

In the Name of God

The beneficent, The merciful



English Language Department  
M.A. Thesis in English Language Teaching

## **Exploring Iranian EFL Learners' Conception of Good Practice: A Grounded Study**

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با سعد و عالی



مدیریت تحصیلات تکمیلی

### فرم شماره (۳) صور تجلیه نهایی دفاع از پایان نامه دوره کارشناسی ارشد

با نام و یاد خداوند متعال، ارزیابی جلسه دفاع از پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد خانم شهربانو گیلکی با شماره ۹۶۱۲۹۰۴ رشته زبان انگلیسی گراش امورش تحت عنوان Exploring Iranian EFL Learners' Conception of Good Practice که در تاریخ ۹۹/۱۱/۲۸ با حضور هیأت محترم داوران در دانشگاه صنعتی شاهrood برگزار گردید به شرح ذیل اعلام می گردد:

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, may her soul rest in peace. A special thanks goes to my supportive family, my husband and my lovely daughter. Thank you for your support, patience and allowing me to pursue this degree.

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## تعهد نامه

اینجانب شهربانو گیلکی دانشجوی دوره کارشناسی ارشد زبان انگلیسی گرایش آموزش دانشگاه صنعتی شاهroud نویسنده پایان نامه با موضوع بررسی نظر زبان آموزان درباره تدریس خوب زبان انگلیسی تحت راهنمایی آقای دکتر فرهاد معزی پور متعدد می شوند:

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- کلیه حقوق معنوی این اثر متعلق به دانشگاه صنعتی شاهroud می باشد و مقالات مستخرج با نام « دانشگاه صنعتی شاهroud » و یا « Shahrood University of Technology » به چاپ خواهد رسید.
- حقوق معنوی تمام افرادی که در به دست آمدن نتایج اصلی پایان نامه تأثیرگذار بوده اند در مقالات مستخرج از پایان نامه رعایت می گردد.
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تاریخ:

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### مالکیت نتایج و حق نشر

کلیه حقوق معنوی این اثر و محصولات آن (مقالات مستخرج ، کتاب ، برنامه های رایانه ای ، نرم افزار ها و تجهیزات ساخته شده است ) متعلق به دانشگاه صنعتی شاهroud می باشد . این مطلب باید به نحو مقتضی در تولیدات علمی مربوطه ذکر شود .

استفاده از اطلاعات و نتایج موجود در پایان نامه بدون ذکر مرجع مجاز نمی باشد.

## Abstract

Several studies have been conducted about the qualities of effective foreign language teachers and their practices, but there is no universally accepted definition of effective teaching. Other researchers conducted their research based on the questionnaire and participants were asked directly to select or rank characteristics that excellent teachers possessed. The aim of the present study was to explore EFL learners' conception of effective EFL teachers. The researcher used a Grounded Theory Method to conduct the research. To collect data, the researcher interviewed fifteen students, including nine female and six male, who experienced studying English at institutes. The concept of purposeful and snowball sampling is used to choose the participants. Open-ended interviews were utilized as the instruments to collect data. All the data were transcribed, coded, categorized into concepts, and analyzed in a narrow way. The rigorous coding schemes of the grounded theory method yielded a set of categories, "Characteristics of effective EFL teachers" as the core category, and five subcategories including "Teachers' Appearance, Personality, Professional Knowledge and Skills, Teaching Strategies, and Classroom Management" captured the learners' opinions on effective EFL teachers. Under these categories, the learner participants expressed their in-depth perspectives about the characteristics that they viewed as being indicative of an effective EFL teacher and they would relate stories or narratives about their most or least good EFL teachers.

**Key words:** Grounded Theory, Teacher Characteristics, Effective EFL Teachers, EFL Learners

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# **Chapter one:**

# **Introduction**

## 1. 1. Overview

This study is a qualitative research study identifying the characteristics of effective EFL teaching from the Iranian EFL learner perspectives. In order to better understand the phenomenon of good teaching, a general overview of researchers' perspectives and definitions of good teachers are presented.

Researchers have been investigating best teaching for decades. Various terms have been used such as 'excellent teaching' (Chen, 2007; Chen et al., 2012; Elton, 1998; Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004), 'highly accomplished' (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Serafini, 2002), 'effective' (Aregbeyen, 2010; Arikan, Taser, & Sarac-Suzer, 2008; Ganjabi, 2011; Gordon, 1974; Henry, Kershaw, Zulli, & Smith, 2012; Zhang, 2009, 2011; Zhang, Fu, & Jiao, 2008), 'better teaching' (Gore, Griffiths, & Ladwig, 2004), and 'good teaching' (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Sakurai, 2012; Vadillo & San, 1999). Although there is variation in terminology, all of the studies describe and investigate similar aspects regarding best teaching.

There have been scholarly debates about effective foreign language teaching and there exist several studies about the qualities of effective foreign language teachers and their practices (Arikan,, 2010; Arikan, Taşer & Sarac-Süzer, 2008; Bell, 2005; Çelik, Arikan, &, Caner, 2013; Çubukcu, 2010; Gordon, 1973; Park & Lee, 2006; Taqi, Al-Nouh, & Akbar, 2014). They have concluded that it is very difficult to explain effective teaching and effective teacher precisely because there are a lot of criteria that can affect the effectiveness of teaching; however, some basic points and skills have been identified from their results.

Doyle (1977) defines good teachers as those who can engage students for longer time so that students' time on tasks increases, which may result in increases in learner achievement. However, Eisner (1985) defines good teachers as those who view teaching as an art, believing teaching is based on artistry and affect, not scientific laws. Bell (2005) defines effective foreign language teaching as "clear and enthusiastic teaching that provides learners with the grammatical (syntactical and morphological), lexical, phonological, pragmatic, and sociocultural knowledge and interactive practice they need to communicate successfully in the target language" (p. 260).

According to Berliner (1987), good teachers are those who provide their learners with more academic learning time, which can predict student achievement. Brophy and Good (1986) describe good teachers as those who are successful in bringing about achievement increases or gains. Cruickshank and Haefele (2001) consider good teachers to be reflective teachers who demonstrate interest not only in learning the art and science aspects of teaching but in learning about themselves as teachers as well. For Glasser (1990), good teachers engage their learners in the objectives of the curriculum, which may change from student to student. Still to others, good teachers are caring teachers who take a special interest in the lives of their students and are sensitive to their particular needs, which may stem from their cultural and ethnic backgrounds, socio-economic status, and their physical or emotional states (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999). There is no one single accepted definition of effective foreign language teaching. Researchers agree that foreign language teaching is a complex, multi-dimensional process that means different things to different people (Bell, 2005).

## **1. 2. Statement of the Problem**

Although the literature is replete with studies searching the comparison of students' and teachers' perceptions of various aspects of language teaching and learning (Bell, 2005; Brosh, 1996; Brown, 2009; Horwitz, 1988; Levine, 2003; Schulz, 2000), relatively few studies have explored individual students' perceptions of effective teaching practice. According to Cruickshank & Haefele, (2001) teachers' attitudes and beliefs about L2 teaching received much attention in the literature during the 1950s and 1970s. Most studies on effective teachers conducted in the first half of the twentieth century did not involve students' views or definitions of good teachers.

Other researchers conducted their research based on the questionnaire. For instance, Brown (2009) identified and compared teachers' and students' ideals of effective teacher behaviors based on the 24-item Likert-scale questionnaire. Park and Lee (2006) investigated the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by teachers and students in high schools in Korea, with a self-report questionnaire. These studies used the language of administrative assessment goals, such as "Select and organize course experiences," which may have little meaning to students. Therefore, this qualitative grounded method study explores the qualities of good EFL teaching from Iranian EFL learners' viewpoints based on interviewing.

## **1. 3. Purpose of the Study**

My interest in this topic stems from my experiences as an EFL learner and an EFL teacher. It happened to me and maybe most of the EFL learners who never really liked their teachers and had very few likeable teachers and only one they considered to be a 'good' teacher. So the objective of this study is to explore Iranian EFL learners' conception of good EFL teachers and quality of good EFL teaching. There is one primary question that guides the research. The question attempts to determine what exactly a "good" language teaching is.

## **1. 4. Significance of the Study**

The knowledge gained from this study would be helpful in better understanding the views of learners concerning characteristics of good teaching at the institutes. Also this knowledge can be used by foreign language teachers to improve the efficacy of their instruction. Knowing these characteristics can help teachers improve their pedagogical practices by allowing them to enhance their good characteristics or those that are most valued by their students and find ways to overcome those characteristics that are less valued.

This information can be used to build a deeper literature on effective teaching, as perceived by persons interested in or practicing in the educational area. In addition, these research findings will extend the existing literature by obtaining more detailed information about the perceived characteristics of effective teaching.

To be responsive to students' needs and improve the effectiveness of student outcomes, teachers must first understand what students define as effective teaching. Both EFL teachers and students are expected to benefit from this research, the teachers by gaining insight into EFL students' needs and preferences, and students by achieving a belief that their opinions and actions will make a difference.

Investigating the characteristics of EFL teachers as perceived by students is beneficial to teachers and students as well as researchers. Teachers can understand what their students expect them and develop their pedagogical techniques through reflection on teaching, which will in turn enhance the complex process of teaching and learning.

The result of this study has applications for language institutes and practitioners, so the result gives them an insight on effective teaching from the learners' perspectives. Therefore they consider learners' perception of good teaching in their teaching. From the results, teachers and educational leaders may discover the benefits of implementing effective practices with students and help improve engagement and achievement.

## **1. 5. Limitations of the Study**

The grounded method in this study necessitates interviewing learners to elicit their ideas on an effective teacher. Interviewing was time-consuming and needed to be tape recorded. Although tape recording was essential and beneficial for the researcher, it caused some difficulties for interviewees. The interviewees might feel a pressure which was provoked by recording which caused them difficulties to speak. So knowing that they are being recorded may affect their speech. As a result, although we could deeply extract learners' perception through interviews, time-consuming feature of the interviews prohibited the researcher from interviewing a large number of learners. The samples of the study were taken from high school and university students of Shahrood who learned English at institutes. Generalization of results is not essential, as the researcher is concerned about these particular groups.

## **1. 6. Delimitation of the Study**

To delimitate time-consuming nature of the interview process, the researcher interviewed small number of EFL learners who experienced attending at language institutes and were willing to participate in the study. The researcher ensured participants that their voice is kept confidential and is not heard by anyone to reduce the stress and fear issues. Also before starting the interview, the researcher established an intimate relationship with the interviewees and during the interview she tried to relieve their stress and fear. Finally, to delimitate the broad scope of the research question, she asked more narrow questions by email, telephone, etc. elicited from analyzing first interviews.

# **Chapter two:**

# **Literature review**

## **2. 1. Overview**

In this chapter theoretical perspectives and empirical findings are presented. Through the theoretical perspectives section, different definitions and characteristics of good teaching and teachers are discussed. The empirical findings section includes the result of studies undertaken to discover the characteristics of effective teachers from teachers'/ students' perceptions, and comparison of the students and teacher's perception of good teaching.

## **2. 2. Theoretical Perspectives**

### **2. 2. 1. Defining good teaching and good teachers**

Giving a proper definition for “good teachers” is not an easy task as the term “good” has many different interpretations. Additionally, the question “good in terms of what?” Good with regard to academic skills, good in terms of personal abilities or teaching qualities? Defining the features of a good teacher is a very difficult task because the term “good” may have various interpretation for different people. Korthagen (2004) believes that the meaning is changeable related to the context.

Numerous studies have been conducted to identify these characteristics but there is no universally accepted definition of effective teaching (Johnson & Ryan, 2000; Paulsen, 2002; Trigwell, 2001). Effective teaching is a contested concept (Skelton, 2004) with varying definitions.

To interpret the beginning definition of “effective” and “teaching,” the problem is to unpack the label “effective teaching” in the context. In ordinary language, effective is defined by Webster as “producing a decided, decisive or desired result” and teaching is defined as “to make to know how; to direct, guide the studies of; to impart the knowledge of; to make aware by information, experience or the like.” then, effective teaching becomes producing-via making, directing, imparting knowledge, and making aware by information or experience-a decided, decisive, or desired result, a knowing how, a knowledge of, an awareness.

Scheffler (1971, p.121) has defined teaching with a critical extension or two:

... an activity aimed at the achievement of learning, and practiced in such manner as to respect the student's intellectual integrity and capacity for independent judgment. Such a characterization is important for at least two reasons: First, it brings out the intentional nature of teaching, the fact that teaching is a distinctively patterned sequence of behavioral steps executed by the teacher. Secondly, it differentiates the activity of teaching from such other activities as propaganda, conditioning, suggestion, and indoctrination, which are aimed at modifying the person but strive at all costs to avoid a genuine engagement of his judgement on underlying issues.

