Abstract: Accountability has been widely considered the leading cause of student achievement and received much attention in recent years. Unlike the researchers in America and European countries, few scholars have addressed learner accountability in Iran to evaluate its effect on different EFL contexts. This mixed-method research design study compared the level of learner accountability between public high school students and English language institute learners. Data were gained from 150 high school students and 150 English language institute learners through a researcher-made learner accountability questionnaire. Moreover, 15 high school students and 15 language institute English learners participated in the qualitative phase of the study to strengthen and expand the study’s conclusions. Both instruments were piloted and validated. Through exploratory factor analysis, seven underlying variables of learner accountability were confirmed. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was high and the reliability of the learner accountability questionnaire was .89. The results of the t-tests revealed a higher statistical level of learner accountability in the context of English language institutes. The findings of this research may contribute to motivating English learners to consider the significance of their roles in active and independent learning.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Leila Zarei is a Ph.D. candidate of TEFL at the Islamic Azad University of Shiraz. She has taught English at different English language institutes and Shiraz Medical University and has published some books and articles. Her areas of interest are research methods, statistics, and teaching methods.

Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri is the assistant professor and faculty member of Shiraz Islamic Azad University. He holds a Ph.D. from Shiraz University. He has published scores of books and articles mainly on international exams, teacher training, and research methods. Furthermore, he has presented miscellaneous articles at local, national, and international conferences.

Firooz Sadighi received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, U.S. A. in 1982. His field of specialization includes Linguistics and L2 Acquisition. His research areas cover syntax, semantics, second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and reading skills and strategies.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT
Few English learners understand the need to take accountability for their language learning. Therefore, researchers should focus more on this important factor to make students familiar with learner accountability components. It may not be easy primarily to instill this crucial concept, but with constant support, English learners may gradually learn to develop it. Understanding this key concept will help students take accountability for their actions because the Education 2030 Framework for Action refers to accountability more than 20 times. Hence, this study compared the level of learner accountability among public high school students and English language institute learners by providing the participants with a learner accountability questionnaire. The results revealed evidence of a statistically higher level of learner accountability among English language institute learners. Finally, some solutions were given to boost learner accountability for learning English.
1. Introduction

It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by the word accountability. Accountability is considered a sophisticated concept (Czerniawski, 2011; Levitt et al., 2008). Essentially, accountability is about holding an individual accountable for a planned purpose. It contains different notions including political, educational, legal, professional, bureaucratic, moral, or ethical. Accountability also has different meanings, e.g., control, responsibility, responsiveness, and dialogue (Syahril, 2017). Unquestionably, accountability is “an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions” (Merriam-Webster, 2020). The most important difference between responsibility and accountability is that accountability conveys answering to an external party and is about being responsible to someone else for something (Abadzni, 2017).

In the educational field, accountability is related to stakeholders’ agendas considering performance, effectiveness, and efficiency. It requires reasonably confirming that schools have obtained the expected results effectively. Emphasizing effectiveness and highlighting results are the distinctive features of educational accountability (Pushpanadham, 2020). Hence, accountability is a foundation of current education policy. Besides, it is a buzzword in global education policy so that the Education 2030 Framework for Action, passed by UNESCO in 2015, refers to accountability approximately 20 times. It is also obvious that the application of accountability systems has been one of the most influential trends in education policy (Smith & Benavot, 2019).

Accordingly, obtaining the expected educational results seems to be possible only through educational accountability, particularly learner accountability. Therefore, it shows a need to be explicit about the concept of learner accountability. Defining learner accountability is a complicated task since, in various contexts, and for different users, this term has been defined differently. In some cases, learner accountability includes political issues to guarantee that students in public schools achieve their intended learning goals (Schoof, 2010).

There is evidence that learner accountability plays a crucial role in education. Enhancing student engagement, encouraging lifelong learners, refining humanity and respecting diversity, and meeting AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) for No Child Left Behind illustrate the attempts of several educational institutions in the United States to increase accountability. All learner accountability attempts have focused attention on responsibility. Therefore, responsibility, answerability, and accountability, which can be used interchangeably, show an individual’s management or power to take action regarding an individual’s sense of answerability to the self and others (Cool-Sather, 2010).

Learner accountability can play an important role in addressing the issue of independent learning. According to Frymier (1998), enhancing teachers’ accountability for students’ behavior is not thought to be legally and psychologically an appropriate strategy because it leads to unproductive teaching, undesired interest in learning, and diminished achievement. Holding teachers accountable for students’ behavior acquires learners of accountability for their behaviors and contributes to student dependency and teacher control. People should be responsible for their actions not for what others should do. Thus, teachers must take their accountability for their professions, not for their students’ responsibility domain, otherwise, it further weakens students’ accountability for their learning.

This study makes a major contribution to research on learner accountability and its important role in Iranian EFL contexts. English has been taught in Iranian schools for four decades. Although students begin to learn English from the seventh grade, they usually participate in private English classes from childhood (Shahriyari., 2017). While Iranian students pass several semesters of
language learning courses with good grades, they cannot use English communicatively and meaningfully (Mousavi, 2012). As a result, the system has overlooked important implementation factors such as accountability. If there is no learner accountability awareness, students do not pay sufficient attention to deep and meaningful English learning. These students might learn English superficially like cramming for exams instead of profound practice to build continuous English study habits. Since learner accountability has not received much attention in Iranian EFL contexts, in the light of this study and similar research the EFL learners become familiar with learner accountability and its key components to learning English more systematically and meaningfully. According to Mathison (2010), in education, all individuals should be accountable for accomplishing a specific goal. Consequently, considering the Iranian EFL learners in different EFL contexts from an educational accountability point of view can be a new avenue for further research. Therefore, something must be done to emphasize learner accountability components, and then solutions and remedies must be sought to help improve learners’ active English learning.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on accountability. Regarding previous research and publications on education accountability (e.g., Darling-Hammond et al., 2014; Fullan et al., 2015; Perie et al., 2007), the writers of this article seriously propose key ideas for learner accountability since learner accountability has not yet been established fully in Iranian EFL contexts and little is known about its effect on English learning. Accountability theories often remain on paper, and learning outcomes are often unsatisfactory. Therefore, it is imperative to consider frequent inconsistency (Abadzni, 2017).

2. Literature review

2.1. Learner accountability

Jo Anne. (2005) defined Learner Accountability as participating fully in learning opportunities provided at school, learning as much as possible, supporting and caring for each other during the learning process, sharing ideas and building on each other’s ideas, and helping to build a community of learners. Wrobleski (2018) assumes that schools do not pay students, but they can create good habits for students, which means a profitable investment in their future life. To hold students accountable for their school work does not have a negative meaning, and it leads to learning life lessons and taking responsibility. Indeed, accountability is one of the most valuable lessons students must learn in school.

