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Research Paper

**Video Inclusive Portfolios as Teachers' Feedback
and EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension**

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Abstract

This study examined whether utilizing Video Inclusive Portfolios (VIP) as teachers' feedback had significantly impacted the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners and whether utilizing VIP makes a noticeable variation in the reading comprehension abilities of Iranian men and women who are learning EFL. Moreover, the study explored the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of VIP as teachers' feedback to develop a fitting model for the Iranian EFL contexts. The study favored a quantitative-qualitative design. To this end, 120 male and female Iranian EFL learners were selected randomly

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based on the NTC's TOEFL test rubrics. In addition to the learners, 15 EFL teachers were also selected for the qualitative stage. Three computer applications, NTC's TOEFL Test, and interviews were the research instruments. Statistical procedures were utilized to analyze the quantitative data presented and for the qualitative part, a theme-based approach using MAXQDA was followed. The findings revealed that VIP significantly impacted the reading comprehension of learners studying EFL. Furthermore, the study did not find any significant difference among the participants of the study regarding their reading comprehension across the two genders. The findings also indicated although some problems were mentioned by the participants, the teachers had a positive perception toward utilizing VIP in language learning/teaching of the reading comprehension skill. Finally, the results showed that a fitting model for the Iranian EFL contexts had some specific features, such as its multimodality, novelty, and strategies for improving and utilizing VIP, thereby receiving better correction than other types of feedback.

Keywords: Video Inclusive Portfolios, Corrective Feedback, Reading Comprehension

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1. Introduction

Language learners have been presented with unique opportunities with an expansion in the use of software and web-based technologies that they can utilize in the target language to practice individually and communicate with teachers and learners on a global level. Previous decades witnessed a revolutionary shift in information and technology. Almost every aspect of human life enjoys the tremendous development of information and technology. In the same vein, as in every other field, according to Transue (2013), the field of education is also passing through a stage of incredible change.

Two essential reasons have led reading to become the primary focus of not only the present study and L2 literacy teaching but also teaching English

as a whole: 1. It has become mandatory to teach the English language in the majority of countries (Ediger, 2001; Enever, 2009; Enever & Moon, 2009); 2. Reading is regarded as an important skill for L2 learners in academic settings (Grabe, 2002). Although many studies have been conducted on how literacy is developed in native speakers of the English language, the same cannot be said about similar studies regarding ESL. Most of the research done in the field of reading has focused on reading strategies (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Erler & Finkbeiner, 2007; Griva, 2014; Rao et al, 2005), understanding (Enever, 2011; Nation, 2005; Szpotowicz & Lindgren, 2011), attitudes as well as the incentive (Mihaljević Djigunović & Krevelj, 2009; Mihaljević Djigunović, 2013). Such studies have deepened the understanding of how a range of factors interacts while, at the same time, opening the door to new questions that necessitate the need for more research to be conducted in the field. This has, in turn, led to a better understanding of L2 reading skills. Hence, new studies should focus on comparing L2 outcomes within various contexts among a large population of young learners Murphy, 2014. This will, in turn, help indicate the prominent variables necessary in predicting an L2 learner's learning success in developing their reading skills.

Feedback is a fundamental component of the language education process (e.g., Harmer, 2001; Keh, 1990). Even though Truscott's article on the inefficacy and harmfulness of providing corrective feedback in L2 has questioned the value of corrective feedback in L2, a large number of studies (Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, & Huang, 1998; Zhang, 1995; Zhao, 2010) have suggested that learners appreciate corrective feedback provided by teachers. Nevertheless, these studies have also revealed that even useful corrective feedback can be limited in its effectiveness. Examples include planning time-consuming one-on-one meetings with students (Keh, 1990), which means that the feedback provided by the teacher will not always be necessarily

supportive, given the misunderstanding that might occur on the learners' part regarding correction symbols or their low proficiency levels (Lee, 2003).

The previously mentioned limitations regarding corrective feedback can also be found in computer-related technology, for example, screen-capture videos. Although many recent studies (Crook et al., 2012; Stannard, 2006; Stannard, 2008) have proven the helpfulness of using screen-capture videos in providing feedback, no research has looked into the pedagogical and practical propriety of such feedback in a foreign language.

Technology-enhanced feedback in the form of audio or video successfully combines the written type of feedback (Hyland, 2003). In fact, e-Portfolios, are better replacements of their print counterparts due to the fact that they are supported by phones, tablets or computers. (Ibarra-Sáiz et al., 2020).

This type of feedback cannot only be listened to but also watched and replayed without considering time or place, hence serving as a portfolio that can be sued by learners to track their performance. Reviewing the related studies conducted on the efficacy of VIP revealed that prior studies have focused only on the writing skill (Ozkul & Ortac, 2017; Barrot, 2021; Lam, 2021; Lam and Moorhouse, 2022; Pourdana & Tavassoli, 2022,) and students' perceptions (Crook, 2012) in terms of VIP. Studies in the field of language learning have failed in attempting to explore the practical and pedagogical effects of video-inclusive feedback. In fact, another aspect of the English language, such as the reading skill is not investigated. There is also a dire need to explore a suitable VIP model for the Iranian EFL context.

2. Literature Review

Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's (2011) study has illustrated the significance of conferencing as one type of providing corrective feedback that teachers can use. This study was conducted by taking into consideration the impacts of both peer and tutor feedback on how future drafts were

conducted. Although the results showed a significant effect that tutor conferencing had on the learners' writing, the same was not observed concerning peer feedback. An earlier study (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990) investigated the effect of teacher conferences on making learners better writers. The significance of this study is that the procedures of teacher conferences were observed, and the manner in which the learners both cooperate and behave with the feedback they receive was investigated.

