ON THE IMPACT OF ACQUAINTANCE OF THE CULTURE OF THE TEXT ON BOOSTED VOCABULARY LEARNING OF THE PERSIAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A SOCIOLOGICAL TESTING RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to scrutinize the influence of the element of acquaintance with the nooks and crannies of the interwoven culture of the text leads to learning of vocabulary through the task of reading. An aggregation of 36 male and female language learners participated in the study. During the process of the study, the students were provided with the texts partaking Persian and English cultural features in the form of both stories and readings. This pedagogical section was followed by a vocabulary test which was aimed at checking the possibility of learning vocabulary due to the acquaintance with the cultural and indigenous qualities of the text of native culture in contrast to the lower chance of learning vocabulary with the English text.

Keywords: *Acquaintance, Culture, Learning of Vocabulary, Persian and English Cultural Features, Indigenous Qualities*

INTRODUCTION
Since the early days of systematization of language learning there has been an insistence on the incidental vocabulary learning in the literature which culminated in the studies of Krashen and Schmitt and some other interested scholars of the field. Incidental exposure to language, particularly through reading, is one of the fundamental means of extending vocabulary knowledge for both L1 and L2 learners. This contributing effect of reading on vocabulary development has been advocated by a number of researchers who believe that a substantial amount of vocabulary growth occurs through extensive exposure to language in print. Since its inaugural into the realm of teaching learning vocabulary through this way which is known as Incidental Vocabulary Learning (as in this process the readers' focus is on comprehension of the text rather than on learning specific words) has been endorsed by a lot of studies done by a number of scholars in the field (Krashen, 2004; Pulido, 2003). These people take this stance because of such factors as the number of total words a typical language learner, either in L1 or L2, needs to know and the limited capacity of any explicit vocabulary instruction to accommodate all vocabulary items the language learners need. Another important point is that most of these studies show a deeper and longer retention of the vocabulary learned through the incidental process of reading a text with cultural affinity.
There have been a lot of studies measuring the amount of the necessary vocabulary that students acquire throughout the process of their language acquisition. This idea differs from country to country and even based on the first language as well. In fact, an average L1 student is expected to know about 40000 words at the end of high school (Cunningham, 2005). Taking into account the 8000 words that they should know when they are six years old, the high school graduates need to learn about 32,000 words in 12 years. This number, 32,000 words through 12 years of schooling, means that a child learns approximately 7 words a day and 3,000 words a year. With regard to L2 learners, they need to know at least 10000 words to function successfully in an advanced academic setting (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2001, 2006). The figures just stated imply the fact that this type of vocabulary development transcends the capacity of even the most intensive vocabulary instruction programs. There has been a vast criticism leveled against teaching vocabulary directly and since explicit vocabulary teaching programs can only cover a few hundred words, even under the most intensive ones, it is unrealistic to expect the learners to learn 2,000 words a year

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and/or the 10,000 minimum words. Therefore, given this situation, we can conclude that a bulk of vocabulary growth and development occurs through incidental exposure to language, especially printed language (Grabe, 2009; Cunningham, 2005). Overall, the researchers associate some benefits with the incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. First of all, novel or new words are embedded in their natural contexts helping readers draw inferences about subtle meanings. In addition, incidental vocabulary learning makes the reading process efficient since it occurs simultaneously with the reading. Moreover, due to the fact that readers consciously or unconsciously attend to unfamiliar words, such sort of learning is highly individualized (Hedgcock and Ferris, 2009). A lot of scholars have espoused this system and a lot of great results are met.

The clash between implicit learning has created a lot of fuss in the world of teaching. Owing to the importance of this issue (i.e., vocabulary learning through linguistic input) a number of researchers have talked about the suitable conditions through which readers can develop their vocabulary knowledge through reading. Webb (2008) mentioned the quality of the context, being informative enough, as a prerequisite for gaining word knowledge through context. Sanchez and Schmitt (2010) consider numbers of encountering a word in a context as a main factor for incidental vocabulary learning. Pulido (2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007) showed the importance of topic familiarity or background knowledge the readers possess of the content of the passage on the incidental vocabulary learning. She has found that the readers remember and retain more words from the passage they are more familiar with its content. Replicating the work of Pulido (ibid), this study tries to see which type of text is more conducive to incidental vocabulary development through reading: the culturally familiar or unfamiliar one. In other words, the current study is centered around the following research question: Does cultural familiarity of the texts have any effect on the vocabulary learning and retention through those texts? It also can be considered as an attempt to see whether the findings obtained by Pulido can be gained in an Iranian context. As mentioned before the significance of the nativity of these results for the Iranian context is not something easily achievable and the study set out to investigate into this issue.

