

# Foreign Language Teaching in Iran: A Model for Effective EFL Teaching in the Iranian Context

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**Abstract**—Language teachers play a crucial role in language education. An effective EFL teacher in most cases paves the way for having an effective education. EFL teaching in different contexts bears some differences. The present study discusses the criteria that an effective EFL teacher should present in Iran. Interviews are conducted and 15 participants are interviewed and as a result of the interview, a questionnaire is developed. 90 EFL teachers and students answer to the questionnaire. The participants are male and female, experienced and novice, and of different ages. Multiple regression analysis reveals no relationship between age, gender, experience, and the answers they provide for the questionnaire. Due to factor analysis, 13 components including linguistic and non-linguistic factors are extracted and the results show that the majority of the participants agree with the criteria posed in the questionnaire. The participants' age, gender, and experience in EFL teaching do not reveal any distinguishing results among them. Consequently, a model is developed to present the criteria for being an Effective EFL teacher in Iran.

**Index Terms**—EFL teacher, effective teacher, model, model development

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This study purports to propose a model for being an effective English teacher in an Iranian context. Estimates based on published data indicate that well over 16,000 people worldwide annually enter the profession of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), also known as English Language Teaching, or ELT, by taking one of several internationally-recognized initial teacher training courses for TESOL (Brandt, 2010, p.9). Therefore EFL, English as a Foreign Language, teaching needs to be developed and organized in an appropriate way to be able to deal with the needs of its context. Doing this research is considered essential due to a number of factors including 1-the differences that English language teaching bears in different contexts, 2-getting to a consensus on behalf of EFL students and teachers with regards to effective EFL teaching, 3- lack of comprehensiveness of the present models in EFL teaching in Iran in order to be able to provide a model for EFL teachers and evaluators and even students to measure the effectiveness of their EFL teaching programs. Avoiding sporadic, intra-institutional EFL teacher evaluation and teacher effectiveness models in Iranian contexts and making use of a more extensive paradigm is the rationale for conducting this research. Teacher education centers and the institutions dealing with teacher employment can benefit from this study by making use of the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher. Due to the fact that the models provided internationally are not total representatives of the factors involving different contexts in different countries such as coping with the cultural and ethnic peculiarities of every country or region, this study proposes a more precise detail of TEFL in an Iranian environment. Ignoring local and national factors involving language teaching can lead to misleading instructions and judgments in that specific context. Therefore, doing this research may lead to better and more effective instructions due to choosing more suitable teachers and diagnosing their strengths and weaknesses through this model provided in chapter five of this study.

Scholars have common views on effective teaching, though they are presented in different words. According to Fullan (2000), Effective teachers do more than testing and teaching students. They constantly monitor and collect evidence of student understanding. Research on successful schools indicates that one hallmark of those schools is that teachers use assessment to focus on student learning (Handbook of qualities of effective teachers, chapter 6, p.167).

Scholars have globally set some criteria to determine an effective EFL teacher. Harmer (1998, p.3) answers to a vital question asserting that a simple answer to the question “What makes a good teacher?” is that good teachers care more about their students' learning than they do about their own teaching. Teachers are evaluated in order to be able to find out what makes a good teacher. Evaluation has many meanings in language programs. Another study has similarly set some standards for professional English teachers. Richards and Renandya (2002, chapter 39, p.390) discuss Penny Ur's findings on the criteria of professional teachers as: “ 1- is primarily occupied in real-time action, 2- thinks in order to improve action, 3-is interested in finding out what works, 4-is an immediate agent of real-world change, 5-is evaluated in the short term by the extent to which he or she brings about valuable change, and 6- is evaluated in the long term by his or her influence on the thought and action of both academics and professional (and sometimes of the lay public).” Thus, bringing about changes is also considered a vital trait of English teachers.

Kiely and Rea-Dickins (2005, P.5) contended that “It is part of the novice teacher's checklist to guide the development of initial lesson plans and teaching practice, a process of determining learning achievements or student

satisfaction, and a dimension of the analysis of data in a formal evaluation or research study. It refers to judgments about students by teachers and by external assessors; the performance of teachers by their students, program managers and institutions; and programs, departments and institutions by internal assessors, external monitors and inspectors. Evaluation is about the relationships between different program components, the procedures and epistemologies developed by the people involved in programs, and the processes and outcomes which are used to show the value of a program – accountability – and enhance this value – development”.

Teacher assessment is also a determining factor in effective teaching since they can lead to better instruction as a whole. A lot of efforts have been put to determine the level of success of educational programs. An educational program includes teacher as its core component, a factor that plays a vital role in education. A key factor in the success of an educational program is the teacher, and at the same time a key factor in the failure of an educational program can be the teacher, too. In most cases, the good or bad quality of the students' learning is attributed to the teacher. There is an assumption that teachers should only be evaluated based on the scores of the students; while, this is just a minor element in teacher effectiveness. The teacher's performance in the class, the incentives he/she provides to the students, and his/her guidance are also a part of the process. So, in order to evaluate a teacher's effectiveness, a number of factors should be considered hand in hand.

