A Theoretical Model of Hope for Teaching English Language

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Abstract
There is a research scarcity in theoretical conceptualizing of hope for teaching second or foreign languages. On the other hand, adopting an exploratory mixed-methods research design, Ghadyani et al. (2020) presented a categorical framework of hope for teaching English as a foreign language. Continuing the previous study, the specific objective of this paper is to depict the process by which hope for teaching English as a foreign language is created. Given conducted in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of experienced EFL teachers, a qualitative theoretical model of hope for teaching EFL was developed. Pilot testing was conducted to validate the results. In the testing phase, 228 Iranian EFL teachers were given the developed scale (Ghadyani et al., 2020). The final theoretical model of hope for teaching EFL was confirmed via performing statistical data analysis. It was revealed that hope for teaching English as a foreign language can be achieved through five paths. The process tends to start with the factor ‘interpersonal relationship’ and it comes to an end with the factor ‘anticipated effort’. The variable ‘source’ was identified and confirmed as the core factor. Additionally, results of this study are compared with those of the research done by Ghadyani et al. (2021, 2022). The findings would be valuable to program designers and curriculum evaluators in assessing the effective use of the second/foreign language teaching.

Keywords: Hope, Theoretical Model, Teaching English

Introduction
Humans living in modern societies need to have language skills as a tool to facilitate their communication with other people due to different types of exchanges with each other and also the expansion of communication channels throughout the world. Bearing this in mind, Iranian society has welcomed learning languages, particularly EFL learning, and Iranian EFL teachers have engaged in teaching English to facilitate EFL learning and help EFL learners to achieve their goals. Moreover, social milieus of all countries may cause people to compromise their perceptions of hope for their professions or vice versa. In this way, the authors have had periods when they had witnessed a substantial number of Iranian EFL teachers within their context who recurrently moaned that they had no high hope for teaching English most of the time. A reasonable approach to tackle this issue could be to ask if the low hope of EFL teachers for teaching English as a foreign language might be enhanced, and how it could be possible.

Though the meaning of hope might be evident to most people, scientifically, there is no consensus about the theory of the subject (Flores-Lucas et al, 2018). Additionally, Sieben (2018) states that hope acts specifically according to the domain specific theory of hope (Robinson & Rose, 2010). In other words, hope can be scientifically conceptualized in terms of its immediate context. Further, Hope has been acknowledged to be a significant psychological capital for job performance (Peterson & Byron, 2008). Therefore, this recognition implies that hope is logically a prominent factor within the field of second language teaching (SLT), too. Nonetheless, most importantly, there is no theoretical conceptualization of hope that has been incorporated in the discipline, and it calls for the development of a theory of hope that is contextually specific to the field. Accordingly, this study sought to answer the following research question.

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RQ: How are the elements of hope for teaching English as a foreign language (HTEFL) connected to one another in the Iranian EFL context?

Literature Review
The theories of hope are landmarks in the contemporary literature on the topic that led to the emergence of the term ‘science of hope’ (Gallagher, 2018). Hope has been studied from different viewpoints. The cognitive view of hope (Snyder et al., 1991) involves the three factors of agency-thinking, pathways-thinking, and goal (Snyder et al., 2002a; Snyder et al., 2002b). A goal is characterized as anything that each individual desires to get or create (Snyder et al., 2002b) and the combination of other two provides the means of achieving goals. While Snyder et al. (1991) proposed that hope is not an emotion, studying the emotional aspect of hope could provide new insights into the dimensions that underlie the structure of hope. Smith and Ellsworth (1985) conducted hope-based research using the cognitive evaluation theory of emotion. They demonstrated a close relation between the human experienced hope and the cognitive evaluations of their surroundings. They found out six dimensions, including human agency, anticipated effort, attentional activity, situational control, certainty, and pleasantness. Averill et al. (1990) explored social rules of hope by adopting a social-constructionist perspective on hope. To end this aim, the study participants received questionnaires asking them to compare hope with desire, provide a detailed account of hope episode, and report on prohibited hope. Eventually, they recognized four social rules of hope, namely priority, prudential, moralistic, and action rules that create hope. All the rules were supported by the qualitative study conducted by Bruininks and Malle (2005). Moreover, the qualitative research of Davison and Simpson (2006) supported the moralistic rule and the priority rule of Averill et al. (1990). Recently, workplace studies of hope have been devoted more attention to the theory developed by Snyder et al. (1991) and Snyder (1994).