It was revealed by the taped conferences that learners have a larger interest in successfully making the modifications in their writing. However, it must be mentioned that not all findings are in accordance with the prevailing literature. For example, one study indicated that the agenda of the conferences is established by the learners, and they are the ones that offer input (Cornicelli, 1980; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). This was contradicted by a study conducted by Goldstein & Conrad, 1990, who found that the different interaction patterns between learners and teachers led to other outcomes. Therefore, the significance of such conferences and the benefits they hold should be recognized by teachers and learners alike. An additional aspect that teachers must take into consideration is checking and controlling the learners' cultural and personal differences.

Additional studies on video feedback have looked into the impact they have on improving the learners' drafts. For instance, Stannard (2006) explains introducing software to students which uses screen capture as a form of corrective feedback has made it possible for these individuals to hand in their tasks in any electronic form they wish. On the other hand, teachers have gained the ability to not only record videos using their word processors but also speak via microphones and computer webcams. He then composed further study into the drawbacks of outdated forms of corrective written comments: 1) its unclarity or meaninglessness leads to misunderstandings on

the students' part; 2) not all learners enjoy revising their writing; hence a novel technique is needed that would motivate them; 3) the learners welcome conferencing; 4) given that traditional forms of feedback are text-based they do not appeal to learners who do not enjoy reading and have lower linguistic intelligence. Therefore, the best manner in which learners can be provided with feedback is through the use of computer technology. On the contrary, this feedback form has been vastly adapted in fields of higher education.

Cook et al. (2012) indicated in their survey that both faculty and learners' perception of video feedback has mostly changed for the better and is vastly appreciated by students because they are engaged in the type of feedback they are receiving and find it to be more encouraging when it is in video form, and many of them often revisit the video feedbacks they receive. More modern studies have concentrated on the effectiveness as well as the variety of corrective feedback, but little has been done on how such feedback in the field of foreign language teaching can be improved using computer technology. Hence, the study has focused on this aspect. It also encompasses a deep investigation into whether such feedback led to any form of learning on the students' behalf or if it merely led to short-term success. It also provides insight into how this method can help overcome the limitations that are currently found in reading feedback practice.

In addition, the study's findings would be fruitful for English language learners, curriculum designers, and policymakers in recognizing the reading needs of learners from different professions. Moreover, it was anticipated that the current study results might be used as a guideline to improve or expand the existing English reading courses. The study would provide some useful suggestions for planners and administrators to develop more effective English reading courses to be used by Iranian EFL learners.

Hence, the present study has been conducted to measure the impact of the VIP as a substitute for teachers' feedback on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners of different sexes. In addition, it explored the perceptions of Iranian EFL teachers towards utilizing VIP in language learning/teaching so that a fitting model of VIP as an alternative to teachers' feedback be presented in EFL contexts.

The following research questions were formed in line with the purposes of the current study:

1. Does utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback significantly affect Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension performance?
2. Does utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback make any significant difference between Iranian EFL learners of different genders and their performance on reading comprehension?
3. What are the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions towards utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback in language learning/teaching regarding reading comprehension skill?
4. What is an appropriate model for utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback in Iranian EFL contexts?

3. Method

As the quantitative phase of the research was followed by an interview that had a qualitative nature, this study enjoyed a mixed methods design to provide comprehensive answers to the posed research questions. Doreneyi (2007) defines a mixed methods study as a way to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data in one study while taking some steps to integrate the two at some point in the research process. The type of mixed methods was sequential in the sense that the qualitative phase follows the quantitative phase, as both are of paramount importance, and none of the phases had priority over the other.

3.1 Participants

The study had a total of 140 male and female Iranian EFL learners from two language institutes and an international school in Shiraz, Iran. Before beginning

304 Teaching English Language

Video Inclusive Portfolios ...

to teach, consent forms were collected from students and their teachers. Classes in both institutes and the international school consisted of online classes in elementary, intermediate, and advanced classes. Administering NTC's TOEFL test to Iranian EFL language learners studying in five language classes, ranging from 12 to 16 years old. The researchers randomly selected 120 out of 140 participants in the study based on the NTC's TOEFL test rubrics. There was an attempt to select participants from English classes with nearly the same language experience. They were categorized into two groups: experimental and control. In the first stage of participant selection, the total number of the control and experimental groups consisted of 120 participants, including 60 ones each.

Concerning the gender of the participants, in the second stage of participant selection, the selected individuals of both the experimental and control groups were categorically divided into two other groups based on their gender. To do so, utilizing convenience-random sampling, 30 female and 30 male participants were selected for each group. Therefore, for the second stage of participant selection, the data collection was performed through convenience sampling.

In addition to the learners, 15 EFL teachers were selected from different language institutes located in the North, West, South, and East of Iran. The researchers chose teachers from the aforementioned institutions because the researchers aimed to include the voices of EFL teachers from different parts of Iran to put forward a qualitative model, which is the second objective of the study. Accordingly, 15 Iranian EFL teachers were selected to be interviewed for the qualitative stage. The demographic information of the participants is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Participants in the Qualitative Phase

Variables		No.
Gender	Male	7
	Female	8
Academic Experience	Low (3-5)	3
	High (above 5)	12
Academic Degree	B.A.	6
	M.A.	5
	PhD.	4
Age	25-30	5

Eslami et al.

	30-35	4
	≥40	6
Social Status	High	3
	Middle	8
	Low	4

3.2 Instruments

Computer Technology software: Some form of technology was necessary for applying this new type of feedback involving a screen capture and PDF file editing software as well as a WhatsApp group in which teachers could post videos for their learners.

The screen-capture software: Several options were available to be utilized for screen video recording with feedback. They mostly had the same default tools and characteristics. One of which was that they gave the user the ability to put in the speaker's camera image in real-time, short messages, pointers, posters, ballpoints, and other pictures into the video, which led to an improvement in the recordings' interactivity. In the end, the Screencast O-Matic was chosen for this study given that it can capture 15-minute-long videos without the need to purchase a license, it is user-friendly, and has many setting options that can be used to adjust both screenshot and video size.