A teacher can be assessed from the viewpoints of experienced observers, scholars, students, and parents. What seems important here is to provide a model to consider teacher effectiveness. The model should be simple enough to be used by all the above-mentioned evaluators.

Meber (2000, p. 3) simply quotes some criteria for being a good teacher by year 8 pupils as follows: " A good teacher is kind, is generous, is forgiving, listens to you , encourages you, has faith in you, keeps confidences, likes teaching children, likes teaching their subject, takes time to explain things, helps you when you're stuck, tells you how you are doing, allows you to have your say, doesn't give up on you, cares for your opinion , makes you feel clever, treats people equally, stands up for you , makes allowances, and tells the truth".

Danielson and McGreal (2000, p. 55) stated that “Evaluation procedures are those methods (the “how”) that teachers use to document or demonstrate their skills and knowledge (the “what,” or the criteria of good teaching). The “how” and the “what,” of course, must be aligned. For every aspect of performance deemed essential to good practice, teachers must have a way to document their skill. Developing assessments that are valid and reliable, demands that we devote serious attention to the procedural aspects of evaluation. They added that “many educators have discovered an even more compelling reason to design the procedures carefully. People learn from what they do; schools and districts can design evaluation procedures that provide opportunities for professional learning for teachers. That is, teachers may actually improve their practice by engaging in the activities required as part of the evaluation process.”

Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric (2003) mentions knowledge and skills of an teacher in 13 areas, based on Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Foreign Languages (for K-12 students) which consist of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, communities, linguistics and second language acquisition, and application to teaching languages.

Zhang (2009) discusses some general criteria for effective teachers which are as follows: 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.

EFL teachers' effectiveness criteria are similar to the ones mentioned in the Literature (Huang, 2010; Ozturk & Atay, 2010; Suarez, 2000; Finardi and Ferrari, 2008; Hsu, 2009; Badawi, 2008; Nicol, 2008; Shamim, 2008). The only part that might be distinctive is that the teachers are teaching a foreign language including a foreign culture which must be taken into consideration. EFL teaching in Iran has its own peculiarities because its culture is mainly different from the cultures followed in the English speaking countries. Therefore, the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran might be partly different in some aspects compared to the criteria for being an effective English teacher in the English speaking countries or any other country.

This study intends to provide a model for determining the criteria for being an effective English teacher in an Iranian context. To put it another way, the study is an attempt to ascertain the qualities attributed to effective teachers in Iran. Having determined the qualities, proposing a model that reflects the opinions of EFL instructors, teachers, and students is deemed as a major objective of this study. Diagnosing EFL teachers' qualities through this model by determining the attributes that they possess and the ones that they do not possess is an important intent that can be reached by carrying out the present study. This research aims at answering the following questions:

- 1- What are the criteria that present an effective English teacher in an Iranian context?
- 2- How do these criteria deal with linguistic and non-linguistic factors?
- 3- How consistent are the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher among the instructors, teachers, and students regarding their age, gender, and experience?

## II. METHOD

This part discusses about the steps followed for the implementation of this study. It includes the following sections: 1) participants, 2) instruments, and 3) data collection and analysis procedures.

### A. Participants

There are 15 adult, male and female participants who took part in the first phase of the study including EFL instructors, teachers, and students. As for the instructors, they have been teaching for some years in different EFL courses and are quite experienced in the field. The selected EFL teachers and students are high-school and language institute teachers in Iran. They are selected through availability sampling, and are required to answer the questions by semi-structured interviews. In the second phase, 90 EFL instructors, teachers, and students were chosen again through availability sampling to respond to the developed questionnaires.

### B. Instruments

Two major instruments were employed in this research. At first, Semi-structured interviews using the 23 questions extracted from Harmer (1998, chapter 1) including a number of points on EFL teacher characteristics were conducted in the first phase of the study in order to elicit responses on the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran. The participants were asked to provide open-ended answers to the questions in either English or Farsi. Secondly, a questionnaire consisting of 60 items was extracted from the interviews' data for the teachers to select their criteria from among the choices available. The reliability of the analysis was computed through Cronbach's Alpha and it reveals a high reliability of .83 for the questionnaire.

As for the validation of the questionnaire, factor analysis was run. 90 participants including EFL instructors, teachers and students filled in the questionnaire. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's Measure of sampling adequacy reveals a moderate value of .52, and the Barlette's test of sphericity's result is significant. Thirteen factors were extracted for the 60 items. The items were categorized according to the thirteen categories determined in the factor analysis as follows:

- 1-General Characteristics of the teacher
- 2- Skills component
- 3- Sub-skills component
- 4- Appearance component
- 5- Cultural aspect component
- 6- Error correction
- 7- Teacher experience and knowledge
- 8- Teacher's decision making
- 9- Use of technology
- 10- Lesson plan items
- 11- Testing and evaluation
- 12- Motivation
- 13- Teacher creativity

