Chapter I

Introduction
Introduction

The dissertation study entitled 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level' deals with the lexical knowledge that is underestimated since the linguists' attention is diverted from lexical knowledge to appealing terms such as competence and performance posited by Noam Chomsky and also the other advocates who paid more attention to grammar as the innate endowment of specific species, namely human being. Despite the theta theory and selection restriction of lexicon, lexical knowledge is overshadowed by the mathematical complexities, logical concepts and axioms. Further studies did not duly contribute to demystify the lexical sophistication. In other words, the lop-sided viewpoints towards lexical knowledge have obscured the fact that what the concept deals with. Consequently, it has left the linguists and semanticists in total disarray who are more or less on the wrong track since they have adopted the holistic or atomistic procedures and have overlooked the combination of them in lexical knowledge.

Word as the entity of sense and reference plays a very important role in linguistic phenomenon. In can also be a contributory factor in improving both productive and receptive skills. The following elements, which are directly related to the dissertation study, are taken into consideration:

1.1. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis is posited as the scientific description of language, which is defined in terms of differences and similarities. Contrastive analysis is generally posited as a very effective way of predicting the linguistic difficult points so as to detect facilitating methods in learning a given language. It is emerged and flourished
in the 1960s. The structural linguistics and behavioral psychology contribute significantly to the formation of contrastive analysis paradigms.

Contrastive hypothesis is posited within various versions, namely strong, weak and moderate. The proponent of strong version, Lado (1957), has placed more emphasis on the element of interference resulted from the negative transfer from L1 (First or source language) to L2 (Second or target language). Wardhaugh (1970) explains errors after they are made. Oller and Ziahosseini (1970) have demonstrated that minimally distinct patterns of L1 and L2 are more difficult to be processed and acquired than the dissimilar ones. It is worth noting that each sentence should be considered at two levels of surface structure and deep structure. It goes without saying that comparing two languages to detect the distinctive points is impossible unless each researcher pays due attention to the above two levels of structure. Furthermore, detecting two languages equivalent in many linguistic aspects seems to be a controversial issue. Besides, the applicability of contrastive analysis in the syllabus-based subject matters is highly suspicious. Moreover, the findings on the mental processes do not confirm that each person learns L2 based on contrastive analysis hypothesis. In addition, the structural linguistics and behavioral psychology as two pillars of CA (Contrastive analysis) have undergone massive changes and criticism. Contrastive analysis hypothesis has deeply overlooked the stylistic and idiosyncratic variations in a language.

Despite all shortcomings, CA procedures are quite dominant in the research-oriented academia. Detecting the similarities or differences of two languages can contribute to better understanding of the language paradigms per se. It can also be generalized to other languages. In the end, it can be as a contributory factor in reaching an in-depth knowledge on the function of the brain.

Contrastive analysis on the dissertation study can demonstrate any distinction between ESL and EFL learners' lexical knowledge. Consequently, the obtained results can be generalized in terms of distinctive ESL and EFL spheres.

1.2. ESL and EFL Learners

It seems that the distinction of ESL and EFL learners is ignored in the realm of in-depth research oriented activities especially in lexical knowledge. The situation is further aggravated when two distinctive concepts of ESL and EFL in English language
teaching domain have come into sharp focus. It also reveals that equal treatment towards the ESL and EFL learners has inflicted irreparable damages on both of them.

ESL learners can take benefit from English subject matters profoundly and they can use what they have learned in a dominant English learning atmosphere, whereas EFL learners have no English priority in their subject matters. The foreign language learners may use the English language in the academic study, which is either unsystematic or restricted to their professional careers. In other words, there is no actual compatibility of what they have learned with the English language atmosphere. Despite the clear-cut distinction between ESL and EFL learners, some methodologists are of the opinion that the differences arise from the cultural content of materials.

In spite of the fact that many ESL learners live in a distinctive cultural-oriented atmosphere, they generally have an English language background, whereas the EFL learners mostly resort to their native language as a strong common language to solve their problems. The matter of time allocation for English language should not also be ignored among ESL learners who spend more time on English language, which is due to their dominant or appropriately prepared communicative environment. Due to tangibility of English language among the ESL learners emanated from widespread usage in satisfying the primitive demands such as earning the living, buying and selling, which act as a give and take, more positive attitude towards language learning is detected.

Readily accessible English language has pushed ESL learners forward towards the worldwide communication, which has contributed to raise the tendency towards English leaning. It has broadened the ESL learners' horizon to modify their English language, and in some cases, it has made them near native speakers. Despite all endeavors to fill the existing gap between ESL and EFL learners, the gap is widened due to English accessibility, worldwide communication, tendency and motivation for learning the respective language.

In general, ESL learners learn English language in an integrative way, whereas EFL learners learn it in a segregated or discrete manner. English language learning is mostly goal-oriented for the ESL learners emphasizing the importance of language use rather than language usage. Task-oriented instruction of the ESL learners is due to their active participation interaction in very authentic and tangible atmosphere, which is greatly different from inflexible pedagogical practices in EFL atmosphere.
Conducting research on the difference between ESL and EFL can accentuate the importance on input, output, the authentic learning atmosphere and other intervening factors. Furthermore, analyzing the ESL and EFL distinctions within the framework of contrastive analysis can lend itself to enriching the learning input to achieve favorable output. The productive word-focused task, which emphasizes integrative way of learning English, is used widely in ESL curriculum subjects, whereas discrete point of English learning is highlighted in EFL syllabus-designed subject matters with an emphasis on learning the words out of a context. The dissertation study, which is based on contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL learners, can implicitly shed light on teaching and learning optimum procedures. Detecting the distinctive rate of lexical knowledge understanding can help the subject matter programmer remove the obstacles of learning or even teaching by recognizing the difficult points of lexical knowledge, which are defined in terms of categories and sub-categories.

