Item	Yes	No	No answer	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig
c. Social distance	25	2	3	33.800	2	.000
14. Wedding						
a. Preparation	27	3	0	19.200	1	.000
b. Ceremonies	30	0	0			
15. Funerals						
a. Rituals	29	1	0	26.133	1	.000
b. Length of mourning	28	1	1	48.600	2	.000
16.Public inter- city Transportation a. Taxi						
1. Number of passengers	29	1	0	26.133	1	.000
2. Stops on the route	27	2	1	48.600	2	.000
b. Buses						
1.number of passengers	29	1	0	26.133	1	.000
2. Stops in the route	25	3	2	33.800	2	.000
3. Time schedule	25	2	3	33.800	2	.000
17. Educational system Concerning the Relationships among						
a. Teachers and students	25	3	2	33.800	2	.000
b. Peers (students)	21	6	3	18.600	2	.000
c. Colleagues	23	4	3	25.400	2	.000

Note: The numbers under 'yes, no, and no answer' represents the frequency of both the Iranians' and native speakers' answers to each question.

b. Material	17	8	5	7.800	2	.020
6. Shopping						
a. Shopping schedule	26	3	1	38.600	2	.000
b. Type of shops	27	2	1	43.400	2	.000
c. Quantity of goods	30	0	0			
7. Bath						
a. Bath schedule	25	3	2	38.600	2	.000
b. The way to bath						
1. Shower	22	5	3	21.800	2	.000
2. Bath tub	23	5	2	25.800	2	.000
3. Public 25	3	2		33.800	2	.000
8. Complement	30	0	0			
9. Family relationships						
a. Husband and wife	27	2	1	43.400	2	.000
b. Father and children	27	2	1	43.400	2	.000
c. Mother and children	22	7	1	23.400	2	.000
d. Children together	25	4	1	34.200	2	.000
10. Greeting						
a. Content	22	5	3	21.800	2	.000
b. Kinesics						
1. Handshakes	26	3	1	38.600	2	.000
2. Kissing	26	3	1	38.600	2	.000
11. Weekends						
a. Time	26	2	2	38.400	2	.000
b. Activities	26	2	2	38.400	2	.000
12. Festivals and						
Holidays	10	1	19	16.200	2	.000
13. Space in conversation						
a. Private distance	22	6	2	22.400	2	.000
b. Public distance	23	4	3	25.400	2	.000

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Appendix
The frequency and chi-square results for items representing intercultural differences

Item	Yes	No	No answer	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig
1. Breakfast						
a. Time	16	14	0	.133	1	.715
b. Style	28	2	0	22.533	1	.000
c. Menu	30	0	0			
2. Lunch						
a. Time	16	14	0	.133	1	.715
b. Style	29	1	0	26.133 1		.000
c. Menu	30	0	0			
3. Dinner						
a. Time	29	1	0	26.133 1		.000
b. Style	29	1	0	26.133 1		.000
c. Menu	30	0	0			
4. Games						
a. Sports	22	6	2	22.400	2	.000
b. Hobbies	23	6	1	26.600	2	.000
c. Recreations	26	3	1	38.600	2	.000
5. Clothing						
a. Style	27	2	1	43.400	2	.000

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tribution of goods, hospitals, libraries, driving, calling before coming for a visit, medical care and maybe many more not mentioned by the subjects. Moreover, what are revealed in this study are just the area of differences and not the nature of the differences. Making a relatively complete handbook of intercultural differences requires lots of investigation.

As a matter of fact, culture like syntax and vocabulary of a language is intertwined with it. Anybody who wants to learn a language has to get familiar with the culture as an inseparable part, too. So if syntax of a language is so important to have a course as CA to find the similarities or differences, comparative/ contrastive culture seems, if not more, at least as important as it.

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among teachers and students ($X^2(2)$ =33.800, p< .05), the relationship among students ($X^2(2)$ =18.600, p< .05), and the relationship among colleagues ($X^2(2)$ 25.400, p< .05). The table at the end of the study provides the summary for all the categories.