### C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

On the basis of qualitative research, this study is established upon a grounded theory. Grounded theory follows two main purposes: It connects a study by describing the relationships among the various parts, and it provides a theoretical model of subsequent studies (Davis, 1995). Thus, this study primarily tries to describe the relationship among various aspects of EFL teacher effectiveness and it provides a model for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006) describe the general procedures followed in the analysis of qualitative data. They assert that analysis involves reducing and organizing the data, synthesizing, searching for significant patterns, and discovering what is important. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) codification of the data occurs in three processes namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding is the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data. Axial coding includes the process of relating categories to their subcategories, termed "axial" because coding occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions. The final coding is the selective coding described as the process of integrating and refining the theory. Based on the questions extracted from Harmer's (1998) model, 15 EFL scholars, teachers and students were interviewed separately by the researcher. Due to the fact that the participants were non-native English speakers sharing Farsi as their mother tongue, the interviews were conducted in either English or Farsi not to have language problems in eliciting the responses regarding that the participants might not be free to express what they want in English. The researcher analyzed the audio-recordings of the interview data. In this way, he first transcribed the data and then codified and categorized them. The results of the codified and categorized data were converted into a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed among 90 EFL instructors, teachers, and students. The data from the interviews were analyzed qualitatively by the codification of the responses.

Another step taken in this research was the quantitative part. Regression was computed in order to predict the effect of age, gender, and experience among the participants who answered the questionnaire. Inferential and descriptive statistics were the procedures employed to come up with basic statistical information about the participants and their answers.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following Strauss and Colin's (1998) model, the 3 coding steps (open, axial, and selective) are followed step by step to be able to come up with a theory or theme.

#### A. Open Coding

The primary data gathered through semi-structured interviews were at first recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The transcribed data were the most important part of the data and the codification was done on them. In this phase, the sentences, phrases, and key words that carried weight in EFL teaching were written down as the criteria for an effective EFL teacher in Iran. Based on the 23 questions extracted from Harmer's (1998) book, the answers were collected and codified question by question. The findings are presented in detail in appendix A.

#### B. Axial Coding

In this process, the answers and the categories were set together and the subcategories were determined. When it comes to evaluation, all that include self-evaluation, peer evaluation, colleague and institute evaluation, and constructing tests have been brought under the category of testing and evaluation. The sub-categories of dress code, choice of color, and teacher's look were brought under one category called appearance. The skills and the sub-skills were categorized in different categories. Promoting one's knowledge and experience, attending workshops and conferences were all related to the teacher's knowledge and experience category. Cultural aspects were brought under the culture category.

#### C. Selective Coding

The categories and sub-categories were honed and refined in this process and the researcher came up with thirteen categories encompassing the subcategories. The categories are as follows:

- 1-General Characteristics of the teacher
- 2- Skills component
- 3- Sub-skills component
- 4- Appearance component
- 5- Cultural aspect component
- 6- Error correction
- 7- Teacher experience and knowledge
- 8- Teacher's decision making
- 9- Use of technology
- 10- Lesson plan items
- 11- Testing and evaluation
- 12- Motivation
- 13- Teacher creativity

Using the above-mentioned components, a questionnaire of 60 items was extracted from the interview results and then distributed among the participants. The results of the questionnaire are reported in the next section.

#### D. Results of the Questionnaire

The Tables below include the descriptive statistics for the participants and their age, gender, and experience. Table I shows the gender of the participants in this study.

TABLE I.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR GENDER

	Frequency	Percent
Male	32	35.6
Female	58	64.4
Total	90	100.0

As it is shown in Table I the number of females participating in the study exceeds the number of males.

TABLE II.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR AGE

Range	32.00
Minimum	21.00
Maximum	53.00

Table II indicates that young, and middle aged participants took part in this study. Table III depicts the level of experience among EFL teachers.

TABLE III.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EXPERIENCE

Range(years of experience)	29.00
Minimum	1.00
Maximum	30.00

The data in table III show that inexperienced, moderately experienced, and experienced EFL teachers answered the questionnaire while the majority of the participants were moderately experienced. The relationship between age, sex, experience and the participants' answers are shown by regression analysis in Table IV.

TABLE IV.  
REGRESSION RESULTS FOR AGE, GENDER AND EXPERIENCE

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.509	.390		11.554	.000
	Age	5.015E-5	.016	.001	.003	.997
	Gender	.008	.112	.007	.069	.946
	Experience	.009	.019	.102	.482	.631

The age of the participants, whether they are male or female, and also their experience revealed no significant relationship with the answers that they provided for the questionnaire. This means that the answers they provided were not age dependent, gender dependent, or experience dependent. As participants who deal with English language teaching, they provided relatively similar answers to each item. The next chapter sums up the results and justifies them while pointing out to the implications of the study and it also suggests further studies to be conducted.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

As the results in the previous chapter reveal, most of the participants agreed with the items of the questionnaire on the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran. By interviewing and distributing the questionnaires, the researcher has been able to conclude that what the participants agreed upon are among the criteria of an EFL teacher in order to be effective because the majority of the participants were positive towards these criteria. In answering to the first research question "1- What are the criteria that present an effective English teacher in an Iranian context?" Table 5 shows the criteria that present an effective EFL teacher in Iran. The table is a recapitulation of the criteria that were included in chapter four of the study.