1.3. Semantics

Semantics, as a branch of linguistics, deals with systematic study on meaning, which plays very crucial role in lexical knowledge. Meaning includes a wide range of interrelated issues. Semantics within the realm of semiotics deals with the theory of signs. The problems arise when the meaning of words is not fixed. On the other hand, it heavily depends on the interpretation of the hearers and speakers, which vary from a language, specifically in a given situation, to the other language and situation. Despite all variations, the results drawn from a scientific study of meaning in semantics tend to be generalized. Sometimes, meaning of words undergoes drastic change in process of time. For example, the word 'boy' once implied a negative meaning as a 'knave', which referred to the people who lived in the colony, changed into an opposite meaning as 'knight' as a high ranking man who was trained to fight on the horse (It is even different from its recent neural meaning as boy versus girl). The word 'refrigerator' was referred to 'cellar'. Now, its meaning is narrowed down to 'electric kitchen equipment'. As an opposite example, the word 'bird' refers to 'nestling' in which the meaning is widened and referred to a creature with wings and feather that can fly.

The words of language do not necessarily reflect the exact meaning of what are expected e.g., the word 'rainbow' does not exactly demonstrate the exact meaning but the feeling of people towards a given word. It seems that the meaning of words is an
inseparable part of culture, which is closely related to the people's experience and how they conjure up their thoughts. For example, the word 'snow' is much more meaningful for an Eskimo rather than a person who lives in a Sahara Desert. The scope of semantics can also be broadened to intangible category such as 'unicorn' and 'gorgon' as two imaginary creatures ('Unicorn' is an imaginary white horse with a long horn on its head, and 'Gorgon' is an imaginary creature who has snakes on her head that changes every person into stone by looking dagger at him or her).

The meaning of a given word is so complicated that cannot be merely guessed by referring to a dictionary e.g., 'apple' is defined as a hard round fruit with skin, which can be in different colors. This phenomenon can be further aggravated by referring to intangible and abstract words e.g., the meaning of the word 'love' varies in terms of the number of interpreters. Besides, the meaning of word also varies according to the profession e.g., the world 'salt' can be viewed as 'sodium chloride', which is meaningless from the viewpoint of a nonprofessional. Analyzing the so-called primitive language of the children and adults' words, phrases and utterances are not also the ultimate solution to the dilemma of the lexical meaning concept in semantics. Despite the fact that some words are well-defined and more explicitly coded rather than the implicitly one in some languages, it does not mean that other languages cannot get access to language devices to express the meaning of words. Furthermore, Researches on semantics can shed light on the brain function by detecting the mental process of words. It can also be a contributory factor in other disciplines such as computational linguistics and psycholinguistics. Every conducted specific research on the word facilitates communication based on the computational linguistics findings. Psycholinguistics as a road map also contributes to further empirical researches drawn from the linguistic theoretical approach.

Semantics deals with sentence meaning and entailment, whereas pragmatics deals with utterance meaning and implication. Lexical knowledge can be well-understood within the domain of semantics. For example, when a person says 'I have read the newspaper', it entails 'I read the newspaper' and implies 'I know its content'. We cannot cancel the entailment (I have not read the newspaper), but we can cancel the implication (I have read the newspaper, but I am not informed of its content).

Meaning as a fundamental issue in semantics is also defined in terms of relationship between language and the world around in the denotational theory of meaning is in contrast with the representational theory of meaning, which delves into
mental issues. The former defines the meaning of words in terms of parts of speech e.g., 'play' is a verb as well as the respective actual events and situations, and the latter seeks the meaning of the words in terms of cognitive grammar and conceptual semantics. Criticism is leveled at both of them: the former cannot interpret subjectivity and the latter cannot interpret variability. Besides, Meaning of words can be shown in terms of semantic primitives, which can be detected in the componential analysis within the framework of lexical decomposition. It is viewed as an atomistic procedure towards the meaning of words in which each word is analyzed in terms of semantic features and is displayed in terms of binary values e.g., woman is [- Male], [+Animate], but it can also be [+ Female], [+Animate]. However, grappling with the entire meaning of a given word is not an easy task since it is often arbitrary. In other words, interpretation of a given word varies from a person to the others. Besides, it is not clear whether atomistic analysis of word ends in reaching a holistic concept of the respective word or not. In addition, it is problematic to follow the example in the function words, as the grammatical words e.g., 'the', 'a', 'an' as definite and indefinite articles. The highly complicated issue also arises when abstract words are analyzed by means of componential features.

The meaning of a word is also defined in terms of views and analyses within the framework of necessary and sufficient conditions of classical paradigms. For example, the necessary and sufficient condition of the word 'spinster' is 'being a feminine', whereas the exact meaning is 'an unmarried woman'. In the word 'bachelor', 'man' is the logical constituent of it, and the word 'bachelor' entails 'man'. Briefly, each word takes its meaning from its components; whereas its entity is different from them e.g., a 'bachelor' is a 'man' but the word, 'man' does not mean 'bachelor'. In other words, a 'bachelor' and 'unmarried man' can refer to the same entity. The example indicates that the meaning of a word is very complicated, which cannot be understood without appropriate understanding of numerous variables such as degree of intimacy, personal preferences, social factors. For example, we can call a person a 'man' since he is either male or behaves manly. The relationship is more complicated when the meaning of a given word is dependent on its adjacent words or sentences in a context. It is also more sophisticated when each person interprets the meaning of each word in terms of his/her understanding. The vagueness of words such as 'big' and 'small' depends heavily on the interpretation of a given person, which is also situation-oriented.
In prototype theory, it is not necessary that concepts have definitions. It demonstrates that sub-ordinate categories have the same features of the super ordinate one. For instance, 'Robin' is a more typical bird rather than 'chickens' since its features are more similar to the super ordinate category. In other words, it is a typical exemplar of a bird. Nevertheless, it seems that prototype words can be defined in terms of compositional semantics. In other words, they are heavily dependent on people's judgment, which can be erroneous and controversial. The lexical knowledge of the ESL & EFL learners, rooted in semantic concepts, is closely related to understanding the concept of meaning.

