Halo Effect and Students' Perceptions of Their Teacher's Appearance, Gender, and Proficiency with the focus on the Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract

Purpose: Teachers, like other human beings are affected by the fallacy of 'Halo Effect'. Regarding their role in teaching and training students, this study tried to investigate the halo effect in relation to appearance, gender, and proficiency of teachers. **Methodology:** In order to perform such an evaluation, this study used 350 males and female EFL students and 53 males and female EFL teachers of universities and institutes of Karaj. Three questionnaires (appearance, gender, and proficiency questionnaires) were designed and evaluated. The questionnaires were distributed among students and after the students answered them the questionnaires were gathered. **Findings**: The results of this study showed that proficiency was the most important feature for both male and female students. The second important feature for students was teacher's appearance. Gender was the least important feature of a teacher for students. The students think of the proficiency as the most important factor. According to the results of data analysis of students' final marks in real situation (classroom environment), the most important factor affecting the achievement of students in a positive way was appearance of a teacher. Thus, appearance of a teacher can cause halo effect. Teachers and educational system can benefit from the results of this study. **Discussion**: Teachers should be sensitive to proficiency and appearance in order to be better teachers, and educational system can understand strengths and weaknesses of the process of hiring teachers regarding appearance and proficiency.

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1. Introduction

Thorndike (1920, as cited in Grcic, 2008) explained the halo effect as the fallacy of concluding from a perceived single positive trait of a person to the conclusion of a positive assessment of that person. Thus, it is a process of cognitive bias that leads individuals to ascribe particular traits to others based upon some observed characteristics. Accordingly, it is a psychological tendency many people have in judging others based on one feature that they approve of and concluding that the person must have other attractive qualities. This one feature leads to the formation of an overall positive opinion of the individual by that one perceived positive character. According to Langlois, Kalakanis, Rubenstein, Larson, Hallam, and Smoot (2000), our social interactions are influenced by halo effect as they are related with interpersonal characteristics.

According to this, the halo effect can even cloud every part of our personality. The process of teaching and learning has to do with our social interactions which deal with some human beings called teachers. Teachers as human beings have their traits and features that can affect students. Teachers as one of the physical entities in the process of teaching can create the halo effect. This resultant halo effect can be driven from teacher's appearance, gender, or proficiency. This fact is important to the extent that it can affect the learning of students. According to what has mentioned above, there is a need to evaluate the teacher's halo effect. Thus, this study tries to investigate the teacher's halo effect about three features: appearance, gender, and proficiency. Gender is another case here. Thus, the purpose of this study is to assess the halo effect of teachers about their appearance, gender, and proficiency based on related questionnaires.

2. literature Review

This study assessed the following: first, the presence or absence of the halo effect of the teachers can be evaluated based on the answers to the questionnaires. Second, the relation and effect of teacher's appearance, gender, and proficiency and the halo effect can be evaluated. Third, the results of this study may be applied in real situations (classrooms and educational system) to find out the agreement or disagreement of the theoretical results with the actual conditions. Finally, some guidelines about the resultant halo effect of appearance, gender, and proficiency of teachers can be introduced.

This study therefore is going to answer the following questions:1) What is the general idea of students about teachers' appearance, gender, and proficiency regarding learning English? 2)Which gender teacher do students prefer: male or female? 3)Which classes have better achievements: those of teachers with higher grades of appearance or those of teachers with higher degrees of proficiency? 4)What is the most compelling feature of a teacher regarding students' achievement (appearance, gender, or proficiency)?