Discussion

L2 learners should learn intercultural differences/ similarities as an integral part of the language. This purpose can be fulfilled explicitly or implicitly. In explicit teaching, two main sources are available for rendering this information in Iran: native speakers and teachers. Native speakers can conduct the class themselves if they are teachers, or they can accompany the teacher as a member of the L2 community. Or the teacher can conduct the class him/herself. In both cases the intercultural information will be discussed directly and consequently the purpose will not be accomplished unless the conductor is familiar with the two cultures. In other words the conductor should be knowledgeable enough about the two cultures to be able to convey the knowledge to the class.

In implicit teaching, the learners can become aware of the intercultural differences/similarities through reading materials. In this case, applied linguists should have the required information to write or to select the necessary materials. So, having the required information about the two cultures is of a necessity in both explicit and implicit teaching.

The results of the present study reveals there is a significant difference between the culture of the Iranian and American/English speakers in all of the above-mentioned areas except in time of breakfast and lunch. This information can be of some help, as a handbook, for the new arrived native speakers and those who are going to go abroad in general, and for the teachers and applied linguists, as a source of the required information, for language teaching and learning, in particular. This study with 17 head categories and their 45 sub-categories clarify only a small part of the differences. There are many others mentioned by the participants such as: gifts, reading materials, respect, role of elders, child birth, shopping centers, dis-

between father and children $(X^2(2) = 43.400, p<.05)$, relationship between mother and children $(X^2(2) = 23.400, p<.05)$, and relationship among children $(X^2(2) = 34.200, p<.05)$.

Considering the results of 'greeting', there is a significant difference in the content (what is said in greeting) $(X^2(2) =21.800, p<.05)$ and in kinesics (body movement), both in handshakes $(X^2(2) =36.600, p<.05)$ and in kissing each other $(X^2(2) 38.800, p<.05)$.

As far as 'weekends' is concerned, a significant difference in both, time of the weekend in the two countries and in the activities done during the weekend is revealed $(X^2(2) =38.400, p<.05)$.

The kind of 'Festivals and holidays' in the two countries shows a significant difference, too $(X^2(2) =16.200, p<.05)$.

'Space in conversation' which is related to the amount of space kept between the two interlocutors, shows a significant difference in different situations, i.e., private, public and social. The results show a significant difference in the private distance, i.e., when the conversation is a private one $(X^2(2) =22.400, p<.05)$, when the conversation takes place in public places $(X^2(2) = 25.400, p<.05)$, and also when the relationship between the interlocutors is of a social one $(X^2(2) = 33.800, p<.05)$.

As far as 'wedding' is concerned, there is a significant difference in getting prepared for the wedding $(X^2(1) =19.200, p<.05)$ and also in the "ceremonies" of the wedding itself for which all the participants had positive responses considering cultural differences.

The results of 'funerals' represent a significant difference $(X^2(1) =26.133, p<.05)$ in the rituals of the funeral and in the length of mourning $(X^2(2) =48.600, p<.05)$.

Considering 'public inter-city transportation', the results indicate a significant difference in all parts: In 'number of passengers in a taxi' $(X^2(1) =26.133, p<.05)$, in 'taxi stops on the route' $(X^2(2) =48.600, p<.05)$, in 'number of the passengers in buses' $(X^2(1) =26.133, p<.05)$, and in 'bus stops on the route and bus time schedule' $(X^2(2) =33.800, p<.05)$.

The last category 'educational system' demonstrates a significant difference in the educational system concerning the relationship

0.133, p< .05), but there is a significant difference in style of eating ($X^2(1) = 22.533$, p< .05) and in menu (what is eaten for breakfast) for which all the participants believed in difference.

In the second category, 'lunch', the results indicate a similar case as the previous one, i.e., no significant difference in time of eating lunch ($X^2(1) = 0.133$, p< .05), but a significant difference in the style of eating ($X^2(1) = 26.133$, p< .05) and menu with 100 percent positive answers indicating 100 percent difference between the two cultures.