TABLE V.  
RECAPITULATION OF THE CRITERIA FOR BEING AN EFFECTIVE EFL TEACHER IN IRAN

Category	Criteria
General Characteristics of EFL teacher	knows the subject matter, is patient, is ethical, communicates effectively with the students, is different from one student to another, motivates the students
Listening Skill	Provides enough listening activities, teaches the listening strategies, focuses on pre-while-and post listening tasks
Reading Skill	Emphasizes on intensive and extensive reading, teaches the reading strategies, provides authentic texts and culturally familiar texts, activates the students' background knowledge, and focuses on pre-while-and post reading activities.
Speaking Skill	Encourages the students to speak as much as possible, encourages outside the class practice, involves the students in communication, provides effective feedback
Writing Skill	Teaches writing strategies, provides peer, self, and teacher feedback; focuses on the organization of writing; and familiarizes the students with the sub-skills of the language
Vocabulary Sub-skill	Presents vocabulary in the context, focuses on active vocabulary for productive skills and passive vocabulary for receptive skills, emphasizes vocabulary learning strategies such as mnemonic devices
Grammar Sub-skill	Applies both inductive and deductive ways of presenting grammar according to their age and experience and the purpose of the instruction, provides enough grammar practice through various tasks
Pronunciation Sub-skill	Has mastered at least one accent of English and is familiar with different accents and dialects of English, makes the students familiar with the segmental and supra-segmental features of pronunciation, uses contrastive analysis as a tool to predict the places of difficulty in pronunciation of English by Persian speakers
Teacher's Appearance and Discipline	Appears tidy, organized and punctual; tries to wear formally and according to the norms, picks the suitable clothes' colors with respect to the age, experience, and gender of the learners, does not distract the students by wearing too wild or weird clothes
Culture	Prioritizes the target culture but also includes the source (Iranian) culture, doesn't take sides against cultures and just talks about the fact that the difference among cultures are natural, predicts inter-cultural conflicts and avoids focusing on them
Error Correction	Paves the way for self-correction, peer correction, and teacher correction respectively, corrects in an unobtrusive manner, thinks positively about the errors, applies correction according to the age, and the experience of the learners, usually makes use of immediate error correction for beginners and for more advanced students he/she makes use of delayed correction
Teacher Experience and Knowledge	Tries to think critically, if he/she is novice he tries to seek help from experienced teachers and if he/she is experienced he/she tries to make use of the recent knowledge of teachers, studies recent journals, and books; uses the internet to improve his/her knowledge of language and language teaching, attends workshops and conferences on the related subjects
Teacher's Decision Making	Makes compromise with the students in handling the class, makes the final decisions eventually, there is combination of both student centered and teacher centered class
Group work	Gives tasks similar to real life tasks to the students and involves them in groups; determines the groups according to level, social background, experience, and interests of the students, encourages cooperation not competition
Use of Technology	Incorporates all technology that is possible and uses technology wisely and makes the students use the technology in out of the class activities too.
Lesson Plan	Makes use of a lesson plan, benefits from a written lesson plan if he/she is not very experienced and if he/she is experienced, he/she benefits from a mental lesson plan, applies a flexible lesson plan to cope with the difficulties and unprecedented situations
Testing and Evaluation	Uses both summative and formative tests, encourages self-evaluation, and teacher or peer evaluation respectively, and he/she is familiar with all the theories and the practice of making tests
Motivation	He/she is motivated and tries to motivate, talks to the students about the benefits of learning English, designs the activities where the students feel that they are really using the language for communication and therefore motivates them to learn English
Creativity	provides creative tasks and techniques in the classroom, encourages creative responds and the new ideas by the students

The above-mentioned criteria show what an EFL teacher in Iran should have in order to be called an effective EFL teacher. Although some elements might be missing in these criteria but they are considered the extract of the opinions of the EFL instructors, teacher, and students around the country. An EFL teacher considering all the criteria mentioned above is supposed to be an effective teacher gaining acceptable results in Iran. The first one mentions the whole picture of a good EFL teacher in general. Then skills and sub-skills are to be taken into consideration in order to see how effective the teacher can be in teaching skills and sub-skills of EFL. Another aspect that is somewhat taken for granted is teacher's appearance and discipline which is regarded as important in the process of EFL teaching. Attending to culture also becomes necessary in EFL teaching. The results show that effective EFL teachers should pay attention to the local culture of the students and should be unbiased regarding the two cultures, the source and the target, since the students might take sides when culture is being discussed. Due to differences in the Iranian culture and cultures of English speaking countries, some misunderstandings and side-takings might happen and it is the responsibility of the teacher to be able to handle these contradictions. Target culture is somewhat prioritized since it is the very language (English) that is being taught. All sorts of corrections should be applied in order to make the students perceive and produce correct language. Making use of experience and knowledge of EFL teachers seems indispensable in effective teaching. Being able to come up with a sound decision in EFL teaching is as important as other factors because a proper

decision can guide the learners to success in language learning. Cooperative learning can never be ignore in ELT since students can put their potentialities into practice in groups. Learning is much more motivation and also more convenient if technology is applied. A teacher without organization and a lesson plan may bring confusion and disorganization in the learning environment. Thus, it is recommended that EFL teachers apply a lesson plan in their teaching. Realizing the students' real weaknesses and strengths is impossible without a good plan for evaluation. A key to learning is to be motivated to learn. The most talented learners become frustrated without motivation of any kind. Teachers can apply techniques to motivate the learners to learn either by talking to them or designing motivation activities for them. Creativity of the teacher can compensate for the limitations that might be in the process of learning. Keeping students away from producing clichés and encouraging them to express themselves in their own ways is another determining feature of an effective EFL teacher.