Literature Review

One of the leading mostly cited studies into this subject is Rodgers (1987) and later on he shared this study with his colleague Renandya. The topic also was the preoccupation of most of the scholars in 80s in the University of California in Los Angeles. Another scholar who stepped into this study was Adams (1982). He investigated the effects of schemata activation on the acquisition of unfamiliar vocabulary through reading. He gave six passages to a group of 298 American students about such familiar topics as playing tennis, grocery shopping, flying a kite, doing a laundry, washing dishes, and a wedding. Each passage was divided into five sections. These sections were presented once at a time on the transparencies by means of an overhead projector. This device was used in order to control the reading time. In this part and once a section is gone, the students were not permitted to look back at the proceeding section. In each section a target word was established which was a word closely associated with the activity or task being described in the text. Participating members of the study were required to correctly recognize these target words in each section they encountered. In addition, half of the students were randomly selected and given sentences acting as schemata activators informing them of what the passages were about while the other half was deprived of such statements. Accruement of the data in this study revealed that the students received script or schemata activating statements achieved significantly higher vocabulary scores than those who did not get such statements. This scholar Pulido (2003) also examined the impact of topic familiarity (background knowledge) on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. The significance he observed in his study amazed many of the researchers who were focused on the reading and the importance of the vocabulary.

In Pulido (2003) the setting of the study included ninety-nine adult learners of Spanish as an L2 across all levels of language proficiency (beginning, intermediate, and advanced) participated in this study. These researchers demanded the students to read four passages, two considered as familiar and two as unfamiliar. In these texts, thirty-two target words associated with the theme of each story were chosen and substituted with nonsense words. Before reading the passages, the participants first completed an L2 passage

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vocabulary test which was a combination of a self-report questionnaire and translation measure designed to check the students' self-reported familiarity and previous knowledge of the meanings of the non-target words. Once this stage was over the participants completed a translation production task in which they were asked to provide L1 equivalents to the target words. Finally, at the end of the study, the students were asked to complete a translation recognition task. This task was a multiple choice test wherein the participants were required to choose the correct translation of the target word from 5 options (the correct option, three distractors, and "I don't know" option).The findings showed that familiarity with the overall topic of the text had no consistent effects on incidental vocabulary acquisition. First, there was no effect of topic familiarity obtained on the translation production test. Second, the impact of background knowledge obtained on the translation recognition task was short-lived and did not last for a longer period of time. That is, only at the short term intervals (i.e., 2 days after reading), the participants at all levels showed greater vocabulary gains after reading the reported familiar passage. So, this study provides partial support for the effect of background knowledge on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

The same discoveries were observed in his other study, Pulido (2004a) examined the effect of topic familiarity on the relationships which may exist between second language passage comprehension and various stages of L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition, namely intake (form recognition), gain (meaning recognition and production), and retention. Ninety nine adult American learners of Spanish as an L2 served as the participants of this study. These people came from all proficiency levels (i.e., beginning, intermediate, and advanced). They were supposed to read four narratives, two pertaining to more familiar topics and two pertaining to less familiar settings. A total of 32 words, eight words per story, which were more frequently related to the themes of each story were chosen and replaced by nonsense words served as target words. In this study, the participants first completed an intake task wherein they were required to determine whether or not the individual L2 words appearing in a list had actually appeared in the passage they had previously read. The students then went through two vocabulary measures: the translation production and translation recognition. In the former, the participants were asked to provide translation, definition, or explanation of the target words in their L1. The latter was a multiple choice test in which the students were required to choose the correct translation of a target word from three distractors and an "I don't know" option. The results revealed that passage comprehension had a strong effect on the incidental vocabulary gain and retention occurring through reading. In other words, increases in passage comprehension were accompanied by increases in gain and retention of the words appeared in the passages. This contribution of passage comprehension was consistent regardless of whether the students read within the familiar or unfamiliar scenarios. But they still pushed on.