2.2. Core concepts of educational accountability

After reviewing the literature already published on accountability systems (e.g., Ananda & Rabinowitz, 2001; Baker et al., 2002; Carlson, 2002; Forte Fast & Hebbler, 2004; Hanushek & Raymond, 2002; Stecher & Hanser, 1992), Perie et al. (2007) made a list of seven core concepts for educational accountability. Their critical components of educational accountability include Goals, Performance Indicators, Design Decisions, Consequences, Communication, Supports, and System Evaluation, Monitoring, and Improvement.

(1) Goals define the purposes, uses, and contexts of accountability systems.
(2) Performance Indicators answer the question of what to measure.
(3) Design Decisions relate to how accountability decisions are made.
(4) Consequences could be positive or negative to reward or sanction systems when they meet or fail to meet the goals of systems.
(5) Communication deals with reporting the results of the intended goals.
(6) Supports provide the necessary resources to fulfill the planned goals.
(7) System Evaluation, Monitoring, and Improvement monitor, evaluate, and improve the accountability systems.
2.3. Theoretical and empirical studies on learner accountability

Several researchers have recently embraced learner accountability to fostering learning (e.g., Benner et al., 2010; Gooblar, 2014; Hawks, 2014; McLaughlin et al., 2014). Morin (2014) stressed that educators feel the need to change how they have approached teaching. Therefore, they ought to pursue strategies that lead to student engagement in their learning and collaborative work, including facilities and technology. Therefore, they ought to pursue strategies that lead to student engagement in their learning and collaborative work as the use of strategies is, according to Kashefian-Naeeini and Sheikhnezami-Naeini (2020), one of the criteria which determine the degree of students’ success. The aforementioned strategies include facilities and technology. Hawks (2014) claimed that students should be willingly accountable for their learning and involved in the analysis, application, and synthesis of learning content rather than sheer memorization.

On the other hand, there are some reasons why there are few empirical studies about accountability and its influences on student achievement (Rutherford & Rabovsky, 2014). Firstly, it is difficult to examine accountability measures and their impacts on academic achievement (Porter, 2015). Consequently, the relationships between accountability and student achievement cannot be demonstrated empirically. Secondly, to recognize accountability components and their influences on academic achievement, a range of factors must be taken into consideration. Additionally, accountability systems frequently introduce fundamental changes, which means they have some similarities or differences with previous accountability measures. Therefore, it even becomes complicated to recognize the influences of the new accountability systems (Hanushek & Raymond, 2002). According to Abadzni (2017), to clarify the concept of accountability, the following points should be taken into account.

(1) Accountability is easier for individuals and harder for groups.
(2) Mutual accountability is easy in cohesive groups.
(3) Credible and enforceable sanctions are essential.
(4) Shared goals and trust are important.
(5) Accountability is more obvious in processes and vague in outcomes.

Student success can be attributed to several factors. Students’ attitudes and perceptions are, according to Nourinezhad and Kashefian-Naeini (2020), among the foregoing factors. Active participation is another determining factor. For instance, the academic achievement of students in online distance learning boosts whenever students are actively involved in their education. They provide opportunities for themselves to analyze and apply materials presented in different contexts (Kuh et al., 2010). Hanushek and Raymond (2002) discovered that academic achievement enhances when a new accountability system is introduced. While Hanushek and Raymond (2002) declaration seems reasonably valid at the middle schools, research done in other school levels indicates insignificant student achievement based on accountability systems.

Astuti and Lammers (2017) explored the important role that learner accountability plays in improving English learning in Cooperative Learning. They addressed this issue by conducting a constructivist grounded theory analysis on participant observation, interview, and document analysis. Data were collected from two EFL teachers and 77 students. The analysis represented that learner accountability contributed to using the target language more and more. The study recommends that EFL teachers provide students with the activities within the learner accountability domain in the Cooperative Learning method and insist on the importance of these activities.

Regarding student accountability, Schoof (2010) did not dismiss the roles of teachers, but he believed that student-centered learning issues could improve some types of learner accountability. He stated that improving student accountability is an approach that scholars have applied in
designing their learning approaches. In evaluating learner accountability, the sheer teacher-centered learning model cannot operate properly any longer, and it should shift onto student-centered learning (Porter-O'Grady, 2001).

As a result, we do not have the evidence to measure the effect of accountability quantitatively; accountability functions in a definite domain, and it requires explanations to be applied in other domains. However, the existing lack of empirical research does not imply that accountability leads to no student achievement (Brill et al., 2018).

2.4. Purpose of the study
Due to the paucity of empirical research in learner accountability, attempts were made in the present study to examine whether there was a significant difference between the rate of learner accountability between Iranian high school students and English language institute learners. Besides, the researchers applied the critical elements of educational accountability based on Perie et al. (2007) as the theoretical frame of the study. The next objective dealt with representing the most significant learner accountability components in both Iranian EFL contexts. Eventually, to improve learner accountability elements in high schools and English language institutes, possible solutions were offered. There are three research questions in this study:

RQ1. Is the learner accountability rate different between Iranian high school students and English language institute learners?

RQ2. Which main components of learner accountability are the most significant between Iranian high school students and English language institute learners?

RQ3. What are the possible remedies to improve EFL learner accountability?

3. Method
3.1. Design
A mixed-methods research design, with a more prominent quantitative dimension, was employed to examine the learner accountability rate between high school students and English language institute learners. To end this, both qualitative (interview) and quantitative (questionnaire) phases were used. Mixed-methods research is gaining prominence in applied linguistics (Riazi, 2017). Many researchers have utilized interviews and observations to investigate accountability since accountability is a relative and subjective notion. However, in this study, the use of the quantitative phase of the study is a well-established approach to examine accountability empirically.

3.2. Participants
The participants of this study were 150 high school students and 150 English language institute learners of both genders. They were chosen randomly to participate in the quantitative phase of the study. According to Brown (1947), random sampling has the maximum freedom from bias. The participants were aged between fourteen and eighteen with a mean of 16. They shared the same L1 (Persian) though they came from different high schools and English language institutes in Shiraz. Firstly, the institute and high school administrators were asked to permit the study to be conducted. Then, the parents had given their consent before their children participated in the study.

The demographic details of all participants represented that all of them came from the same first language background that is Persian though about 20% of the participants could speak Turkish or Lori and originated from different economic conditions. 100% of the students had not traveled abroad. As for the period of exposure to English, 80% of the participants had studied English for six years whereas 30% were introduced to English for four years. It is obvious that
participants had been exposed to some amount of English learning at school or simultaneously at a language institute. It is important to note that because of factor analysis, which was applied in this study, the number of the participants was 300. Tanachnick and Fidell (2013) suggest that “it is comforting to have at least 300 cases for factor analysis” (p. 613). Additionally, 15 high school students and 15 English language institute learners of the total participants of the study participated in the qualitative phase of the study to strengthen the results of the study.

3.3. Instruments

To conduct the current study, two kinds of instruments were used. In the quantitative section, the instrument was a questionnaire, and in the qualitative section, an interview was administered. The questionnaire was a five-point Likert Scale researcher-made questionnaire. The researchers drew their inspirations from Perie et al.’s (2007) educational accountability check-list to make the questionnaire.