## V. CONCLUSION

As for the second research question, "2- How do these criteria deal with linguistic and non-linguistic factors?" the present study incorporates both linguistics and non-linguistic factors as the important criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran. While the knowledge of the language such as the knowledge of skills, sub-skills, testing, evaluation, teaching experience, and knowledge represent the linguistic factors; appearance of the teacher, his/her attitude towards culture, his/her ability to decide, his/her use of technology, his/her creativity, his/her ability to motivate, his/her ability to implement group work are among the non-linguistic factors of the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher.

The answer to the third research question "3- How consistent are the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher among the instructors, teachers, and students regarding their age, gender, and experience?" has been mentioned in table 4.4 of the study. Multiple regression analysis has revealed that age, gender, and experience are not predictors of the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran. It doesn't matter how old the person is or whether the person is male or female and even experienced or inexperienced, the criteria seem to be similar in their opinions.

Compared to the studies reviewed in chapter two of this study, a model has been developed in which apart from the common criteria for EFL teachers, a number of criteria have been included that reflect the situation in the Iranian context. These criteria include what can help an EFL teacher to be more successful in Iran because there are some cases that have to be dealt with differently in its specific context.

### A. Implications

This study has promising implications for EFL evaluators, programs, institutions, students, instructors, and the teachers themselves. Evaluators can make use of the model developed in the present study to assess EFL teachers in Iran to decide on their effectiveness. Language institutes and schools can benefit from this study in order to set their plans and criteria to educate effective EFL teachers and evaluate them optimally. The students can use this model to see if their teacher is a good EFL teacher or not and based on the model they will be guided not to make superficial judgments about their teachers. Instructors and teachers can evaluate themselves, and their peers according to this model. Teacher education centers can apply the model in order to be able to prepare effective EFL teachers and therefore contribute to the quality of EFL teaching in Iran.

### B. Suggestions for Further Studies

The present study has posed a new area of research that is looking for the EFL teacher's criteria in the context of Iran. This study has focused on the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in Iran all in one study. Each aspect or component of the criteria discussed in chapter four can be researched and investigated. The general characteristics of the EFL teacher, the method of presenting the skills and sub-skills of the EFL teacher, the appearance, the views towards culture and language, the motivating techniques that the EFL teacher uses, and also the creativity applied by the teacher in the classroom can be an area of research for the researchers that are looking for these criteria in the Iranian context. Some contexts similar to Iran in culture and also by narrowing down the subject, more local contexts such as the provinces or cities of Iran can be a subject of study for researchers to find out about the differences in the criteria for being an EFL teacher in that country or in the Iranian local contexts.

## APPENDIX A. OPEN CODING

"1- What makes a good teacher?" The participants gave a number of responds to it while almost all of them asserted that because it was a very general question, therefore the answer to it would be rather difficult. The answers to the questions include being familiar with the subject matter, being familiar with the psychological basis underlying appropriate teaching, being familiar with the ways of presenting the materials and with the basics of teaching and learning, being able to evaluate his/her performance in the classroom, being familiar with teaching methods, procedures, and techniques, being creative, being proficient in all the skills and sub-skills, being ethical, building good relationship with the students, being different from one student to another, and being patient.

"2- How should the effective teacher teach listening?" The answers provided were as follows: Providing more listening activities in classrooms beyond what is contained in the students' course books, being familiar with the

strategies of listening comprehension, providing some kind of pre-listening, while listening, and post-listening tasks for the students, providing news data for listening because the students have little exposure to English.

“3- How should the effective EFL teacher teach reading?” The replies were as follows: providing the students with a general warm-up on the topics of the reading materials in order to activate the students' background knowledge and by background knowledge the interviewee means both linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world; providing pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading tasks, and emphasizing intensive and extensive reading.

“4- How should the effective teacher teach speaking?” is the next questions regarding the skills. Their answers were put in this way: “teachers should try to actually encourage them to speak to one another as much as possible because they do not have enough access to native speakers of English in Iran, teachers should encourage them to form informal chat clubs within their own classes so that their practice of the language is not limited to the classroom context, the students can be advised to have free discussions of different topics outside the classroom, increasing students' background knowledge is very important, teachers should make students aware of the great importance of these three sub-skills or sub-components of the language, an effective teacher must be able to make the students involved in communication, while teaching speaking the formal aspects of the language should not be ignored, the teacher should use a variety of tasks to help the students feel that they are communicating, providing individual (feedback) is more effective in speaking, and teachers should make the students speak as much as possible”.