The PDF file editing software: In order to grade the primary drafts driven from the experimental group's passage, a need for PDF file editing software was identified. Hence, for the purposes of this study, the PDF-Xchange Viewer was utilized for error marking and highlighting purposes on the scanned PDF files of the passages. In addition, it was utilized as the feedback videos' default screen image.

WhatsApp application: This tool was used for the purpose of broadcasting videos to the sample. The reason for using WhatsApp for video sharing is not only because it is completely free but also allows users to publish unlimited numbers of videos. It should be noted here that the above-mentioned

computer technology software was utilized in the current study due to its accessibility and user-friendly characteristics.

NTC's TOEFL Test: The test of reading comprehension in NTC's TOEFL was used to evaluate the participants' general language proficiency level in the early stages of the study. It was selected because of score objectivity and ease of access, as well as its appropriateness to the participants' language proficiency. The test consisted of 30 reading comprehension questions, and students were expected to answer within 40 minutes. Using the KR21 formula, the test's internal consistency was recalculated and reported as the reliability index ($r=.78$). Furthermore, three language experts reviewed it for the purpose of proving its validity. The comments as well as their face and content validity were used in the follow-up version of the main study to completely confirm them.

Pretest on Reading: In addition to NTC's TOEFL test, a researcher-made reading comprehension pretest was used as a secondary but necessary study instrument. The goal is the determination of the homogeneity of participants regarding background knowledge of English reading before receiving the treatment. It was a 50-item multiple-choice pre-test. Items were related to five reading passages, each including ten follow-up questions. Two language experts also reviewed the items of the pretest to ensure validity, and they unanimously verified its face and content validity. In addition, through KR-21, the reliability of the pretest was calculated and reported (.82).

Posttest on Reading: An identical reading comprehension test as the posttest was developed and administered. The test had 50 multiple-choice items, with the difference lying in the sequence of the items, hence avoiding the practice effect. (Bachman, 1990)

Interview: The last complementary data collection instrument was interviewing through an Interview Protocol, which was designed by the

researchers in the form of a semi-structured open-ended interview with about 20 items. The semi-structured interview consists of pre-prepared questions and prompts that are used as guides for the participant, while the interviewer is willing to follow up on noticeable developments as well as allow the participants the freedom to provide elaboration on specific issues (Dornyei, 2005). It was conducted in focus group sessions to find out teachers' opinions about the details of the study, such as the advantages and disadvantages of VIP, the effect of gender, and reading comprehension.

A measurement instrument must be reliable, meaning it has to yield reproducible and consistent estimates of something that is assumed to be an underlying true score (Hinkin, 1995). The following sections demonstrate the results from analyzing the reliability of the instruments used in this study in the piloting stage.

Table 2

Reliability Indices of Research Instruments

Instruments	Items	r
Reading Pretest	50	0.82
Reading Posttest	50	0.83
Interview	20	0.85

As shown in Table 2, the reliability indices of the research instruments are satisfactory to be utilized in the current study. In addition to the above research instruments, the researchers personally carried out a semi-structured interview with the participants in the study's second phase. The interview sessions were conducted in the hope that they bring about reliable and valid results as well as complement any inadequacies in the data.

3.3 Procedure

Firstly, the NTC's TOEFL test was used to determine the proficiency level of the participants. Based on the result of this test, 120 out of 140 Iranian EFL learners from two language institutes and an international school in Shiraz, Iran, were randomly selected and divided into homogeneous

groups based on their language proficiency as the experimental and control groups. Then, they were divided into male and female groups. In the experiment's first session, all participants took the reading pretest to ensure their homogeneity in reading. From the second session, the instructor (in the two experimental groups) taught the reading via VIP. First, the researchers scanned the hard copies of the students from the experimental group and transformed them into PDF files so the drafts would be hard copies. The PDF-Xchange Viewer was then used to mark and comment on the files with correction codes. The output consisted of the reading documents with required feedback provided by the marginal comments in the documents. The researchers used Screencast-O-Matic to screen capture and save the commenting process and to build and broadcast the videos of the tasks being carried out on computers (Seror, 2012; Seror, 2013). The reading problems were addressed in a manner in which the teacher appeared to be speaking to the students. The image of the teacher appeared at the left upper corner of the screen, and his voice was recorded, as were his cursor movements on the learner's reading tasks. Finally, the video files were individually shared on a WhatsApp group. The second instructor also checked the feedback provided to both groups by the first instructor prior to being sent to the learners in order to confirm that correction codes were uniformly utilized among the students. After being given feedback on their first drafts, the participants were given a week to submit their second ones and received teacher feedback. After eight sessions of the instructions based on VIP feedback, a posttest was run, and the performance of the two groups was calculated and compared.

In contrast, the control group was taught via conventional methods of teaching reading skill. As cited by Pany and McCoy (1988), the decoding strategies of prompts and clues were used by teachers in helping the readers

correct a word that has been misread. This type of feedback was provided to advance readers' overall improvements in terms of vocabulary knowledge and the ability to decode to simultaneously enhance their reading comprehension. Hence, the learners began reading a text, sounding out its vocabulary, responding to the queries, and retelling the context that was read. At the beginning of every session, the story of the previous reading was reviewed. After that, the learners were given a ten-item vocabulary list from the passage that they were supposed to read and define. Finally, the teacher asked one of the learners to start reading (each a page). Teale (2003) believed that the old method focused more on phonemes, phonics, and alphabets. It also considered the learner's emergent literacy and gave attention to phonics. The teacher started with parts to the whole. This method cited that each sound and letter had to be taught independently, and then it should be formed into words and sentences that would help read a book. But this method had zero impact on the way she viewed and supported literacy development among her first graders.