The reason why the learner accountability questionnaire was developed based on Perie et al.’s (2007) check-list is that according to Perie et al. (2007), to establish their accountability model, they synthesized the literature to date on critical elements in an accountability system, they developed a framework incorporating core concepts, guiding questions, key elements, and various options listed in previous literature, and they provided descriptive examples of more fine-grained elements or options that increase effectiveness and success of state-level accountability systems.

The questionnaire items were closed-ended questions because they are straightforward and suited for quantitative studies (Dorney, 2007). The translated questionnaire was back-translated to confirm the trustworthiness of the translation (See Appendix B).

The learner accountability questionnaire was made up of 46 items, and the respondents were asked to express their opinion about their English learning experience. The questions were based on the critical elements of educational accountability (Perie et al. (2007)) and contained the following main items:

1- To what extent have you achieved your goals in learning English? (Goals) (I:9-I:19-I:11-I:18)

2- To what extent are the related performance indicators considered in your success in learning English? (Performance indicators) (I:36-I:35-I:33-I:34-I:32)

3- To what extent are the right decisions made to make you a successful English learner? (Design Decisions) (I:46-I:40-I:42-I:41-I:39-I:22-I:20-I:21)

4- To what extent when you leave school, will you be able to use English effectively? (Consequences) (I:43-I:44-I: 15)

5- To what extent does your school provide appropriate communication about your improvement? (Communication) (I:30-I:31-I:28-I:29)

6- To what extent are you supported by parents, school, teachers, and classmates to learn English? (Support) (I:37- I:27- I:25- I:24- I:17- I:16- I:14- I:13- I:12- I:10- I:8- I:7- I:6- I:5- I:4- I:3- I:2)

7- To what extent do you think that you have a high level of achievement in English learning? (System monitoring, evaluation, improvement) (I:45-I:26-I:23-I:1) (See Appendix A)

Besides the quantitative side of the study, an interview was also administered to be sure about the results of the questionnaire and to find solutions to learner accountability in Iranian EFL contexts. The first part of the interview consisted of some questions from the questionnaire (structured-interview), and the second part included 14 questions (semi-structured interview). These questions were also asked regarding Perie et al.’s (2007) check-list. Two EFL experts and some English
learners participated in the qualitative phase of the study. While doing the interview, audio recordings and written notes were also used. Moreover, the validity of the interview questions was confirmed by the two EFL experts beforehand (See Appendix C).

The construction of the learner accountability questionnaire included the following steps. Firstly, Perie et al.’s (2007) check-list was the source of inspiration for the researchers of this study. The items were collected through tentative interviews with the two EFL experts who participated in the study. Secondly, they reviewed the items to add appropriate or omit inappropriate items. To confirm the validity of the questionnaire, a copy of the questionnaire and a validity form including, three parts (accept, edit, and reject) were delivered to the two EFL experts. Then, the content and face validity of the questionnaire with 50 items were confirmed by them. For the first-round piloting, the learner accountability questionnaire was given to 50 students. After that, some items were changed based on what was expressed by the participants. Then, for the second-round piloting, 20 students answered the questionnaires. The reliability was assessed by Cronbach’s Alpha and was .89. The internal consistency of the questionnaire also showed a high degree of reliability. Exploratory Factor analysis was run to reveal the loading factors of the main components of the learner accountability questionnaire. Through exploratory factor analysis, four items were deleted as they had pretty low loading factors.

3.4. Procedure

The researchers collected data using both quantitative and qualitative means, with priority given to the former. To collect the quantitative data, the questionnaire was administered to the participants to be answered in 30 minutes. In all, a period of two months was spent in gathering the data of the questionnaire. All of the items of the questionnaire were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. All of them were given numerical values: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, I do not know = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5. Finally, the reversed-items were scored and valued appropriately at the time of conducting statistics.

In the qualitative phase of the study, after preparing the final interview questions, the participants were contacted to set the time and the place of the interview session where the English classes were held. First, the researchers explained the aim of the study to the interviewees. Since the interview needed to be recorded to enable the researchers to analyze the findings later, the interviewees were asked if they were willing to be recorded, and only at their will the researchers/interviewers turned on the recorder. The interviews were carried out in the participants’ mother tongue (Persian) and a friendly and comfortable atmosphere. The interviews were done based on the questions of the questionnaire and took about thirty minutes each. Then, the second part of the interview took about 30 minutes to provide some remedies. The first part of the interview questions was developed from the items of the questionnaire and the other ones were based on the seven constructs of the educational accountability model to provide some remedies to improve learner accountability. (See Appendix C). The responses were recorded, and some written notes were taken with the interviewees’ consent and permission. Then, all the interviews were transcribed, codified, and translated by the researchers. Finally, the results were interpreted through numerical counts, frequency, and percentages.

To analyze the interviews, the researchers provided a check-list based on the questionnaire from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. All of them were given numerical values: Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, I do not know = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5. Then, they selected 20 questions from the questionnaire. All those 20 questions covered the seven critical elements of educational accountability components. Then, they needed to establish the number of items that were ticked. For example, the first interviewee received 10 out of 20 questions “Strongly Agree”, 5 out of 20 “Agree”, and 5 out of 20 “I do not know”. The next step after the numerical count procedure measured the frequency. Next, percentages were used because they are easy to interpret. In the second part of the interview, to provide some remedies, the questions were asked and the responses were recorded. Then, two EFL experts helped select the best remedies.
Finally, the two EFL experts added more professional remedies to the responses. It took four months to gather the data by using the learner accountability questionnaire and conducting interviews.

3.5. Data analyses
To analyze and interpret the results, the data were inserted into SPSS 22.0. In the quantitative phase of the study, Exploratory Factor Analysis was run as a variable-reduction procedure. Then, to judge how well the items on the questionnaire measured the same construct, the internal consistency of the learner accountability questionnaire was run. One of the most well-known tools for assessing the reliability of an instrument is Cronbach's Alpha which was applied to measure the reliability of the learner accountability questionnaire. Following that, the mean scores of variables were represented through descriptive statistics and statistical significance was analyzed using analysis of variance and t-tests to answer the first and second research questions. Besides, in the qualitative phase, Numerical count, Frequencies, and Percentages were used.

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative part of the study
One of the main goals of the present study was to find which EFL context had more level of learner accountability. Therefore, descriptive and inferential statistics in this section will answer the first research question.

Research Question 1
Is the learner accountability rate different between Iranian high school students and English language institute learners?

The descriptive statistics for the learner accountability contained two groups of Institutes and Schools. (See Table 1)

As seen in Table 1, the statistical analyses indicated that in the first context (school), the mean score of learner accountability was (M = 3.59, SD = .77). On the other hand, the mean score in the other context (Institute) was (M = 3.86, SD = .45). As a result, the mean score in the institute context was higher than the mean score in school. Hence, an independent t-test was run to show the significance of the difference (See Table 2).