1.4. Lexical Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge, despite being as a sub-skill compared to four main skills as listening and reading (receptive skills) as well as speaking and writing (productive skills), plays very crucial role in communication, which can be assumed in both active and passive forms. The former refers to the total words that a person use in a communication in a spoken or written mode, whereas the latter refers to the total words a person has heard or read. However, the importance of each skill or sub-skill should not be underestimated. For instance, Vocabulary knowledge is also a decisive factor in understanding reading comprehension texts. The type of the vocabulary that a person uses as diction or idiosyncratic words shows his/her characteristics, personality, and attitude as well as family background or so-called affective, social and cognitive variables. Nonetheless, the vocabulary size of native speakers and their choice of words are significantly different in terms of ESL and EFL learners.

The vocabulary or lexicon can be manifested as the coded (focal) and peripheral. Coded words are more specific, which are used in a language, but it may not be so specific in another language e.g., There are different words for 'snow', in Eskimo language, whereas they do not exist in English language. However, the English can use peripheral words or definitions to make the meaning of those words clear. There are many words on 'camel' and 'ship' as coded words in Arabic and English languages respectively. In Hopi language, there are merely three core words for colors. Nevertheless, It does not mean the people cannot use and understand other words, which pertain to colors. It implies that language has a mechanism in which the words can combine with each other and make new concepts. Learning the word can also be in the form of explicit and implicit (incidental). The former is defined in terms of
consciousness, attention and awareness, whereas the latter is defined in terms of unconsciousness. It is worth noting that learning is different from acquisition since learning is conscious knowledge and acquisition is unconscious. Learning a word can be either deductive or inductive (and even combination of them). Deductive way of learning is based on the instruction in which learning takes place from narrowing down the rules to the particulars. Conversely, inductive way of learning is defined in terms of drawing rules from the particulars. The former heavily depends on pedagogical practices and foci, and the latter relies on congenial surroundings. Despite the fact that native speakers take enormously benefit from both of them in language phenomenon by combining the words and reaching the correct sentences, the non-native speakers can not use them appropriately. In an integrative way of learning vocabulary, a native speaker uses the appropriate words, which are defined in terms of context to convey a concept, whereas a non-native speaker uses the words atomistically without having appropriate knowledge of word arrangement in a context. On the other hand, word knowledge of a native speaker is not merely memorizing sporadic words devoid of context, but that type of knowledge facilitating communication. Words are also classified into general, academic and technical. The general words are the most frequent and commonly used words that people use in their daily life. There are also other words, which are not so much frequent like the general words but are used in academia. They are mostly detected in non-specialized texts but can be found in various disciplines. The technical words are meaningful in specific fields or genre. In other words, the technical words are much more specific than the two others are.

Word as morph is defined as a minimal free form in which the role of situation as a crucial value is underrated. If a word is a minimal free form, it should be text independent, while it is not true since each word is multifaceted. The boundary of a word is not also clear-cut since a phrase or a sentence can also imply a word, or they can be defined in terms of a word. Even combination of words raises the question whether we deal with a word or some words as word compounds. Word can be in different forms e.g., lexical or functional (grammatical). Nevertheless, they are tightly linked to each other. For example, the function words have contributory effect on better understanding the specific and event-oriented meaning of the lexical words. Word in terms of parts of speech has raised more questions whether the quality and quantity of learning different parts of speech are the same. How are the words sorted out in our brain? Do they follow the same mental processes? Does the difference or
similarity result in language universals? All of such questions imply the complexities of the word knowledge, which necessitates in-depth analysis of the concept of word knowledge.

The lexical knowledge is defined in terms of lexical relations by lexical semanticists (Ullmann, 1962; Lehrer, 1974; Nida, 1975; & Cruse, 1986) within synonymy, antonymy, and idiomaticity, and collocation, abstract and concrete category in the dissertation study. The reason is that they are the commonest ways of defining the words irrespective of elaborate explanation of a given word in sentence(s). Besides, the frequency of using the above categories in dictionary is high. Moreover, the categories can be more objective rather than other categories e.g., 'polysemy, or 'hyponymy' in lexical relations. It is worth noting that the objectivity of a given category facilitates its testability. Detecting lexical knowledge is sometimes in contrast with the lexicographers' tasks, which mostly focus on dictionaries, thesauruses and glossaries to define the words. The purpose of the study is to demonstrate the ESL and EFL learners’ knowledge on the mentioned categories and to detect the rate of differences. Undoubtedly, understanding the differences contributes to recognizing the word process in the brain. It also plays very significant role in revising the curriculum textbooks. It can also contribute to compiling and selecting those words, which are more comprehensible for ESL and EFL learners by considering the learners variations.

1.5. Synonymy

1.5.1. Definition

Two words are synonymous, which have the same meaning. It raises the question: If 'x' has the same meaning as 'y', then 'x' is equal to 'y'. In this case, it is not necessary to use 'y' since it has the same meaning as 'x'. In other words, x = y. This is redundancy, while the mental process is based on economy principle. In other words, the more accessible word is processed, the sooner the redundant words will be faded. Psychological achievements and linguistic approaches e.g., minimalist theory confirms such a viewpoint.

1.5.2. Parts of Speech

The issue of synonymy mounts another challenge: If two words are not the same, synonymy meaning is redundant. How is it possible that two words are synonymous despite the fact that they are not the same? Besides, grammatical features
should be taken into consideration, indicating inseparable interrelationship of synonymy and parts of speech. In other words, the synonymous words are from the same parts of speech.

1.5.3. Borrowing

In spite of the fact that the exact synonymy seems to be vague and imprecise, there are some borrowed words from the other languages, which are very similar to the equivalent English words. However, some semanticists claim that the meaning of no word is exactly compatible with other word.