Murray (1991) stated that many researchers have been seeking to establish criteria for assessing effective teaching. While there is little agreement, researchers agree at least on some dimensions that describe effective teaching in general, regardless of the subject matter; including enthusiasm or expressiveness, clarity of explanation, and rapport or interaction. World Bank's

study defined teacher effectiveness “as the capacity of a given teacher to lead their students to sustained achievement gains”.

Kreber (2002) suggests excellent teachers as those who know how to motivate their students, how to convey concepts and how to help students overcome difficulties in their learning. Donald (1985) defined good teaching as effective teaching, teaching that meets certain criteria. Hodgson (1997) stated that traditional effective teaching carried out by teachers who are researchers in the field and are able to relate their teaching explicitly to their own research.

According to Czikszentmihalyi (1982) the best way to get students to believe that it makes sense to persevere the knowledge, is to believe in it oneself. Thus, an effective teacher is one who is intrinsically motivated to learn, because it is he or she who will have the best chance to educate others. The real task of a teacher is to enable the learner to enjoy learning. Education works when the student becomes intrinsically motivated to acquire the information.

Teachers with good classroom management skills are extensively prepared, they keep their students actively engaged in lessons and seatwork, minimize discipline problems and non-instructional transitions, they are able to do group alerting, and hold students accountable for their work (Brophy, 1973; Brophy & Good, 1986; Bruning, 1984).

Effective teachers teach well-structured lessons that include reviews of past work or homework, clear statements of goals, clear presentation of new material in small steps, modeling skills or processes, guided and independent practice, monitoring for student understanding, comprehensive closures, and reteaching when necessary (Anderson et al., 1979; Brophy & Good, 1986; Rosenshine, 1978; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986).

Researchers reported that transformational teaching resulted in teaching effectiveness as it led to student motivation, satisfaction, and improvement in academic performance (Boyd, 2009; Pounder, 2004). Birjandi and Bagherkazemi (2010) also reported a positive relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking ability and their professional success. Skinner (2016) believes that understanding and using effective teacher talk is crucial for successful ELT. English language teachers are expected to use their talk effectively.

## **2. 2. 2. Characteristics of effective teaching and effective teachers**

Although researchers use different terms for similar teacher characteristics and have different conceptual views for the way the characteristics are organized, there are similarities and consistent themes (Stronge 2007). A large number of studies have tried to classify and categorize these characteristics into certain groups and dimensions.

Researchers (Good and Brophy, 1997; Porter and Brophy 1988), stated that effective teachers are interested in having students learn and understand the meanings rather than merely memorizing facts or events, place priority on reading because it affects success in other content areas and overall achievement gains, and students have higher achievement rates when the focus

of instruction is on meaningful conceptualization, especially when it builds on and emphasizes their own knowledge of the world.

Walker (2008) suggested 12 identifiable personal and professional characteristics of an effective teacher and these characteristics included being prepared, being positive, having high expectations, being creative, being fair, displaying a personal touch, developing a sense of belonging, admitting the mistakes, having a sense of humor, giving respect to students, forgiving, and being compassionate.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) categorized the characteristics of effective teaching into five areas: (1) commitment to students, (2) extensive knowledge about the subjects and how to teach these subjects, (3) responsibility for managing and monitoring student learning, (4) reflection on their practice and learning from their experience, and (5) membership in learning communities (Serafini, 2002).

Normand & Kohen (2011) reviewed Paul Chance's book *The Teacher's Craft: The Ten Essential Skills of Effective Teaching* (2008). Chance recommends that teachers make clear what exactly is expected of students and classroom rules should be stated in terms of what to do, rather than what not to do. He also emphasizes the importance of positive comments over negative ones and suggests that teachers count their comments during the class period to get an idea of how infrequently they make use of positive comments, particularly in proportion to negative comments. He believes the current notion that "to drill is to kill" and suggests that instead deliberate, repetitive practice improves performance, retention, and transfer; and that feedback from teachers that is short, specific, and public allows students to improve on their current level of performance. He addresses another belief that motivation is "intrinsic" and students either "have it or don't" citing research that motivation is an outcome or consequence of other variables, many of which are under the control of the teacher. He cites research showing that the largest differences between poor students and good students have less to do with genetics or intrinsic abilities and more to do with practice and the acquisition of specific skills. He also emphasizes Skinner's suggestions that natural reinforcers be encouraged. He provides some suggestions for how to teach students to learn and some strategies. He addresses three seemingly unrelated concepts: "active learning", the use of what Chance calls a "phantom parent" to guide teachers' behaviors, and general classroom management for students' answering questions. At last he addresses students' misbehavior, some behavioral e.g., praise opposite behavior in another child, implement time-out correctly and some more admonishments of what not to do (e.g., physical punishment) rather than what to do.

Billson & Tiberius (1991) stated a new ideal for the social context of teaching and learning as an alliance between teachers and students. They identified five key characteristics underlying the alliance: mutual respect; shared responsibility for learning and mutual commitment to goals; effective communication and feedback cooperation and willingness to negotiate conflicts; and a sense of security in the classroom. They have argued that the alliance is central to the social context and have stressed the nature of the teacher-student relationship.

Schulz (2000) stated that the adequate linguistic proficiency required for effective foreign language teaching should be determined imminently. Zhang (2003) conceptualized characteristics

that an effective teacher should possess into six principles: 1) academic qualification and publication, 2) preparedness and subject knowledge, 3) personality trait and personal style, 4) connectedness with students, 5) motivation and enthusiasm, and 6) classroom operation.

Clark and Walsh (2002) characterize the components that make up an effective teacher. These components include content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and knowledge of educational contexts.

Paladino (2018) reviewed a seven step process to teaching effectiveness, the list is as follows: (1) determine your teaching style, (2) be prepared, (3) build a rapport with your students, (4) use technology to boost learning, (5) make classes interesting and memorable, (6) select appropriate supplementary material to enhance student learning, (7) document your teaching effectiveness, reflect on it and engage in continual improvement. He also offered some tips on building the foundations for effective teaching practice in small classes such as: being organized, understanding your content and your students, generating engagement and norms for participation, as well as investing in adaptable skill development.

Researchers have used different dimensions to categorize and classify teaching practices. These dimensions range from more student-centered to more teacher-centered perspectives. Borich (1986) gives a summary of effective teaching practices in classrooms as generating a warm, supporting affect; getting a response before moving to the next bit of material; presenting materials in small bits with a chance of practicing; emphasizing application of knowledge; using pupils' experiences; using individually differentiated materials; and encouraging learners to have responsibilities for their own learning.

Based on a review of the research by Scheeler (2008), four factors emerged as important teaching skills in classrooms: using immediate feedback to promote acquisition of skills, programming for generalization, training to mastery to promote maintenance of behavior, and providing performance feedback in classroom settings. Hativa, Barak and Simhi (2001) propose four dimensions of effective teaching: interest; clarity; organization; and a positive classroom climate. Young and Shaw (1999) propose six major qualities of teaching effectiveness: value of the subject; motivating students; creating a comfortable learning atmosphere; organization of the subject; effective communication; and concern for student learning.

Kember and McNaught (2007) proposed ten dimensions of effective teaching: (1) Teaching and curriculum design need to be focused on meeting students' future needs, implying the development in students of generic capabilities such as critical thinking, teamwork and communication skills, amongst others. (2) Students must have a thorough understanding of fundamental concepts even if that means less content is covered. (3) The relevance of what is taught must be established by using real-life, current and/or local examples and by relating theory to practice. (4) Student beliefs must be challenged to deal with misconceptions. (5) A variety of learning tasks that engage students, including student discussion, needs to occur in order that meaningful learning takes place. (6) Genuine, empathetic relationships with individual students should be established so that interaction can take place. (7) Teachers should motivate students

through displaying their own enthusiasm, encouraging students and providing interesting, enjoyable and active classes. (8) Curriculum design should ensure that aims, concepts, learning activities and assessment are consistent with achieving learning outcomes related to future student needs. (9) Each lesson must be thoroughly planned but flexible so that necessary adaptations may be made based on feedback during the class. (10) Assessment must be consistent with the desired learning outcomes and should, therefore, be authentic tasks for the discipline or profession.

Numerous studies have shown that teacher effectiveness is a crucial factor that affects the students' achievement (Ketsman, 2012). Teachers with high levels of efficacy are shown to be better at planning their classes, are more willing to engage in teaching innovations to address students' need and work more with students to assist their learning. This helps improve student learning outcomes, assist students in learning better and becoming more engaged (Allinder, 1994). Several studies have existed about the qualities of effective foreign language teachers and their practices. What makes an educational practice effective is a billions question that is influenced by many factors one of which is the teacher who is at the center of education. Researches have proven that the teacher has an important role in the foreign language learning process and the students, their parents/supervisors, the stakeholders, and the society have some expectations from the teachers during the teaching and learning process.

Davis and Thomas (1989) categorized effective and less-effective teachers' qualities including (1) academic engagement, (2) teacher expectations, (3) classroom management, (4) organizing learning, (5) orienting students and presenting objectives, (6) increasing clarity, (7) monitoring student progress, and (8) ensuring high success rates.

Stronge's review of research relating to effective teaching framework, in *Qualities of Effective Teachers* (2007), includes 27 research-based qualities for effective teachers grouped in six domains: (1) prerequisites for effective teaching, (2) teacher as a person: caring, (3) classroom management and organization, (4) planning for instruction, (5) implementing instruction: utilizing a repertoire of instructional strategies, and (6) monitoring student progress: giving feedback.

Miller (1987, as cited in Vadillo & San, 1999) defines the characteristics of effective teacher by distinguishing four areas: (1) affective characteristics: enthusiasm, encouragement, humor, interest in the student, availability, mental health; (2) skills: creativity, challenge; (3) classroom management: pace, fairness; (4) academic knowledge: grammar.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) reported the characteristics of effective teachers in two categories: management and instructional techniques and personal characteristics (Demmon-Berger, 1986). These characteristics were met among the teachers who had a tendency to be good managers, use systematic instruction techniques, have high expectations of students and themselves, believe in their own efficacy, vary teaching strategies, and handle discipline through prevention. They also are caring, demographic in their approach, task-oriented, concerned with perceptual meanings rather than with facts and events, comfortable interacting with others, accessible to students outside of class, flexible and imaginative, tailor teaching to student needs and have a strong grasp of subject matter.

Fuller's (1969) assume that teachers are initially concerned about their ability to establish respect, trust, and relationships with students. Therefore, Fuller proposes that teachers' development starts with learning how to establish relationships and a constructive learning climate in the classroom. This claim has been confirmed by (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005) research findings.

Huberman (1993) reports that approximately one-third of teachers consider themselves "too close" with students at the beginning of their careers, and another one-third estimates themselves as "too distant." He suggests that beginning teachers should start developing skill in establishing constructive teacher-student relationships. Furthermore, some teacher observation protocols assign respect and relationships a central position in the development of effective teaching. For instance, based on Bowlby's attachment theory the classroom assessment scoring system states that only in classrooms where students feel safe they will start to learn (Pianta & Hamre, 2009).

Some researchers claim that the most important quality a teacher should possess is Teacher Efficacy. Teacher efficacy is a teacher's ability to impact change in the educational setting. Teacher efficacy, teachers' confidence in their ability to promote students' learning, was defined many years ago in a study by the RAND Corporation (Armor et al., 1976). Armor et al., 1976; Rotter, 1966; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998 providing an early theoretical construct presume that teachers who are confident in their teaching capabilities would be likely to identify teachers as one of the most significant agents in improving student outcomes, rating them higher than other factors such as social environment, school resources, or the student's family background.

Bandura's social cognitive theory focused on the relationships among teacher's efficacy beliefs, competency, performance, and the learning environment (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). He suggests that efficacy may be most workable early in learning, thus the first years of teaching could be critical to the long-term development of teacher efficacy. He defined self-efficacy as "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Bandura (1977, 1997) proposed four sources of efficacy expectations: mastery experiences, physiological and emotional states, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion. Mastery experiences are the most powerful source of efficacy information which is connected with teachers' experiences of students' success or failure.

Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) argue that teacher self-efficacy is "the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context" (p. 22). The result of Runhaar, Sanders, and Yang (2010) study showed that participants with a stronger sense of occupational self-efficacy were also more reflective practitioners since they sought more feedback from their colleagues, students, and managers. Higher-efficacy beliefs on the part of teachers work to reinforce their positive teaching behaviors, leading to better student performance. At the same time, improved outcomes become a piece of evidence supporting a teacher's assurance of his or her effectiveness.

A number of studies have suggested a connection between teacher efficacy and practice. For example, teachers with a high sense of efficacy devote more class time to academic activities and less time to disciplines. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy work willingly with students who have difficulties, invest considerable effort into finding appropriate teaching materials and activities, perform better, and probably remain committed to their work (Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011). In EFL contexts, Ghanizadeh & Moafian, (2011) stated that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are influential factors in teaching effectiveness.