As demonstrated in Table 2, there seems to be a significant difference between levels of learner accountability in both EFL contexts because Sig (.00) is less than 0.05. This means that the difference between both groups was significant at (p < 0.05). As a result, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the learner accountability rates in high schools and English language institutes.

Research Question 2
Which main components of learner accountability are the most significant between Iranian high school students and language institute English learners?

| Participants         | N   | Mean | Std. deviation | Std. error |
|----------------------|-----|------|----------------|------------|
| School students      | 150 | 3.59 | .77            | .06        |
| Institute students   | 150 | 3.86 | .45            | .03        |
Table 2. Independent samples t-test to compare learner accountability in high schools & English language institutes

| Learner accountability | Levene's test for equality of variances | 95% confidence interval of the difference |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|                        | F           | Sig. | t    | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 21.28       | .000 | -5.08 | 58 | .000 | -.23 | .03 | -.35 | -.16 |
| Equal variances not assumed | -5.07 | 530.55 | .000 | -.23 | .03 | -.35 | -.16 |
The descriptive information of seven critical components of learner accountability at high schools and English language institutes are provided in Table 3.

Table 3 displays seven critical elements of learner accountability, including System evaluation, Support, Consequence, Goal, Design Decisions, Communication, and Performance Indicators. As Table 3 shows, the mean scores for all critical elements of learner accountability in the context of institutes were higher than those in the schools. Moreover, to consider which elements of learner accountability had higher mean scores than others, Table 3 demonstrates that Goal with 4.2 and Consequence 4.1 had the highest mean scores. All these high scores belonged to the institute. Thus, an independent sample t-test was run to confirm the statistical differences among all learner accountability elements in two different contexts (See Table 4).

Table 4 presents the results of a paired samples t-test which compared the key elements of learner accountability in high schools and English language institutes. The differences between Support, Consequence, Goal, Design, and Performance were found to be significant because Sig (.00) was less than 0.05 in all these mentioned elements, contrarily, the difference between Communication and System were not significant because Sig (.12) and Sig (.27), respectively, were higher than 0.05. It could be concluded that Support, Consequence, Goal, Design, and Performance were more significant in the institutes.

4.2. Qualitative part of the study to answer the first and second research questions
This part of the research was conducted by some structured interviews. As Table 5 represents, some high school students and English language institute learners were asked to answer the questions regarding the theme of the questionnaire about learner accountability and its main elements.

| Key elements | Contexts and participants | N   | Mean   | Std. deviation | Std. error mean |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| system       | School Students           | 150 | 3.8083 | .93918         | .07668          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 3.9117 | .67191         | .05486          |
| support      | School Students           | 150 | 3.6137 | .92088         | .07519          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 3.9580 | .57781         | .04718          |
| consequence  | School Students           | 150 | 3.7689 | 1.01440        | .08283          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 4.1911 | .64315         | .05251          |
| goal         | School Students           | 150 | 3.9833 | .91852         | .07500          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 4.2533 | .62053         | .05067          |
| design       | School Students           | 150 | 3.5704 | .82253         | .06716          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 3.9185 | .50855         | .04152          |
| communication| School Students           | 150 | 3.3083 | 1.11969        | .09142          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 3.1883 | .89177         | .07281          |
| performance  | School Students           | 150 | 3.4387 | .95135         | .07768          |
|              | Institute Students        | 150 | 3.6520 | .69144         | .05646          |
Table 4. Independent samples t-test to compare the key elements of learner accountability in high schools and English language institutes

|                          | Levene’s test for equality of variances |  | t-Test for equality of means |  | 95% confidence interval of the difference |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------|---|
|                          | F                        | Sig. | t               | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | Lower  | Upper  |
| system                   | Equal variances assumed   | 15.714 | .000          | −1.096 | 298 | .274 | −1.0133 | .09429 | −2.2889 | .08222 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −1.096 | 269.862 | .274 | −1.0133 | .09429 | −2.2897 | .08230 |
| support                  | Equal variances assumed   | 28.086 | .000          | −3.879 | 298 | .000 | −3.4431 | .08877 | −5.1900 | −1.6963 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −3.879 | 250.578 | .000 | −3.4431 | .08877 | −5.1913 | −1.6949 |
| consequence              | Equal variances assumed   | 20.303 | .000          | −4.305 | 298 | .000 | −4.2222 | .09807 | −6.1522 | −2.2923 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −4.305 | 252.127 | .000 | −4.2222 | .09807 | −6.1536 | −2.2908 |
| goal                     | Equal variances assumed   | 10.301 | .001          | −2.983 | 298 | .003 | −2.7000 | .09051 | −4.4811 | −0.9189 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −2.983 | 261.561 | .003 | −2.7000 | .09051 | −4.4822 | −0.9178 |
| design                   | Equal variances assumed   | 27.704 | .000          | −4.409 | 298 | .000 | −3.4815 | .07896 | −5.0354 | −1.9276 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −4.409 | 248.392 | .000 | −3.4815 | .07896 | −5.0366 | −1.9263 |
| communication            | Equal variances assumed   | 11.970 | .001          | −1.540 | 298 | .125 | −1.8000 | .11687 | −4.0000 | .05000 |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed|           | −1.540 | 283.792 | .125 | −1.8000 | .11687 | −4.0005 | .05005 |

(Continued)
Table 4. (Continued)

| Performance | Levene's test for equality of variances | t-Test for equality of means | 95% confidence interval of the difference |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|             | F          | Sig. | t   | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean difference | Std. error difference | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 17.813 | .000 | -2.222 | 298 | .027 | -2.1333 | .09603 | -.60231 | -.02436 |
| Equal variances not assumed | -2.222 | | 272.072 | .027 | -2.1333 | .09603 | -.60238 | -.02428 |
Table 5. Qualitative results of key elements of learner accountability in two contexts

| Learner accountability elements | High school students | English learner |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Goals                           | 80%                  | 86%            |
| Performance Indicators          | 64%                  | 72%            |
| Design Decisions                | 70%                  | 78%            |
| Consequences                    | 75%                  | 80%            |
| Communication                   | 65%                  | 66%            |
| Support                         | 71%                  | 79%            |
| System                          | 70%                  | 78%            |

Table 6. Remedies for learner accountability

Key elements of EA

Goal
FEL learners should create a desire to learn English that is consistent with their values and intentions.
EFL learners should set short-term and long-term goals for learning all English skills and components. Setting goals plays a pivotal role to energize, direct, and eventually affect meaningful learning.
EFL learners should become familiar with key elements of setting goals, e.g., clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task difficulty.

Performance Indicators
Students need to boost their autonomy.
Students must take more responsibility, create a higher awareness of their language learning processes, and provide themselves with the ability and opportunity to take control of their learning.
The good accountability habits developed by students are worthwhile investments in their future.
Students should get familiar with the power of autonomy, which is the ability to assume responsibility for their learning.
Students should empower themselves to be more accountable because it is a useful technique that can be learned in school.