There are studies which studied features related to halo effect. Palmer and Peterson (2016) in their study 'Halo Effects and the Attractiveness Premium in Perceptions of Political Expertise' tried to investigate the political consequences of the 'halo effect' in which positive traits are ascribed to individuals based on some characteristic. They used a pair of survey experiments. The results showed that there were clear biases in perceptions of respondents' political knowledge. In another word, attractive individuals were viewed as more knowledgeable by interviewers. More attractive individuals were also seen as more persuasive; they seemed to have more political information. These results can be used for the subconscious biases that govern people's daily political lives and understanding of the role of expertise in social interactions. Clayton, Sasser, Marr, Proctor, and Rouanzion (2016) in their study 'Halo Effect Impact on Student Ratings' investigated the effect

of student ratings of professors on the type of biographical information (positive, neutral, or negative). The results showed that students presented with positive information rated the professor's effectiveness more positively than students presented with negative information. The participants were 48 volunteers, ages 17-52 that were recruited through an online research participation system. The process was as the following: participants were assigned into the Positive, Negative or Neutral biography groups by block randomization. The data were collected over approximately two weeks as the questionnaires were administered. The results of this study showed that the participants rated the professor high or low according to the positive or negative biography. The positive description of the professor and the negative description of the professor seemed to be the most important aspect of the memoirs. The findings of the study, also, showed that student rating systems were fundamentally flawed. This can be manipulated by the biographical information presented to students. The researchers suggested that professors could positively influence student ratings by informing students of previous ecclesiastical roles and positive family relationships.

Joye and Wilson (2015) in their study 'Professor Age and Gender Affect Student Perceptions and Grades' assessed teacher gender and age in the process of academic performance. For this purpose, the researchers asked students to rate professor attractiveness as a potential explanation for group differences. The researchers showed a picture of either a young or old male or female professor. At the same time the participants were listening to an audio lecture. The results of the study showed that female students pay more attention to younger professor and teachers. But, there was an interesting point here: students reported the male professors as more efficient than the female professors. The findings, also, showed that younger women were rated as more attractive. It can be said that age and gender bias can affect student evaluations of teaching. The results of the study showed that students acquired higher quiz grades in the older-female condition (Joye and Wilson, 2015, p.126).

Slepian, Ferber, Gold, and Rutchick (2015) in their study 'The Cognitive Consequences of Formal Clothing' tried to test whether wearing formal clothing enhances abstract cognitive processing. They used evidence from five studies. They (2015) mentioned that wearing more formal clothing was associated with higher action identification level and greater category inclusiveness. The results of this study showed that using formal clothing induced greater inclusiveness and enhanced a global processing advantage. Clothing formality and its relation to abstract processing were mediated by felt power.

Marinova and Moss (2014) in an interesting study 'The Smell of Success? The Impact of Perfume-Gender Congruency on Ratings of Attraction and the Halo Effect' mentioned that attraction had revealed the existence of olfactory influences that go beyond pheromonal level. They (2014) said that synthetic fragrances affect not only perception of attraction, but also attribution of beauty-unrelated intrinsic characteristics. According to was mentioned, they investigated the impact of perfume-gender congruency on ratings of attractiveness and any perfume-generated halo effect. They used male faces as the material for investigation in three categorizations of low, medium and high attractiveness. 36 female students rated the faces considering attractiveness, reliability, being outgoing, intelligence, wealth and social competence. Ratings were made in the presence of a female perfume, male perfume, and no fragrance. The results of the study showed that female perfume was more powerful than male perfume. The results, also, revealed that the gender-congruent fragrance heightened attribution of 'halo' characteristics. These results of this study indicated an important point: gender congruent perfume can impact positively on first impressions beyond attractiveness.

Dean (2014) in a study 'A 'Halo' Effect for Inference of Managerial Ability from Physical Appearance' mentioned that physically attractive people are assumed to have more pleasing personalities and better social skills than less interesting people (the 'halo' effect) (p.15). This study, thus, tried to examine the premise that attractive people will be perceived to have more managerial ability than less attractive people. The researchers used six color photos of male politicians as the primary material of the study to be assessed. The participants were in separate groups of respondents ranked or rated the men in these photos for handsomeness and inferred managerial ability. The participant, thus, explained their response. The results of the study showed that for inferred administrative ability a halo effect was detected. The findings showed that participants developed an affective reaction to the men in the photos, leading to inference of personality traits and then estimation of managerial ability.