With regard to the effect of topic familiarity on the relationship between passage comprehension and various levels of incidental vocabulary acquisition such as gain, retention, and intake, the following findings were obtained. First, topic familiarity or the availability of relevant background knowledge facilitated reading comprehension and as a result positively affected the gain and retention of the target words. Second, in the case of the intake of the new words, it was found that participants recognized more words from less familiar passage than from more familiar one. This situation can be related to the confusion that may arise from the more familiar text. That is, when the participants were completing an intake test relating to the familiar story (i.e., when they were supposed to determine whether the words existed or not existed in the given passages) they mixed up the items actually presented in the text with those related to the theme of the passage. This problem was not there when they did a similar intake test related to an unfamiliar text. So, in this study, it was concluded that topic familiarity has a differential effect on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

Pulido (2004b) examined the effects of cultural background knowledge on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. Twenty three adult English speaking learners of Spanish at the high intermediate level were asked to read familiar and unfamiliar versions of the same story. Before reading the texts, the participants completed a background knowledge questionnaire to determine their level of familiarity with the content of the passages. After the students had finished reading their passages, they took a test called Vocabulary Knowledge Scale to determine the vocabulary gain occurred as a result of

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reading the texts. It is worth mentioning that this test is a kind of self-report task designed to tap the various self-perceived levels of learners' vocabulary knowledge ranging from unfamiliarity through recognition and some idea of the meaning to the ability to use the words in a sentence. The results of this study showed significant effects of cultural familiarity. It was found that the participants demonstrated greater vocabulary, gain scores after reading passages with which they were familiar. In other words, after reading the culturally familiar texts, learners demonstrated better memory for having seen the target words than after reading the unfamiliar passages.

Pulido (2007) examined the impact of topic familiarity and passage sight vocabulary on lexical inferencing and retention. 35 adult learners of Spanish took part as participants in this study. These students were recruited from five university courses: beginning, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced, and graduate. In this study, these students read two contrived passages, one depicting a familiar course of activities and one depicting an unfamiliar scenario. In addition, 16 words, 8 ones per passage, representing the concepts frequently associated with each scenario and replaced by nonsense words. The participants completed a topic familiarity questionnaire before starting to read the two given texts. At the same time as they read the texts, the students completed the accompanying lexical inferencing (they wrote the meaning or translation of each underlined and boldfaced target word in their L1) and difficulty rating tasks (they revealed the level of the difficulty the participants faced in inferring the meaning of each target word). After reading the two stories, all participants completed a self-paced online target word verification task. In this part of the study, each target word sentence and its translation were presented on a computer screen. The participants were required to confirm or reject their guesses about each word and to encourage deeper processing of target words. Afterwards, at the end of the study, the students completed the lexical retention test in the following order: L2-L1 translation production and L2-L1 multiple choice translation recognition tasks. The results found in this study revealed a strong and robust effect of topic familiarity lexical inferencing.

As it was mentioned earlier, this study can be considered as an attempt to corroborate and replicate the findings of the previous studies investigating the effect of cultural knowledge on incidental vocabulary learning , particularly those conducted by Pulido (2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007). The difference that exists between the current study and the Pulido's ones, and even the other studies examining this issue, lies in the type of words used to assess the participants' incidental vocabulary acquisition. In the previous studies, a number of words termed target words and relating to the theme of the text are selected and replaced with nonsense words to ensure that the students do not have any prior familiarity with them.

However, here, we do not have any target words. As an alternative, a number of words, thought by the researcher as important, are chosen and incorporated in a vocabulary test to be given after reading the assigned passages.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Methodology
3.1 Participants
A group of students of university were present in this study (40 men & 16 women) in two intact classes. These students aged from 18 to 30 with the age average of 24. Since these students had enrolled in the university where this study was conducted to achieve an Associate degree in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and had intensively Iranian received courses in all language skills which all were produced and prepared for the intermediate level learners of English, they were assumed to be at this level of language proficiency. Finally, the readers might wonder why females were far more than males in this study. The reason for such imbalance is that nowadays the women population is much higher than that of men in Iran and this has been reflected in the educational institutions where females outnumber males in a way that transcends any power of imagination.

