

## **Negotiation of Meaning among Iranian EFL Learners and the Relationship between the Proficiency Levels and the Transfer of Knowledge**

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**Abstract :** Interaction and negotiation of meaning in the foreign language (FL) contexts are crucial to L2 development. Although research studies on children in EFL contexts have increased in recent years, the study of Iranian children negotiating meaning during their communicative task performance still needs further study. The purpose of this study was to investigate young EFL learners' interaction and negotiation of meaning (NoM) during task completion and examine the difference in meaning negotiation between the different proficiency levels and the association between the learners' proficiency levels and their transfer of knowledge. The participants were twenty-eight young Iranian EFL learners forming 14 proficiency-matched dyads and were assigned into two different groups according to their proficiency levels. The dyads were asked to complete the collaborative task; their interaction was transcribed and analyzed in terms of their NoM. To test the transfer of knowledge to the subsequent performance, tailor-made tests were designed based on the NoM of each individual dyad. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between the learners' level of proficiency and their transfer of knowledge to the subsequent performance. Our findings suggest that the elementary group had engaged in more negotiation of meaning compared to the intermediate group, and the higher the proficiency level, the better they performed in the post-test and benefited from the NoM. The study has some implications for researchers, teachers, and young learners.

**Keywords :** collaborative tasks, negotiation of meaning, proficiency levels, sociocultural theory, tailor-made test

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