Luthans and Jensen's (2002) investigation into workplace hope revealed a positive correlation between the managers’ performances and their levels of hope. Further, Peterson and Byron (2008) highlighted the significance of employees' hope levels for their job performance in the industrial environment. Hope was also correlated with the employees' level of financial performance (Avey et al., 2010). The meta-analysis by Reichard et al. (2013) confirmed the positive association between hope level and job performance in the workplace. Additionally, the significant role of hope in predicting the personnel’s behavior was concluded. The findings of Valero et al.’s (2015) research on adolescents suggested a positive relation between their job performance and their hope for supervising the trainees. Interestingly, Anderson and Feldman (2020) found that hope for exercising, unlike that of general hope, is related with frequency of the respective activities. While some research has been carried out on hope in occupational environments, there is a dearth of scientific understanding of the topic within the SLA/EFL studies. In this respect, the concept of hope for teaching EFL (HTEFL) was developed categorically by Ghadyani et al. (2020). They estimated the explanatory power of involved items. This paper has focused on illustrating the process by which hope for teaching EFL is developed.

Methodology
The present research adopted an exploratory mixed-methods research design. The grounded theory method (GTM) and the survey method were used for conducting the qualitative and quantitative phases of this study respectively.

Instruments
The primary data was gathered through in-depth interviews with the research participants. The secondary data source was provided by reading up on the relevant literature. To collect and analyze the qualitative data conjointly, the purposive sample of participants was obtained through theoretical sampling. Constant data comparison technique was employed to reveal the theoretical saturation of data. The qualitative results of the research led to designing a Likert-type questionnaire of hope for teaching EFL (Ghadyani et al., 2020). It was piloted and tested in the quantitative phase.

Participants
Five experienced Iranian EFL teachers were interviewed in this grounded-based study. A sample of thirty EFL teachers participated in the piloting phase. A convenience sample of 228 EFL teachers participated in the testing phase. Final participants in the testing phase included 203 EFL teachers. Table 1(Ghadyani et al., 2020) indicates the distribution of 203 EFL teachers participated in the testing phase by their differences in gender, age, and university degree.
Table 1
The Final Participant Distribution in the Testing phase (Ghadyani et al., 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17-22</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>F 76%</td>
<td>F 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>F 41%</td>
<td>F 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>F 61%</td>
<td>F 12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Frequency
**Percentage

Procedure
To better understand the perspectives of research participants on the topic, a verbatim transcription of interview sessions was prepared as a Word file. They were then analyzed using open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The validation of the coding data was judged. The intracoder reliability and intercoder reliability was estimated and confirmed at 88% and 83% respectively (Ghadyani et al., 2020). A two-step approach, including piloting and testing was adopted in the quantitative phase. The structural equation models of this research were analyzed statistically.

The Qualitative Results
Seven major underlying components of HTEFL, including interpersonal relationship, goal-setting, source; social purpose, emotion, certainty, and anticipated effort are depicted in figure 1. Source as a core factor was discovered and relations among the components were explored which led to the development of an initial model of hope. The process begins with factor ‘interpersonal relationship’ and concludes with factor ‘anticipated effort’. The figure demonstrates that there are eleven paths to the development of hope. Further, this process indicates that the emotion factor mediates just the path which starts from the goal-setting factor or the social purpose and leads to the certainty factor.