3.2 Instrumentation
3.2.1 The Passages
The texts that were chosen for this study were an English translation of an Iranian story titled "The Little Sugar Beets Vendor" and an English short narrative "The Winepress". The former was written by the great

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Iranian author Samad Behrangi which happens in an Iranian village and depicts the hard life of an orphan Iranian boy and his struggle to protect his family. Since this story takes place in an Iranian context, has Iranian characters, and portrays the fight to save the honor of the family represented in a female character, a typically eastern and Iranian tradition, it was expected that the students would comprehend it easily. The other short tale was written by Josef Essberger and was about a retired French politician telling his friends strange stories about different kinds of wines he drinks. This short story happens in France, has foreign characters, is full of French names and is also replete with the names of the different types of wine, a beverage forbidden in Iran because of it's Islamic nature. Therefore this passage has things in its stomach which are strange to a typical Iranian ear. This made us anticipate that our participants will face difficulties understanding this story efficiently.

In the continuation of the study it is worth noting here that every essential step was taken to make these two passages as equal as possible. A mere look at the tables 1 and 2 which were obtained through using the Flesh Software of Readability Calculations shows that both passages are relatively easy to read and are relatively equal in terms of the readability (Flesh Reading Ease Score for the Iranian story was 79.26 and 75.61 for the English one). A comparison between the figures of these two tables shows that while the two passages differ in the number of words (1492 for the foreign story and 2182 in the Iranian text) and sentences (117 and 133 in the alien and Iranian texts respectively), their readability grades are nearly equal (Flesh Kincaid Grade Level: 5.88 and 6.28 and Flesh Reading Ease Score: 75.61 and 79.26 for the foreign and Iranian passages separately).

Table 1: The Winepress (the foreign story) readability scores

Flesh Kincaid Grade Level:	5.88
Flesh Reading Ease Score:	75.61
Sentences:	117
Words:	1.492
Average Syllables per Word:	1.40
Average Words per Sentence:	12.7

Table 2: The Little Sugar Beet Vendor (the Iranian story) readability score

Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level:	6.28
Flesh Reading Ease Score:	79.26
Sentences:	133
Words:	2.182
Average Syllables per Word:	1.31
Average Words per Sentence:	16.41

Table 3: Flesh Reading Ease Scores and their implications

Reading Ease Score	Style Description	Estimated Reading Grade
0to 30	Very Difficult	Collage graduate
30 to 40	Difficult	13th to 16th grade
50 to 60	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th grade
60 to 70	Standard	8th and 9th grade
70 to 80	Fairly Easy	7th grade
80 to 90	Easy	6th grade
90 to 100	Very Easy	5th grade

Consequently, we can surely conclude that the two short stories we have selected for this study are similar regarding the degree of reading difficulty. This readability formula was developed firstly by Rudolf Flesch (1948) and was modified by Farr, Jenkins, and Paterson (1951) and the U.S. Navy (1976) (as cited in DuBay, 2004). In this formula, as it is shown in the table 3 below, the scores ranging from 70 to 80

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represent the fairly easy texts which are suitable for a 7th. grade student. Therefore, due to the fact that the reading ease scores of the texts used in this study were within this range (the Iranian story: 79.26 and the foreign story: 75.61), we can conclude that these two texts are fairly easy to read by an intermediate second language reader.

3.2.2. The Vocabulary Tests

As the second step which goes to the reading section of the research procedure, all participants went through a vocabulary test consisting of the difficult and key words of the texts they were supposed to read. In other words, a vocabulary test was designed to assess the participants' knowledge of the difficult words of the Iranian story and a more or less similar test was also developed to measure those of the foreign narrative. These words are determined by the researcher to be above the participants' level of proficiency. Some expert TEFL university professors were also consulted on these words and they agreed with most of them. The aim of taking these tests by the participants after they had finished reading their passages was to see to what extent the subjects were able to remember the meaning of the difficult and important words of the texts or to see if familiarity with the cultural background of the texts had any effect on their vocabulary learning that may take place as a by-product of the reading task. Both vocabulary tests were in multiple-choice format. In addition, the vocabulary test of the foreign story consisted of 20 items and that of the Iranian passage consisted of 23 items.

Owing our attention to the process of coding or scoring the vocabulary measurement instruments used in this study, every correct response received one point and the wrong choice was given a zero point. This scoring procedure led to 20 (in the case of the vocabulary test of the foreign story) and 23 points (in the case of the vocabulary test of the Iranian story) for those students who answered the all items correctly and 0 point for those who failed to provide the correct response of even one question item. Finally, the reliability of these two tests is found to be .68 and .65 for the vocabulary tests of Iranian and foreign stories respectively.