1.5.4. Levels

The relation of words can be defined in terms of two levels: Syntagmatic and paradigmatic. The word can be defined in terms of its relationship with other words in a sentence, and it can be defined in terms of substitution. The former is on the horizontal surface (axis) at the syntagmatic level and the latter is on the vertical axis at the paradigmatic level. Synonymy is defined in terms of paradigmatic level since the synonym words can more or less substitute with each other.

1.5.5. Binary Features in Synonymy

Synonymys are the words with similar meaning, which are not exactly the same. On the other hand, synonymy can be defined in terms of similarity and difference. Two words are synonyms in terms of binary feature in which one synonym word is different from the other.

1.5.6. Synonymy in terms of Antonymy

Synonymy, in near synonymy, is also considered as a range of words, which are opposite to each other. For example, the words ’Frozen, chilly, cool, tepid, balmy, warm, hot’ show ranges of synonymous words leading to antonymy.

1.5.7. Deep & Surface Level

Synonymy, which is a category of lexical knowledge, can be considered at two levels: The deep structure, which is called the mental lexicon and the surface level, which is called word performance. The mental lexicon represents the very basic knowledge as the competence, which can be manifested not necessarily and exactly in
the form of performance. Concisely, the synonymy phenomena and categories are commonly detected in all languages as an amalgam of two opposite phenomena known as both universalities and varieties. Within the linguistic framework, the universalities lead to language commonalities and similarities. Conversely, varieties result in language dissimilarities or differentiations. It is worth noting that such a classification is detected in all lexical categories and sub-categories. It should be noted that the lexical categories of the research study are 'synonymy', 'antonymy', 'idiomaticity', 'collocation', 'concrete', and 'abstract'.

1.5.8. Absolute, Complete or True Synonymy

Absolute synonymy refers to synonymous words, which are compatible with each other in all situations. In other words, synonymy is at the paradigmatic level. Thus, the absolute synonyms can be used interchangeably. On the other hand, each synonymous word can be substitute for another one.

The untenable of existence of full synonymy may raise the question whether there is an extreme synonymy or not. The crux of the matter is that synonymy initiates from zero, extends to near and propositional and ends in absolute. However, the usage of zero synonymy has raised the question whether the term is accurate or not. If zero synonymy is not synonymy, it cannot be a part of it. Thus, the usage of zero synonymy is redundant, and it cannot solve any problem. In other words, it cannot be considered as synonymy since it is based on the lack of existence of synonymy. Besides, it seems the absolute synonymy exists merely at the theoretical level. Despite the fact that there are some words borrowed from the other countries, it is sometimes impossible to find two exact synonymous words. In other words, it is impossible to detect two words, which are the same in all situations. On the other hand, a word is virtually synonymous with another word when it is compatible with it in every specific situation. Even in the borrowing phenomenon, the etymological differentiations can be found. Needless to say, detecting appropriate classifications in synonymy irrespective of idiosyncratic synonymy classifications mounts challenges.

1.5.9. Two Types of Synonymy

The researcher adopts two types of synonymy as near synonymy (disguised as almost synonymy, plesionymy or near synonymy) and propositional synonymy.
1.5.9.1. Near Synonymy, Almost Synonymy or Plesionymy Synonymy

Likeness of meaning in which peripheral differences can be detected is a cornerstone issue in defining near synonymy. In other words, some scales of degree are detected in the near synonymous words. The elements such as aspectual distribution, prototypical distinctions, background differences and degree of specialization are helpful cues in detecting such type of synonymy.

1.5.9.2. Propositional Synonymy

Propositional synonymy is defined in terms of all variations, which can be dialectal, formality, geographical differences along with professional-unprofessional distinction. For example, the words 'elevator' (American) and 'lift' (British) are propositional synonymy since their difference is in terms of dialectal variation.

1.6. Antonymy

1.6.1. Definition

Antonymy refers to the words with opposite or nearly opposite meaning. Many word relationships can be defined in terms of binary features as plus (+) & minus (-), indicating opposite signs. However, another question mark sign (?) is also introduced, indicating neither plus nor minus.

1.6.2. Antonymy & Synonymy

Synonymy as a category of lexical knowledge is sometimes defined in terms of antonymy. Near synonymy refers to the type of synonymy, which can be defined in terms of meaning ranges from so-called meaning spectrum. In this case, synonymous words can be differentiated in terms of their trivial meaning differences. Even the propositional synonymy can be defined in terms of geographical, dialectal and other variations.

1.6.3. Frequency

In terms of frequency and usage, synonymy is used more than antonymy in defining the meaning of an entity. However, children are fully familiar with both of these two lexical categories.
1.6.4. Incompatibility

Antonyms is defined not only in terms of incompatibility but also in terms of contrast e.g., when something is green, it is not blue, but turquoise is a greenish-blue stone, indicating both green and blue as a combination of colors and even neither green and blue color as an independent object with its specific color. The word 'crimson', which means deep in red color, can be in contrast with red color since it has a specific feature that the red color lacks and it can be a variety of red color, which is an independent color per se. The phenomenon in which two contrastive entities can be in contrast or in combination, (It depends on what aspects are going to be taken into consideration) refers to incompatibility.

1.6.5. Contrastive Features

Many scholars differentiate the contrastive features of two given objects from antonymy. For example, the word 'metal' is different from the word 'wood'. In other words, the former has some features that the latter lacks. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the word metal is the antonym of the word wood.

1.6.6. Compositionality

Antonymy is the same as synonymy, which can be defined in terms of compositionality in which the meaning of the constituents convey the meaning of the whole.

1.6.7. Inequality

Antonymy is also be defined in terms of inequality. On the other hand, two antonyms are not of equal value from the point of view of native speakers e.g., 'How heavy is it?' is an unmarked or normal sentence, whereas 'How light is it?' is marked, which is more unusual than the unmarked one.