On the other hand, Cardelle-Elawar, Irwin and Lizarraga (2007) declare successful teachers are self-regulated individuals who understand themselves as teachers and sustain their motivation encountering different tasks, diverse students and changing circumstances. In addition, self-regulation can help teachers gain a better understanding of their students' needs and learning experiences, have a deeper sense of the teaching and learning strategies, and emulate for the students (Paris & Winograd, 2001).

Ghanizadeh (2011) showed that there is a significant relationship between EFL teachers' self-regulation and their teaching effectiveness. Subsequent data analyses showed that among the components of self-regulation, intrinsic interest, mastery-goal orientation, and emotional control have the highest correlations with teaching effectiveness.

Another term is teacher reflectivity. Reflection allows teachers to be self-directed, i.e. to take responsibility for their own growth (Lindop, 1985; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). The practice of reflection results in the prospective teachers' progress through cognitive-development stages, the growth from a novice to expert teacher, that enables them to view teaching from a more interpretative and critical perspective (Frieberg & Waxman, 1990). Some researchers agree that many teacher educators seem to be persuaded that reflection is a worthy aim in teacher education. There is a general agreement that reflectivity leads to professional growth (Van Manen, 1991).

Borg, (2011) states teachers who are engaged in reflection critically examine their teaching beliefs and practice on an ongoing basis with the ultimate goal of enhancing their teaching quality. It is presumed that reflective teachers avoid routine teaching practices by gaining new insights about their performance (Braun & Crumpler, 2004; Farrell, 2016). Farrell (2015) also maintained that reflection is an important part of effective teaching and effective teachers systematically examine their beliefs and practices. The reflective practice is a factor to improve English teachers' effectiveness in the classroom because they can look back on what they have done in the class.

Researchers suggest that improving our effectiveness as teachers of adults begins with reflecting on our own beliefs about learners, the learning process, the teaching-learning relationship, and the social context in which the teaching-learning transaction occurs; nevertheless they provide practical guidance for adjusting our teaching practices with our beliefs and for assisting learners to engage in similar reflection and critical thinking (Ross-Gordon, 2002).

## **2. 3. Empirical Findings**

In order to find out what makes a good teacher, questionnaires (Park & Lee, 2006; Brown, 2009; Onem, 2009), interviews and observations (Andrews & McNeill, 2005), workshops - seminars (Hadley & Hadley, 1996; Borg, 2006), principals' views (Harris & Sass, 2010), students' views (Arikan, 2008; Çelik, 2013; Salahshour & Hajizadeh, 2013; Arnon & Reicher, 2007; Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2007; Boz, 2008; Koc, 2012; Kourieos & Evripidou 2013), teachers' views (Bell, 2005; Arikan, 2010; Phan & Locke, 2015; Yuan & Hu, 2017; Sokel, 2019; Hien, 2020), and both students' and teachers' views (Cordia, 2003; Borg, 2006; Park & Lee, 2006; Brown, 2009; Babai & Sadeghi, 2009; Liando, 2010; Kalay, 2017; Alimorad & Tajgozari, 2016 ; Metruk, 2020) have been taken into consideration. These studies have presented some commonly shared aspects of being a good teacher such as (1) individual qualities: being warm, patient, understanding, imaginative, organized, smiling, talkative; (2) academic qualities: having good academic knowledge on the subject, (3) socio - affective skills: being enthusiastic for teaching, allocating time to students, motivating students to do their best, having friendly relationship with students, giving praise and encouragement, supporting weak students, leading equal participation among students; and (4) teaching qualities, including presenting the material interestingly, using different teaching styles, providing various classroom activities with students, and preparing the lessons well.

### **2. 3. 1. Teachers' perceptions literature**

Arikan (2010) investigated the ideal characteristics of an effective English language teacher from the perspectives of prospective and in-service teachers of English through a mixed method study. The participants of the study were 4 pre-service teachers, 3 in-service teachers and 50 additional pre-service teachers who filled in a survey. The findings of the study indicated that the prospective teachers did not regard their mentors (in-service teachers) effective; on the other hand, in-service teachers contend that their ineffectiveness stem from not having proper in-service training programs and an updated curriculum.

Yuan and Hu (2017) explored the essential qualities of effective EFL teacher educators as perceived by pre- and in-service language teachers in China. The participants depicted effective teacher educators as 'fountains of knowledge' having 'eyes on the stars and feet on the ground', and 'providing a personal touch'.

Sokel (2019) conducted a qualitative study to determine the extent to which, how, and why a professional development course was considered effective in its contribution to the development and practice of the 28 in-service EFL teachers in Israel who participated in the course. The overall key themes that arose in the findings were largely consistent with previous relevant researches. Three main attributes of the course that participants perceived as contributing to its success emerged from the data were: 1. Coherence: the need for a clear connection between theory and practice, 2. opportunities to work together with other teachers: to share and gain new ideas for their practice with colleagues, and 3. active participation: to engage regularly in active participation.

Hien (2019) explored a mixed-method research to identify characteristics of a good EFL teacher, as perceived by pre-service teachers. The results indicated that remarkable pedagogical skills and excellent content knowledge are highly expected for EFL teachers. Behaviors and attitudes towards students, Personal characteristics and attitudes, and finally, Broader educational goals and skills ranked in order of importance by pre-service teachers.

Phan and Locke (2015) conducted a qualitative study investigating Vietnamese EFL teachers' perceptions of sources of self-efficacy information. Findings suggested that four sources of efficacy information appeared to influence teachers' sense of self-efficacy including: social persuasion, cognitive mastery, cultural factors, and cognitive processing. Contrary to beliefs that mastery experiences were known as influential source, the most influential source of efficacy information was social persuasion.

A study in China done by Chen (2007) explored the conceptions of effective teaching held by 20 middle school teachers in the north of the country. Applying a phenomenographic approach with grounded theory, the researcher used an anonymous qualitative questionnaire which asked teachers to recount a personal anecdote or narrative of a time when they delivered effective teaching. He found four main themes: (1) caring for students, (2) guiding students' all-round development, (3) connecting school knowledge to other areas, and (4) planning structured lessons.

Chen (2010) examined teaching practice from the point of view of Chinese middle school teachers. He identified a four-factor teaching practice model including being strictly teacher-oriented, using the novelty and the variety of methods, keeping extramural connections, and encouraging student involvement.

Some studies (Berry 2007; Chauvet 2009) have demonstrated that effective teacher educators need to construct a comprehensive knowledge base, and strategically and reflectively apply such knowledge in their work.

Witcher et al. (2001) examined pre-service teachers' perceptions about the characteristics of effective teachers by asking the participants to identify, rank, and define three to six characteristics that excellent teachers possessed. They found a total of 125 characteristics which were classified into the following six categories in order of endorsement rate: student-centeredness (79.5%), enthusiasm for teaching (40.2%), ethicalness (38.8%), classroom and behavior management (33.3%), teaching methodology (32.4%), and knowledge of subject.

Carnell (2007) examined university teachers' conceptions of effective teaching. It reports a small study of eight teachers. Their narratives identify rich insights. Conceptions of 'learning through dialogue', 'community of learners' and 'meta-learning' emerged as crucial in supporting students' learning. These conceptions extend the understanding of effective teaching in higher education and illuminate how teachers transform their teaching to learning.

## **2. 3. 2. Literature on learners' perception**

In order to identify the characteristics of effective foreign language teachers, Arıkan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer (2008) explored conceptualization of an effective English language teacher of Turkish learners of EFL. Their study concluded that an effective teacher is a friendly, young, enthusiastic, creative, and humorous person whose gender is not important. The students expect the teacher to be fluent in English, to play educational games, and to teach grammar effectively by using real life situations to explain language items.

Çelik, Arıkan, and Caner (2013) asked about the qualities of a successful English language teacher through a survey to 998 undergraduate students who took English courses at a state university in Turkey. Their results revealed that the students gave the highest scores to the attributes of being fair and just as well as showing enthusiasm. These qualities were followed by personal traits such as friendliness, being loving, creativity, and being experienced. In addition, being humorous and being Turkish, but good at English were reported as being important characteristics of an effective foreign language teacher. The least significant items included being young, having lived in a foreign country, being a native speaker of English, and being a male or a female.

Kourieos and Evripidou (2013) also investigated on the characteristics that are assigned to effective EFL teachers as perceived by Cypriot university students. On the basis of the participants' responses, an effective EFL teacher no longer has a directive and authoritarian personality, but apart from other characteristics, an effective teacher is an individual who takes into account their students' individual differences, anxiety, interests, and abilities.

Salahshour and Hajizadeh, (2013) sought to identify the characteristics of effective EFL instructors through a 58-item questionnaire in Iran. They listed some of the most important features of an effective and successful EFL teacher as follows: having interest in his/her job, having a sense of responsibility towards his/her job, being enthusiastic and lively, being self-confident, being punctual, encouraging students to use the target language at all times, providing explicit grammar correction, providing detailed explanation during reading and listening tasks, emphasizing frequent oral quizzes, emphasizing all skills, especially speaking, having knowledge of subject matter, having the ability to communicate ideas effectively, having the ability to answer the students' questions, having respect for students, being kind and friendly, creating motivation in students, helping to increase the students' self-confidence during learning, taking students' feedback about the class into consideration.

Barnes & Lock (2013) conducted a qualitative study in a Korean university setting, on student beliefs about the attributes of effective EFL lecturers. They asked participants to write, in their own language, about the attributes of effective EFL lecturers. Rapport attributes including: sociability, empathy, personality, and receptiveness were the major focus of discussion and viewed as particularly important in Korean university contexts where student anxiety about interacting in English often inhibits effective English language learning.

Vulcano (2007) surveyed 2 samples of Canadian undergraduates concerning their views of a "perfect instructor." Students identified as many descriptors as they wished; he categorized them

into 26 sets of qualities and behaviors. The top 10 categories included: knowledgeable; interesting and creative lectures; approachable; enthusiastic about teaching; fair and realistic expectations; humorous, happy, and positive; effective communicator; flexible and open-minded; encourages student participation; and encourages and cares for students.

Taskafa (1989, as cited in Telli, den Brok, and Çakroglu, 2008) interviewed 43 middle school students and asked them to write down their teacher's desirable and non-desirable characteristics. Giving positive reinforcement, interacting friendly with students, and understanding students' feelings were the most frequently mentioned desirable characteristics. The non-desirable characteristics of a teacher in this study were: isolating some of the students, giving specific students preferential treatment, denying students chances to perform or to talk in class, sneering at students, and demanding students to learn.

Çetin (2001) conducted a study with 100 higher education students to find out the ideal teacher behaviors which were defined as understanding, friendly, cooperative, being aware of students' individual differences and general student psychology, besides having good subject matter knowledge and using different teaching methods in the class.

Witcher, Onwuegbuzie, Collins, Filer, Wiedmaier, and Moor, (2003) conducted a qualitative study and found the students' perceptions of the characteristics of effective college teachers in the following order: Student-centered, knowledgeable, professional, enthusiastic about teaching, effective communicator, accessible, fair and respectful, and provider of adequate feedback.

Wichadee and Orawiwatnakul, (2012) collected data with a questionnaire from 192 students at Bangkok University. The results of their study showed that both low and high proficiency students rated "effective language teacher skills" in order of importance as follows: organization and communication skills, socio-affective skills, and organization and communication skills.

Senko, Belmonte, and Yakhkind, (2012) used a budget methodology that is specifically designed to distinguish necessities from luxuries. The spending patterns of the students in that sample revealed that they prioritized teachers who are energetic, passionate, humorous, and engaging (i.e., Enthusiasm and Entertainment), similar to prior work on evaluations of actual instructors.

Kratz (1896, as cited in McEwan, 2002) asked a group of students to identify the characteristics that distinguished the teachers from whom they learned the most from those whom they liked the most. Four characteristics of teachers who were successful were found out to be making greater demands of the students, more teaching skill, more knowledge of subject matter, and better discipline.

### **2. 3. 3. Comparison of the learners' and teachers' perception of effective teaching**

Foreign language teachers and students may have very similar or different notions of effective teaching. Babai and Sadeghi (2009) investigated the qualities of an effective English language teacher as perceived by Iranian English language teachers and learners. The results indicated significant differences between teachers' and learners' views on some characteristics of effective teachers. Teachers seemed to agree more strongly than students on that an effective English language teacher should assign homework and integrate group activities into the classroom. Other areas of significant difference in opinions included preparing the lesson well, using lesson plans and assessing what students have learned reasonably. Students, on the other hand, agreed more than teachers on that teaching English in Persian (learners' native language) were one of the prominent characteristics of an effective English language teacher. The qualitative analysis indicated that teachers perceived the features like mastery of the target language, good knowledge of pedagogy and the use of particular techniques and methods as well as a good personality to make an effective teacher, while, learners gave more weight to characteristics relating to a teacher's personality and the way he behaves toward his students.