Figure 1
The Qualitative Theoretical Model of HTEFL

The Quantitative Results
The pilot test and final test’s reliability were confirmed by Cronbach's alpha test results at 0.840 and 0.944 respectively (Ghadyani et al., 2020). Multiple regression analysis, EFA, and first-order and second-order CFA were used to statistically estimate and test the measurement models (Ghadyani et al., 2020). Third-order CFA was employed to estimate and test the structural equation models of research. KMO and Bartlett’s test results (Ghadyani et al., 2020) at 0.861 revealed the sampling adequacy. The final theoretical model of hope for teaching EFL was developed.
The Structural Equation Modeling
Figure 2 depicts ten hypothesized relationships as paths. Two of the ten interrelations are between each of the elements of source and social purpose as well as the element anticipated effort. Two of the total relations are between each of the elements of interpersonal relationship and emotion, as well as the certainty element. Two hypothesized interconnections are between each of the elements of goal-setting and social purpose as well as the element emotion. The other two hypothesized interrelations are between each of the elements of interpersonal relationship and the social purpose as well as the element goal-setting. The relationship between the elements of interpersonal relationship and social purpose in addition to the relationship between the certainty construct and the element source were also hypothesized within the model. As indicated in Table 4 below, the goodness-of-fit indices all demonstrate the model’s validity at 99 percent of confidence. According to Table 2 below, the validity of all the hypothesized relationships within the model is confirmed at 95 percent of confidence. Thus, as shown in Table 3 and figure 2, the constructs of source and social purpose have significant effects on the element anticipated effort at the effect powers of 0.72, and 0.36 respectively. Similarly, the observed variables of interpersonal relationship and emotion have significant effects on the element certainty at the effect powers of 0.57, and 0.56 respectively. Moreover, the elements of goal-setting and social purpose have significant effects on the element emotion at the effect powers of 0.46 and 0.30 respectively. The elements of interpersonal relationship and social purpose have significant effects on the element goal-setting at the effect powers of 0.35, and 0.36 respectively. Likewise, the observed variables of interpersonal relationship have significant effects on the element social purpose at the effect power of 0.59. Finally, the observed variables of certainty have significant effects on the element source at the effect power of 1. It is worth mentioning that the final structural equation model of hope for teaching EFL provided confirmation of the interconnections between the identified factors and the discovered core factor ‘source’. The final HTEFL structural model verified that the process of HTEFL begins with the factor interpersonal relationship and it concludes with the factor anticipated effort.

Figure 2
The Final Structural Equation Model of HTEFL
The final theoretical model of hope for teaching EFL (HTEFL) is depicted in Figure 3.
Discussion
In the final structural equation model of HTEFL (Figure 2), it is well depicted that HTEFL can be achievable following the five paths.

1. Interpersonal 0.35 Goal-setting 0.46 Emotion 0.56 Certainty 1 Source 0.72 Anticipated effort
2. Interpersonal 0.57 Certainty 1 Source 0.72 Anticipated effort
3. Interpersonal 0.59 Social purpose 0.36 Goal-setting 0.46 Emotion 0.56 Certainty 1 Source 0.72 Anticipated effort
4. Interpersonal 0.59 Social purpose 0.36 Anticipated effort
5. Interpersonal 0.59 Social purpose 0.30 Emotion 0.56 Certainty 1 Source 0.72 Anticipated effort

The strongest is path 2 and the longest is path 3. In the final structural equation model of hope for teaching EFL, the ‘achieve goals’ (0.81), and ‘out of a predicament’ (0.54) are the most and the least influential factors, respectively in the ‘goal-setting’ structure. The ‘learner’s role’ (0.64), and ‘friend’s role’ (0.23) tied to the ‘interpersonal relationship’ category in the final hope model for teaching EFL are the most and least significant variables respectively. The ‘personal values’ (0.74) linked to the ‘social purpose’ category is the most influential factor while the least influential factor is ‘possibility’ (0.58). The ‘consider further’ (0.81), and ‘pleasantness’ (0.62) related to the ‘emotion’ category, are the most and least effective factors respectively. The ‘predict’ (0.71), and ‘understand’ (0.51) linked to the ‘certainty’ category, are the most and least effective factors respectively. The ‘internal motivation’ (0.74), and ‘foreign themes’ (0.17) tied to the ‘source’ category, are the most and least influential factors respectively. Eventually, the ‘expend effort’ (0.72), and ‘exert yourself’ (0.66) associated with the ‘anticipated effort’ category, are the most and least influential variables respectively (Table5).