Considering the category of 'dinner', the results reveal a significant difference in time and style ($X^2(1) = 26.133$, p< .05) and also in the menu with 100 percent positive responses for the difference.

For 'games' the results show that there is a significant difference between cultures in all aspects, i.e., in the kinds of sports ($X^2(2) = 22.400$, p< .05), hobbies ($X^2(2) = 26.600$, p< .05), and recreations ($X^2(2) = 38.600$, p< .05).

The results of the category of 'clothing' represent a significant difference in the style of clothing ($X^2(2) = 43.400$, p< .05) and in the material used for clothing ($X^2(2) = 7.800$, p< .05).

Concerning 'shopping', the results indicate a significant difference in all three: schedule of shopping (the time and way of shopping) ($X^2(2) = 38.600$, p<.05) , in the types of shops in the two countries ($X^2(2)$ 43.400 p<. 05) and in the quantity of goods bought for which all the participants believed in difference.

The results of the next category, 'bath', shows a significant difference between cultures in 'bath schedule' ($X^2(2) = 38.600$, p<.05). Also the difference in 'the way of bath' is shown to be significant considering the three subcategories of taking shower ($X^2(2) = 21.800$, p< .050), using bath tub ($X^2(2) = 25.800$, p< .050) and the public one ($X^2(2) = 33.800$, p< .05).

For 'Complement' (tarof), all the participants had positive responses for the cultural differences.

The results of 'family relationship' demonstrate that there is a significant difference in all four subcategories: the kind of relationship between husband and wife ($X^2(2) = 43.400$, p<05), relationship

Method

Participants

A total number of 46 subjects filled out a questionnaire. Twelve Iranians who had lived in America/England at least for two years and 19 American/English subjects who had lived in Iran at least for two years were selected. The minimum of 2 was considered as the basis because it seemed that 2 years, though might not be enough for complete and detailed information about the quality of the intercultural differences, might be enough for having a concept about the areas of difference between two cultures. The other participants (15) were excluded from the study because they had lived either in another country or less than 2 years. Also another subject who had not answered based on the instruction and had ambiguous explanations, was excluded from the study. So, the study was conducted based on the information provided by 30 subjects.

Instrument

A questionnaire including three major parts was used:

1. In the first part of the questionnaire, the participant's nationality and the length of their residence in the specific country were asked.
2. The second part included the 17 above-mentioned categories, some of which are based on Brook's (1986) list. The participants were supposed to check for yes / no answers to indicate the presence or absence of cultural differences.
3. In the third part, they were asked to write any other differences not mentioned in the list.

Results

To find the aspects in which there are meaningful differences between the two cultures at the level of .05 significance, a number of chi-squares were conducted.

In the first category, 'breakfast', the results indicate that there is not any significant difference in time of eating breakfast ($<2(1) =$

affairs.

The Study

The present study was conducted to check if there is any significant difference at the level of .05 significance between the Iranian and American/English culture in the following aspects some of which are derived from Brook's (1986) list of items as topics for discussion in the language classroom, and others are based on the knowledge of the researcher in dealing with the English/American culture directly or indirectly. The following 17 categories include the list of intercultural differences investigated in this study:

1. Breakfast (time, style, menu)
2. Lunch (time, style, menu)
3. Dinner (time, style, menu)
4. Games (sports, hobbies, recreations)
5. Clothing (style, material)
6. Shopping (shopping schedule, types of shops, quantity of goods bought)
7. Bath [Bath schedule, the way to take bath (shower, bath tub, public)] 8. Complement
9. Family relationships (husband and wife, father and children, mother
and children, children together)
10. Greeting [content, gestures (handshakes, kissing)]
11. Weekends (time, activities)
12. Festivals and Holidays
13. Space in conversation (private distance, public distance, social distance).
14. Wedding (preparation, ceremonies)
15. Funerals (rituals, length of mourning)
16. Public inter-city transportation [taxi (number of passengers, stops   on the route), busses (number of passengers, stops on the route,   time schedule)].
17. Education system concerning the relationships among [teachers and students, peers (students), colleagues].

and some even believe that classroom as an artificial community can provide some benefits for the learners because it is a free place to make mistakes without any anxiety of the consequences, opposite to the students studying in the real context abroad (Damen, 1987; Mitchell, 1988).