3.2.3. The Device to Measure the Text Acquaintance

Two measures were used to check the participants' familiarity with the two passages they were assigned to read. The first one was given to the participants before they begin reading each passage. It was a 4-item questionnaire asking the participants if they were familiar with the author of the passage or his/her works and if they had read or heard anything about the story they were going to read. The students were instructed to provide "yes" or "no" as an answer to each item.

The post-test questionnaire was given to the students immediately after finishing reading each passage. It was a Likert Scale Questionnaire asking the students to identify their degree of familiarity with the content of the text they had just read. This questionnaire had five response options ranging from completely familiar to completely unfamiliar of which the students were supposed to choose only one alternative. The primary purpose of this test was to check if the students were precise enough in answering the pretest questionnaire and to see if the texts were truly familiar or unfamiliar.

4. Procedure and Process

The study was conducted during the regular class time, in the middle of the second semester, and in the presence of the instructors of the classes. In addition, in all phases of the data collection, the researcher was present and provided any help the participants needed. The students were first told that they were going to be given a passage to read for comprehension and nothing was mentioned about any test that might follow.

The participants read the stories and completed the vocabulary tests accompanying them in two separate sessions. In each of these sessions, to mitigate the effects relating to ordering of passages, the presentation of the texts and their vocabulary tests was counterbalanced. That is, one half of the students received the Iranian narrative and answered its vocabulary test and the other half read the foreign story and completed its following measurements.

In the just discussed sessions dedicated to the current study, the students were first given a pre-test questionnaire asking them about their prior familiarity with the given story, its author and his works. Then, they were asked to read the story. Immediately after they finished reading the text, the participants

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completed the post-test questionnaire inquiring about the degree to which they were familiar with the content of the story. Then, they were asked to answer the vocabulary tests designed and developed to measure their vocabulary knowledge gained through their stories reading.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
5.1. The Perceived Familiarity/Unfamiliarity of the Texts Used
In order to make sure that the texts used in this study are appropriately classified as familiar or unfamiliar and to check that they have not been previously read by the participants of this study, the participating students were asked to declare their acquaintance with the passages both before and after they read these texts. Prior to reading the stories, they answered four yes/no questions inquiring whether they knew the author of the text, had read his/her stories, had read the story they are about to read, and if they had heard anything about it. Immediately after they finished reading each passage, they were asked to reveal their degree of familiarity with the story they had just read through a one-item Likert scale questionnaire whose options ranged from completely unfamiliar to completely familiar. Tables 4 and 5 show the results of the pretest and posttest questionnaires of the Iranian story. As you can see nearly all the participants, precisely about 96.4 percent of them, indicated they had not known the author of the Iranian story or read his works. Nor had they read the story they were supposed to read or even heard anything about it. Statistically speaking, 100 percent had not read the story and 98.2 percent had not heard anything about it. So, we can safely conclude that the students had not read this text before.

However, although before reading the Iranian narrative, the students demonstrated that they had not read it or even known its writer, they found its content to be familiar after they finished reading it. About 78 percent of them found the story to be either completely or mostly familiar whereas only 21 percent said that the text was half familiar and half unfamiliar. As it can be seen from these figures, we can conclude that the Iranian story was familiar to our research population.

Table 4: The participants' responses to the pre-test questionnaires of the Iranian and foreign story

The items	The Answers	
	Yes	No
Do you know Samad Behrangi?	3.6%	96.4%
Have you ever read his stories?	3.6%	96.4%
Have you ever read his Little Suger Beet Vendor?	0	100%
Have you ever heard anything about this stoty?	1.8%	98.2%
Do you know Josef Essberger?	0	100%
Have you ever read his stories?	0	100%
Have you ever read his The Winepress?	0	100%
Have you ever heard anything about this story?	0	100%

Although the results obtained through the pretest questionnaire of the foreign story and those gained from the set of questions given prior to the Iranian passage were almost similar, they went in a quite opposite direction with regard to the posttest questionnaire.

As it can be noticed through Table 4, all the students stated that they had neither known the author of the foreign story nor read his other works. They also unanimously indicated that they had not read the chosen story and even had not heard anything about it leading to the conclusion that the participants had not had any prior experience with this story.