Table 5
The Most and Least Influential Variables in the Final Structural Equation Model of HTEFL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The most influential variables</th>
<th>Goal-setting</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Interpersonal relationships</th>
<th>Anticipated effort</th>
<th>Certainty</th>
<th>Social purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The most influential variables</td>
<td>Achieve goals</td>
<td>Consider further</td>
<td>Internal motivations</td>
<td>Learner’s role</td>
<td>expend effort</td>
<td>predict</td>
<td>Personal values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The least influential variables</td>
<td>Out of a predicament</td>
<td>Pleasantness</td>
<td>Foreign themes</td>
<td>Friend’s role</td>
<td>Exert yourself</td>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Possibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The factor interpersonal relationship can initiate the HTEFL process dominantly, according to the final theoretical model of HTEFL (Figure 3). The factor interpersonal relationship includes the variables of family’s role, colleague’s role, friend’s role, and learner’s role. Exploring the factor interpersonal relationship in this...
research can be compared to the findings of some earlier studies. For instance, Benzein et al. (2000) and Hollis et al. (2007) noted relationships as the dimensional aspect of hope structure. Further, as Bernardo (2010) points out, Brione (2009) demonstrated that there are explicit references to parents, siblings, and God. Therefore, the roles of family, colleague, friend, and learner mentioned later, may be supported by the results of Brione’s (2009) study. In other words, the present research suggests that hope has been conceptualized by both collectivist and individualistic agency. Indeed, this point also corresponds with the findings of Bernardo’s (2010) study on the extension of hope theory in which locus-of-hope dimension was revealed with both external and internal agency to generate routes to relative goals.

Within the HTEFL process, five factors, namely social purpose, emotion, goal-setting, source, and certainty act as mediators to result in the anticipated effort. The anticipated effort, including the indicators of “exert yourself” and “expend effort”, is the final factor in this model. Moreover, this result is in agreement with that of Smith and Ellsworth’s (1985, 1987) studies of hope in which they found the factor ‘effort’ as a component of hope. The factor ‘source’ was discovered as the core factor in HTEFL process with the elements, including internal motivation, motivation for earning money, motivation for gaining professional identity, you yourself, foreign themes, Persian knowledge, Persian themes, and religious beliefs or spirituality. The final figure depicts that the majority of the significant factors in the hope process are closely related to the core factor. In terms of spirituality or religion, the present study’s finding supports the results of Bland and Darlington’s (2009) study as well as Brione’s (2009) research in which hope is tied with the variable religion.

Along with the three major categories mentioned above, the ‘certainty’ factor, namely the ‘predict’, ‘understand’, and ‘sure about’ emerged. On this matter, Smith and Ellsworth (1985, 1987) who hold an emotion perspective on hope indicated the variable uncertainty as one of the six dimensions of hope. They argued that the variable uncertainty sets hope apart from other kinds of human emotion. Notwithstanding, it needs to be cognitively evaluated. In contrast to their findings, conceptually, the present study offers a multi-componential construct of hope for teaching EFL in which the ‘certainty’ acts as a distinctive factor in the evaluation of created HTEFL.

Identification of the factor goal-setting with the dimensions of pathways-thinking and agency-thinking in present study agrees with the findings of Snyder et al.’s (1991) research. The factor goal-setting can help map the process of hope for teaching EFL when it is needed. At the same time, parallel to the factor ‘goal-setting’, the factor ‘social purpose’ with the dimensions of social values, family values, personal values, priority, possibility, and practicality has a significant influence on the process of HTEFL. These findings coincide with the outcomes of a number of previous studies. For example, most importantly, hope was understood by Averill et al. (1990) as a universal emotion experience governed by social rules. In this study, however, both the ‘emotion’ and ‘social purpose’ variables emerged as two major constitutive components of HTEFL at the same time. Tolentino (2009) contends that the community members, God, and family are externally major factors influencing hope, according to Bernardo (2010). In a similar vein, the creation of HTEFL is influenced by the dimensions of ‘family values’ and ‘social values’. Finally, the factor emotion plays an effective role in the ‘goal-setting’ path to the ‘certainty’ and also in the ‘social purpose’ path to the ‘certainty’. It is noteworthy that there are similarities between the dimensions of ‘effort,’ ‘attention,’ and ‘pleasure’ explored in present study and those discovered by Smith and Ellsworth (1985, 1987).