“5- How should the effective teacher teach writing?” is the question about writing and the answers to this question are as follows. “writing should be presented quite systematically, teacher should make students familiar with grammar, vocabulary and spelling rules of the language, the students should be given enough feedback different forms, an effective teacher should be able to teach the strategies of writing, an effective writing teacher should concentrate on the organization, on the ideas, on the content of the writing.”

“6- How should the effective EFL teacher teach vocabulary?” The answers provided are as follows: “Teachers should make students familiar with appropriate vocabulary learning strategies such as for example using mnemonic devices, the students should know that we have two types of vocabulary, active vocabulary and passive vocabulary, vocabulary items should be presented according to their level of frequency, providing some exercise just like let's say role play exercise and using the dictionary, and learning the vocabulary in context.”

“7- How should the effective EFL teacher teach grammar?” is answered by the participants as described below. “If the students turn to be kids or young learners we'd better actually opt for the inductive approach but if they are adult learners, It is better to make use of the deductive approach, maybe for the students and beginners using a deductive approach is more effective, but for the advanced learners I think mainly inductive approach is more effective, teachers should make students increase their knowledge of grammar through self-study so that they will be successful language learners later on.”

“8- How should the effective EFL teacher teach pronunciation?” The participants provided their replies as follows: “What is more important in EFL context is paying attention to segmental aspects because otherwise students might be able to use language quite fluently but with a lot of pronunciation mistakes which might lead to a breakdown in communication in most of the cases, accuracy and fluency should be paid equal attention.”

“9- How should the effective EFL teacher's appearance be?” Here are the answers provided for the question. “They should try to actually be a good model for learners; females' teachers should know that because of the specific conditions of our country enough attention should be paid to the way they actually decide to show up in their classes, teachers should not set their appearance to distract the students, some teachers might not be that much presentable as far as their physical appearance is concerned but they have great potentials, teachers' appearance should be similar to that of the English speaking people; the more clean, neat, and punctual the teacher is the more the students may count on their teachers and maybe they are more motivated to listen to the teachers.”

“10- How should the effective EFL teacher's dress code and choice of color be?” The teacher should wear dresses of bright colors for kids' classes and for young adult ones, but not very colorful ones because if it is the case this might again function as a sort of a distracter, and again teachers should actually change dresses twice a week; It is better that the teachers wear formally than wearing traditional clothes, usually for the young generation the bright colors are more important or favorable than the dark ones, the students compare their teachers with the native speakers of English so they prefer casual dress as compared to the formal one, and a participant added that wearing traditional clothes makes the students more integrated with their teacher.”

“11- How should an effective EFL teacher integrate the source and the target culture?” is related to language and culture. Some replies have been provided. “Cultural aspects of a second or foreign language should be instructed directly in language classes of course to the extent that they do not violate the cultural values of the source language, teachers should pay attention to both the source and the target language culture, cultural points related to the foreign language to be included in the syllabus and presented to the students and at the same time, ok, attention should be paid to the great value of national and religious values of our own culture, focus should be on L2 culture, and then at time depending on the cultural points there can be an integration of the two cultures, teacher should predict inter-cultural conflicts and avoid them to the extent possible.”

“12- What should the effective EFL teacher's attitude towards error correction be?” Error correction has been a matter of controversy among EFL scholars. A number of answers given by the participants have been brought here.



“The time of correction and the person providing the correction play an important role in error correction, teachers should give the chance to the students to correct themselves, teachers should make a difference between errors and mistakes, unobtrusiveness is important in other correction including peer and teacher correction, it’s better to jot down the students’ errors and tell them in an unobtrusive manner, a good teacher should have a positive attitude towards the students’ errors, try to use them in order to modify its teaching and then help students make appropriate, sometimes on the spot correction is an effective way and sometimes it should be delayed, teachers usually we start with self-correction, then peer correction, and finally teacher correction; and teachers should use immediate error correction for the beginners, and for the intermediate and advanced levels somehow delayed or never correction can be used.”

“13- How can an effective EFL teacher make use of experience and recent knowledge of language teaching?” is answered this way. “There should be a friendly atmosphere in which both teachers (novice ones and experienced ones) try to have a critical type of thinking, they can very easily exchange information and experience quite willingly, and by studying the recent journals, books, if not available by observing the classes of the more experienced and knowledgeable to teachers, by asking, getting advice from these teachers so this way the can make use of the recent knowledge of language.”

“14- How should an effective EFL teacher implement group-work in the classroom?” The participants replied this way: “ Teachers should establish a friendly atmosphere or what we technically refer to as rapport in the classroom so that the students feel close enough to one another to establish the job together, EFL teachers should give some kind of tasks to the students that are very similar to the real life situation and then ask them to do the task, and teachers should create a sense of cooperation among the students not competition, and they can divide the students depending on the kind of the task.”

“15- How should an effective EFL teacher implement classroom management?” The participants answered this question in the following sentences. “Teachers should create a sort of compromise with the students as far as the overall teaching policies are concerned from the beginning of a course, and the more advanced the students are the more it should be learning centered and learner centered while the elementary ones are more guided than being autonomous, the final aim should be implementing or designing learner and learning centered activities in the language classroom and then the role of the teacher should become less and less observable, and in an ideal case the class is a combination of both teacher centered and student centered.”