Brown (2009) found that the students favored a grammar-based approach, whereas their teachers preferred a more communicative classroom, as evidenced by significant differences in such areas as target language use, error correction, and group work. Items in his research questionnaire showed that 73% of the teachers disagreed with their students over the statement that "Effective foreign language teachers should mostly use activities that practice specific grammar points rather than activities whose goal is to merely exchange information."

Layne (2012) asked a sample group of professors and students to define the term "effective teaching," and their responses were compiled into a research-only survey that gave 30 options for defining the term. Then they were asked to select the top four of those definition options. The study revealed that although there is some similarity in student and faculty definitions, there are greater differences between the two groups. Faculty members focused on the process and actions that lead to effective teaching and students focused on the products or results.

Brosh (1996) identified the characteristics of EFLT as perceived by high school teachers and students in Israel with interviews and a questionnaire consisting of 20 items of teacher characteristics. Both groups attributed the highest importance to items regarding commanding the target language and teaching comprehensibly, whereas neither the teachers nor the students endorsed items regarding positive attitudes toward native speakers and teaching in the target language. In addition, the teachers gave more weight than students to items related to developing motivation and research orientation, whereas the students gave more weight than teachers to items related to treating students fairly and making lessons interesting.

Alimorad and Tajgozari (2016) compared the views of high school students and instructors on effective teachers in different cities in Iran. They found that the perceptions of students differed dramatically from those of their teacher counterparts. The instructors preferred a more traditional approach, while the students tended to favor the communicative approach. Furthermore, different

perceptions between males and females were also detected. Metruk (2020) indicated that the pre-service teacher participants favored traditional teaching more than their in-service teacher counterparts, who preferred CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) to a greater extent.

Feldman (1988) analyzed effective college teaching from the students' and faculty's point of view and compared the results of the analysis with earlier studies. Students and faculty were generally similar, though not identical, in their views, as indicated by an average correlation of +.71 between them in their valuation of various aspects of teaching. In those studies the differences that did exist between the two groups showed a pattern of students placing more importance than faculty on teachers being interesting, having good elocutionary skills, and being available and helpful. Students also emphasized the outcomes of instruction more than faculty did. Faculty placed more importance than did students on teachers being intellectually challenging, motivating students and setting high standards for them, and encouraging self-initiated learning.

Altan (1997) surveyed 300 high school English as a second language teachers in Turkey and states that the majority of the teachers agreed that good language teachers motivate their student to learn and are creative. As well, nearly a quarter of the participating teachers considered being well organized an important characteristic of good language teachers, while fewer teachers insisted that being proficient in the target language is essential for any good language teacher.

Buskist et al. (2002) enrolled undergraduate and faculty participants at a doctoral and research-university- extensive institution to select the top 10 qualities and behaviors most important to master teaching at the college and university level from among the 28 qualities and behaviors. Of the top 10, students and faculty agreed on 6: (1) realistic expectations and fair, (2) knowledgeable, (3) approachable and personable, (4) respectful, (5) creative and interesting, and (6) enthusiastic. In the remaining 4, students emphasized aspects of the student-teacher relationship (understanding, happy/ positive/humorous, encouraging, and flexible) and faculty emphasized specific teaching techniques (effective communication, prepared, current, and promotion of critical thinking).

Schaeffer, Epting, Zinn, and Buskist (2003) surveyed comprehensive community college faculty and students concerning their perspectives on effective teaching. Both students and faculty ranked the following among the top 10 qualities or behaviors of effective teachers: (1) approachable, (2) creative and interesting, (3) encouraging and caring, (4) enthusiastic, (5) flexible and open-minded, (6) knowledgeable, (7) realistic expectations and fair, and (8) respectful.

Park and Lee (2006) investigated the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by high school teachers and students in Korea through a self-report questionnaire consisting of three categories of effective teaching: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. Overall, the teachers perceived significantly different characteristics than the students in all three characteristics with the teachers ranking English proficiency the highest and the students ranking pedagogical knowledge the highest. The male students demonstrated significantly different characteristics from the female students in socio-affective skills, whereas the high achieving students held significantly different characteristics from the low achieving students in pedagogical knowledge and socio-affective skills. There were universal

teacher characteristics which were considered important by all the groups, such as reading and speaking proficiency, arousing students' interest in learning English, and building students' self-confidence and motivation.

Liando (2010) found that "giving lots of homework" and "being strict" were not categorized by the students among the characteristics the best teachers have by the students. Similarly, but strangely, the quality of "giving lots of homework" did not receive many ratings by the teachers, as well; which indicated that teachers do not like giving homework because they require continuous checking and correction (p. 130). He concluded that for teaching effectiveness in second language classrooms, the students preferred their teachers to have personal attributes such as being caring, friendly, patient, and fair. Students stated that professors who made the course more interesting and challenged students academically were considered as effective teachers.

Kalay, (2017) investigate the Turkish university EFL students' and instructors' opinions of what makes a good EFL teacher and examine how these perceptions are related to each other. He used a questionnaire developed by Onem (2009) to collect quantitative data, and semi-structured interviews with students and instructors. The result showed large degree of similarities between the students and the instructors as to perceived characteristics of a good language teacher although there are some small differences between them in terms of some individual items. The results have presented insight into students' and teachers' views about the personal traits, socio-affective qualities, academic qualities, and teaching qualities of an effective language teacher.

Lang, McKee, and Conner. (1993) developed a list of 32 characteristics of effective teachers through interviews with college teachers, and asked 167 participants to identify and rank three characteristics considered important for teaching. They found that the teachers rated 16 characteristics different from the students and that the overall difference was significant. The mean ratings for three characteristics including being knowledgeable of world events, and knowing students and teaching them in ways which they learn best were higher for student respondents, while the remaining 13 characteristics including knowing the subject well and encouraging students to learn independently received higher mean ratings from teacher respondents.

## **2. 4. Summary of Empirical findings**

Reviewing the literature shows that defining and characterizing an effective teacher is highly considered by researchers. Plenty of researchers tried to find characteristics of effective teachers from teachers' and students' perspectives. Almost all of the researchers in this field have used questionnaires or open-ended questions to discover characteristics of effective teachers. Some researchers have required teachers and students to rank or mention some characteristics.

As a result effective teachers have been characterized as: being kind, fair, humorous, friendly, patient, caring, motivating, enthusiastic, warm, understanding, imaginative, organized, young, knowledgeable, reflective, having good academic knowledge on the subject, allocating time for students, giving praise and encouragement, supporting weak students; teaching qualities

including presenting the material interestingly, using different teaching styles, providing various classroom activities with students, preparing the lessons well, having lesson plan, having native like accent, proficient in target language, and good at teaching grammar, being good at classroom management, use technology to boost learning, having self-efficacy and self-regulation.

Although the scope of characterizing effective teachers is highly researched and detailed, the how to be an effective teacher and why these characteristics are important have not been clarified. To clarify these facts the researcher is going to gather learners' perception about characteristics of effective teachers. This will be achieved by interviewing that help the researcher to deeply elicit how and why of each characteristic.

# **Chapter three:**

# **Research Methodology**

### **3. 1. Overview**

The methodological foundation upon which this research study was built is qualitative research methodology. Many of the previous research studies conducted on the topic of teacher and student perceptions have been quantitative research studies. The methodological procedures that are employed in this study are methods typically associated with qualitative and grounded theory research and the method of data collection is a series of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with participants.

I chose to implement a qualitative research methodology for its emphasis on thick, detailed descriptions and what seems to be lacking in many studies of students' perceptions are the voices of those with whom the studies are concerned (i.e. the students themselves). Qualitative research allows the voices and thoughts of participants to be heard, and makes room for the researcher's voice as well. Thereby gives the researcher *authority with* rather than *authority over* the people involved in the research. (Bailey & Nunan, 1996)

### **3. 2. Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory method (GTM) is a research method concerned with the generation of theory which is grounded in data that has been systematically collected and analyzed. The intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description and to generate or discover a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory is a qualitative research design in which the researcher generates a general explanation or a theory of a process, action, or interaction shaped by the views of participants who have experienced the process.

The two popular approaches to grounded theory are the systematic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) and the constructivist approach of Charmaz (2006). In the more systematic, analytic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), the investigator seeks to systematically develop a theory that explains process, action, or interaction on a topic.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe qualitative research as any type of research whose results are not a product of any statistical process or some form of quantification. Qualitative research focuses on how the research findings were arrived at. It has to be based on interpretation of the results and not on the quantification. Qualitative research is usually done when the task of the researcher is to uncover and understand a phenomenon in its natural setting (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) published *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. They characterize this research approach as one oriented towards the inductive generation of theory from data that has been systematically obtained and analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory, "the discovery of theory from data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1), provides the opportunity for the researcher to theorize from evidence existing in the data. The major advantage of grounded theory is its inductive, contextual, and process based nature (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) believed in generating a theory from the data. By generating a theory from the data, they mean, not only concepts and hypotheses coming from the data, but during the research process the workability of them is ensured. Furthermore, they believe a theory grounded in the data is more successful than theories which are logically deduced from a set of assumptions which scholars possess.

Charmaz (2006) believes that GT is not a set of prescribed methodological rules. Instead, it has principles of its own and can be practiced flexibly. Rather than a method that stands against other qualitative methods, GT is complementary to other approaches to qualitative method. Charmaz (2008) points out that GT involves why, how, and what questions. She argues social constructionist allows researchers to ask why questions by preserving the complexity of social life. She adds, GT is not only a discovering method about participants' life but also a method constructed by researchers through inquiry. Grounded theorists implement strategies for collecting and analyzing data through interaction with research setting, participants, their data, colleagues, and themselves (Charmaz, 2008).

The basic tenet of Grounded Theory Method (GTM) is to allow free discovery of theory and to limit any preconceptions. Grounded theory begins with a research situation within which, the task of the researcher is to understand what is happening there and how the players manage their tasks and roles. What differentiates grounded theory from other research is that it is emergent, and explicitly. It does not test a hypothesis. It sets out to find what theory accounts for the research situation as it is.

GTM provides useful tools to learn about individuals' perceptions and feelings regarding a particular subject area. Quantitative data may be useful in measuring attitudes across a large sample; however, GTM offers a powerful methodological framework if the aim of the study is to learn about individuals' perceptions. GTM shares the following characteristics with other qualitative methods, which correspond to those of this study: Focus on everyday life experiences, valuing participants' perspectives, enquiry as interactive process between researcher and respondents, primarily descriptive and relying on people's words (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Grounded theory methodology advocates *creating new theory* consisting of interrelated concepts rather than *testing existing theories*. A study guided by GTM does not seek representativeness to achieve statistical generalisability but instead aims to explain and sometimes predict phenomena based on empirical data. GTM provides guidelines for data collection and analysis consisting of coding, comparisons between data, memo writing and theoretical sampling.

The research questions that the inquirer asks of participants will focus on understanding how individuals experience the process and identifying the steps in the process (What was the process? How did it unfold?). After initially exploring these issues, the researcher then returns to the participants and asks more detailed questions that help shape the axial coding phase. The point is to gather enough information to fully develop or saturate the model.

In generating a grounded theory, the researcher can increase its potential for practical applications by including controllable and access variables if they do not emerge by themselves. Grounded theory generated in the way that be general enough and be understandable. Further,

grounded theory is applicable *in* situations as well as *to* them. Thus people in situations for which a grounded theory has been generated can apply it in the natural course of daily events.

### **3. 3. Sampling Procedure and Participants**

Foreign language education in Iran is generally provided by two centers, public schools and private language institutes, which are fundamentally different from each other. Participants of this study are those who experienced studying English at language institutes.

GTM uses a form of purposive sampling, known as *theoretical sampling*. Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to theoretical sampling, which is a process of sampling individuals that can contribute to building the opening and axial coding of the theory. There are several qualitative sampling strategies. Researchers might use one or more of the strategies in a single study. The concept of purposeful and snowball sampling is used in this research. Purposeful sampling means that the researcher selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. Decisions need to be made about who or what should be sampled, what form the sampling will take, and how many people or sites need to be sampled.

Purposeful sample will intentionally sample a group of people that can best inform the researcher about the research problem under examination. Through this sampling procedure, researchers look for those who have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched (Creswell, 1998). Thus, the researcher needs to determine which type of purposeful sampling will be best to use. One subset of a purposive sample is snow ball sampling. Snowball or chain type of sampling which identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information-rich (Creswell, 2007). Snowball sampling can be defined as a technique for finding research subjects, one subject gives the researcher the name of another subject. In addition it is a method of expanding the sample by asking one participant to recommend others for interviewing (Babbie, 1995).