1.6.8. Affixes

Sometimes, antonyms are shown by using affixes as negative markers e.g., the opposite of 'happy' is 'unhappy'. It should be noted that the form of affixes as a negative marker is not the same e.g., 'hope # hopeless', 'flexible # inflexible', 'possible # impossible', 'logical # illogical' and 'rational # irrational'. Among the negative markers, the affixes 'un' and 'non' are unmarked. Besides, parts of speech are
sometimes crucial in the selection of the type of affix such as 'unsatisfactory'(adjective), but 'dissatisfaction'(noun) or 'inequality'(noun) but 'unequal'(adjective). Moreover, some regularities can be detected in using the negative marker affixes e.g., the words with initial letters 'L' and 'R' will be changed into negative by 'Il' and 'Ir' e.g., 'logical # illogical' and 'rational # irrational'.

1.6.9. Different Types of Antonymy

Four types of antonym are detected by the researcher, which encompasses all types of antonym: complementaries, graded antonymy, converse or relational antonymy and Auto-antonymy.

1.6.9.1. Complementaries

The words dead/alive and true/false are complementary antonyms. It is based on binary feature: if something is dead then it is not alive. It is not based on 'neither, nor' phenomenon. In other words, it does not accept ' neither dead nor alive' rule. Actually, this rule deals with normal not anomalous situation. For example, the word 'eunuch' means a man whose testicles are removed who is not a man or a woman.

Complementary antonyms do not accept comparative adjective markers such as 'er' or 'more'. They are not also preceded by intensifiers such as 'very' or 'quite'. They are also based on reversiveness e.g., when you live, it means you are alive or you are not dead. Complementary antonymy can also be based on negative marker affixes e.g., obey # disobey.

1.6.9.2. Gradable antonymy

Gradable or graded antonym represents the end of a scale. It can take the form of 'er' or 'more' e.g., 'large # small'. It can also be preceded by intensifiers or modifiers such as 'very' and 'quite' in the antonym words like 'difficult # easy'. It is based on non-binary opposition, which is in contrast with complementaries or complementary antonymy. Graded antonymy is not based on the rule that the negative of one component of antonymy denotes the other e.g., 'He is not tall' does not necessarily mean 'He is short'. Besides, the graded antonyms can also be based on being unmarked (normal) and marked (unusual) e.g., 'How high is the house?' is unmarked, while 'How low is the house?' is marked.
1.6.9.3. Converse or Relational Antonymy

It means the presence of one part of antonym includes the presence of another one e.g., If John is the husband of Mary, then Mary is the wife of John. The words, which take 'ee' in contrast with the words, which can take 'er', can be considered as one part of relational antonymy e.g., employer # employee.

1.6.9.4. Auto-Antonymy

It refers to a word with contrastive meanings. In other words, one sense of a word is the antonym of another sense of the same word. Selection of the correct meaning of the word heavily depends on the situation. In a simple language, auto-antonymy is a type of antonymy in which a word has two opposite meanings e.g., the word 'sanction' means 'punishment' and 'permission'.

1.7. Idiomaticity

1.7.1. Definition

Idioms can be defined as a combination of words in which the individual words do not convey the whole meaning. Accordingly, idiomaticity is a category in which the meaning is taken for granted due to the nature of its arbitrary phrases. If the definition is clear-cut, then meaning of idiom should be fixed, which is stored in the mental lexicon as a separate category. According to the assumption, the individual words do not contribute to better understanding of the completely idiomatic phrases.

1.7.2. Is Idiom as a Different Lexical Category?

Decomposability, in contrast with compositionality, refers to phrases as the fixed words in which the individual meaning of the words do not convey the holistic meaning. In other words, the idiomatic expressions are classified in different location(s) of the brain, which is due to their decompositionality nature. In this case, it is differentiated from compositionality theory, which pinpoints the contributory effect of individual words in conveying the same meaning.

Idiom can also be called a specific mode of expression, which heavily depends on culture of people who would like to express their thought by the combination of words within the framework of affective, social and cognitive variables.
1.7.3. Idiom Peculiarity

Idiom is a manner of expression, which is peculiar to a given language. In this case, the idiom of each given language is peculiar to that culture and language.

1.7.4. Universality

Despite the fact that idioms are specific to each language, some universal properties drawn from the nature of language can be detected. In this regard, contrastive analysis studies can play very crucial role in displaying the idiomatic similarities and differences in different languages, and it can indicate how meaning of the idiomatic expression is construed in similar or different ways. Despite all differences in combing individual words manifested in idiomatic phrases, many shared meanings and commonalities can be detected in different languages.

1.7.5. Idiomaticity Dilemma

If idiomaticity is defined in terms of the phrases with fixed meaning, then idiomatic words cannot be understood literally. It implies that understanding of idioms depends on the context. In other words, idiom is a context-oriented category. It is the horns of a dilemma whether idiomaticity is definitely defined in terms of appropriate context, indicating the meaning variability, or in terms of the individual words, which convey a fixed meaning.

1.7.6. Challenges on Idiomaticity

In spite of the fact that idioms are called the non-compositional phrases with fixed meaning, the combination of the individual words can somehow contribute to understanding the entire idiomatic phrases in some idiomatic phrases. Accordingly, two types of idioms are identified:

a. The separate words do not convey the same holistic meaning.

b. The individual words somehow convey the same holistic meaning.

He former is called frozen idiom and the latter is known as flexible idiom. The idioms 'at sixes and sevens, and 'pour out ones heart' are attributed to the first and second types of idioms respectively. Despite the clear demarcation of two types of idioms, there are some idioms, which have historical background. In other words, the meaning of the idiomatic phrases traces back to even a known or unknown history. Understanding the situation in which the idiom is used contributes to demystify its real
meaning. The phrase such as 'pass the bucket' is an idiom, which has no obvious holistic meaning (The meaning of the individual words does not convey a holistic meaning), but it has a clear-cut history. That's why, its meaning is located in the borderline. In other words, there is an overlapping between the frozen idiom and flexible idiom.