The present research provides a multifaceted theoretical model of HTEFL. It can be developed in a variety of ways, and the goal-setting component is not necessarily required. Further, considering the factors of social purpose, interpersonal relationship, and source, the HTEFL theoretical model may be deemed to be a conjoint model by agency (Markus & Kitayama, 2003). This paper makes a comparison between the two theoretical models of HTEFL and HLEFLL (Ghadyani et al., 2022) to demonstrate the similarities and differences between them.

A. The similarities

A-1- The underlying structures that make up hope in both the theoretical models are seven main categories, including interpersonal relationship, social purpose, goal-setting, emotion, certainty, source, and anticipated effort.

A-2- In both HLEFLL and HTEFL, the process of hope development tends to start with the interpersonal relationship and it comes to an end with the anticipated effort. The interpersonal relationship factor emphasizes the influential role of learner, teacher, friend, and family within the hope process. The anticipated effort factor is emphasized in two ways, namely spending a lot of energy (expend effort) and working very hard (exert yourself) to learn or teach English as a foreign language.

B. The differences

B-1- There are some definite differences between the two theoretical models in terms of the number of concept-indicators that make up the structure of hope, and these differences are particularly pronounced in the interpersonal relationship, source, and anticipated effort structures. It should be noted that gradual learning and practice as items of the anticipated effort construct related to hope for learning EFL brings to mind the meaning that having patience is a requirement for EFL learners to achieve the goal.
B-2-In terms of the paths, it is clear that more paths to HLEFL are available to EFL learners to be developed as compared with those of HTEFL.

B-3-The comparison of the main components of HLEFL and HTEFL shows their different explanatory power in developing hope for both learning and teaching EFL respectively. For instance, the goal-setting component related to the theoretical model of HLEFL indicates lower rate of explanatory power as compared to the theoretical model of HTEFL. This issue seems to be due to less familiarity, less knowledge, less experience, possible inaccessibility, and possible restrictions imposed on the educational context. Therefore, teachers are more highly in positions of choice, authority, and experience to facilitate EFL learning.

B-4-The core concern of EFL learners’ hope is identified as the ‘certainty’ referring to the degree to which EFL learners have definite evaluations of their developed hope for learning English. Meanwhile, the category ‘source’ constitutes the core concern of EFL teachers’ hope for teaching English. It is worth mentioning that the ‘internal motivation’ item tied to the component ‘source’ in HTEFL is intensely highlighted due to the highest rate of explanatory power that it indicates.

Conclusions

Seven main components, namely interpersonal relationship, social purpose, goal-setting, emotion, certainty, source, and anticipated effort make up the underlying structures of hope in HTEFL theoretical model. Recognizing the interrelationships between the identified factors led to the development of HEFLT theoretical model. The influence of these factors on each other is drawn as five paths to hope for teaching EFL. The process of hope for teaching EFL tends to start with the interpersonal relationship and it comes to an end with the anticipated effort. The factor ‘source’ constitutes the core concern of HTEFL theoretical model with the elements, including internal motivation, motivation for earning money, motivation for gaining professional identity, you yourself, foreign themes, Persian knowledge, Persian themes, and religious beliefs or spirituality. The results of the present study can raise awareness of educational managers and instructors of the EFL/ESL about the importance of the topic. It is then possible to produce EFL/ESL teacher education materials to address the topic. Further, designing intervention programs of HTEFL can improve the EFL teachers’ levels of hope. The findings would be valuable to program designers and curriculum evaluators in assessing the effective use of the second/foreign language teaching. Finally, the findings lay the foundation on which further research on the subject may be done in the future. The weak explanatory power of the ‘religious beliefs’ item can be the subject of future research. Doing research on this topic in the second or foreign language contexts of other countries and comparing their results can provide researchers with a more complete knowledge about the subject.

References


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