language skill. The total score for this test is (100), and the theoretical mean is (50). Accordingly, the test includes listening, reading (comprehension), speaking, and writing parts, as shown in table 3.2:

Table 2 LP Test

Skills	Number of questions	Total mark
Listening	10 questions	20
Reading	10 questions	20
Writing	An essay question	30
Speaking	One picture	30
Total	22	100

a- Listening Skill

In this part, students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to recognize a short passage in English by determining what it means, followed by (10) multiple-choice items. Students must listen to the passage and choose the appropriate response. This part is scored out of 20 marks.

b- Reading Comprehension Skill

This section includes a reading passage with 10 questions where the questions consist of (5) multiple-choice questions, (3) completion questions, and (2) true or false questions. The Students must answer all of the questions in this part which is scores out of 20 marks.

c- Speaking skill

This part is designed to measure students' ability to talk in English by asking them to speak on a specific topic. In this section, students are asked to explain a picture that relates to a variety of social media platforms while also answering questions about the 41 picture's content, which was chosen based on their daily interests and the importance of the subject's relation with their lives. 30 marks are allotted to this part.

d- Writing Skill

In this section, students are asked to write a 250-words essay in English on a given subject in order to assess their writing ability. The writing subject is chosen in accordance with the topics they have previously covered as well as the criterion of authenticity. This part carries 30 marks. The total score of the English proficiency test is (100). The lowest score that students receive is (12) and the theoretical mean of the test is (50).

Validity of the Research Instruments

One of the essential qualities to research design and choosing a research

instrument is validity. According to Mills and Gay (2019, p: 178), validity refers to how a tool measures what it is intended to measure and thus allows appropriate interpretation of scores. Validity of an instrument assesses the extent to which the instrument measures what it is designed to measure (Robson, 2011). It is the degree to which the results are truthful. Face validity is considered as one of the most appropriate forms of validity to be measured. An instrument's face validity refers to how well it appears to those who use it. (Mc-Namara, 2000, p.50).

a- Face Validity

To ensure validity of the three instruments in this study, they subjected to a jury of experts in ELT, Applied Linguistics and Educational Psychology . The instruments are found 100% valid by the jury members with some modifications regarded in the final version of the questionnaire.

b- Construct Validity

Construct validity defines as the extent to which a research tool measures the train, theoretical ability or construct that is intended to measure (LI, 1996, p.39). To measure the construct validity of perceptual curiosity questionnaire, noticing test and English proficiency test, the psychometrics of the questionnaire and the

questions of the tests are tested by conducting items analysis in which discriminatory power, difficulty level and item total correlation are checked.

Administration

a- PC Scale :

The PC test was applied to students of the Department of English at the College of Basic Education, University of Mosul on 9/3/2022. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic to facilitate the process of understanding the paragraphs for the students. The questionnaire contained 32 items of 4 alternatives. It took 15 minutes for the students to answer, and the items of the questionnaire were clear and easy.

b- English Language Proficiency test :

The English LP test was applied to students of the English Language Department at the College of Basic Education, University of Mosul on 23/3/2022. The test contains examining the four skills of students, for each skill there are appropriate questions, and there was great cooperation from the students. The test took 30 minutes to be completed.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, the data collected through the application of the study instruments will be analysed statistically

359

by using suitable statistical means. The analyzation of data will be done in light of the hypotheses

THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS

"EFL college students have moderate level of PC"

The researcher hypothesized that EFL college students have moderate level of PC. To test this hypothesis and verify it, the students' scores obtained according to

their responses on the PC scale. It has been found that the students registered a computed mean on the PC scale (82.58) of (64) SD. The theoretical mean of the scale is (15.99569). To show the students level of PC, the computed mean should be compared statistically to theoretical one to see if there is a significant difference between them. The t test formula for one sample has been utilized for this purpose. The result is shown in table 3 below:

Table 3 measuring the level of PC

Variable	Sample	Computed Mean	SD.	Theoretical mean	T calculated	T tabulated	Sig.
PC	100	82.58	15.99569	64	11.616	1.987	Significant (99)(0.05)