1.7.7. Grammatical Categories

Despite the fact that it seems the idiomatic expressions are anomalous, they have a crystal clear syntactical arrangements. Besides, some rather fixed collocation formats are used in the idiomatic phrases.

1.7.8. Syntagmatic Relationship

The idiomatic phrases are not based on the substitution, which is verily defined in paradigmatic relationship. In contrast to synonymy & antonymy, which are based on paradigmatic relationship, collocation and idiom are based on the syntagmatic relationship, which pinpoints the interwoven links of all parts of the phrase(s).

1.7.9. Other Distinctive Features of Idioms

Idioms are the phrases, which convey holistic meaning. They can substitute for a word that is compatible with the entire phrase. Idioms often affect the listeners or readers more than the individual words. It seems that idiomatic phrases are entirely interwoven with affective, social and cognitive variables. Idiomatic phrases are rather rhythmic e.g., 'safe and sound'.

1.7.10. Dissertation Classification

Two classifications are considered as the most suitable for the idiomaticity category. In other words, Idiomaticity category falls into two sub-categories as flexible idiom and frozen idiom. Both of them are considered within the framework of the dissertation study entitled ' A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level'.
1.8. Collocation

1.8.1. Definition

Collocation is the co-occurrence of words in a meaningful way, in a particular context and in a rather fixed sequence. It is also called as frequently used non-idiomatic phrases. Despite the fact that choice of frequent words seems to be arbitrary random, it is systematic in terms of syntactic arrangement. Collocational words are frequently used in terms of mutual expectancy, which are meaningful for native speakers and may be rather meaningless for non-native ones. Collocation is also lexical chunks with rather fixed patterns with frequent usage. In other words, it is the interaction of lexical and grammatical arrangement in a rather fixed order. Substitutability and syntactic transformation are impossible or restricted in the collocational words. Collocation is rather in a rhythmic form. Collocation raises several questions whether the phrases are stored in different parts of the brain or it is based on combination of sequence of words. The other question is raised whether distinctive parts of lexical knowledge (in terms of words, phrases and sentences) are stored in the brain separately or in an integrative manner.

1.8.2. Collocation & Proficiency

Due to high frequency usage of collocation, defined in terms of co-occurrence restriction of phrases, proficiency seems to be crucial factor in differentiating the native speakers from the non-native ones. It is adduced that the rate of proficiency is closely connected to collocation as one of the categories in lexical knowledge.

1.8.3. Systematic Arrangement

Several findings indicate that the co-occurrence of phrases in collocation is not at random. At the syntactic level, very clear-cut arrangement in collocation category is detected. Besides, the rate of people's knowledge seems to fluctuate in terms of parts of speech.

1.8.4. Collocation versus Idiom

Idiom is differentiated from collocation that the former is less flexible in meaning than the latter. In other words, the combination of idiomatic expression is rarely compatible with the meaning of individual words. However, collocation is more flexible than even 'flexible idiom'.
1.8.5. Findings on Concrete & Abstract Collocation

Findings indicate that collocation with concrete words can be processed sooner than the abstract ones (Glenberg & Robertson, 2000).

1.8.6. Collocation & Style

Collocation is often intertwined with style. Longer collocational phrases are more often used in formal situations and shorter collocational ones are mostly used in informal situation (Kjelmer, 1986).

1.8.7. Collocation as a Continuum

Collocation is sometimes considered in terms of a continuum. On the other hand, there are some words, which can be easily combined with other words to make collocational phrases e.g., the word 'head' in 'head of department' and 'at the head of the table' or the word 'leg' in 'roast leg of lamb' and 'a chair leg'. The other classification is based on bound collocation in which high restriction of co-occurrence of phrases exists e.g., 'bark of dog' but 'hoot of owl'. Nevertheless, the classification is very controversial. That's why, the researcher has merely considered one type of collocation in the dissertation study.

1.8.8. Paradigmatic or Syntagmatic

Collocation is also classified in terms of syntagmatic relations. Accordingly, the words can be considered at the horizontal level. In other words, the collocational words cannot be defined in terms of substitutability.

1.8.9. Collocation in ESL & EFL

Due to restriction in collocation usage, its learning is problematic for a second language learner as well as a foreign language learner. McArthur (1992) has underlined the importance of learning the collocational phrases since they act as indicators, which differentiates a native speaker from ESL and EFL learner.

1.8.10. Dissertation Classification

No sub-classification is considered for collocation category. It is merely similar to other categories defined in terms of word level and sentence level. On the other
hand, the lexical knowledge of ESL and EFL learners in terms of collocation knowledge is tested at either word or phrase level in which collocation is tested as a phrase, and at the sentence level. Collocation category is considered within the framework of the dissertation study entitled 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level'.

1.9. Concrete & Abstract Category

1.9.1. Definition

Concrete and abstract categories can be differentiated in terms of tangible and intangible concepts. Sometimes the former is attributed to a direct referential concept and the latter to the indirect one.

1.9.2. Frequency

It is worth noting that the tangibility of a word is different from its frequency. On the other hand, it is possible that a word is tangible, but it is not used frequently. Thus, the degree of using the word can determine its tangibility. For example, the words 'lining', 'heel', 'toe', 'lace' and 'sole' are the words, which are not used frequently by the ordinary people, but they are frequently used by the shoe makers.

1.9.3. Tangibility as a Relative Concept

Tangibility is one of the attributes of concrete word. Accordingly, the words, which are tangible, are the objects that can be received as meaningful by our five senses. Nevertheless, the value of tangibility of different objects is not the same for every single individual person, indicating its highly idiosyncratic and situation-oriented nature. Despite the above-mentioned fact, the issue of universalities in concrete category cannot be ignored.