Selection for the current study consisted of a purposive sample of 15 university and high school students, including nine female and six male, who experienced studying English at institutes. Participants meet the following attributes: all participants in this study had experienced studying EFL at institutes, they have at least one year of experience studying EFL in an academic EFL institute, and they are over fifteen years of age. Students' participation was anonymous and confidential; they received nominal extra credit for their participation. To protect participants' anonymity, I used numbers for them and it is these numbers that are used throughout this study.

I will present profiles of the EFL learner participants. It includes demographic information about the participant, comprising their age, gender, education, occupation, and the number of years they spent studying English as a foreign language. Table below provides a summary of EFL learner participants' information.

**Table 1.** Demographic information of participants

Interviewee Number	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Year of learning experience in institutions
1	16	Male	High school	Science	2
2	23	Male	B.Sc.	Engineering	2
3	19	Female	B.Sc.	Plant pathology	7
4	20	Female	B.Sc.	Architect	5
5	16	Female	High school	Art	6
6	19	Male	B.Sc.	Management	1
7	20	Female	B.Sc.	Architect	4
8	22	Male	B.Sc.	Architect	1
9	16	Female	High school	Math	8
10	24	Female	M.Sc.	MBA	5
11	25	Female	M.Sc.	MBA	4
12	20	Male	B.Sc.	Biomedical Engineering	6
13	19	Female	B.Sc.	Computer Engineering	7
14	18	Female	B.Sc.	Biomedical Engineering	3
15	19	Male	B.Sc.	Biomedical Engineering	2

### 3. 4. Data Collection

A qualitative research method designed to aid in the systematic collection and analysis of data and the construction of a theoretical model (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Interviews play a central role in the data collection in a grounded theory study. Conducting interviews and the lengthy process involved in transcribing audiotapes from the interviews are difficult for inexperienced researchers. Following Creswell (2007), determining what type of interview is practical and will net the most useful information to answer research questions.

Discussions about qualitative interviewing highlight the importance of reflecting about the relationship that exists between the interviewer and interviewee (Kvale, 2006). Kvale (2006) questions the warm, caring, and empowering dialogues in interviews, and states that the interview is actually a hierarchical relationship with an asymmetrical power distribution between the interviewer and interviewee.

Glaser (1992) advises researchers not to ask direct questions during interviews. Interview questions should give as little guidance as possible to allow the interviewees to talk about what is of importance to them regarding a given context. At the end of each interview each respondent is asked if there were any issues they deemed important that had not been discussed, or if there were anything that they would like to know more about.

In this study data collection were conducted through semi-structured, open ended interviews with participants. During interviews, the participants would list the characteristics that they viewed as being indicative of an effective EFL teacher, explain why these characteristics are important, and relate stories or narratives about their most or least good EFL teachers. All interviews were carried out in Farsi, i.e. the participants' mother tongue, since EFL learner interviewees might not be proficient enough in English to express themselves clearly. Interviews lasted an average of thirty-five minutes. With the permission of my participants, I tape-recorded the interviews for accuracy and then transcribed for analysis. A snowball effect ensued as student participants and friends began introducing potential volunteers. I set up a meeting at a coffee shop with them to interview and my supervisor introduced me some of his students and I had meeting with that participants at the university.

Over a period of two semesters, I asked 15 EFL learners at Shahrood city for their opinions, using open-ended questions to give them the opportunity to think about and expand on a given point. Participants were asked to reflect on their learning experiences and interactions with teachers at the institutes. They also were encouraged to look back on their learning experiences and make comparisons between their previous teachers to explain features of their most effective teachers. First I asked them questions such as: in your opinion how English teaching should be and what the qualities of the good English teacher at institutes are. Actually they listed some characteristics, then I asked to explain and exemplify regarding their experience.

First, each participating student was interviewed individually. The purpose of this interview was to gather data regarding participating EFL learners past EFL learning experiences at institutes. Then I transcribed participants' interviews, after that I translated participants' interviews transcription in English selectively by eliminating crutch words such as 'like' and 'you'

know,' hesitations, false starts, non-emphatic repetitions, and empty fillers like 'um' and 'er'. I also did not transcribe participants' digressions from the topic of an interview. To protect the individual rights to privacy and confidentiality, and for ease of reporting, each participant was given a reference number: for example, participant number 1 is referred to as "P1."

### **3. 5. Data Analysis**

Grounded theory uses detailed procedures for analysis. It consists of three phases of coding-open, axial, and selective- as advanced by Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998). Grounded theory provides a procedure for developing categories of information (open coding), interconnecting the categories (axial coding), building a "story" that connects the categories (selective coding), and ending with a discursive set of theoretical propositions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

In qualitative research, coding is the process of generating ideas and concepts from raw data such as interview transcripts, field notes, archival materials, reports, newspaper articles, and art. The coding process refers to the steps the researcher takes to identify, arrange, and systematize the ideas, concepts, and categories uncovered in the data. Coding consists of identifying potentially interesting events, features, phrases, behaviors, or stages of a process and distinguishing them with labels. These are then further differentiated or integrated so that they may be reworked into a smaller number of categories, relationships, and patterns.

In the open coding phase, the researcher examines the text. For example, transcripts, field notes, and documents for salient categories of information supported by the text. Using the constant comparative approach, the researcher attempts to "saturate" the categories-to look for instances that represent the category and to continue looking and interviewing until the new information obtained does not further provide insight into the category. These categories are composed of subcategories, called "properties," that represent multiple perspectives about the categories.

The analysis of the data proceeds in stages. After transcribing and translating data, following Strauss and Corbin (1990), I began with open coding, coding the data for its major categories of information. In open coding, the researcher forms categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information. Within each category, the investigator finds several properties, or subcategories, and looks for data to dimensionalize, or show the extreme possibilities on a continuum of, the property.

From this coding, axial coding emerges in which the database is reviewed or new data are collected to provide insight into specific coding categories that relate or explain the central phenomenon. In axial coding, the investigator assembles the data in new ways after open coding. This is presented using a coding paradigm or logic diagram in which the researcher identifies a central phenomenon, explores causal conditions, specifies strategies, identifies the 'context and intervening conditions i.e., the narrow and broad conditions that influence the strategies, and delineates the consequences for this phenomenon.

Axial coding is defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories. This is done by using a coding paradigm involving conditions, context, action/interactional strategies, and consequences. Whereas open coding fractures the data into categories, axial coding puts the data back together by making connections between the categories and subcategories. Axial coding focuses on the conditions that give rise to a category, the context or specific set of properties in which it is embedded, the action or interactional strategies by which the processes are carried out, and the consequences of the strategies.

Then information from this coding phase are organized into a figure, a coding paradigm that presents a theoretical model of the process under study. In this way, a theory is built or generated. From this theory, the researcher generates propositions or statements that interrelate the categories in the coding paradigm. This is called selective coding.

Selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and theoretical coding (Glaser, 1978, 1992) are the last coding processes in grounded theory methodology and involve the selection of a core category: that category of data that accounts for most of the variation of the central phenomenon of concern and around which all the other categories are integrated. This is a process that systematically relate the core category to other categories and integrate and refine the categories into theoretical constructions. Finally, at the broadest level of analysis, the researcher can create a conditional matrix. This matrix is an analytical aid-a diagram-that helps the researcher visualize the wide range of conditions and consequences related to the central phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The result of this process of data collection and analysis is a theory. A *substantive-level theory*, written by a researcher close to a specific problem or population of people. The theory emerges with help from the process of *memoing*, a process in which the researcher writes down ideas about the evolving theory throughout the process of open, axial, and selective coding. Glaser (1978) suggests that the writing of theoretical memos is a core activity throughout the grounded theory research process. Theoretical memos are defined as the following: "Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding" (Glaser, 1978, p. 83).

Memos are used to record the meaning of conceptual ideas and to record ideas for theoretical sampling. These memos provide a track record of the analysis and eventually are used as the analytical building blocks from which the new theory is developed. They reflect emerging ideas concerning relationship between data categories, new categories and properties of these categories, cross-category insights into the process, mention of relevant examples from the literature and many other reflections. Memos is considered important since it encourages analysis that is grounded in the data because the researcher must consider how the codes and their properties relate to each other and provide evidence of this from the data. Grounded theory needs to be understood as a package of research methods that includes the use of concurrent data collection and constant comparative analysis, theoretical sampling and memoing. These methods are not optional extras but instead are an integral part of the systematic and rigorous research approach of grounded theory.

The researcher validates the accuracy of the findings through constant comparison and member checking (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). By constant comparison, the provisional concepts and categories were constantly compared with transcripts in order to ensure consistency. By member checking or respondent validation, provisional categories as well as the final conceptualization were shown to the participants and modifications were made for the best fit.

In short, the coding schemes of the Grounded Theory method yielded a set of categories: "characteristics of good EFL teachers" as the core category, coupled with some sub-categories such as "Teachers' Appearance, Personality, Professional Knowledge and Skills, Teaching Strategies, and Classroom management".



# **Chapter four:**

# **Findings**

## 4. 1. Overview

The results presented in this study are the outcome of interviews with EFL learners who experienced learning English at language institutions at least for one year. The interviewees referred to some characteristics of an effective teacher based on their experience of having good or bad teachers.

## 4. 2. Appearance

### 4. 2. 1. Dressing up properly

One aspect of teachers' appearance is the way they dress up. Actually people's clothes are often an expression of their personality. Comments from eight participants illustrate that appropriate clothing is an important characteristic of teachers. A good teacher should dress up properly. Participant number one (P1) expressed this importance in the following comment:

*Regarding teachers dressing, it is true that we can't tell anyone to dress in such a way, but a teacher should dress in a way that preserves his dignity. Apart from personal and religious beliefs, a teacher is expected to be adorned and have strong character not to be tawdry. For example, it is not in the dignity of a teacher to wear clothes such as pompon, tatters and these kinds of new fashions and so on. Because their choice of clothes reflects their personalities.*

P1's comment above shows that learners expect a teacher to dress up in a way that preserve his dignity. They believe that choice of clothes reflects people's personality. Participant 15 also expressed his opinion about teachers dressing up:

*I have a personality that even the teachers' dressing up is very important to me. Being tidy shows the character of a teacher. In my opinion it's better to be formal, but not too much, for example, a teacher who comes to class with a chador, her students won't feel comfortable.*

Six participants who commented on teachers dressing, all used same features such as: being tidy, wearing appropriate clothes neither too formal nor too informal, so that student feel comfortable in the classroom. Since they believe that teachers' appearance affects learners' spirit and their relationships with teachers.

### 4. 2. 2. Having an up-to-date look

Having an up to date look was another aspect of teachers' appearance expressed by the participants. Besides dressing up properly, some of the students expect their teachers to have an up to date look too. P3 explains:

*In appearance, I think a teacher should be neat and tidy. Tidiness is important because I had teachers who dressed as usual and they didn't care. When you go to an institute which has a good environment with sentimentality of its staff, it's very effective. For example, if the teacher wears happy colors, and this would make you spend time to dress up too, and this would motivate you a lot. So you would go to class in a good mood. I'm a person who likes this kind of classes.*

Learners care about teachers' look since they explained how it affects and motivates them. Teachers' appearance will attract learners' attention to the lesson to be taught and they will pay more attention to the lessons if they like their teachers. P8 believes that a good teacher must have his prestige so that students see him as a teacher.

*The teacher must have his prestige, for example, someone who is very old and has been left in his old time, the way he dresses is old and doesn't have that prestige. On the other hand a teacher who is very young may wear very fashionable clothes and cannot maintain his prestige. His appearance is important, because it affects. Someone who does not look good... Maybe students think someone who cannot maintain his appearance and dress, why should what he says be true. Maybe the way he dresses will make learners like him and someone you love means to attract him so you listen to him more.*

Some participants mentioned teachers' look can cause to create a good relationship between teachers and learners and learners rely on these teachers' knowledge. As 13 said:

*In my opinion, if a teacher's look is more up-to-date or modern, learners can develop a good relationship with him, maybe they can get along better with him. They think that a teacher who looks up-to-date, maybe his knowledge and his information is more up-to-date too. In addition to behavior, appearance is also important. It is important to be well-dressed and tidy. You know, these are all little things that attract students to go to the class. When he sees that his teacher has a good style, he has a good look, so he definitely likes to go to that class.*

#### **4. 3. Personality**

##### **4. 3. 1. Authority**

Teacher authority was one of the characteristics that a considerable number of participants talked about its importance. The concept of authority is close to the concept of power and influence. P9 explained:

*The teacher should not be too serious for the students to talk to and communicate with at all. When a teacher is bad-tempered, you are afraid to tell him something, you get stressed.... The teacher should be friendly with students, but to the extent that the teacher is respected. That is, it should be in such a way that the position*

*of the teacher be maintained and, as the saying goes the teacher must have the word in the classroom.*

Power and authority in the classroom are different from being bad-tempered. Teachers' temper may not be related to authority. Some teachers confuse authority with anger. As commented by P9, participants appreciate teachers who have authority in the classroom meanwhile they are friendly with their students.