Table 2 shows that the t calculated is higher than the t tabulated. This means that there is a significant difference, at 0.05 level of significance and 99 degrees of freedom, between the computed mean and the theoretical mean for the benefit of the computed one as it is higher. This means that EFL students have higher level of PC. Accordingly, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

This result can be explained by the fact that university students enjoy perceptual curiosity and that is the tremendous and rapid developments that

are taking place in our current era, especially technological ones, which led to the wide spread of computerized devices and smart devices, as this segment of young people spends a long time with them because of the available effects and sensory alerts. Perceptual, which is often characterized by novelty and diversity in various areas of life, as well as its superior ability to provide unlimited communication with others, which led to an increase in the desire of the individual who deals with it to know more about the surrounding world, in addition to the fact

360

that the university environment is a wide, diverse and rich environment

SECOND HYPOTHESIS

"EFL college students have moderate level of LP"

This hypothesis is devoted to measure students' LP. The proficiency test has been administrated upon the sample and their responses have been registered. The mean score of the sample on LP is (53.0100) of (12.34152) SD. The theoretical mean score of the test is (50). So, to identify students' LP, the two mean scores are tested by using t test for one sample. The result is shown in table 4.3. It is clear that the subjects of the study have accepted level of LP as the t calculated is higher than the t tabulated. So, there is significant statistical difference between the two mean scores for the benefit of the computed mean. The reason behind this could be the emphasis on the overall learning of the four skills of English imposed by university authorities, and the stringent evaluation system of the university. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. Although, the computed mean score of the sample is accepted, but it is not high.

Table 4 Measuring the Level of LP

Test	No.	Computed Mean	SD.	Theoretical mean	T calculated	T tabulated	Sig.
LP	100	53.0100	2.34152	50	2.439	1.987	Significant (99)(0.05)

THIRD HYPOTHESIS

"There is no significant correlation between students' PC and their LP"

To test this hypothesis, the correlation between the mean scores of PC and LP has been computed by using coefficient correlation formula. Then, the result has been tested by using t test for one sample. The correlation coefficient between the two variables is (0.325). It has been tested to see if it is significant. The statistical analysis shows a significant correlation between PC and LP as the t calculated is higher than the t tabulated at 0.05 level of significance and 99 degrees of freedom.

Table 5 The Correlation Between PC and LP

Variables	No.	PC mean	LP mean	Correlation Coefficient	T calculated	T tabulated	Sig.
PC and LP	100	82.58	53.0100	0.325	3.402	1.98	Significant 0.05, 99

The result of this hypothesis pointed at curiosity as a factor positively contributing to the language development of the participants. In the foreign language learning process, the participants were exposed to a great amount of language content. They had the chance to observe the way the target language was used inside and outside the classroom setting. This offered them the opportunity to encounter a number of new language usages to learn. This content-rich environment naturally raised the curiosity of the participants to learn more about the target language. The reflections of the participants revealed that constantly being exposed to new forms of the target language inside and outside the language classroom was a factor increasing their curiosity to learn more about the language. Either by searching for novel things or going through a process of comparing and contrasting their native language and the target language, the participants expressed being motivated, out of curiosity, to develop their language knowledge in terms of the linguistic aspects.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In order to know the level of cognitive curiosity among university students, which is the first goal of this thesis, the researcher conducted a questionnaire about curiosity in general and about linguistic curiosity in particular. The statistical analysis shows that EFL students have a good level of curiosity of language learning. This indicates that curiosity is a feature and an innate thing in Man and a basic instinct towards knowing what surrounds him which arouses his interest. It surrounds them in general and this is consistent with Berlin's theory.

What explains the students' possession of a level of language proficiency that was inferred after conducting a test of the four skills and analyzing the data of this test is the students' curiosity and desire to master the foreign language as a second language. This explains their choice of the English

language department as a means to help them fulfill this curiosity. The study of language as a specialization helps them mastering the language and acquire a good competence, as it is not possible to acquire language competence without the actual practice of the language.