There are many other studies in addition to above studies but there is no space to mention all of them in this paper. But it can be said that all these studies introduced interesting issues and investigated them. They found interesting conclusions and results. But none of these studies did a triangulation such as the present study; the researcher tried to investigate the proficiency, gender, and appearance of a teacher in relation to halo effect and also, to examine the resultant halo effect of each of these features in the performance of students in a real situation. This is the innovation of this study which makes it worth to perform. It is hoped that the results of this study would be beneficial in the field of teaching and learning, especially for English language teachers and students.

3. Methodology

Participants of the study: There were two types of participants in this study: Participants who were given questionnaires were 350 students, but the complete questionnaires that were gathered were from 219 students of English at the upper intermediate or advanced levels. These levels had been chosen because the students of these levels have the proficiency in the language to the extent that they could evaluate their teachers' proficiency or other aspects related to teaching. They were 81 male and 138 female students in different language institutes of 'Karaj. The other group of participants was the teachers who taught English to the mentioned students. They were 53 English teachers, 26 male teachers, and 27 female teachers. They did not take part in the study directly, but their manners and appearances, genders and proficiency in teaching English provided the answers to the questionnaires. In other words, the questionnaires answered by the students were based on the way these teachers acted.

Information of the participants of Final Marks Evaluation: To evaluate the agreement of the results of the theoretical part of the study and the real situation and to evaluate the results of this study in the academic environment, the researcher provided an additional evaluation whose participants need to be clarified. For this further evaluation, the researcher chose five teachers (two males, three females) whose students' final grades were compared based on teachers' total points of each questionnaire. The teachers were chosen from among the teachers introduced in the previous part based on the following criteria: All five teachers were in the same institute. They passed the same entrance exams and interviews. They, based on the mentioned evaluation tools, had nearly the same proficiency level. They used the same tools and exams for their students (the exams they used were all pre-designed by the institute). Their students were in the same level of proficiency. They used the same method of teaching English (Communicative Language Teaching).

In this study, the researcher used self-made questionnaires (Appendices I-IV) for assessing the resultant halo effect of appearance, gender, and the proficiency of the teachers. These self-made questionnaires were created based on the related features of appearance, gender, and proficiency. The questions of these questionnaires were designed through literature review, interviews, personal experiences of the researcher as an English teacher and a pilot study. The reliability and validity of these questionnaires were checked before their distribution among the students (Cronbach's Alpha was 0/727 for appearance questionnaire, '.·708' for gender questionnaire, and is '.·948' for proficiency questionnaire). The questionnaires which provided the corpus of this study are as follows:

Table 1. questionnaires of the study

Questionnaire	Number of Questions	Type of Questionnaire
General Questionnaire	5	Demographic questions (Available in Appendix I)
Questionnaire of Appearance	10	Likert type (Available in Appendix II)
Questionnaire of Gender	12	Likert type (Available in the Appendix III)
Questionnaire of Proficiency	27	Likert type (Available in the Appendix IV)
Total	54	--------

This study is a comparative quantitative study. In order to accomplish the objectives of the survey, the research design has separate parts that at the end provide a conclusion for this investigation. There was no intervention in the study. For the first part, the quantitative part, the researcher used the self-made questionnaires. The validity and reliability of these questionnaires were assessed through a pilot study. After that the questionnaires were distributed among the students and then their answers were collected.

For the second part of the study and intend to assess the results of the study in real situations, the researcher chose five teachers' (two males and three females) classes among all the teachers and compared the final marks of their students. As these teachers were assessed by the students considering appearance, gender, and proficiency based on the mentioned questionnaires, their total points of each questionnaire are available for each of these teachers. By comparing the final grades of their students, it can be concluded which teacher acquired the best result, regarding appearance, gender, and proficiency. Also, the coincidence of the theory and the real situation can be evaluated.

For the quantitative part which consisted of two parts, first, the researcher provided copies of the questionnaires and gave them to the students. After answering the questionnaires by the students, the questionnaires were collected. For the second part of quantitative analysis, the researcher gathered the final marks of five mentioned teachers' students and then compared their results. These answers provided the base for quantitative data analysis.