“16- How should an effective EFL teacher implement technology in the classroom?” is the next question answered here by the participants. “Teachers should make a wise use of technology in their classrooms not just fill the classes with computers, video projectors, and cassette players, implementing technology is not very applicable because there aren’t enough facilities that can be used in the classes especially the use of internet.”

The next question and answers discuss about the lesson plan.

“17- How should an effective EFL teacher make use of a lesson plan?” “Making lesson plans is quite necessary of course basically for novice teachers because in fact they don’t know what to teach and how to teach it, but as the teachers’ experience increases having a detailed lesson plan or a lesson plan in its written form is not necessary as far as the teaches are able to have a mental lesson plan of the materials to be presented, and there should be a lesson plan but it should be very flexible.”

“18- How should an effective EFL teacher construct tests?” Here are the answers. “Teachers should pay double attention to the types of tests they construct, having table of specifications at the beginning of test construction is something very important, EFL teachers need some in-service training programs to become refreshed on the way functioning test items can be constructed, teachers should focus on both formative and summative tests, a good teacher should be familiar with all the theories and the practice of making tests, he/she should be familiar with very significant and important subjects in language testing such as the validity of the test, the reliability of the test, and the practicality of the test, teachers can use the previously made test in their test construction with their students, but they should not just stick to the test, according to different levels, different factors, the level of proficiency of the students, their age, , their specific needs, their strong points and weak points they can create a more effective test.”

“19- How should an effective EFL teacher improve his knowledge? Do conferences and workshops help?” The responses are as follows: “Conferences and workshops are not of much use because they repeat the knowledge that the teachers already know or are not of interest to them, using the internet can be a great help to the teachers; participating in in-service training, conferences, workshops, studying, observing each others’ classes are absolutely helpful.”

“20- How should an effective EFL teacher evaluate the failure and success of the students?” The participants believe that it all depends on the policies of the educational system, policies of the government on the whole, and then the way the teacher has taught the class; Students themselves and their classmates can be helpful in providing them with feedback on their performance, but the final evaluator of the learning process is the teacher himself; and teachers should not just use the information drawn from a test in order to say that the students should pass or fail.

“21- How should an effective EFL teacher motivate the students?” is the question on a significant aspect of ELT that is motivation. The participants provided some answers on motivation that are brought here. “The teacher himself should be motivated enough when he or she teaches the language, the teacher should try to talk about the importance of English for both academic and non-academic purposes, the teacher should help students become motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically, in fact the students based on their right understanding of their status of English for different types of

purposes should be able to develop a sort of motivation within themselves, the source of motivation should be created within the students so that they are intrinsically motivated and again parents and the teachers should motivate them extrinsically by providing information with regard to the importance of the language, by telling the students that by learning English they can use these facilities better so teachers can motivate the students, and also by designing the activities where the students feel that they are really using the language for communication.”

“22- How should an effective EFL teacher evaluate himself/herself?” The answers are as follows: “In fact preparation starts well before a class is going to be taught by a specific teacher, then it goes on continuously when the teacher does the job and it can still continue after the teacher finishes a single classroom, therefore we can talk about the evaluation of the teacher's performance with regard to her or his relationship with the students, the way he or she prepares the material and himself, the way he conducts the classroom activities, the way the materials are presented, the way he or she receives feedback from the students or provides them with feedback, and finally with the way he can gain information after a class is over, and when the teacher is actually out of the class, This way in fact the teacher can have a better picture of his or her own performance.”

“23- How should an effective EFL teacher implement new methods and creativity in the class?” The participants commented on this question. Here are their responds. They asserted that the problem in Iran is that the majority of the systems in different educational settings, institutes, schools are centralized, so the teachers do not have much room for creativity, or being flexible, but within those constraints the teacher can be creative. They added that because the teacher is not free to do whatever he/she wants it's a bit difficult, except for university, but in other contexts it's a bit difficult for the teacher to apply new methods or be very creative in his/her class because usually what they should do has been dictated to them and they are not able to actually deviate from what they have been told to do, and they also said that providing creative task and making use of good aspects of different methods can help the teacher in the process of teaching.

#### APPENDIX B. QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE NAME OF GOD

Dear Participants

This questionnaire intends to gather data on the criteria for being an effective EFL teacher in "IRAN". Your careful attention will be highly appreciated.