Finally, 15 selected EFL teachers were interviewed. Each interview lasted ten minutes. The researchers personally carried out a semi-structured interview with the participants. The interview sessions were conducted to bring about reliable and valid results. To this end, the researchers initially contacted each participant and invited him/her to participate in the interview via Skype. She then created a friendly atmosphere to make the interviewees feel comfortable. Having introduced herself, the interviewer informed the interviewees of the purpose of the interview but avoided providing too much information about the research study to preclude bias in the respondents. To gauge the interview questions' reliability, language experts with Ph.D. degrees in TEFL were requested to evaluate the relevance and appropriateness of the questions through a short interview session. The

amount of consistency and agreement in the experts' responses was measured and considered as the yardstick for reliability. Ary et al. (2010) pinpointed that the more consistent the responses, the higher the reliability.

Additionally, a few steps were taken in the interview sessions. First, the interviewees were allowed to use Persian or English they felt comfortable with to freely express their viewpoints. Second, they were assured that their personal information would remain confidential. Third, they were informed that their voices would be recorded. Fourth, the researchers took a neutral position and did not meddle in the participants' talks. Fifth, back-channeling signals and feedback were presented to the interviewees to prevent them from thinking that a monologue was running. Sixth, the researchers took notes of the main points and asked clarifying questions to make the points tangible for themselves at the end of the interview. Finally, the data provided during the interviews were member-checked to focus on misunderstandings and vague points. Accordingly, the researchers required the interviewees to return to the matter and clarify it, and the participants reviewed their own viewpoints and added/ removed any inconsistencies. Although each interview was recorded in order to have all of the necessary information from the participants, the researchers took notes during the interviews, the interview process was continued until data saturation. After identifying the main constructs of the study, sub-components were systematically developed, and a proposed model for professional identity was presented.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the data to answer the research questions. To ensure the normality of the distribution Kolmogorov-Smirnoff test was run. Additionally, descriptive statistics, such as standard deviation, standard error of means, and mean were calculated. Independent samples t-test was conducted on the data to indicate the difference between the mean scores

among the groups on the pretest, posttest, and the difference between pretest and posttest.

Regarding the qualitative phase, the gathered information from interviews was transcribed, and the themes and subthemes were identified and codified by the researchers. In fact, to collect the data, interviews, and questionnaires were conducted and recorded. Three standards of rigor for these interviews were checked at this stage. They will be "credibility", "dependability", and "transferability" of the findings (Ary et al., 2010). To check credibility, the member-checking strategy was used. To assess the dependability of the findings, an interrater agreement strategy was applied. To support the transferability of the study, the researchers provided detailed and accurate descriptions of the participants and context so that the readers could make judgments about similarity.

This process was done based on a theme-based approach. This approach provided a good guideline for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes of the raw data by which the researchers described and categorized details of data. In fact, it is not wed to any pre-existing theoretical framework and so it is used within various contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

For a more efficient analysis of the qualitative phase, first, the data were prepared, which was a transcription of interviews into word processing files. Then, the data were entered into the MAXQDA as the qualitative data analysis software program. Next, data were read several times to get a general understanding of the database. Once the data was organized, it had to be openly, axially and selectively coded.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Results of NTC's TOEFL test

As stated, to have a homogeneous sample of the participants, NTC's TOEFL test was run and analyzed. Table 3 has illustrated the descriptive statistics of the NTC'S TOEFL test results.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of the NTC'S TOEFL Test

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
NTC'S TOEFL	140	43	62	52	1.708
Valid N	140				

NTC'S TOEFL test's mean and standard deviation scores were 52 and 1.708, respectively (Table 3). Based on the NTC'S TOEFL test results, those who scored 47-59 were selected and administered as the main participants of the study. Accordingly, 120 out of 140 Iranian EFL learners were chosen and separated into three identical groups. Finally, the two groups were separated into groups based on gender, with one being assigned as the control group.

4.2 Examining the normality distribution of data set

Prior to making a comparison between the performances of the two groups and selecting a suitable statistical test, checking the assumptions made by the parametric tests is essential. Field (2013), states that the assumptions driven from parametric statistical tests encompass distribution normality, variances' homogeneity, possessing interval variables, and measurements' independence. To test the first assumption, the researchers calculated the values of kurtosis and skewness and their corresponding z-scores for all groups.

Table 4

Skewness and Kurtosis Values

	Skewness	Std. Error of Skewness	Kurtosis	Std. Error of Kurtosis
Experimental Groups	-.110	.326	-.622	.747
Control Group	.163	.312	-.757	.614

The skewness z-scores of the experimental groups were Z skewness = -.110, while the kurtosis z-score was calculated at Z kurtosis = -.622. On the other hand, the z-score of the skewness of the Control group was Z skewness = 0.163, and its kurtosis z-score was calculated at Z kurtosis = -.757. Comparing the z-score with the normal distributions' known values led to the conclusion that a value greater than 1.86 is significant at $p < .05$. The results indicate that all z-scores were lower than 1.86, meaning the scores were normally distributed. Moreover, Levene's test was run to examine the second assumption, namely variances' homogeneity. Table 5 presents the results.

Table 5
Levene's Test Results

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Mean	.084	1	118	.732
Based on Median	.077	1	118	.719
Based on Median and with adjusted df	.077	1	114.02	.729
Based on trimmed mean	.083	1	118	.730

Levene's test is not significant at $p < .05$ as revealed by Table 5. Therefore, it can be concluded the groups are not significantly different, rather they are closely similar. Hence, the variances can be regarded as homogenous and parametric test's main assumptions are met.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Groups in Pretest and Posttest

Table 6 shows the descriptive analysis of the pretest and posttest of the female group (FG).

Table 6
The Descriptive Analysis of Results for FG

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Pretest	40	28	35	31.5	1.09
Posttest	40	26	44	35.0	1.22
Valid N	40				

The pretest mean score of FG is 31.5 and $SD = 1.09$ (Table 6). In addition,

314 Teaching English Language

Video Inclusive Portfolios ...

the posttest mean score of FG is 35.0 and SD=1.22. In addition, the descriptive analysis of the pretest and posttest of the male group (MG) is shown in Table 7.