Design Decisions
Interacting with students should be considered a major priority in schools.
To encourage student achievement, students should be involved in school decision-making.
There should be an environment in which students are comfortable asking their questions and involving in deciding on EFL programs.
Teachers should always try to speak to students and document that. Besides, teachers should follow up on their conversation with documented communication with the parents. In general, students are more accountable when they become aware of the fact that they are not able to place teachers and parents against each other.

Consequence
It is students’ accountability for doing their homework. They must continue the work their teachers do in class later at home. They must understand that if they do not get the expected results, they are fully accountable for it.
Teachers must try to engage learners in learning. However, it is the students’ responsibility to be willing to learn what teachers provide. Students must try to be receptive and positive.
If students do not have the assigned homework, they must fill out an excuse sheet. This sheet requires students to create documentation for their missing work.
The classroom is the perfect place to learn responsible work habits as well as the content.

Communication
Teachers can maintain a class WhatsApp group where they can post important information and homework.

(Continued)
As the results in Table 5 reveal, in all learner accountability critical elements, the interviewees in the institutes expressed more accountability rates. For example, regarding Goal 80% of the high school students had intended goals for active English learning. At the same time, 86% of the language institute learners established long-term goals for meaningful English learning.

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008, p. 101), a “meta inference is an overall conclusion, explanation or understanding developed through an integration of the inferences obtained from the qualitative and quantitative strands of a mixed-method study.” Therefore, the results of the qualitative phase of the current study merely confirmed the results of the quantitative phase. Both phases of the study indicated that the level of learner accountability was higher in the context of English language institutes.

Research Question 3

What are the possible remedies to improve EFL learner accountability?

As one of the objectives of the current study was to provide remedies for learner accountability, data for this part of the study were collected through semi-structured interviews with some participants of the study and two experienced ELT experts. (See Table 6)

4.3. Remedies for learners

When a student uses autonomous abilities, the learning is self-directed. Since autonomous abilities are not innate, developing autonomy is a process that needs teachers’ and students’ time and effort (Ivarsson & Fredrik, 2013).

5. Discussion

The present study explored the level of learner accountability and its seven main components. The results of the descriptive and inferential statistics represented a significant difference in learner accountability in the high schools and English language institutes. According to Brill et al. (2018), few researchers have quantitatively addressed educational accountability and its impacts on learner achievement.

On the other hand, the literature reviewed did enlighten insight into the influences that accountability have on essential features of education. This study was a small-scale study. Therefore, it is impossible to
make any substantial conclusions about learner accountability aspects. Instead, the results of this study clarify some points that are appealing to those scholars who develop accountability measures.

Regarding learner accountability, this study corroborates with the previous studies. For example, Schoof (2010) stated that student accountability has different meanings for different users. This study is also in good agreement with the previous studies on the effect of learner accountability in Cooperative Learning on EFL communicative competence (e.g., Astuti & Lammers, 2017; Kagan & Kagan, 2009). On the other hand, Dugan (2004) only investigated learner accountability from the learner's perspective. In contrast to the current study, Guastello and Lenz (2005) investigated learner accountability through a reading program, not questionnaires. As a result, they concluded that holding students accountable for quizzes is possible. Moreover, Porter (2015) concluded that accountability and quality affect online education while few empirical studies have investigated the association between these measures and academic achievement.

When comparing the results of this study with other studies, it must be mentioned that Shin's (2010) study demonstrated the influence of a new accountability system on institutional performance in higher education, and he specified that no noticeable growth in institutional performance was seen. Besides, Volkwein and Tandberg (2008) stated that accountability has created no considerable advance in learning. Therefore, it can be considered unproductive. Correspondingly, an empirical study by Rabovsky (2012) indicated that the impact of accountability on boosting institutional performance is relative and has some severe limitations.

Considering different critical elements of learner accountability, evidence from the result presented in Iyabo Idoewu et al.’s (2014) study shows that goal-setting skill has a positive impact on English learners’ performance. Also, Hayes (1986) asserted that goal-setting leads to remarkable performance in learning, mainly in essay writing. He also stressed that academic writers mostly develop content and process goals when writing. The significance of goal-setting is evident in prominent writers as supported by (Lamb, 1997). From these findings, it is apparent that establishing a goal is essential for excellent performance in learning English. The reason is that, when a goal is established, students have directions, they are determined to pursue their goals, and intrinsic motivation originates naturally.

Regarding Performance Indicators, the results of Hoang Tuan and Ngoc Mai (2015) study indicated that satisfactory English learners’ speaking performance depends on different factors, e.g., topical knowledge, confidence, motivation, listening ability, and teachers’ feedback. In terms of Design Decision, Greenbank (2010) provided a booklet about Decision-making as a critical skill for students through active learning. Concerning Consequence, Mansfield (2017) emphasized the relationship between rewards and sanctions, and school effect and sense of belonging. About Communication, Nik Hashim et al. (2014) found that there was a steady positive relationship between students’ English communication and their teachers’ personality. Respecting Support, Sadeghi et al. (2014) examined the influence of learners’ two primary needs (skills and materials) on learning strategy use. The results showed different learning strategies were used based on students’ different needs. Therefore, it can be concluded that learners’ needs can influence strategy. Finally, about System Evaluation, Monitoring, and Improvement, Heidarian's study (Heidarian, 2016) indicated that there is a statistically significant increase in the learners' writing due to the self-assessment method.

Considering the differences between the level of learner accountability in high schools and English language institutes, a possible explanation for this might be based on Davari Torshizi and Davari Torshizi (2016) findings. They demonstrated the importance of placement and showed a critical effect on English students’ performances and motivation in high schools. Additionally, they proved that poor placement in Iranian high schools resulted in learners’ demotivation and deficiencies in their evaluation. Another possible explanation for the difference in learner accountability levels in two Iranian contexts may be a large number of students in public English classes
which puts adverse effects on learners’ interactions in the classroom and has opposing influences on students’ motivation. The results of this study are likely to be related to the simple and ordinary teaching methods in high schools that are traditional in comparison to the situational type of English language institutes. Moreover, the effects of the textbook and syllabus design on teaching methods were under consideration in their study. Despite their common aims and purposes, public schools and English language institutes are using different procedures for teaching and learning English.

6. Conclusions
The main goal of the current study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the level of learner accountability between Iranian high school students and English language institute learners. The second aim of this study was to investigate the most significant learner accountability components in both Iranian EFL contexts. Finally, to promote student accountability in two Iranian EFL contexts, the interviewees offered some possible remedies. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that learner accountability level was more significant in the English institute context.

The current data highlight the importance of considering learner accountability in Iranian EFL contexts. Since accountability is a government’s device to hold educational organizations accountable for delivering superior services, the idea that accountability can contribute to improvements in education fortifies policy. Studies reported the influences of accountability systems on student and teacher engagement (Brill et al., 2018).