This study also confirmed the existence of a correlation between curiosity and linguistic noticing. As it indicated previously, curiosity provoked by strange and mysterious stimuli, and because language is something that arouses human curiosity as a strange and new stimulus that does not belong to his mother tongue, so, students will have a percentage of noticing towards language in an attempt to understand and learning it as one of the challenges of reality. This also explains the existence of a correlation between curiosity and language proficiency, as one of the most important factors affecting language competence is motivation. As there is a motive to learn a language, curiosity and linguistic knowledge of the participants will be developed. This finding is agreed with Aysegul's study which indicated the role of curiosity in developing language and linguistics knowledge among students.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the current study, the researcher attempts to shed light on and investigate correlation between three important factors that may affect the instructional process. These variables are PC and LP for EFL college level students. language education can be said to have been affected by the natural human trait of curiosity. It is an area in which curiosity can serve for the purposes of a motive encouraging language learners to follow their language studies in the long-lasting and demanding process of language education. LP is a measurement of how well an individual has mastered a language. Proficiency is measured in terms of receptive and expressive language skills, syntax, vocabulary, semantics, and other areas that demonstrate language abilities.

The participants benefitted from the sense of curiosity in developing their knowledge and competence in the target language in terms of linguistic, social-cultural and pragmatic aspects. They have the desire to learn more about the target culture and the different cultures introduced by the other students in the class. As a result, the more they were curious about novelty, the more they improved their target language. They improved their linguistic knowledge by

363

adding new items into their language repertoire. They advanced their social and cultural basis by observing the target culture as well as other cultures. In addition, they enhanced their pragmatic competence by learning the norms of different cultures and languages including the target language. Moreover, the participants contributed to the maintenance of a new social and cultural atmosphere by introducing local cultures into the learning community reflecting their peculiar linguistic, social and cultural characteristics.

REFERENCES:

1. Alderson, J. C. (2005). **Diagnosing foreign language proficiency: The interface between learning and assessment**. London: Continuum.

2. Allen , P. , Swain , M. , Cummins , J. , & Harley , B. (1990) . **The Development of Second Language Proficiency** . New York , NY : Cambridge University Press. Arana, 2008

3. Arnone, M. P., Small, R. V., Chauncey, S. A., & McKenna, H. P. (2011). "Curiosity, interest and engagement in technology-pervasive learning environments: a new research agenda". **Educational Technology Research and Development**, vol. 59 No. 2, 181-198.

4. Baruch, K., Deczkowska, A., David, E., Castellano, J. M., Miller, O., Kertser, A., & Schwartz, M. (2014). "Aging-induced type I interferon response at the choroid plexus negatively affects brain function". **Science**, 346(6205), 89-93.

5. Berlyne, Daniel Ellis. (1954) "A theory of human curiosity." **British journal of psychology**, vol. 45 No.3, 180.

6. Brumfit , C. (1984) . **Communicative methodology in language teaching** . Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

7. Canale, M. (1983). "On Some Dimensions of Language Proficiency". In J.W. Oller **Issues in Language Testing Research**. MA: Newburry House.

8. Chastain, K. (1998). **Developing Second Language Skills**. (2nd Ed.). Chicago:

9. Harcourt Brace Publishers.

10. Chomsky, Noam (1965). **Aspects of the theory of syntax**. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.

11. _____ (1976). **Reflections on language.** Fontana/Collins Press.

12. Ciampa, Katia (2016). "Implementing a Digital Reading and Writing Workshop Model for Content Literacy Instruction in an Urban Elementary (K–8) School". **The Reading Teacher**, vol. 70 issue 3, 295-306.

13. Claudia ,H.(2017)."proficiency". **ELT Journal**, vol.17 No.2, 251

14. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). **Research Methods in Education** (6th ed.). London and New York, NY: Routledge Falmer.

15. Collins, Robert P., Jordan A. Litman, and Charles D. Spielberger (2004). "The measurement of perceptual curiosity." **Personality and individual differences,** vol. 36 No.5, 1127-1141.