Table 7
MG's Descriptive Analysis of Results

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Pretest	40	23	33	28.0	1.07
Posttest	40	26	42	34.0	1.23
Valid N	40				

Additionally, the descriptive analysis of the pretest and posttest of the control group (CG) is presented in Table 8. As illustrated, the pretest mean score of CG is 26.5 and SD= 1.05. Furthermore, the posttest mean score of FG is 25.5 and SD=1.45.

Table 8
CG's Descriptive Analysis of Results

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Pretest	40	21	32	26.5	1.05
Posttest	40	22	29	25.5	1.45
Valid N	40				

The first research question inquired whether utilizing VIP as teachers' feedback had a significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' performance in regard to their reading comprehension. To answer the first research question, one-way ANOVA was administered to make a comparison between the three groups' performance in the reading posttest stage.

Table 9
One-way ANOVA Results of three groups in reading posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	116.133	2	58.067	6.479	.003
Within Groups	510.850	118	8.962		
Total	626.983	120			

According to Table 9, since $F(2,118) = 6.479$ and $p < .05$, a significant difference was found across the two genders in terms of the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group. Nevertheless, the ANOVA test does not indicate where the source of the variance lies, making a

post-hoc Tukey HSD test necessary to determine the place of the differences. The results are illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10
Tukey HSD of Three Groups

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-2.900*	.947	.009	-5.18	-.62
	3	-3.000*	.947	.007	-5.28	-.72
2	1	2.900*	.947	.009	.62	5.18
	3	-.100	.947	.994	-2.38	2.18
3	1	3.000*	.947	.007	.72	5.28
	2	.100	.947	.994	-2.18	2.38

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

(1)= Female

(2)= Male

(3)= Control

As presented in Table 10, a difference was found between group 1 (female) and group 2 (male) since $p=.009$. Moreover, the results showed the difference between group 1 (female) and group 3 (control) since $p=.007$. Accordingly, both experimental groups performed better compared to the ones in the control group. As a matter of fact, the conclusion was that teachers' feedback in VIP form had a significantly positive impact on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. The performance of the three groups in the posttest is presented in Figure 1.

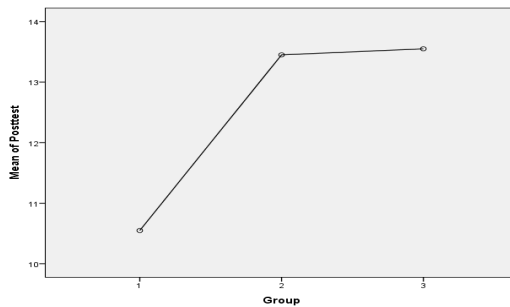


Figure 1. The performance of three groups

316 Teaching English Language

Video Inclusive Portfolios ...

The second research question examined whether utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback significantly caused a difference between Iranian EFL learners of both genders' reading comprehension. To answer this question, an independent samples t-test was utilized to compare and calculate the performances of the two experimental groups.

Table 11
Independent Sample T-test Results of Female and Male Groups

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Levene's Test for t-test for Equality of Means				
				Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig.
F	Sig.							
Female	40	35.00	1.22	9.012	0.001	2.304	59	0.000
Male	40	34.00	1.11					

Table 11 indicates the female group's mean as 35.00 (SD=1.22), and that of the male group was 34.00, with a .000 significance level. Given that the Sig. level was lower than the 0.05 that was set for the purposes of the study, $F(2, 78) = 9.012, p > .05$). Overall, the obtained conclusion was that gender did not cause a significant difference in the performance displayed by the two groups' reading comprehension.

The third research question evaluated the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions toward utilizing VIP as teachers' feedback in language learning/teaching reading comprehension skills. In addition, the fourth research question explored the development of an appropriate model for utilizing VIP as teachers' feedback in Iranian EFL contexts. To this end, the results of the interviews are analyzed and reported.

The interviews made it evident that resources of technology must be integrated into EFL classroom instructions. Many language centers in which the teachers were employed provided access to SMART boards, computers, laptops, multimedia, audio devices, projectors, and Internet facilities. Such

devices were set up in a room similar to a hall called the ICT lab, but the lab was too small compared to the number of classes needed to use it. Nevertheless, given the spread of Covid-19 throughout the world has forced both teachers and students to conduct and take classes on an online platform rather than physically attending classes. Hence, this teaching model has proven useful given their virtual nature because it compelled students to provide technology tools to learn. At the beginning phase, the teachers were asked how often they integrated VIP into their classroom instructions, to which the general answer was once a week or once a month. As can be inferred, using technology in such a limited manner in an EFL classroom is not likely to lead to substantial feedback that would change the delivery mode of knowledge construction. Teacher A stated:

(1)

"Not every session. I don't use these tools to teach my students or to give them feedback. It sometimes happens. Maybe once a week, once a fortnight. It depends on the topic in fact".

A similar view was expressed by Teacher B:

(2)

It's not a routine but in line with the lesson I teach,
I make use of it... once a week maybe.

However, VIP was regularly used by Teacher C in teaching the material. This was due to the fact that the language institute where he worked was able to provide him with projectors, whiteboards, and classroom Wi-Fi. The teachers only had to connect to the Web using their laptops and then present the material on a whiteboard. This prohibited them from wasting time, trying to get into the ICT lab, or waiting in line for such an opportunity. He stated that:

(3)

Mostly it happens. Frequently ... VIP is used in my class almost every session...

Six out of fifteen teachers used VIP on a regular basis for the purpose of teaching. The other nine found it difficult to mix technology into their teaching since it was not necessary for the ESL course, as stated in the previously mentioned paragraphs.