On the other hand, there is a paucity of quantitative evidence about the impact of learner accountability on pupil engagement because accountability works in a specific context and needs a translation to other contexts. However, this lack does not necessarily mean that accountability does not have any impact on educational contexts. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize the impacts of accountability systems. For example, many other factors affect the quality of education, and it is challenging to separate the specific influences of accountability from those. Also, it may take time for any accountability reforms to become apparent in a given education system (Brill et al., 2018).

The findings reported in this study shed new light on English learning. The concept of accountability is always fresh and enhances reasonable prospects to improve its principal aspects (Flinders, 2014). To date, the only deficit of accountability systems has been considered its shortage of theoretical precision and general framework (Willems & Van Dooren, 2012). Additionally, accountability is a matter of history, subjectivity, and context. Improving accountability for education necessitates determined attempts to decrease potential stresses that reduce attempts, lower motivation, and diminish engagement in making judgments in an accountability system. Such stresses mostly root in social psychology and biases. One of the most fundamental obstacles to accountability studies is to build a sound foundation for empirical studies. Thus far, both quantitative and qualitative empirical studies have been expected to be done (Brandsma, 2014; Fahey & Koster., 2019; Yang, 2014). Unquestionably, scholars should provide perfect opportunities to validate the findings of social psychology beyond the laboratory and into observational practice (Schillemans, 2016).

The results of the current study will help us have a broader perspective on learner accountability in society. As a result, it mainly affects the productive output of teaching and learning English in Iran. Firstly, English learners hold themselves accountable for making their sincere commitments to a high quality of English learning. Moreover, they will realize that meaningful learning will need an effective monitoring mechanism and powerful management. Public school EFL students will also approach raising more optimistic expectations for learning English. They will observe their achievement in English more precisely than before, and they will participate in meaningful discussions to achieve better results in English learning. Besides, they will pay more
attention to the importance of their roles in English learning improvement. Additionally, they will focus exclusively on positive relationships with their English teachers and curriculum expectations. They will find some tactics for evaluating English activities at home to see whether they are prepared for their English class. Finally, this study leads to focusing more on the importance of Cooperative Learning and different levels of learner accountability: learner accountability in pairs, in-home groups, in other groups, and the whole class to improve communicative EFL competence which requires support from its social environment and particularly from the EFL teachers (Astuti & Lammers, 2017).

It is recommended that further research should be undertaken in educational accountability. This study compared public high school students and English language institute learners. However, studies could be done to compare public high school students, private high school students, and English language institute learners. On a broader level, research is also needed with more participants to compare the level of learner accountability in different cities of Iran. Moreover, studies could be conducted to compare learner accountability with each other in different national and international contexts. Concerning learner accountability, future research is suggested to do close classroom observation to explore how English learners interact with their teachers in the classroom to shed more insights into the qualities of accountable English learners. Furthermore, future research can be carried out to construct a more valid and reliable learner accountability questionnaire. About learner accountability, more research is suggested to compare EFL university contexts. Finally, the prospect of being able to see the effect of gender on learner accountability serves as a continuous spur to future research.

The present study encountered several limitations. The most problematic part of this study was related to the data collection procedure, which means if there have been more participants, the results were more precise. Therefore, the aspect of generalizability is the main limitation of the study. To generalize the results of this study, the study should have included more participants. Meanwhile, the results of this study are likely affected by culture, gender, society, affective factors, learning styles, and language proficiency. Thus, care must be exercised not to generalize the results beyond the existing limitations. Notwithstanding these limitations, the study suggests that learner accountability should be taken into consideration in Iranian EFL contexts more and more.

Acknowledgements
The authors would like to express their gratitude to Dr. Yamini, an assistant professor and an active member of the Center of Excellence in L2 Reading and Writing, Shiraz University, who kindly helped in validating the learner accountability questionnaire. Thanks are also due to Dr. Kashefian-Naeeini, an assistant professor in English learning, who read the article and made useful suggestions.

Funding
The authors received no direct funding for this research.

Author details
Leila Zarei1
E-mail: zarei.efl@gmail.com
Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri1
E-mail: Bagheries@gmail.com
Firooz Sadighi1
E-mail: Firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

1 Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran.

Citation information
Cite this article as: An investigation of Iranian EFL learner accountability: A demand for learner accountability, Leila Zarei, Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri & Firooz Sadighi, Cogent Arts & Humanities (2021), 8: 1870066.

References
Abodzni, H. (2017). Accountability and its educational implications: Culture, linguistics, and psychological research. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259573

Ananda, S., & Rabinowitz, S. (2001). Building a workable accountability system. WestEd. https://www.wested.org/resources/building-a-workable-accountability-system-policy-brief/

Astuti, P., & Lammers, J. C. (2017). Individual accountability in cooperative learning: More opportunities to produce spoken English. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 7(1), 215–228. https://doi.org/10.17509/jial.v7i1.6878

Baker, E., Linn, R., Herman, J., & Koretz, D. (2002). Standards for educational accountability systems [Policy Brief 5]. National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. http://cresst.org/publications/cresst-publication-3248/

Benner, P., Surphen, M., Leonard, V., & Day, L. (2010). Educating nurses: A call for radical transformation. Jossey- Bass.

Brandsma, G. (2014). Quantitative analysis. In M. Bovens, R. Goodin, & T. Schillemans (Eds.), The Oxford handbook of public accountability. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199641253.013.0041

Brill, F., Grayson, H., Kuhn, L., & O’Donnell, S. (2018). What impact does accountability have on curriculum, standards, and engagement in education? A literature review. NFER.

Brown, G. H. (1947). A comparison of sampling methods. Journal of Marketing, 6(4), 331–337. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224294700300401
Carlson, D. (2002). The focus of state educational accountability systems: Four methods of judging school quality and progress. In W. J. Ennew, et al. (Ed.), Incorporating multiple measures of student performance into state accountability systems—A compendium of resources (pp. 285–297). Council of Chief State School Officers.

Cool-Sather, A. (2010). Transforming education, and redefining accountability. Curriculum Inquiry, 40(4), 555–575. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-875X.2010.00501.x

Czerniawski, G. (2011). Emerging teachers—emerging identities: Trust and accountability in the construction of newly qualified teachers in Norway, Germany, and England. European Journal of Teacher Education, 34(6), 431-447. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2011.587114

Darling-Hammond, L., Wilhoit, G., & Pittenger, L. (2014). Accountability for college and career readiness: Developing a new paradigm. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education.

Davari Torshizi, M., & Davari Torshizi, M. (2016). Learners’ perception of differences between language learning in high school and private language institute. International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 5(1), 33–38.

Dornyei, Z. (2007). Research methods in applied linguistics. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dugan, R. E. (2004). Institutional assessment planning. In P. Hernon & R. E. Dugan (Eds.), Outcomes assessment in higher education (pp. 73–88). Libraries Unlimited.