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Table 5: The participants' responses to the posttest questionnaires of the Iranian and foreign stories

The items	The options Completely familiar	Completely unfamiliar	Mostly familiar	Mostly unfamiliar	Half familiar/unfamiliar
The content of the Iranian story was?	50%		28%		21.4%
The content of the foreign story was?		48%		35%	16.1%

After the participants had finished reading the foreign story, their responses to the question coming immediately after this text showed that this passage was unfamiliar to a high proportion of them. Table 5 shows that 83 percent of the population expressed that the story was either completely or mostly unfamiliar (completely unfamiliar: 48% and mostly unfamiliar: 35%). Moreover, finally, only 16.1 percent of the students served as the participants of the study indicated that the content of the foreign story was half familiar and half unfamiliar to them. Therefore, our assumption that the foreign story was unfamiliar to the participants was actually confirmed through these percentages.

Table 6: Paired Samples Statistics of the students' scores on the vocabulary tests of the Iranian and foreign stories

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	The vocabulary scores of the Iranian story	7.7500	56	3.87650	.51802
	The vocabulary scores of the foreign story	4.6607	56	3.05273	.40794

Table 7: Paired Samples Test of the students' performance on the vocabulary tests of the Iranian and foreign stories

Paired Differences									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	The vocabulary scores of the Iranian story	3.08929	1.87109	.25003	2.58820	3.59037	12.355	55	.000
	The vocabulary scores of the foreign story								

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5.2. Does Cultural Acquaintance of the Texts have any Effect on the Vocabulary Learning and Retention through those Texts?

A paired samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the effect that text familiarity might have on the participants' performance on the vocabulary tests that they completed after reading each narrative. In this statistical method of analysis, the whole population of the study was taken as a single group and their scores on both the vocabulary tests were compared. The results indicated that the students performed higher in the vocabulary test of the Iranian story (M= 7.75, SD= 3.87) than in that of its alien equivalent (M= 4.66, SD= 3.05) (see Table 6). Table 7 also shows that this difference in the participants' performance on the two vocabulary tests to be highly significant (t (55) = 12.35, p< .0005).

So, the answer to the third question of this research study regarding the facilitative effect of text familiarity on incidental vocabulary learning will be positive. The participants learned and remembered more words from the Iranian story than from its foreign counterpart.

Discussion

Regarding the research question raised in the present study inquiring whether familiarity with the overall cultural context or background of the texts can lead to vocabulary learning and development through reading, the results demonstrated that this was the case. The intermediate students served as the participants in this study remembered and recognized significantly more words from the Iranian/familiar story than from its alien counterpart. This finding corroborates and replicates the results obtained by the studies conducted by Pulido (2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007) attributing a strong effect to cultural and/or topic familiarity on the process of the incidental vocabulary gain. This result also provides additional support for what has been known as "schema-theoretic and knowledge-based" views of learning and memory (Pulido, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Widdowson, 1983) according to which the possession of an appropriate background knowledge is assumed to facilitate the attentional allocation, the construction of mental representation, and the development of form-meaning connections between the new words and the contexts within which they occurred. Greater familiarity, as Pulido (ibid) asserts, the readers may have with a passage provides what she calls a "cognitive foothold" from which they can construct and integrate information about the new words. In this study, when reading the familiar story, the students were in a much better position to interact with the text as a whole and to create a satisfactory mental representation of its events.

Conclusion

As stated elaborately, the familiarity of the students with the overall cultural settings of the Iranian story helped them to more efficiently direct attention to input they were dealing with (Pulido, 2007). So, they were more able to recall or recognize words used in the story they identified more culturally familiar than the other one. In the foreign narrative, on the contrary, the story happened in a situation unaccustomed to a typical Iranian native speaker living in this country. Therefore, the students failed to interact efficiently with the passage in order to construct a mental representation based upon the original story. In fact, they comprehended the text in a way contradicted with what was originally intended by the text. This distortion of the intended message of the unfamiliar text appears to have negatively affected the participants' ability to build accurate and sound form meaning connections for the new words happened in this kind of context (Pulido, 2004a, 2004b). This research has that much of the importance that a lot of the research is already considered in its regard and a lot more will possibly follow.

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