The problem lies in the fact that teachers have not received professional training courses that would teach them how to integrate technology into teaching and the many new applications that could help facilitate their teaching and their learners' learning abilities. None of the teachers expressed that they had received professional training on integrating technology into their classrooms. On the other hand, a number of them received some basic training in computers in 2-3 days. The purpose of professional training is to give teachers the ability to upgrade the manner in which they teach as well as help them effectively integrate technology given that they will receive ongoing high-quality training (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012). On the topic of VIP skills and knowledge that could assist in integrating technology into their teacher, a large number of instructors stated the fact that they already possessed some primary knowledge of computers which had been obtained via trial and error or from friends. Teacher D maintained that:

(4)

No, I have not encountered with any training. ...
It has been learned by myself and through practice
and my needs. You know, I am interested to learn
that.

Other teachers expressed similar views. Teacher E argued that:

(5)

The school provided us with how to use SMART
board in different workshops after school time.
Not only how to teach using its facilities, but also
how to make lesson plans. In summer also, the
basic computer course has been introduced to us

and in this way the teachers over here get familiar with many ICT tools.

A large number of Iranian instructors agreed that a one-week training course was not sufficient in teaching them the proper use of technology for instruction. This makes it difficult for teachers to build a constructive environment for teaching and learning because there is a lack of technical knowledge. Although all teachers showed enthusiasm about the use of VIP in their EFL classrooms, the main problem was that the teachers did not have sufficient knowledge on the matter. Hence, their main challenges hinge on first-order barriers.

Another problem arising in the Iranian EFL teaching environment was the high workload and limited time constraints as well as midterms and finals, which intervened with the time that had to be allocated to completing the VIP course. Moreover, Bordbar (2010) states that compared to the teachers who are not very active and enthusiastic in learning the training activities, the other active and willing teachers are more ready to instruct using technology. Teacher F expressed his view:

(6)

... How is it possible to teach with VIP without being prepared? In my opinion, it is unlikely. Not only because readiness makes a teacher faster, but it makes teachers more competent. We are under the pressure of time to finish the syllabus we are given.

The teacher continued expressing the shortage of time in using VIP they have for each session. Each class is about one hour. Spending 45 minutes of that on VIP is not enough for the feedback:

(7)

... Not enough. I have to organize everything in 45 minutes. It puts pressure on me because I have to pay attention to every student of my class.

Teacher C expressed her view that:

320 Teaching English Language

Video Inclusive Portfolios ...

(8)

There exists time limitation ... extra hours are needed to prepare the tools. The most difficult part is the traditional setting we encounter but we have to modernize that using these ICT tools and method. Lesson plans are needed to be revised because the general one is not appropriate anymore.

Learners are one of the crucial components of teaching and learning. The focus of any curriculum is students. However, learning is hindered when they do not have access to a technological software. The teachers had the same views on the challenges related to the students. It was said that the main population of students in public schools was allocated to families with low incomes. This meant that their families did not have the means to give them access to technology at home, which caused difficulties for the EFL teachers since this led to a digital divide gap between those who had technology access and others who did not. Bernard (2011) defines the digital divide gap as an equality gap between individuals with computer access and those without. Access to the Web gives the more privileged students the ability to have more home practice and complete assignments digitally. While others are forced to go to cyber or a friend's house to complete their homework. One of the individuals who were interviewed stated:

(9)

... Not every student has internet access. Although students are crazy to work with ICT tools, they do not have necessarily computers or laptops at home. It is really challenging.

One of the teachers mentioned that:

(10)

...Due to the fact that the majority of students are from middle class, most of them don't have ... they may use cyber to do their assignments.

In terms of no colleague or administrative support, it was found that administration is one of the main pillars of any educational center. An administration that has all the necessary infrastructure helps improve the teachers' professional training for better instruction, builds an academic environment, organizes educational stakeholders, etc. Some of the establishments stated that their administration did not support technology-integrated instruction because they believed it was too time-consuming and delayed in completing courses. As expressed by one of the interviewees:

(11)

... It usually happens that we are ready as teachers and students are also announced about the lab time and what they have to do, however because of some reasons such as the absence of the lab assistant or some other technical problems, the lab is closed, and we are not able to use the lab and our schedule postpones to another time and may lead us to be far behind from our syllabus.

Further, another interviewee pointed out that:

(12)

... There are some other factors at work, like the differences among the teachers. There are some teachers who are really active in this regard, and they follow time schedule and others who are not consider them as ... You know. They start to speak behind her or him....

The same view was expressed by teacher 'D'. He believes that the teachers who are likely to follow traditional teaching are not interested in this new and technological way of teaching and giving feedback. Therefore, it can be evident that if enough support is not provided by colleagues and administrative staff, even active and enthusiastic teachers may be discouraged from integrating technology into their EFL instruction.

Based on the results of the MAXODA software, Figure 2 illustrates the themes, categories, and codes.