Fahey, G., & Koster., F. (2019). Means, ends, and meaning in accountability. https://doj.org/10.3200/TCHS.78.4.142-145

Forte Fast, E., & Hebbler, S. (2004). Incorporating multiple measures of student accountability into the type of behavior to be modeled and the model’s attitude. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233111983.2020.1870066

Frymier, J. (1998). Accountability and student learning. Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 12(3), 233–235. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:100811125539

Fullan, M., Rincon-Gallardo, S., & Hargreaves, A. (2015). Professional capital as accountability. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 23(15), 1–21. Retrieved from https://www.readinggate.net/publication/276379205_professional_capital_as_accountability

Galluzzo, G. (2005). Performance assessment and renewing teacher education: The possibilities of NBPTS standards. The Clearing House, 78(4), 142–145. https://doi.org/10.3200/TCHS.78.4.142-145

Gooblar, D. (2014). Want students to come to class prepared? Try rolling the dice. Pedagogy Unbound. http://chroniclevitate.com/news/368-want-studentsto-come-to-class-prepared-try-rolling-the-dice

Greenbank, P. (2010). Developing decision-making skills in students: An active learning approach. Edge Hill University. https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/files/2012/02/Developing-decision-making-skills-in-students.pdf

Guastello, E., & Lenz, C. (2005). Student accountability: guided reading kid stations. The Reading Teacher, 59(2), 144–156.

Hanushek, E., & Raymond, M. (2002). Sorting out accountability systems. In W. Evers & H. Wolberg (Eds.), School accountability (pp. 75–104). Stanford University, Hoover Press.

Hawks, S. J. (2014). The flipped classroom: Now or never? AANA Journal, 82(4), 264–269.

Hayes, M. E. (1986). A study of the relationship between the type of behavior to be modeled and the model’s similarity to the observers. Dissertation abstracts International, 34, 17–23.

Heidarian, N. (2016). Investigating the effect of using self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners’ writing. Journal of Education and Practice, 7(28), 80–89.

Hoang Tuan, N., & Ngoc Mai, T. (2015). 8 factors affecting students’ speaking performance at le Thanh Hien high school. Asian Journal of Educational Research, 3(2), 8–23.

Ivarsson, D., & Fredrik, P. (2013). Learner responsibility in the English classroom. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Learner-responsibility-in-the-English-classroom-Ivarsson-Phill /1149cbf3689e21c6b5c2495e96083537c621ba77

Iyabo Idowu, A., Gyu Chibuzoh, I., & Ify Louisa, M. (2016). Effects of goal-setting skills on students’ academic performance in English language in Enugu Nigeria. New Approaches in Educational Research, 3(2), 93–99. https://doi.org/10.7821/naer.3.2.93-99

Jo Anne., A. (2005). Accountability in education. UNESCO IIEP, International Academy of Education. https://www.IIEP.org

Kagan, S., & Kagan, M. (2009). Kagan cooperative learning. Kagan Publishing.

Kashefi-Naeini, S., & Sheikhnezami-Naeini, Z. (2020). Communication skills among school masters of different gender in Shiraz, Iran. International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology, 29(2), 1607–1611.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J. (2010). Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter. John Wiley & Sons.

Kumb, M. E. (1997). Parental behaviors in humans. American Zoologist, 25(3), 883–894. https://doi.org/10.1093/icb/25.3.883

Levitt, R., Janta, B., & Wegrich, K. (2008). Accountability of teachers: Literature review. RAND Corporation.

Mansfield, C. (2017). Responding to rewards and sanctions: the impact on students’ sense of belonging and school affect. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Fremantle, Australia, November 2017.

Mathison, S. (2010). The purpose of evaluation. In P. Peterson, B. McGaw, & E. Baker (Eds.), The international encyclopedia of education (3rd ed.). Elsevier Publishers.

McLaughlin, J. E., Roth, M. T., Glatt, D. M., & Mumper, R. J. (2014). The flipped classroom: A course redesign to foster learning and engagement in a health professions school. Academic Medicine, 89(2), 236–243. https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.000000000000086

Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary (11th ed.). (2020). Merriam-Webster Incorporated.

Morin, K. H. (2014). Fostering student accountability for learning. Journal of Nursing Education, 53(10), 547–548. https://doi.org/10.3928/19448434-20140922-10

Mousavi, S. A. (2012). An encyclopedic dictionary of language testing (5th ed.). Rahnama Press.

Nik Hashim, M. H., Alam, S. S., & Mohd Yusoff, N. (2014). Relationship between teacher’s personality, monitoring, learning environment, and students’ EFL performance. Journal of Language Studies, 14(1), 101–116.

Nourinezhad, S., & Kashefian-Naeeini, S. (2020). Iranian EFL university learners and lecturers’ attitude towards translation as a tool in reading comprehension considering background variables of age, major, and years of experience. Cogent Education, 7(1),
Perie, M., Park, J., & Klau, K. (2007). Key elements of educational accountability models. CCSSO.

Porter, M. (2015). Accountability, quality, and student success in online education: A literature review of empirical studies. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Accountability%2C-Quality%2C-and-Student-Success-in-A-Porter/bff6c07f0d3d68f47ebc297baedd9d5b1fd6a4

Porter-O’Grady, T. (2001). Profound change: 21st-century nursing. Nursing Outlook, 49(4), 182–186. https://doi.org/10.1067/mno.2001.112789

Pushpanadham, K. (2020). The academic accountability in higher education; rhetoric or real. 2020. Interwoven: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Navrachana University, 2(1), 1–13.

Rabovsky, T. M. (2012). Accountability in higher education: Exploring impacts on state budgets and institutional spending patterns. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 22(4), 675–700. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur069

Riazi, M. (2017). Mixed methods research in language teaching and learning. Equinox, Macquarie University.

Rutherford, A., & Rabovsky, T. (2014). Evaluating impacts of performance funding policies on student outcomes in higher education. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 655(1), 185–208. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716214541048

Sadeghi, B., Hassani, M. T., & Dashtaki Hessari, A. (2014). On the relationship between learners’ needs and their use of language learning strategies. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 136 (2014), 255–259

Schilleman, T. (2016). Calibrating public sector accountability: Translating experimental findings to public sector accountability. Public Management Review, 18(9), 1400–1420. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2015.1112423

Schoof, P. M. (2010). Student accountability in student-centered learning. Master Teacher Program, the Center for Teaching Excellence, United States Military Academy.

Shahriyari, H. (2017). The status of English in Iran. file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/TheStatusofEnglishinIran.pdf

Shin, J. C. (2010). Impacts of performance-based accountability on institutional performance in the U. S. Higher Education, 60(1), 47–68. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9285-y

Smith, W. C., & Benovot, A. (2019). Improving accountability in education: The importance of structured democratic voice. Asia Pacific Education Review, 20(2), 191–205. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-019-09599-9

Stecher, B., & Hanes, L. (1992). Local accountability in vocational education: A theoretical model and its limitations in practice. MDS-291. RAND.

