The Interaction Between Using Test-Taking Strategies, Level of Language Proficiency, and Test Performance

Narjes Ghafournia\textsuperscript{a*} and Akbar Afghari\textsuperscript{a}

\textsuperscript{a*}: Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch, Isfahan, Iran
Corresponding Author: narjesghafournia@yahoo.com
\textsuperscript{a}: Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch, Isfahan, Iran
afghary@yahoo.com

The study was an attempt to scrutinize the probable interaction between linguistic and strategic variables in reading comprehension test performance of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, the interaction between the participants’ reading comprehension test performance, use of test-taking strategies, and level of language proficiency was analyzed by using factorial and regression analyses. The participants consist of 286 EFL learners who answered a reading comprehension test and a questionnaire. In addition, 25 students participated in a retrospective interview after answering the test and questionnaire. The findings manifested a significant interaction between the use of test-taking strategies and test performance of the examinees. The more proficient learners used the strategies more frequently than did the less proficient learners. The qualitative findings also confirmed the quantitative findings and revealed the underlying non-linguistic reasons for the differences in the frequency and type of the strategies used by learners. The findings showed that the observed scores do no manifest true ability of language learners and true score should be calculated with regard to the non-linguistic variables affecting test performance. The findings provide empirical support for Bachman’s classical true score measurement theory.