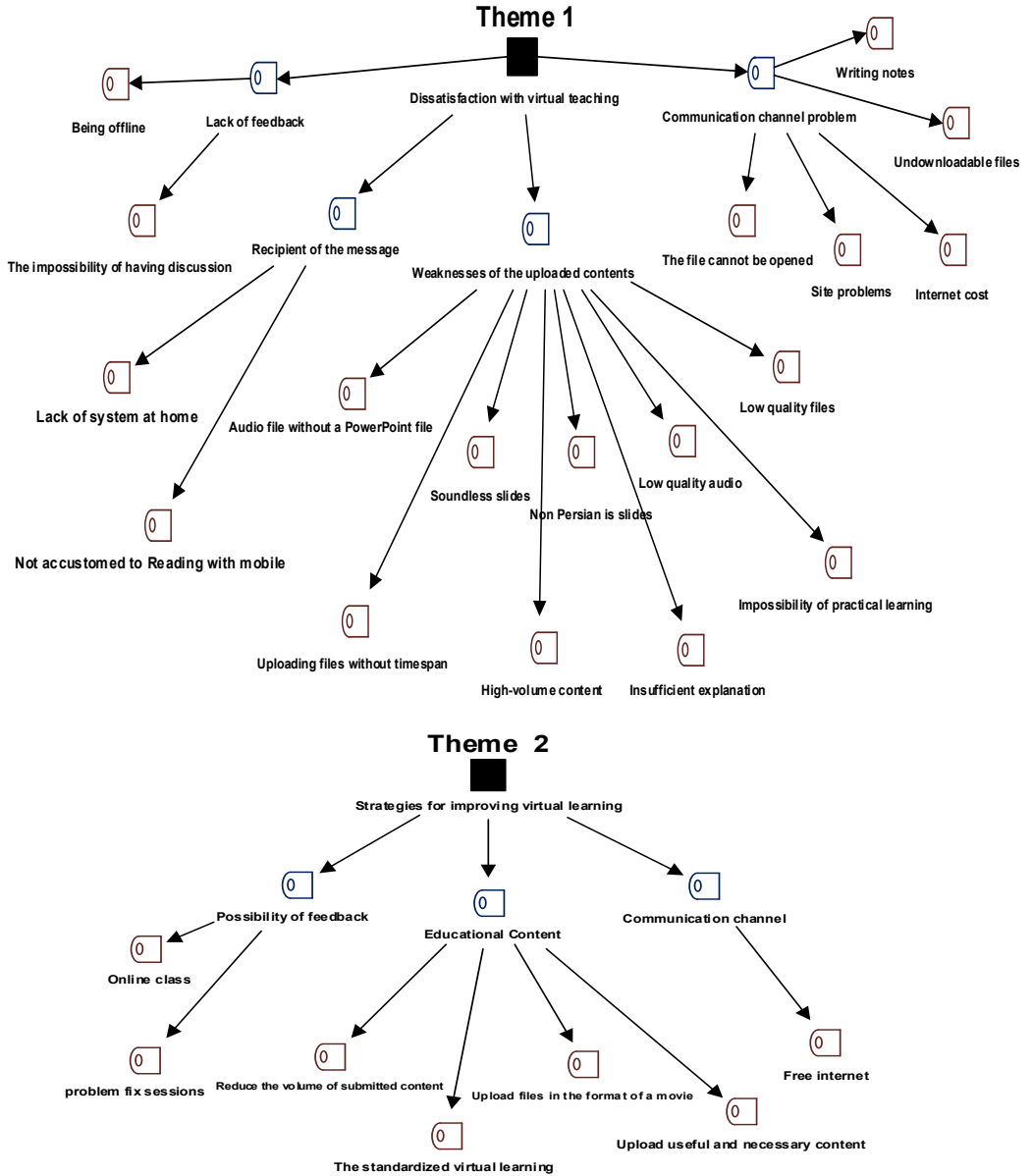


Figure 2. Themes, categories, and codes extracted from the interviews

In sum, the findings can be categorized into two main themes. The first theme refers to the dissatisfaction with virtual teaching. The following codes were included in this category: to upload a VIP without the use of a PowerPoint file, muted slides, poor quality of the sound, slides in languages other than Iranian, poor quality of the file, too much content, not considering time span when uploading files, and inadequate teacher descriptions. Furthermore, a lack of feedback was found that was caused due to offline teaching that did not allow for discussions with instructors to be made. One of the interviewees depicted their experience as unsuitable for beginner-level students given that using technology and applications confuses them. Additionally, they also faced some communication channel problems. Strategies for improving virtual learning fall into the second category, containing codes pertaining to site issues, net prices, and download difficulty. In addition, the receivers of the messages have not been properly prepared for such tasks. This is due to the problematic situation of learner homes, meaning that they do not have the appropriate computer systems nor enough information/ability to utilize devices such as computers, cell phones, or tablets. However, the participants were helpful in giving some solutions, such as an increase in online feedback throughout the course, the consolidation of internet infrastructure inside educational centers, customizing Web facilities based on the needs of both teachers and students, the provision of accommodating communication channels, and so on.

4.4 Discussion

The study looked into the impact of VIP as a type of teacher feedback on the performance of Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. Additionally, it examined the possible difference in reading comprehension performance across the two genders. The teachers' perceptions toward utilizing VIP as a teachers' feedback in teaching and learning reading

comprehension skill is also investigated. The results indicated that VIP is an appropriate model for teachers' feedback in Iranian EFL contexts and positively affects Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the gender of the participants did not have a significant impact on their obtained results. A number of problems mentioned by the participants were also mentioned; however, teachers had a positive perception toward utilizing VIP as a teacher's feedback in language learning/teaching reading comprehension skill. Finally, the results showed that VIP as teachers' feedback in Iranian EFL contexts had some features, such as having strategies for improving and utilizing VIP.

The characteristics of the VIP can explain why its effectiveness is justified. Firstly, VIP has features of conferencing (Seror, 2012; Thompson & Lee, 2012). The interaction with the VIP in this study might have been one-sided, but the instructors did address the learners. Seror (2012) states that by integrating videos into the feedback given to learners, we are adding more personalization, emotion, and relationship-building to it, making it more authentic. VIP has proven to encourage more correction in learner reading than any other method (Mukundan & Nimehchisalem, 2011), given that it is taken more seriously, leading them to make the changes it advises (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). Secondly, the multimodality of the VIP method has made it more effective than others, which is caused by its audio-visual characteristics. It encompasses speech, videos, learners' homework, and referencing resources like graphic organizers, digital glossaries, and the teachers' webcam images. Hence, it is not only linguistic intelligence like feedback (Stannard, 2008). But rather, it included a bigger range of learning styles and multiple intelligences (Seror, 2012). Thirdly, this is a new approach that makes the study that uses it even more superior. These results agree with that obtained by Lunt and Curran (2009), who observed the learners' reaction to audio

feedback and showed that they found it more meaningful and understandable. VIP could have similar results in this regard. Crook et al. (2012) also suggested that VIPs could be particularly useful for lower-level learners who need more help and extra visual scaffolding. The fact that EFL learners preferred being addressed in videos to other forms of feedback and actively participated with the received VIP is also confirmed by Lee (2003).