1.9.4. Lexical Decision Time

Findings of De Groot et al. (1989) has shown that people can recognize the concrete words sooner than the abstract ones. In other words, the reaction time towards the concrete words is sooner than the abstract ones. Easy accessibility to the concrete words implies distinctive mental processes towards the concreteness. It also implies that the brain function and word classification of the concrete and abstract words are astronomically different. The findings of Strain et al. (1995) reveal that even the
people suffering from dyslexia have fewer problems in reading the contexts with words that are more concrete rather than the abstract ones.

1.9.5. Diachronic Changes

The historical change indicates that the concrete words are exposed to change less than abstract ones. For example, the word 'fork' compared to 'freedom' is more concrete, which has undergone less meaning change. Besides, the abstract word is susceptible to interpretation. For instance, more interpretation of the word 'love' is expected than the word 'spoon'.

1.9.6. Affective Variable

It seems that the emotional words can be expressed more by the abstract word.

1.9.7. Style Variation

The more formal the situation is, the more abstract words are used.

1.9.8. Child Development

In the initial stage of development, a child deals with concrete word and later with abstract ones.

1.9.9. Curriculum Issues

The beginner students compared to intermediate and advanced level ones use concrete words more than abstract words, and consequently it is expected the former is understood better than the latter. It seems understanding the abstract words needs further mental processes, which is heavily dependent on brain development. Accordingly, the age issue is a crucial element, determining the rate of concrete and abstract understanding.

1.9.10. Noun Markers

There are some noun markers, which can change an adjective or verb into noun. They are often signs of abstract words such as 'ness' in 'concreteness'(noun), 'dom' in 'freedom'(noun) and 'tion' in 'pronunciation'(noun) since these markers signify properties or a state.
1.9.11. Dissertation Classification

No sub-classification is considered for concrete and abstract categories. They are similar to other categories, defined in terms of both word and sentence levels. On the other hand, the lexical knowledge of ESL and EFL learners in terms of concrete and abstract knowledge is tested at word and sentence level. Concrete and abstract categories are considered within the framework of the dissertation study entitled 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level'.

Statement of the Problem

Contrastive analysis is a way and a paradigm to detect similarities and differences of various categories. Due to inefficiency of defining the lexical categories, which arises from discrepancies between semanticists, linguists, philosophers, neurolinguists, psycholinguists, computational linguists and lexicographers and the rest academicians, a shadow is cast over the real definition and consequently the use as well as the usage of lexical knowledge. Besides, Lexical knowledge, in many cases, is not analyzed separate from other categories e.g., syntax in linguistics.

It also launches a challenge when the researcher deals with a contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL. Moreover, defining the lexical knowledge in terms of synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete and abstract categories is not a crystal clear phenomenon emanated from discrepancies of defining the categories and classifying them into proper sub-categories. Thus, the researcher should take the following procedure to run up the obstacle in the research process:

a. Giving a clear definition of contrastive analysis
b. Clarifying the ESL&EFL distinctions
c. Defining lexical knowledge in terms of categories
d. Sorting out lexical categories in terms of clear-cut classifications
e. Detecting the contrastive points of ESL (Mysorean) & EFL (Tehrani) learners (Those native undergraduate students who live in Mysore and Tehran)
f. Revealing the correlation between ‘Hobbies’, ‘FamBond (Family bond(s))’, ‘SocioAtta (Social attachment(s))’, ‘Language’, ‘FamMem (Family member as siblings)’ as non-lexical knowledge and lexical knowledge
The Research Question

According to the dissertation study entitled, 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level', the following questions are raised:

1. Is there any significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge, in general and in particular, in terms of synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete & abstract categories as lexical categories?

2. Is there any gender difference on ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge overall and in terms of synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete and abstract categories as lexical categories?

3. Can any difference be detected at various levels of ESL & EFL learners' lexical knowledge (word or sentence) overall and in terms of synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete and abstract categories as lexical categories?

4. Is there any relationship between non-lexical elements and lexical knowledge of ESL&EFL learners?

5. Is the parents' education on lexical categories knowledge of ESL&EFL learners effective?

6. Is there any in-group word & sentence difference between ESL & EFL learners?

7. Is there any correlation between the same lexical categories of ESL&EFL learners?

Statement of the Hypotheses

For holding reliable and desired results from the research entitled 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level', the following null hypotheses and null sub-hypotheses are suggested:

Hypothesis One and Sub-Hypotheses

H1: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge.
H1.1: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in synonymy.

H1.2: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in antonymy.

H1.3: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in idiomaticity.

H1.4: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in collocation.

H1.5: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in concrete word.

H1.6: There is no significant difference between ESL and EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in abstract word.

**Hypothesis Two and Sub-Hypotheses**

H2: Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge is insignificant (M stands for male and F stands for female).

H2.1. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in synonymy is insignificant. (M and F stand for male and female respectively).

H2.2. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in antonymy is insignificant.

H2.3. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in idiomaticity is insignificant.

H2.4. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in collocation is insignificant.

H2.5. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in concrete word is insignificant.

H2.6. Gender difference of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge in abstract word is insignificant.

**Hypothesis Three and Sub-Hypotheses**

H3: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge (word or sentence). It should be noted that 'H', 'M' and 'L' stand for 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low' respectively in the dissertation.
H3.1: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of synonymy (word or sentence).

H3.2: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of antonymy (word or sentence).

H3.3: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of idiomaticity (word or sentence).

H3.4: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of collocation (word or sentence).

H3.5: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of concrete word (word or sentence).

H3.6: No significant difference can be detected at various levels of ESL&EFL learners’ lexical knowledge of abstract word (word or sentence).

**Hypothesis Four and Sub-Hypotheses**

H4: No correlation can be detected between non-lexical elements and lexical knowledge of ESL&EFL learners.

H4.1 (Sub-hypothesis of hypothesis 1): No correlation can be detected between non-lexical elements and lexical knowledge of ESL learners.