16. Dornyei, Z., & Ottó, I. (1998). **Motivation in action: A process model of L2 motivation.**

17. Houghton, S. (2014). "Exploring manifestations of curiosity in study abroad as part of intercultural communicative competence". **System**, 42, 368-382.

18. Jepma, Marieke, et al. (2012) "Neural mechanisms underlying the induction and relief of perceptual curiosity." **Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience,** 6: 5.

19. Kagan, J. (1972). "Motives and development". **Journal of Personality and Social Psychology**, vol. 22 No.1, 51–66.

20. Kashdan, T. B., & Roberts, J. E. (2004). "Trait and state curiosity in the genesis of intimacy: Differentiation from related constructs". **Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology**, vol.23 No.6, 792-816.

21. Kashdan, T. B., & Yuen, M. (2007). "Whether highly curious students thrive academically depends on perceptions about the school learning environment: A study of Hong Kong adolescents". **Motivation and Emotion**, vol.31 No. 4, 260-270.

22. Kose, N. (2006). **Effects of portfolio implementation and assessment critical**

reading on learner autonomy of EFL students.

23. Li, S. (1996). "The construct validity of language aptitude". **Studies in Second Language Acquisition**, 38, 801-342.

24. Lin, H.-S., Hong, Z., & Chen, Y.-C. (2012). "Exploring the development of college students' situational interest in learning science". **International Journal of Science Education,** vol. 35 No.13, 2152–2173.

25. Lines, H. E. (2014). It is a matter of individual taste, I guess: Secondary school English Teachers" and Students" Conceptualizations of Quality in Writing. Thesis, University of Exeter.

26. Litman, J. A. (2018). "Interest and deprivation factors of epistemic curiosity". **Personality and Individual Differences**, vol.44 No.7, 1585–1595

27. Loewenstein, George. "The psychology of curiosity: A review and reinterpretation." **Psychological bulletin, vol.** 116 No.1, 75.

28. Manzouri, M. (2016). Experiences of Iranian high school immigrant students in learning mathematics in Canada (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

29. Markey, A., & Loewenstein, George(2014). **Curiosity. International handbook of emotions in education**, 238-255..

30. Mc-Namara, T. F. (2000). **Language Testing.** Oxford University Press, Oxford [England].

31. Mills, Geoffery E. and Gay, L. R. (2019). **Educational Research : Competencies for Analysis and Applications.** Twelfth ed. , Pearson, New York.

32. Reio Jr, T. G., Petrosko, J. M., Wiswell, A. K., & Thongsukmag, J. (2006). "The measurement and conceptualization of curiosity". **The Journal of Genetic Psychology**, 167(2), 117-135.

33. Richards , J. C. , Platt , J. , & Platt H. (1992) . **Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics** (2nd Ed .) . London : Longman.

34. Robinson, P. (1995). **Attention, memory and the noticing hypothesis**. Language Learning 45(2), 283-331.

35. Sarifa, N. (2020). "Enhancing EFL learners' English Proficiency and Intelligence by Implementing The Eclectic Method of Language Teaching". **Arab World English Journal,** vol. 11 No. 1, 103-113.

36. Schraw, T. D., Roedel, G., & Plake, B. S. (1994). "Validation of a measure of learning and performance goal orientations". **Educational and Psychological Measurement,** vol. 54 No.4, 1013-1021.

37. Stern , J. R., Rubenstein, L. Z., &, Sowers ,N. (1983). "Plasma norephinephrine responses to posture and isometric exercise increase with age in the absence of obesity". **Journal of gerontology,** vol. 38 No.3, 315-317.

38. Stern, P., & Trefler, E. (1991). "An interdisciplinary problem-based learning project for assistive technology education". **Assistive Technology**, vol. 9 No.2, 152-157.

39. Taylor, D.S. (1988). "The meaning and Use of the Term 'Competence' in

40. Linguistics and Applied Linguistics". **Journal of Applied Linguistics**,

41. Vol. 9 No. 2, 148–168.

42. White, R. W. (1959). "Motivation reconsidered: the concept of competence". **Psychological Review**, 66(5), 297.

365