Syahril, I. (2017). Learning, accountability, and professionalism: A policy recommendation for transforming Indonesian education. Research Gate, Sampoerna University. file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/NECConferencePaper_IwanSyahril_050617%20(4).pdf

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2008). Introduction to mixed method and mixed-model studies in the social and behavioral science. In V. L. Plano-Clark & J. W. Creswell (Eds.), The mixed- methods reader (pp. 7–26).

Volkwein, J. F., & Tandberg, D. A. (2008). Measuring up: Examining the connections among state structural characteristics, regulatory practices, and performance. Research in Higher Education, 49(2), 180–197. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-007-9066-3

Villems, T., & Van Dooren, W. (2012). Coming to terms with accountability: Combining multiple forums and functions. Public Management Review, 14(7), 1011–1036. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2012. 662446

Wroblewski, S. (2018). Student accountability: 5 fast ways to keep kids on track. K-12 Teachers Alliance. https://www.pinterest.com/pin/2960431375475750397/

Yang, K. (2014). Qualitative analysis. In M. Bovens, R. Goodin, & T. Schillemans (Eds.), The Oxford handbook of public accountability. Oxford University Press.
### Appendix A. Learner accountability questionnaire

| No. | Statements                                                                 |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | **Please tick the most appropriate box.**                                  |
| 1   | **Strongly Disagree**                                                       |
| 2   | **Disagree**                                                                |
| 3   | **I don't know**                                                            |
| 4   | **Agree**                                                                   |
| 5   | **Strongly Agree**                                                          |

1. I am satisfied with the quality of my English learning.
2. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn to speak English.
3. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn to write English.
4. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn to read English.
5. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn to listen to English.
6. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn English pronunciation/accent.
7. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn English vocabulary.
8. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to learn English grammar.
9. I provide what I need to learn English effectively.
10. I use entertaining exercises in learning English.
11. I try to understand what I am expected to learn in English.
12. I help my classmates to learn English better.
13. I try to get involved in social English activities.
14. I help myself learn English effectively.
15. I follow the rules in my English class. If not, I blame myself.

(Continued)
| No. | Statements |
|-----|------------|
| 16  | I try to access my school programs and services to get help with schoolwork to learn English. |
| 17  | When I need help in learning English, I ask my teacher to help me. |
| 18  | I try to learn the English knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for using English throughout my lifetime. |
| 19  | I try to learn the attitudes and behaviors to be successful in using English when I leave this school. |
| 20  | I try to make the right decisions about English learning. |
| 21  | I am satisfied with making the opportunity for myself to be involved in decisions about learning English at home and school. |
| 22  | I am satisfied that my input into decisions at my school is considered. |
| 23  | The quality of learning English that I experienced has improved with my effort. |
| 24  | I try to access the counseling services in English learning promptly on time at school when needed. |
| 25  | I support myself to meet my needs in learning English. |
| 26  | I am satisfied with my grades in English. |
| 27  | I support interactive English activities with my classmates. |
| No. | Statements |
|-----|------------|
| 28  | I produce information for my family about my improvement or failure in English learning. |
| 29  | I make two-way channels to communicate from school to home and from home to school to maximize my learning of English. |
| 30  | I provide information for my family on how to check my English homework at home. |
| 31  | I provide constant information for my parents on how to help me improve my skills to learn English better. |
| 32  | I am satisfied with my school principal and English teachers. |
| 33  | I am satisfied with my English books. |
| 34  | I am glad to be a successful English learner. |
| 35  | I use appropriate English testing books at home. |
| 36  | I have enough time management skill to study English effectively. |
| 37  | To practice English at home, I provide the right equipment. |
| 38  | I am accountable when I cannot meet my English learning expectations. |
| 39  | My English teachers are partially responsible for my English development. |
| 40  | My parents are partially responsible for my English development. |
| 41  | I am partially responsible for my English development. |
| No. | Statements |
|-----|------------|
| 42  | My school principal is partially responsible for my English development. |
| 43  | I get demotivated if I do not do my job properly in my English course. |
| 44  | If I pass my English course successfully, I get motivated to study more. |
| 45  | I continually monitor my improvement in English. |
| 46  | I have to provide myself with English resources at home to improve my English skills. |
Appendix B. Translated learner accountability questionnaire

| No. | Question in Persian | Question in English |
|-----|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1   | از کیفیت یادگیری زبان انگلیسی خوددتایی مردسه راضی هستم. | From your perspective, are you satisfied with your level of English learning? |
| 2   | کردی به زبان انگلیسی راداری مردسه مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | You have English language skills, but you are affected by a decrease in... |
| 3   | زبان انگلیسی راداری مردسه مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | Your English language skills are affected by a decrease... |
| 4   | از فرآیند مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | From the perspective of... |
| 5   | زبان انگلیسی راداری مردسه مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | Your English language skills are affected by a decrease... |
| 6   | از فرآیند مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | From the perspective of... |
| 7   | زبان انگلیسی راداری مردسه مهارت وقتی مبتلا به کاهش. | Your English language skills are affected by a decrease... |
| 8   | من سعی می کنم کاملاً به شرایط زبان انگلیسی نیاز است. | I try to be perfectly adapted to the English language needs. |
| 9   | از تمرین داده شده و سرکاری کامپیوتر زبان انگلیسی استفاده می کنم. | I use the computer for English language practice. |
| 10  | من باید تمام شده که در این مورد، زبان انگلیسی راداری کامپیوتر را یاد بگیرم. | I need to learn the computer to... |
| 11  | خوراک و آماده می کنم تا همکاری های در این زبان انگلیسی کامک. | I prepare to collaborate in this English language... |
| 12  | خوراک و آماده می کنم تا همکاری های در این زبان انگلیسی کامک. | I prepare to collaborate in this English language... |
| 13  | من دارم مهارت کامک زبان انگلیسی راداری کامک. | I have the English language skills... |
| 14  | دارم مهارت کامک زبان انگلیسی راداری کامک. | I have the English language skills... |
| 15  | در ویرایش صورت خودم را سریاً می کنم. | I proofread my own work carefully. |
Appendix C Interview questions about learner accountability

(1) What are your goals to learn English?

(2) How do you monitor your learning improvement in English?

(3) How do you measure your English improvement, your teachers’ quality, and your school efficacy?

(4) What do you need for evaluating your English improvement?

(5) Are you responsible for better English learning?

(6) What is satisfactory progress in your English learning?

(7) Regarding your English learning, what consequences (positive and negative) do you provide for yourself?

(8) What are useful to become motivated to obtain the goals of English learning?

(9) How do you report the results of your improvement in English to your parents?

(10) How do you get informed of the goals and limitations of your English learning?

(11) How do you provide yourself with the supports needed to improve learning English effectively?

(12) How do you support yourself to learn English meaningfully?

(13) How is your improvement in learning English evaluated by yourself?

(14) How do you use the results of this evaluation to improve your English learning?