Authority is required to control and influence students' behavior. Many of participants mentioned that the teacher must create a good relationship and friendly atmosphere in the class, he must also have the authority to control the class. P4 spoke of teacher authority as follows:

*Neither be too friendly with students, nor be too far away from them, that is, he should observe almost the normal limit. Because if students are very comfortable, class order may be disturbed, for example they do not care about the homework that they are told to do. Therefore, in intimacy, the teacher's authority is very important.*

Learners remember best and are most influenced by information coming from an authoritative source. Authoritative behavior of the teacher is appreciated by learners. P15 says:

*The teacher should have a warm and intimate relationship with the learner, be like a friend to the students, and in addition to this intimacy, he should have a policy of keeping the class in order, for example, the teacher has sufficient control over the children so that he controls them in terms of noise or any other thing.*

#### **4. 3. 2. Responsibility**

Being available and helpful, using the class time wisely, and being punctual are considered to be important characteristics related to responsibility of a good teacher from learners' point of view. They expect teachers to be in class on time and use the class time wisely. P1 said:

*Class time should not be wasted, that is, things that are not related to the lesson and breaks its integrity, should not be discussed in class.*

The assumption that teachers are personally responsible, is at the core of educational policies. A teacher is responsible for education-related outcomes. A noticeable number of interviewees also emphasized that a teacher should be responsible in the sense of accountability. P7 explains based on her experience:

*The teacher should not say that when I am in class for an hour or two, I will solve any problems you have. For example, my teacher had set a time for us whenever we had writing or any assignment, we sent our assignments and he corrected our errors and gave us feedback. Punctuality, and availability are very important to*

*me. Not only should a good language teacher be physically available, also he should be reached via email etc.*

#### **4. 3. 3. Motivation**

Students are eager and motivated to listen to their teachers if they feel secure in the classroom. P1 considers generosity in scoring and creating comfortable atmosphere in the class as a way to motivate learners:

*Another characteristic of a good teacher is encouragement. There are many ways to encourage, one such as scoring. Being generous in scoring is a good encouragement, but encouragement is not necessarily scoring, for example, when the student feels comfortable and safe in the classroom, is a form of encouragement. For example, having a sense of security that even if he asks the wrong question, he will not be ridiculed.*

Participants' comments obviously show that they were very pleased with teachers who make learners more eager to learn and more comfortable in a classroom environment. P6 advised teachers to motivate learners by saying their positive points and give them confidence:

*Encourage learners, tell the positive points of that learner. For example, if they do not participate in speaking, tell them that you speak well. Or, say that you are very strong in writing, tell them that you can handle it. This helps them gain self-confidence because I think most learners do not have self-confidence. The teacher should not say negative things or beat them up and humiliate them.*

Motivation is the key to success. Learners note that they are motivated by teachers who encourage them. When teachers motivate their students in the class, they are more likely to participate in class activities. Learners are motivated by encouragement, while punishment and humiliation can demotivate them. P11 expressed her experience as follows:

*Motivate students, motivating is very important. I remember the first time I started learning English, I was not interested in language at all even I hated it. I hated English language because of the teacher I had at high school, because he was humiliating us all the time. After few years I went to the language class, because I felt the need to go, however I was not really interested. But my teacher was good there and motivated me to learn, for example, he said you are very smart, you have a good understanding and ... this affected me a lot. His encouragement made me feel very good to work on a new language. For the basic levels, it is much more important to motivate than when students have learned English to some degree or advanced levels.*

#### **4. 3. 4. Patience**

Teachers who does not get angry quickly and forgive students' mistakes are more liked by learners. Teachers should treat students gently and teach patiently. Students expect their teachers to be patient so that if they made a mistake or if they had a question, they would feel free to ask P1 comments:

*The teacher must be patient, for example there is a noisy student in the classroom, the teacher throws the student out of the classroom if he won't be patient; and this creates a negative atmosphere in the classroom causing the students not to listen to their lesson or if they listen, they are forced, which reduces the quality of learning.*

Listening shows that the teacher is trying to understand the student. EFL teachers sometimes did not pay attention when a student could not articulate properly. This affected student pride and confidence. P11 remarks:

*The teacher has to be very patient to listen and understand what the students are saying. And be patient when the learner can't articulate the words, and help him if he has forgotten a word. Sometimes they just pretend to listen. They confirm and pass to the next student to speak.*

Teachers should always be patient, so that students do not worry about making mistakes and trying a new language. An EFL teacher who lost patience even once permanently harmed the student's confidence. The fear of making mistakes was addressed in responses. Majority of the participants expressed that students had an inbuilt fear of making mistakes and so did not try out a new language. P 14 expresses her view:

*The teacher must teach patiently. If the student has a question, he should be accountable at the time or after teaching, he needs to make sure to explain it, even if necessary after the class. Not that he just wants to teach fast and finish.*

#### **4. 4. Professional knowledge and skill**

##### **4. 4. 1. Language knowledge**

Prior to university entrance exam, most of the students learned English with a focus on grammar and vocabulary. The EFL teachers needed to understand that writing, speaking and listening did not come easily to most students because of the lack of training in these areas. Mastering just one skill is not sufficient; learners trust teachers who are proficient in language skills. Although among responses most importance is given to speaking skill and teacher fluency since you seem more competent when you speak correctly and fluently. P3 stated:

*The teacher who is teaching, first of all must have good language literacy. I mean he must have the necessary skills to teach a language learner. For example, he must be able to speak fluently, to teach well, and know how to transfer the knowledge he has.*

Proficiency on language skills makes the teachers capable of teaching and makes the education effective and useful. Some participants stated the teacher's pronunciation is very important. They mentioned it as an essential characteristic of an effective teacher. P1 explains that teachers' accent and pronunciation should be understandable to all learners in the classroom and they should teach pronunciation tips:

*The teacher's accent and pronunciation should be according to the level of the learner and shouldn't be beyond their comprehension. I mean the teacher's pronunciation should be such that all learners benefit and are able to fully understand the material. Besides, they should teach something in terms of pronunciation (pronunciation tips) because pronunciation is not readable, it can be taught.*

An EFL teacher's teaching is effective in the quality of pronunciation and word stress. P5 expressed her idea about teachers who follow American or British accent and expect them to have mastery to distinguish the pronunciation of the words between two accents and help learners to tell them apart:

*Having a good accent is very important. In addition, I think the teacher, who is teaching according to the book, it does not matter if it is British or American accent, he should have the mastery to say differences between British and American words. And a series of words that are very different or words that are written almost the same but their pronunciations are different, these tips should be said that the pronunciations of these words are different or the pronunciation are the same but the meaning is different. Another thing that I think is very important is that when a learner is learning a language, if he has a bad accent, the teacher must tell him, because some people really speak English with Farsi accent, and this is really bad. He himself may not know it, he should be told.*

Good language teachers must have sufficient proficiency in language skills which include speaking, listening, reading, writing skills and mastery upon pronunciation. Appropriate accent and correct pronunciation are important to learners since it is believed by learners that an incorrect pronunciation leads them to being misunderstood and incorrect pronunciation will be fossilized in their minds. Although learners may make grammar mistakes, at least they know how to express themselves. However, the correct pronunciation is essential, since if a person mispronounces a word, he might be misunderstood. P8 regards teacher pronunciation as the most important factor:

*But the most important thing at the level we were, was the teacher's own pronunciation, because it is very effective. Besides showing films, organizing workshops, and all the things teachers do to teach, the most important thing is*

*the teacher's own pronunciation. Because the principle of communication that we have with others is through speaking, if the pronunciation is wrong, the principle is wrong. You know, vocabulary can be corrected, if you do not learn or learn by mistake, but the pronunciation will be fossilized. Accent no, I don't talk about accent, so whatever we do, we have our accent, we are not native but pronunciation should be taught in an accurate way.*

#### **4. 4. 2. Subject matter knowledge**

In addition to teachers' proficiency on language skills, it is essential to have subject matter knowledge. Students expect their teachers to be informed and to know new changes in education. Teachers need to gain knowledge about topic they are going to teach. In support of this statement p3 comments:

*My opinion about good teaching, not only language teaching but teaching in all fields, is effective teaching. That is, the learner has learned something after he leaves the classroom. The first basis of good teaching is that the teacher himself must know what he is teaching. In general, every teacher must be proficient in his job. He should have enough knowledge and information about the lesson he wants to teach.*

Students trust teachers who have both language skills proficiency and subject knowledge. Participants' responses showed that some learners experienced that their teachers evade the question and refuse to answer when students asked a question. Learners are not pleased with these teachers. P8 explains:

*Teachers should know the subject very well, so that if someone has a question, he should not evade it. Because it often happens that when a student has a question the teacher drops the issue or says I will answer it later and later they forget and will not answer it at all. They should have this mastery to answer questions in topic which they are teaching, but unfortunately most of them do not. Do not limit yourself to the book and teach practical things.*

Teaching English requires teachers to have information in related fields. Teachers need to update their knowledge. Participants emphasized that besides professional language knowledge, EFL teachers must have knowledge about language teaching methods, a vast knowledge of subject, content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. According to P10 an effective teacher keeps his general information up to date:

*Teacher must have enough information, Keep his information up to date. Even if his information is very up-to-date, just not limited to a certain area. In all fields he can get information. For example, there were semesters that the teacher who came to our class, practically knew nothing, he could not present well.*

Teachers knowing what to teach, what goals to achieve, and what students are expected to learn, are regarded as important factors by participants. Successful teachers are those who increase their knowledge about the subjects to be taught. Participants believe that teachers shouldn't rely on just textbooks and they should teach authentic materials. The use of newspapers and magazines rather than textbooks make everything real and encourage learners to participate more. Films could be used to provide interesting foci for discussion. Some participants thought that instructional tools like pop songs and soap operas could be used to learn a variety of language expressions. P1 explains:

*Teaching should be practical, teachers should increase their information about the topic they are going to teach. Teach material that the student can use in the real world. Not some of the words which came in the book they teach, some of them are very difficult, but in reality we never use them.*

## **4. 5. Teaching strategies**

### **4. 5. 1. Comprehensibility**

Another characteristic identified by respondents is comprehensibility. Teachers who used easy language when speaking to learners encouraged learners to speak more. When students could follow and join in on a conversation, it gives their confidence a remarkable boost and gives them the desire to engage in further conversations. P2 expressed is feeling as follows:

*A good teacher uses easy and understandable sentences. Some teachers show off their career or knowledge by using slang and difficult words which students cannot understand.*

Learners' priority is understanding the teacher. They note that teachers should be clear in the presentation of material. In other words, the teacher should explain lesson clearly. P9 advised teachers as follows:

*Good teaching is teaching in which the teacher can communicate with the students so that they can understand his lesson. The teacher should not use slang and advanced words in his teaching that the students do not understand at all. They cannot comprehend, then that class will be boring because students do not learn anything.*

The responses contained four references to the importance of the teachers giving clear explanations and five references to the teachers' use of good examples. P13 complained that difficult words and idioms used by EFL teachers often led to misunderstandings. These participants said that teacher should remember that English is not the students' first language and, therefore, teachers should use easy words, slow down and not use difficult words or idioms. P14 complained as follows:

*There are teachers who teach very professionally, which I do not think is really true. For example, he teaches grammars that you do not need to learn at that level.*

#### **4. 5. 2. Cyclical presentation**

Consolidating the teaching content should be accompanied by practice and repetition. Instead of linear presentation, teachers should have cyclical presentation. P1 explains:

*Consolidating content is much more important than learning new content, if you learn a word today and you don't remember it tomorrow, it's a loss. Instead of learning the new material, practice and repeat the previous material to be fixed in the learner's mind.*

Repetition is the first principle of all teaching. If the teacher cares about quality of learning, he should systematically design repetitive engagement into courses. However, too much repetition has negative consequences such as rote learning and boredom. So teachers need to achieve a sensible balance, neither too much, nor too little repetition. P3 comments:

*The more they are repeated, the more they stay in mind. Every new thing that students learn should be repeated to stay in their minds, but not to the extent that will be boring.*

Learners appreciate repeating new learning materials but the repetition shouldn't be to the extent that learners get bored. It is strongly believed by many participants that repeating new materials makes them remember the lesson. P4 comments in support of the mentioned statement:

*Repetition to the extent of reviewing the previous sessions so that learners, even someone who has not studied, learn that session well, repeating more than this will be waste of time. But if it is not repeated at all, it is a loss because students often do not study at home, or even if they have studied, I think a short review of about five minutes is necessary. Five minutes of browsing and warming up does not reduce anything from class time, but also speed up the overall learning process.*

One of the biggest mistakes a teacher can make is to forget to return and repeat. Participants mentioned learning materials can be repeated in different ways such as: orally by teacher in middle of teaching, reviewing previous session before the class, asking questions from previous session's lesson, or summarizing in the end. P11 remarks:

*In my opinion repetition can be very good and important. If each session, ten minutes is spent, for example, on the words, if the teacher asks what the word's meaning is and where it was used, and this kinds of questions, this will remain in the learner's mind. Then it becomes a habit for the student and he knows that the class flow is like this. It is supposed to be repeated and the teacher will ask*

*questions so he comes with a study before the class. Then all the things he has learned will be stable in his mind.*

#### **4. 5. 3. Integrating skills**

The most problematic issue in EFL teaching is that teachers teach language skills and subskills in separate segments. Students may learn language skills and components, but to use it, skills and components must be integrated. Communication requires integration of the four main language skills including listening, reading, speaking, and writing, and accessorial skills including grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and pronunciation. P1 remarks:

*Regarding the skills they learn in the language, including speaking, reading, and writing, the teacher can use these skills in a way that it is beneficial for the student in learning the language. For example, you can teach the words to the student for example ask them to use these words of the lesson in writing an essay. When we use these in the form of a story, we won't forget the word, it comes to mind which word we used in which part of the story.*

Class time is devoted to teach isolated skills such as reading, grammar, and vocabulary but they don't dedicate enough time to use their knowledge in actual communication. Using integrated approach learners have the opportunity to practice language skills simultaneously and improve them. Many of participants emphasized that the integrated approach is very helpful in the second language learning. P4 says:

*If they know conversation, grammar is almost included. If a person speaks little by little, it will subconsciously affect his grammar, but if he only focuses on grammar, he can never have a good conversation, for example. He may know millions of grammar rules, but he does not know where to use them and when to use them or how to express them.*

#### **4. 5. 4. Involving students**

Learners expect their teachers to create an environment in which they have an opportunity for speaking because EFL learners don't have this chance outside the classroom. Teachers should not consider themselves as the most important ones in classes and allow students to express their ideas in case they have the knowledge. P7 explains:

*We live in a country where English is not used in communications at all. So first, the most important thing is to create an environment where students have to speak. This is the most important thing that must be in the classroom. Because outside the classroom there is not English speaker. The most important thing is that the students must talk. For example, we had a teacher who always forced*

*everyone to speak, I myself was shy and didn't speak, and it was mostly because of this teacher that I learned to speak English and I was not ashamed anymore.*

Participants' comments obviously show that they were very pleased with teachers who engage students in the teaching process and pay enough attention to them. Good teachers do not teach without grasping students' attention and involving their ideas in the teaching process. P8 expressed his experience as follows:

*I had a teacher he came to class and gave a pamphlet; he asked students to fill in the blanks, and said do this and answer these questions for next session. But there was also a teacher, when he was teaching he asked students to talk. There was same opportunity for everyone to talk. Well, I definitely did not have the opportunity to speak as much as I did in this class, and I could learn more since maybe someone who knows and does not speak will say something that I have not heard before.*

Engaging students more in class activities helps them to learn better. Learners complain that some teachers perform as a lecturer, they teach by themselves and don't care about learners whether they have understood or whether they are satisfied or not. Participant comments indicated that learners want their teachers to involve them more in the learning process. This would result in a more effective and efficient use of instructional time. P 9 comments:

*In my opinion, it should be taught in such a way that students also participate in that lesson. Teachers must get them to talk in class and do group work. For example, before reading, students should talk about that reading, explain, etc. In general, teaching should be such that the student understands the lesson. The critic must have repetition and practice both of which can strengthen the student's conversation and increase his vocabulary.*

An effective teacher follows learner-centered method not teacher-centered. Learner-centered or active learning is a method of instruction in which the student is the center of focus. On the other hand, teacher-centered learning or passive learning occurs in a setting that the teacher plays the main role. In teacher-centered method students passively receive information, the problem is that this method never lets students use their potential. Nearly most of the learners welcome learner-centered approach since they prefer learning by doing and experiencing rather than observing. P11 remarks:

*It should not be a unilateral class where, for example, the teacher always says something and the students listen. It is better for the learner to participate in the discussion, express his / her opinion so that the class is a two-way class, I mean both students and teacher are active in the class.*

Involving students appeared to be a very important characteristic of effective teaching. Learners are satisfied with teachers who help them in the teaching process by asking their ideas, communicating, and promoting interactions among learners through teamwork activities. They want their teachers to pay attention to what the students respond. Participants complained also

about teachers who depend on books. An EFL teacher should be creative, use authentic materials, such as short stories, films, songs and art in teaching. Instead of learning irrelevant materials, learners could have opportunity to learn related materials to their real life. P3 says:

*Good teaching is teaching in which the teacher can engage the learner. At our schools, institutes, or colleges it's not like this. It is one-sided, that is, the professor teaches a lesson according to the chapter given to him by the administrator, and the ultimate goal of the student is to get a grade and finish that course and leave. But in fact this issue should be two-sided. This is an issue that the students must be involved in.*

#### **4. 5. 5. Judicious use of native language**

Believing that the prohibition of the native language would maximize effectiveness of learning English, some learners suggest that the target language should be the only medium of communication in the class. Using learners first language is not the problem, the problem is when and how to use it. P1 remarks:

*In a class that has passed a level so that they can explain something in English, it is good to speak English, because students get used to speaking English little by little. In learning language, the most important component is that the student can speak. And speaking no Persian will eventually lead the student to learn English.*

Teaching in target language maximizes exposure and immersion so students learn faster and more efficiently. Reciprocally, students need to push themselves more to understand. Therefore, it fosters their motivation to learn. It facilitates the acquisition of language skills, it also triggers and stimulates the student's mind to think in English. P11 expresses her idea:

*I don't agree with translation into Persian. If the teacher tries to explain the word in English, I think it also helps listening. Because the student wants to understand what that word means, he has to listen more carefully to find out the meaning. So this helps students to develop their listening skill.*

On the other hand, many of respondents express that teachers should use Farsi occasionally to explain meanings of words when English explanations were unclear. The use of mother tongue can be more beneficial to beginners, as they progress in their learning target language should take its place. P10 says:

*Many teachers tell us to think in English from the beginning, when I was too young, when I went to a language class, our teacher said everything in English. He told us not to speak or write in Persian, and think in English. And I had all these problems, I did not understand the meanings. I was really tormented, but if they said the Persian meaning, I would be very comfortable. I think the Persian meaning should be said, its English meaning should also be said. Both together.*

First language use can be a great help when teachers teach grammar. Translating exercises for example may be perfect practice where there is a grammar point that causes trouble for students. Some participants also are annoyed about lack of understanding of instruction, use of learners' first language can be used to redress this issues and it helps learners to understand what is exactly asked from them. P14 comments:

*Not everything is English because there are some things that the student may not understand, such as grammar, which he must explain in Persian. Not everything is Persian because it is a language class. The more the ear hears English and understands the explanations in English, the better.*

Using first language gives a sense of security and allows them to minimize the stress they may feel in EFL classrooms. All of these factors help learners to understand materials better. There are teachers who reject the use of first language, on the other hand, there are those who overuse it. Participants' suggest a rational and judicious use of first language in EFL classes. So using target language as the medium of communication when possible and switching to mother tongue when it is really necessary will be advantageous. P15 explains:

*Well, many people do not understand English at first, then in the classroom, many teachers insist that you only speak English. The teacher first explained in English and then in Persian. At high levels, someone who has reached there will definitely understand English well, but when the level is not very high, there should be a Persian explanation so that we can understand.*

#### **4. 5. 6. Providing systematic corrective feedback**

A common theme among the responses was the importance of EFL teachers correcting errors. Six of participants felt that correction was necessary to make their performance better although the way of correcting mistakes is very important. P2 explained the way teachers should correct learners:

*Well... students often make a mistake, such as in reading, speaking or any other part. Unfortunately, when the learner makes a small mistake, some teachers make a mocking, humiliating behavior, which affects the learner's emotion. And it always causes an unwanted stress when reading a text or speaking he thinks lest I be humiliated in class, lest I be ridiculed. Maybe it would be better to let him go and correct it at the end and say that it is better to pronounce it like this or this is the correct pronunciation, but you also read it well. In such a way that it does not hurt the student's emotion spirit.*

Almost all participants specifically wanted corrections to go beyond simple editing and to include grammar explanations. P3 talking about error correction of speech indicated that although this may help students to speak better, EFL teachers had to be very careful and selective when correcting speech to avoid embarrassing or intimidating students, as this could then discourage them from speaking:

*During the conversations, if the student made a mistake in the middle of his speech, teacher should not take that mistake immediately. You have to explain to him after he has finished talking. Correct him and make him clear because if it is wrong, it will remain in his mind. Then give him a series of examples and exercises. If the teacher interrupts him while he is talking, he will miss the words and forget what he was saying, and it is better not to say it directly, because he loses his self-confidence. Explain that for the class. For example, if he has a grammar problem, explain about that. His behavior should be such that the student does not lose his self-confidence. Correction should not be in a way that if he makes a mistake, he will not speak again, it should be in a way that encourages him to act again.*

Respondents showed that learners prefer not to be corrected immediately. Among interviewees just P1 advised teachers to correct every mistake immediately:

*If learners make mistakes, tell them right away. Do not let them find out later. If it is said at that moment, the learner can correct himself, it will be useful. I think it is better to say it directly. Because when a person understands his mistake in a moment is much better than later, absolutely it won't be forgotten.*

## **4. 6. Classroom management**

### **4. 6. 1. Establishing a friendly atmosphere**

Poor teacher-student relationships are related to classroom management issues and are very important. Participants feel that effective EFL teachers maintained interest of the class by being enthusiastic. Respondents identified a number of behaviors that would be an indicator of this characteristic such as: smiling, interacting with students, and getting to know students. P3 said from the moment the teacher walks into the classroom, we know whether he wants to be in the class or has to be. From then on, the atmosphere is set. A gloomy character makes the class hard and boring:

*A good teacher should be good-tempered and friendly with students. When a teacher comes to the class with a frown, as if he is angry, he wouldn't succeed to teach well. On the other hand teachers who are friendly and have a good relationship with their students, in my opinion are good and effective teachers.*

Humor was an attribute mentioned as a useful tool to promote class atmosphere and combat boredom. Participants talked also about teacher use of humor, and its benefits on learning. Teachers who used jokes, role plays, and amusing gestures helped students to understand and remember. P8 says:

*The teacher should not consider only himself, his students should be a priority ... he should pay attention to their spirits. Care about their feelings and emotions so that learners don't feel embarrassed or disappointed in the classroom. Develop*

*a good relationship with learners, allocate a time between classes to joke as a fun. It had occurred to me that I had gone to one of the institutes where the teacher was teaching almost the full time of the class. He did not allow us to talk miscellaneous subjects in the classroom at all. It was terribly boring.*

The results indicate that students believe that effective EFL teachers are those who create a positive learning environment. Some of participants mentioned that good relationships between teachers and learners are important for learners' motivation. Being friendly, according to a number of participants, will result in better class attendance. P10 explains:

*The teacher should create a friendly atmosphere with his learners so that they feel comfortable in the class. Meanwhile preserve the limit of being a student and a teacher, but it should not be too serious that the teacher not to be available. For example if you have a question, you can be in touch to ask him your problem.*

#### **4. 6. 2. Controlling the class**

Another characteristic identified by participants is controlling the class. An effective teacher is a teacher who can control the class. Effective teachers manage classes with different techniques to succeed in their teaching careers. Participants appreciate teachers who do not discriminate between learners. P1 believes the teacher must control the class atmosphere so that all learners feel comfortable, don't feel class differences, and understand the lesson:

*The cultural level of the class should be such that a wealthy student or a poor student, everyone understands what is being discussed in the class and that no one is disrespected.*

Participants regard having knowledge about classroom management techniques necessary for good EFL teachers. Teachers need classroom management strategies to control disruptive students. In most classes there are certain groups of students who are difficult to manage. Good management prevents many discipline problems. P7 explains:

*If there is even one student who is embarrassed, for example, he cannot speak, the teacher must encourage him or force him to start talking. Raise the cultural level of the class so that if, for example, one makes mistakes, the others do not laugh or make fun of him. In general the class shouldn't be so that learners do not like it or they are afraid to express themselves, and they have to come to class.*

Like all human beings, students will misbehave at times. However having knowledge of various classroom management techniques helps teachers to control learners' behaviors, no degree of teaching skill can prevent all problems. Responding to these behaviors, teachers must preserve learners' dignity. Learners expect teachers to respect their dignity. P15 express his idea as follows:

*Some students are mischievous, they make fun of those whose language is not good, well they'll get hurt emotionally in that class. The teacher in that class should be able to control this. We had a teacher, when one person made mistake,*

*two students were making fun of him, and then the teacher would ask them difficult questions to make mistakes so that the others would laugh at them. In fact, it is bad if the teacher is very serious, but it's bad too if the teacher is very funny; since there always are some students in the class who are cheeky, they also get funny and the class falls apart. It is good that the class is balanced.*



# **Chapter Five:**

# **Discussion and Conclusion**

## 5. 1. Overview

The objectives of the present study are to explore EFL learners' conception of good teachers. To this aim, 15 learners who had experienced learning English as a foreign language at private institutes, are chosen to be asked to explain their opinions of good teachers, what characteristics they have, and how they should teach based on learners' experiences.