Like teaching any other subject, culture teaching can be conducted by different methodologies: It can be taught implicitly embedded in the linguistic forms that students are learning (Peterson and Coltrane, 2003) through role playing (Kodotchigova, 2001), or through comparison and contrast. Among those who pose practical ways for teaching cultural differences is Brook (1986). He says:

Many successful language teachers habitually begin their classes with a five-minute presentation in the foreign language of a subject that has not been previously announced. The content for this simple and effective device may often be a topic that brings out identity, similarity, or difference in comparable patterns of culture. (p. 123)

He (1986) mentions about 60 topics, which could be discussed in class in the form of comparison and contrast, some of which include: the methodology of personal exchange, the patterns of politeness, intonation patterns, verbal taboos, telephone, childhood literature, written and spoken language, learning in school, etc. Hence, comparison and contrast of cultural aspects can be beneficial for learners (Hanvey, 1979; Baradaran, 1988) provided the teacher, as the main source of input, has the knowledge (Cook, 1996). But if he /she has limited personal experience about these differences, this will restrict the teacher's ability to teach culture (Byram et al.1991).

For Iranians who are learning English as an L2, knowing about American/English culture is necessary and teachers and material developers as two of the sources for providing this information should be aware of the differences. To investigate some of these differences, the present study was conducted. The results can be useful as a basis of information for all those who are somehow involved in cultural

ing, knowledge about the people and their system of making sense of language is necessary and inevitable in L2 learning. In other words, to

understand other people's system of making sense of language, one needs to understand other people's culture. In fact, it is "through culture that humans share learned systems for defining meaning" (Erickson, 1986).

Review of literature

Samovar et al. (1998) believed:

We are beginning to realize that a symbolic relationship ties all people together. No nation, group, or culture can remain aloof or autonomous. If you touch one part of the world, you touch all parts. (p. 3)

For such kind of relationship, cultural information is of a necessity. Hence due to the importance of culture learning and teaching, many researches have been conducted in this field. Sometimes culture is considered as a shared learned system for defining meaning (Erickson, 1986). In some researches, it is dealt with as a context for education (Hemphill, 1992; Ogbu, 1992) and some other researchers consider culture as a source of problem the lack of which indicates it has been understood (Mestenhauser, 1988; Ward and Kennedy, 1993). Most of these studies deal with culture learning and teaching in SL contexts. In other words, "context" has the key role in these researches (Heath, 1986; Ellis and Roberts, 1987; Byram, 1988; Edwards and Rehorick, 1990).

Although there exists much theorizing about culture learning in FL or structured setting, unfortunately, the descriptive studies which deal with the real world of classroom are not many (Boutin, 1993). Distinguishing between learning and acquisition (Krashen, 1982), some believe that classroom setting does not lead to language and culture acquisition while others argue that concerning culture, the difference between learning and acquisition is little (Van Lier, 1988),

Iranian and American/English Cultural Differences

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Abstract

Intercultural differences and their role in teaching English have been a point of research for decades. While some believe that it is useless in structured setting, some others consider it advantageous without having the disadvantages such as anxiety in the real context. The present study tries to investigate some significant cultural differences between Iranian and American/English culture some of which are selected from Brook's (1986) list and some others based on the researcher's experience. The results indicate significant differences in 15 out of 17 head categories. The information may help some researchers including teachers interested but not knowledgeable enough in the intercultural differences.

Keywords: cultural differences; Iranian culture; American/ English culture; teacher's awareness of cultural differences

Introduction

Language teaching and learning have been very much concerned with the communicative value of language. In this sense studying an L2 is more than decoding; it is to understand the purpose of the speaker and achieving that purpose. In other words, the major purpose of language is meaningful communication, and since different people have different ways of understanding meaning or interpret-