H4.2 (Sub-hypothesis of hypothesis 1): No correlation can be detected between non-lexical elements and lexical knowledge of EFL learners.

**Hypotheses Five, Six and Seven**

H5: The effect of parents’ education on lexical categories knowledge of ESL&EFL learners is insignificant.

H6: There is no in-group word & sentence difference between ESL&EFL learners.

H7: No correlation is detected between the same lexical categories of ESL&EFL learners.

1.10. **Significance of the Study**

The points, which make the study more significant, are as follows:

1.10.1. **Significance based on the Proposed Hypotheses**

a. The purpose is to determine the differences between ESL & EFL learners' lexical knowledge overall for each category and sub-category. The significance is that
the difference will draw the attention of the academicians, subject matter designers and organizers to make appropriate modifications in the respective fields at theoretical and applied levels. The rate of the difference also contributes to determining the exact difficult points

b. Gender difference is an important factor, which needs due attention. It should be emphatically considered in the curriculum affairs. Determining the rate and type of lexical knowledge differences will be a contributing factor in different disciplines especially educational fields.

c. It is also of great importance to determine the different categories and subcategories of lexical knowledge at various levels, including 'high', 'medium', and 'low'.

d. The correlation between non-lexical elements and lexical knowledge of ESL&EFL learners should not be overlooked.

e. The effect of parents’ education on lexical categories knowledge of ESL&EFL learners should be taken into consideration.

f. In-group word & sentence, the difference between ESL&EFL learners should be taken into consideration.

g. Correlation should be detected between the same lexical categories of ESL&EFL learners.

1.10.2 Significance in a Wide Range of Disciplines

The research study is a contributing factor in various domains:

a. **Lexicography:** Determining the lexical knowledge distinction between ESL & EFL learners paves the way for compiling a dictionary, which can appropriately satisfy the needs of second and foreign language learners. The researcher raises the question whether a monolingual dictionary without considering variations of ESL&EFL learners in understanding the context can satisfy their growing demands e.g., a dictionary takes benefit from different lexical devices such as synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete and abstract words to define a word in a comprehensible manner. It is impossible or improbable to expect the ESL and EFL to understand the exact meaning of so-called well-defined meaning of a given word, which can be attributed to language varieties. The recent study underscores the importance of variation and distinction of ESL&EFL learners

b. **Computational linguistics:** Appropriate computer program can be designed in term of the lexical knowledge of ESL & EFL learners.
c. **Pedagogical Modification:** Modification in the pedagogical practices and subject matter syllabus is an inevitable result of understanding the rate of variation of lexical knowledge between ESL and EFL learners.

d. **Psycholinguistics and Neurolinguistics:** Distinctive Lexical knowledge on categories such as synonymy, antonymy, idiomaticity, collocation, concrete & abstract words implies different function of brain in terms of each category.

e. **Linguistics:** Determining the paradigm of ESL and EFL distinction fosters universals as commonalities and differences in understanding the lexical knowledge.

f. **Discourse and Pragmatics:** The study fosters appropriate textual modifications to convey the real meaning and intention, which can be materialized by due attention to varieties in understanding the lexical categories to make the texts more comprehensible.

g. **Interdisciplinary Studies:** The research can be a contributing factor in interdisciplinary studies, which encourages the scholars to mull over distinctive understanding of ESL&EFL learners that are not restricted to English students.

### Definition of Important Terms

The dissertation study terms, which are compatible with the title of the research as 'A contrastive study of lexical knowledge between ESL&EFL (Mysore & Tehran) at undergraduate level', are as follows:

a. **Contrastive Analysis:**
Contrastive analysis is a scientific procedure in which various language components of different languages are taken into consideration in order to detect the similarities and differences facilitating any modification in a wide range of disciplines.

b. **Lexical Knowledge:** It is a systematic study of meaning by detecting a detailed analysis of the word relationship.

c. **ESL & EFL Learner:** English second language learner versus English foreign language learner can be differentiated from each other in terms of environment, degree of mother language influence and other intervening variables.

### Limitation of the Study

Certain limitations are imposed on the dissertation study due to the nature of ex-post facto features of the carried out research, which are as follows:
1.11. Pilot & Pedestal Group
1.11.1. Pilot Study
   a. It is limited to 20 Mysorean undergraduate students as ESL learners aged 17-25 from equal both genders (10Males and10 Females) selected at random from Mahajana college from separate five classes, each class comprises four students both equal males and females. The group is selected randomly as a sample from the whole students in which 250 students who learn English as a medium of instruction are to be selected randomly as pedestal or main group.
   b. Similarly, The above specifications are towards EFL learners from Azad University Central branch.

1.12. Main or Pedestal Group
   a. 250 first undergraduate level students with equal males and females are selected randomly in which English language is the medium of instruction. The main group is selected from five classes from Mahajana College is located in Mysore with the age group ranges from 17 to 25.
   b. Similarly, The above qualifications are used towards EFL learners from Azad University Central branch located in Tehran.

Instrumentations
   a. The ETS (Educational testing service) TOEFL test is administered to the Mysorean & Tehrani first undergraduate students as ESL learners and EFL learners respectively within the age group 17-25 from equal both genders selected at random from Mahajana college and Azad University Central branch from separate five classes (Five classes in Mysore and five classes in Tehran).
   b. The main test addendum to background knowledge, which is only to elicit the general information from the main group, is administered. The background knowledge questionnaire with 15 minutes and main test with 55 minutes allocated time (110 items each one with 30 seconds allocated time, which are determined in the pilot study) are administered in terms of all categories and sub-categories. They comprise near synonymy, propositional synonymy, complementaries, graded antonymy, converse or relational antonymy, auto-antonymy, flexible idiom (Idiomaticity), frozen idiom (Idiomaticity), collocation, concrete category and abstract category at two levels of
word and sentence. Each part of the mentioned categories and sub-categories contains 10 items with 5 items at word level and 5 items at sentence level.