The obtained outcome of the present study is in agreement with a large number of other studies conducted on this topic. For instance, the conclusion of a study conducted by Ferris (1997) stated that the learners found teacher feedback to be useful in rewriting their drafts. This study emphasized that the learners regarded the instructors as trustworthy knowledge sources and were likely to find the feedback that they provided as beneficial. A similar study by Bitchener (2008) suggested that when teachers gave learners corrective feedback in the form of a pretest/posttest excelled better than one who received any kind of feedback whatsoever. Finally, Chandler (2003) emphasized the role of teacher feedback in minimizing the number of errors and mistakes that students had in reading without having a negative impact on quality or fluency. Hence, it can be concluded that teachers' feedback is essential to turning learners into better English writers. Most significantly, as Ferris (1999) stated, not providing learners with feedback will lead them to believe there is no need for revision in their writing.

The results of this research clarify the nature of language learning while using VIP feedback and the interaction it creates. This study might contribute to the present literature feedback by explaining the affective factors of VIP feedback dynamics to facilitate academic English reading among Iranian EFL learners while communicating ideas through reading activities. In addition, these results could cast light on the issue of gender. The results demonstrated that some factors are more dominant than other factors in EFL VIP feedback;

however, gender had no role in EFL contexts in terms of VIP feedback. These results can also be useful to curriculum and syllabus designers, providing information about the factors affecting VIP feedback. In particular, the study provided them with the knowledge that solely grammar and vocabulary are not enough in the language learning process. Rather, it includes other factors like social, cultural, and linguistic factors affecting interaction. Many of these factors could be at least brought to the consciousness of the learners.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study confirmed the fact that VIP leads to an enhancement in the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. Many studies have focused on VIP as a prominent element that helps develop learners' reading comprehension (e.g., Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Some have listed its social and cognitive advantages, such as that it helps students rewrite and improve their learning (e.g., Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). Additionally, feedback is considered a formative developmental process, meaning that the students not only gain the ability to exchange views on how they interpret the readings from other sources but also how they do so for their own readings. On the other hand, some studies have raised questions about digital feedback (Connor & Asenavage, 1994) or taken into consideration its limited use (e.g., Flower, 1994; Spear, 1988).

As previously stated, current research has focused on how to provide digitally based feedback while focusing on the interactions this way of feedback brings. Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) for example argue that some of the benefits of digital responses include social affection, which leads to the development of good communication among students. In studies by Rollinson (1998) and Caulk (1994), it has also been investigated that students give comments that are not only valid but also correct on each other's

reading. It is argued by Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) that since students make specific comments, hence VIP feedback is considered complementary to them.

Given that there are no psychological barriers between learners, feedback can make interactions both comfortable and influential. Nevertheless, the question of whether this type of feedback carries a better effect on students' reading in comparison with other types is yet to be discussed. What is certain is that VIP feedback helps with error correction, not whether this error correction leads to better reading.

Concerning interview findings, it was concluded that a lack of ability to properly teach second language learning affected the reading performance of the learners. The interviews additionally, revealed that the teachers did not have the necessary motivation or interest to properly teach the material. There is no participation on the part of the ESL learner in class discussions, even though brainstorming is done in the pre-task phase. Reading is not enthusiastically done because the main focus is on grammar and vocabulary; sometimes, even first drafts are not handed in by EFL learners. It is then concluded that the learners did not find the digital-based feedback as useful given that they were neither motivated nor found the need to follow up, as previously stated. Moreover, this causes a number of other weaknesses in reading which draws teachers to explain grammar to overcome such difficulties.

There was a positive and negative emotional reaction toward digitally based feedback. Because of the communicative nature of feedback studies, there were more positive reactions toward digitally-based feedback. Participants' interviews did reveal why most of them preferred digitally-based feedback. These participants noted that VIP feedback allowed communicative activities to continue without interruption and stress. Moreover, some

participants also mentioned a preference for VIP feedback since it allowed students to focus on feedback without being distracted by the communicative pressures of communicative tasks given by the instructors. Noticing, self-improvement, comfortable feeling, and a positive attitude toward the classroom and classmates were the major comments of participants in response to why they preferred VIP feedback.

The findings of interviews have shown that VIP feedback is useful and valued by both teachers and students and that it helps improve reading. The results also indicated that digital feedback was preferred to underlining because the latter made understanding their errors easier, encouraging them to fix them. In addition, the answers provided by the EFL learners strengthen the results of the interview given that they stated how the VIP feedback left no room for asking further explanations or questions.

Teachers believed that it is crucial to provide feedback since learners gain benefit from it and make them more competent in their reading skill. In fact, it is considered a valuable tool from the teachers' point of view, and they found it one of the attractive activities for the learners. A number of instructions are doubtful towards this approach, VIP feedback error correction because they might believe underlining errors encourages them to search for the correct form of their errors. But others consider error correction to be of benefit to EFL learners. But it must be noted that sometimes how teachers think or act toward L2 reading is not necessarily indicative of how they behave in this regard.

In fact, evaluating their effectiveness seems impossible without understanding VIP feedback practices and interaction patterns. On the other hand, having an awareness of the EFL learners' views of VIP feedback helps them adjust feedback to cater to different individuals. Furthermore, previous ESL/EFL studies showed that their beliefs and practices influence learner

reactions and attitudes to VIP feedback. Therefore, how the EFL learners react and respond to this type of feedback has to be presented to the learners to assist them in developing reflective and productive digitally-based feedback practices.

Given that this study was carried out among a certain group of participants, the findings cannot be generalized unless it is duplicated in other contexts. Further studies can be conducted on the following aspects, other studies from different contexts in the literature review, duplicating the same study on a larger EFL scale, and less ambiguity in the interview questions that would lead to more accurate ESL responses. Additionally, the proficiency levels of the participants and their impact on the type of feedback they prefer can be further investigated. Incorporating these factors into the present study would have yielded more validity and reliability.

Declaration of interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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