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study, a discussion of these findings concerning the previous studies in the field, the pedagogical implications of the study, and the suggestions for further study.

## 5. 2. Discussion and Conclusion

This qualitative study was an exploration of EFL learners' perception of good practice. In this study some characteristics of effective teachers were extracted through interviews. The characteristics earned from the data are categorized and subcategorized by the researcher as follows: appearance: dressing up properly and having an up-to-date look; personality: authority, responsibility, motivation, and patience; professional knowledge and skills: language knowledge, subject matter knowledge; teaching strategies: comprehensibility, cyclical presentation, integrating skills, involving students, judicious use of native language, providing systematic corrective feedback; classroom management: establishing a friendly atmosphere, controlling the class.

Most of the characteristics extracted in this study have been pointed out in the literature review. But some characteristics such as having an up-to-date look, cyclical presentation, and integrating skills were discovered as new characteristics. However, the aim of this study is not only discovering the characteristics of effective teachers, but this qualitative study aims at determining how to be an effective teacher and why these characteristics are important from learners' perspectives. Among the categories, teacher's personality are mentioned by most of the participants. The most important one was the way teachers correct learners' mistakes and establishing a friendly and secure atmosphere in the classroom.

Although teachers and learners of EFL may have overlapping perceptions on desirable qualities of a good language teacher, studies that compare teachers' and learners' perception shows that they hold different views toward some characteristics of an effective English language teacher (Brown, 2009; Brosh, 1996; Feldman, 1988).

Different characteristics are discovered in different studies and some characteristics are common in all studies. For instance, being kind and friendly, patient, motivating, understanding, knowledgeable, involving students, and classroom management are common characteristics in the literature.

This study indicates that most interviewees believe that a good EFL teacher needs to have an acceptable appearance. Not only was the teacher's clothing said to be important, many participants emphasized that an up-to-date look affects and motivates learners.

Research findings revealed that the teacher's appearance affects students' learning. Students expect their teachers to wear clean and tidy clothes. Students appreciate teachers who are clean and well-dressed, so they will pay more attention to that lesson. Teachers' colorful clothes refresh learners' spirit and decrease their anxiety. Teacher's appearance as an effective characteristic is also supported by some researchers and they found that being neat and tidy in appearance is an important characteristic ( Babai & Sadeghi, 2009).

Characteristics related to the teachers' personality extracted from this study were supported by many researchers. In second language classrooms, the learners preferred their teachers to have personal attributes such as being caring, friendly, patient, and fair. (Liando, 2010).

The results also revealed that an EFL teacher must have proficiency in language skills and subject matter knowledge. Learners believe that effective teachers have strong content knowledge in addition to the language knowledge. Students expect effective teachers to have knowledge of the subject in which they teach above and beyond course objectives, to have the ability to communicate freely about their subject area, and possess a strong background in the area.

In line with the above, correct pronunciation was reported by Arikán, Taser and Sezgi (2008) to play a key role in characteristic of an affective teacher. Interestingly, knowledge of the content to be taught, as well as a proper methodology to teach it, was regarded as crucial in Witcher et al.'s (2003) and Gatbonton's (1999) study. Wichadee (2010) revealed that English proficiency, correct pronunciation and accent are the most important factors for students. Babai and Sadeghi (2009) also found mastery of the target language essential to be an effective language teacher.

Learners believe that the most important characteristic is teaching strategies including: comprehensibility, cyclical presentation, integrating skills, involving students, judicious use of native language, providing systematic corrective feedback.

The first subcategory of teaching strategy is teacher comprehensibility. Learners expect their teachers to be understandable by using easy words. Teachers also should make the subject matter comprehensible. Good teachers pay specific attention to providing comprehensible input to their students. According to Brosh (1996), effective EFL teachers are those who focus on comprehension.

The next important criterion situated within this category is cyclical presentation. The results revealed that cyclical presentation is necessary and lack of it will cause difficulty in teaching process. Teachers should have cyclical presentation instead of linear presentation. According to Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami (2018), cyclical presentation helps students internalize materials and reduces learners' tension. Learners appreciate repeating new learning materials because they believe that repeating new materials makes them remember the lesson. But too much repetition has negative consequences such as rote learning and boredom.

This study is the first to report that integrating skills is vitally important to the learners. The analysis showed that learners are pleased with the teachers who integrate language skills rather than teaching them separately. Following this, Tajzad & Ostovar-Namaghi (2014) argue, the problem is that Iranian EFL learners have an acceptable knowledge of language components such

as grammar and vocabulary but they can rarely use them to communicate in English. The reason is that class time is devoted to learning grammar, vocabulary and the isolated reading skill, and rarely do they find the chance to use language skills in an integrated fashion.

The participants indicated that involving learners is very effective in learning process. Learners appreciate teachers who engage learners more in class activities; in other words teachers who follow a learner-centered approach. Witcher et al. (2001) classified characteristics of effective teacher in which student-centeredness was categorized with highest rate among six ranked categories.

Respondents also indicated that most of the students want their teachers to use their native language in the classroom selectively. On the other hand, a few participants believe that teaching in target language maximizes exposure and immersion. Morady Moghaddam and Moezzipour (2021) indicated that the use of first language (L1) in the class has pros and cons; proponents of using the L1 believe that L1 can be used to motivate, explain abstract concepts, communicate better with language learners, and explain disciplinary cases. On the other hand opponents believe that using L1 has no scientific justification and interrupts the process of language learning. As mentioned by Ostovar-Namaghi and Norouzi (2015), although researchers support the facilitative role of first language use in teaching a foreign or second language, a vast majority of practitioners in private language schools of Iran are reluctant to use learners' mother tongue in foreign language education. According to Babai and Sadeghi (2009), students agreed more than teachers on teaching English in Persian (learners' native language).

Providing systematic corrective feedback appeared to be a very important characteristic of effective teaching. Participants indicated that corrective feedback can encourage student learning and provide experiences that can boost self-confidence. They want their teachers to avoid sarcasm and degrading remarks. Ostovar-Namaghi and Shakiba (2015) stated that although a noticeable portion of class time is spent on error correction, error correction has had no effects on EFL learners. They suggest that one method of corrective feedback cannot be applied universally across varied contexts. They found corrective feedback techniques as direct correction, indirect correction, correction through other skills, and no correction. Witcher et al (2003) and Stronge (2007) also categorized giving feedback as a quality of effective teachers. Notwithstanding this, Bell (2005) comments that there is still major uncertainty in the profession as to the place and role of error correction in foreign language teaching and learning.

The last category is classroom management including: establishing a friendly atmosphere and controlling the class. It can be inferred from the results that the learners expect their teachers to be able to control the class, have classroom management techniques to control students' behaviors, and control disruptive students while preserving their dignity. The findings also confirm that EFL teachers should be aware of the importance of establishing a friendly atmosphere.

Classroom management is recognized to be a common characteristic of effective teachers per previous studies. As discussed in Brophy, 1973; Brophy & Good, 1986; Bruning, 1984, teachers with good classroom management skills keep their students actively engaged in lessons.

Witcher and Onwuegbuzie (1999) found classroom management to be important for being an effective teacher from the perspective of pre-service teachers.

To conclude, all of the characteristics mentioned above are regarded as the most important characteristics from the EFL learners' perspectives. Some of these characteristics were discovered by previous studies and some of them are newly discovered by the present study. It is worth mentioning that unlike previous studies, these characteristics are discovered by interviewing EFL learners not by the use of questionnaires or ranking characteristics. In addition, each of these characteristics and the importance of each one were explained by interviewees. In the following implications for practice are presented.

### **5. 3. Implications for Practice**

The implications emerged from the findings of this study are presented as follows:

- **EFL/ESL Teachers**

This study offers valuable information about learners' preference, the importance of teachers-students relationships, and the teachers' teaching method. The knowledge gained from this study can be used by foreign language teachers to improve the efficacy of their instruction.

The results of this study could also add to teachers' knowledge of the students' perspective on characteristics of good teachers. Knowing learners' opinion will lead to tailoring instruction to meet the learners' individual needs.

- **Curriculum developers**

Learners' experiences and perceptions can provide curriculum developers with a precious and vivid insight about the way learners think about the quality of their textbooks and materials. They can make an informed decision based on the finding of this study. Data from this study show learners prefer authentic materials, they want to learn materials to use in their real life. This study has implications for syllabus designers of second language, they can design their materials based on learners' interest.

- **Researchers**

This information can be used to build a deeper literature on effective teaching, as perceived by persons interested in or practicing in the educational area. In addition, these research findings will extend the existing literature by obtaining more detailed information about the perceived characteristics of effective teaching.

## **5. 4. Suggestion for Further Research**

In the field of second and foreign language education, researchers have done very well in eliciting teachers' and students' perceptions about language learning and teaching. However, the field of literature is lacking with regard to research on good language teachers, about who they are, what they do in and outside of class, and what their students think of them. What emerges to be needed in future studies is more extensive research focusing specifically on good language teachers. More research is needed in this area that particularly adopts a qualitative methodology since many previous studies of teacher effectiveness and teacher/student perceptions have been quantitative in nature. Other suggestions appeared from the findings of the study as follows:

- A similar study could also be conducted with more participants; this study was conducted with fifteen participants.
- One can investigate how effective EFL teachers teach by observing their classes.
- Another research area can be what characteristics are considered bad for EFL teachers.
- This study was conducted in Shahrood; participants consisted of high school and university students who experienced learning English at least for one year. Therefore the present study can be done in other areas of Iran or even other contexts. Because every teaching and learning situation is context specific and disciplines differ.
- Each found characteristic through this study can be a clue to a research and be tested to find the degree of its effectiveness.
- It is suggested that a follow up study be carried out with different groups from different universities, and levels in different cities.
- This study is conducted with selecting and studying a heterogeneous sample of individuals. That is, both male and female learners participated in this study. It is suggested that homogeneous sample of individuals (only males' or females' views) could be taken into account in a follow up study.

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## چکیده

مطالعات متعددی در مورد کیفیت "معلم زبان انگلیسی خوب" و شیوه تدریس آنها انجام شده است، اما تعریف پذیرفته شده جهانی از یک تدریس خوب و موثر وجود ندارد. محققان دیگر تحقیقات خود را براساس پرسشنامه انجام دادند و از شرکت کنندگان به طور مستقیم خواسته شده خصوصیاتی را که معلمان موثر دارند انتخاب یا رتبه بندی کنند. هدف پژوهش حاضر بررسی درک زبان آموزان ایرانی از معلمان زبان انگلیسی است. برای انجام پژوهش، محقق از روش نظریه مبنا (grounded theory) استفاده کرده است. برای جمع‌آوری داده‌ها، محقق با ۱۵ زبان آموز، شامل ۹ دختر و ۶ پسر که تجربه یادگیری زبان انگلیسی در موسسات را داشتند، مصاحبه کرد. برای انتخاب زبان آموزان از نمونه‌گیری هدفمند و گلوله برفری استفاده شده است. برای جمع‌آوری داده‌ها از شیوه مصاحبه باز استفاده شد. تمام داده‌ها رونویسی، کدگذاری، و طبقه‌بندی شدند و به شیوه تحلیل جزئیات بررسی شدند. بر اساس الگوبندی دقیق در روش مبنایی، مجموعه‌ای از الگوهای پدیدار شدند، "ویژگی‌های معلم زبان انگلیسی موثر" را به عنوان الگوی اصلی و پنج زیرشاخه شامل "ظاهر معلم، شخصیت، دانش حرفه‌ای و مهارت، راهبردهای تدریس و مدیریت کلاس" نظرات زبان آموزان در مورد معلمان موثر را جلب کرد. در قالب این الگوهای زبان آموزان دیدگاه‌های عمیق خود را در مورد ویژگی‌هایی که به نظر آنها نشان‌دهنده یک معلم موثر است، بیان نمودند و داستان‌ها یا روایت‌هایی را درباره معلمان زبان انگلیسی که دارای بهترین این خصوصیات و معلمانی که دارای کمترین این خصوصیات بودند، بازگو نمودند.

**کلمات کلیدی:** تئوری مبنا، ویژگی‌های معلم، معلم زبان انگلیسی خوب، زبان آموزان ایرانی



گروه زبان انگلیسی

پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد آموزش زبان انگلیسی

## بررسی نظر زبان آموزان درباره تدریس خوب زبان انگلیسی

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