Age:

Gender:

Years of experience as an EFL teacher:

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. A good EFL teacher should be knowledgeable in English.					
2. A good EFL teacher should be familiar with the subject matter he/she is going to present.					
3. A good EFL teacher should be able to express his/her ideas vividly and intelligibly in English.					
4. A good EFL teacher should be able to communicate effectively with the language learner.					
5. A good EFL teacher should be proficient in listening.					
6. A good EFL teacher should provide ample and various authentic listening input to the students.					
7. A good EFL teacher should provide comprehension questions in order to realize the weaknesses of the students in listening.					
8. A good EFL teacher should be proficient in reading.					
9. A good EFL teacher should not focus on reading aloud because it plays a trivial role in reading.					
10. A good EFL teacher should focus on silent reading.					
11. A good EFL teacher should familiarize the students with extensive and intensive reading.					
12. A good EFL teacher should implement pre, while, and post-reading activities in the classroom.					
13. For better speaking, a good EFL teacher should provide ample listening input for the students in order to learn and activate English structures.					
14. A good EFL teacher should activate the students' background knowledge on the subject of speaking.					
15. A good EFL teacher should try to form informal chat clubs in and outside the classroom for the students to be able to enhance their speaking ability.					
16. A good EFL teacher should provide sample or guide writing for the students to familiarize them with effective writing in English.					
17. A good EFL teacher should make students write individually on different issues.					
18. A good EFL teacher should implement peer-correction in writing.					
19. When peer correction is done, and the writings are delivered, a good EFL teacher should provide enough feedback on their writings.					

20. A good EFL teacher should be able to teach writing strategies to the students.					
21. In writing, a good EFL teacher should make students familiar with the sub-skills and their importance in writing.					
22. A good EFL teacher should teach vocabulary in contexts and situations.					
23. A good EFL teacher should make the students familiar with the appropriate vocabulary learning strategies such as mnemonic devices.					
24. A good EFL teacher should try to make the students aware of the fact that for productive skills the number of active vocabulary should be increased and for receptive skills the number of passive vocabulary should be increased.					
25. A good EFL teacher should teach vocabulary according to their frequency in the language.					
26. A good EFL teacher should follow an inductive approach for teaching grammar to the younger students.					
27. A good EFL teacher should follow a deductive approach for teaching grammar to the older students.					
28. In case the purpose of instruction is not grammar, a good EFL teacher should teach grammar inductively.					
29. In case the purpose of instruction is grammar, a good EFL teacher should teach it deductively.					
30. A good EFL teacher should be a good model in pronunciation of at least one standard accent or dialect in English, and should be aware of the different varieties of English accents and dialects.					
31. A good EFL teacher should practice pronunciation by verbatim repetition and should provide more listening input to the students.					
32. A good EFL teacher should implement contrastive analysis in case of difficulty in pronunciation of English by Persian speaking students.					
33. A good EFL teacher should be tidy and organized.					
34. A good EFL teacher should be good-looking.					
35. A good EFL teacher should represent English appearance and clothing.					
36. A good EFL teacher should dress formally in the classroom.					
37. Wearing traditional clothes should be avoided by a good EFL teacher.					
38. A good EFL teacher should try to wear bright colored clothes for kids and younger students.					
39. Wearing darker clothes for older students and adults is preferred by a good EFL teacher.					
40. In teaching language and culture, a good EFL teacher should focus more on the target (English) culture.					
41. Focusing on the source (Persian) culture is necessary because the students should be able to talk about their own culture in English, but teaching English culture is more important.					
42. For less proficient students, a good EFL teacher should focus on global errors.					
43. For students with higher level of proficiency, a good EFL teacher should focus on local errors.					
44. A good EFL teacher should consider the differences among the individuals and their feelings in correcting the errors of students.					
45. An inexperienced teacher should try to observe the experienced teachers' classes and should interact with them in order to be an effective EFL teacher.					
46. Experienced teachers should be able to make use of the recent knowledge of English and EFL teaching by interacting with the teachers who have that knowledge in order to be effective EFL teachers.					
47. A good EFL teacher should be able to make the final decisions in the class.					
48. Providing a student-centered class based on the level of proficiency of the students and their socio-cultural backgrounds is a feature of a good EFL teacher.					
49. A good EFL teacher should try to make use of technology such as cassette players, computers, and video projectors (considering the constraints of the institutes or the schools) in EFL classes.					
50. Making students benefit from the internet and computer in out of class activities is an important task of a good EFL teacher.					
51. Inexperienced teachers should make use of a written lesson plan to be able to manage their teaching, and in order to be effective EFL teachers in their classrooms.					
52. Experienced teachers' lesson plan is mostly in the form of a mental lesson plan.					
53. An effective EFL teacher should provide a flexible lesson plan in order to deal with the unexpected events in a classroom.					
54. A good EFL teacher should make use of both formative (during the semester) and summative (mid-term and final) tests in his/her classes.					

55. A good EFL teacher must be familiar with the basic and delicate aspects of test construction.					
56. A good EFL teacher should evaluate his/her students based on their class activities apart from explicit testing.					
57. A good EFL teacher should attend workshops and conferences and make internet as his/her major source of increasing the knowledge of the language and language teaching.					
58. A good teacher should motivate the students by talking to the students about the benefits of learning English as well as providing them with positive feedback and rapport.					
59. A good EFL teacher should be able to evaluate him/herself based on the improvements of the students, based on the results of their tests, based on his/her own evaluation of him/herself, and finally based on their colleagues' evaluations.					
60. A good EFL teacher should be able to make use of his/her creativity (within the constraints of the schools or institutes) in providing creative tasks and techniques in EFL teaching.					

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