In this research, assessment, and investigation of 'Halo Effect' was based on three separate evaluations. The first evaluation was the pilot study of the mentioned questionnaires. 50 students, both male, and female (upper intermediate and advanced levels) were the participants of the pilot study. The results of the pilot study provided the proper basis for applying the primary study.

The second part of the study was a quantitative data analysis of the mentioned questionnaires. The data, the total mark of each questionnaire and the total score for each teacher, gathered from questionnaires given to students were analyzed in three main analyses (regarding students' gender, regarding teaching staff' gender,

regarding teachers' and students' gender). The data analysis of part three was based on the analysis of the final marks of the students of those five teachers. The total score of each teacher was calculated in the previous parts. The mean of their students' final marks was gathered, and then these scores were compared in order to find which teacher's students had the best results (regarding appearance, gender, proficiency).

4.   Finding

Table 2. analysis of students' answers to the questionnaires about their teachers' appearance, gender, and proficiency

		Appearance	Gender	Proficiency
N	Valid	219	219	219
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		37.82	30.45	114.29
Median		38.00	32.00	118.00
Mode		38	33	135
Std. Deviation		5.792	7.847	21.361
Variance		33.542	61.570	456.281
Range		49	48	135
Minimum		0	0	0
Maximum		49	48	135
Percentiles	25	35.00	27.00	106.00
	50	38.00	32.00	118.00
	75	42.00	35.00	130.00

Table 2 is data analysis of students' responses to the questionnaires about their teachers' appearance, gender, and proficiency. In Table 2, students' answers have been considered totally for all teachers and students. According to this Table, students pay more attention to their teacher's proficiency, appearance, and gender respectively.

In the following Table (2), the answers are displayed regarding their teachers' appearance, gender, and proficiency but with the focus on students' gender.

Table 3. analysis of the students' answers to the questionnaires (appearance, gender, proficiency) regarding student's gender

Gender of students			Appearance	Gender	Proficiency
1	N	Valid	81	81	81
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		36.96	31.38	110.02
	Median		37.00	32.00	116.00
	Mode		34[a]	30	135
	Std. Deviation		6.254	7.257	24.281
	Variance		39.111	52.664	589.549
	Range		49	42	135
	Minimum		0	0	0
	Maximum		49	42	135
	Percentiles	25	34.00	30.00	104.50
		50	37.00	32.00	116.00
		75	41.00	36.00	125.00
2	N	Valid	138	138	138
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		38.33	29.91	116.80

Median		39.00	31.00	121.00
Mode		38ᵃ	33	135
Std. Deviation		5.463	8.149	19.097
Variance		29.842	66.407	364.703
Range		35	48	135
Minimum		13	0	0
Maximum		48	48	135
Percentiles	25	35.00	26.00	108.00
	50	39.00	31.00	121.00
	75	42.00	35.00	132.00

Table 3 is the data analysis of the students' answers to the questionnaires (appearance, gender, proficiency). Male students are considered as '1, 'and female students are considered as '2' in Table 3. For both genders, proficiency (mean of male students: 110.02, mean of female students: 116.80) is the most important feature. Appearance and sex are the other essential functions, respectively. Female students compared to male students pay more attention to proficiency and male students, compared to female students, give more attention to the gender of a teacher. However, the difference is not very significant and also male students pay less attention to the appearance of their teachers compared to female students. Also, proficiency is more important for female students.

There was another important factor in this study 'the gender of teacher' and its importance to the students. There were two questions in the questionnaires that mainly focused on the students' preference for their teacher's gender. In fact, these two questions aimed to measure if gender is an important factor for the students or if it can affect the quality of teaching.

Table 4 is the data analysis of question 1 of gender questionnaire for all students without focusing on their gender.

Table 4. data analysis of gender questionnaire, question 1 for all students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	67	30.6	30.6	30.6
	1	69	31.5	31.5	62.1
	2	83	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

According to these data, students preferred female teachers (it should be noted that the difference is very small). One-third of the students did not answer this question. 0 means no answer, 1 means male teachers and 2 means female teachers.

Table 5 is the data analysis of question 1 of gender questionnaire for students regarding their gender. In column of gender, male students are considered as '1', and female students are considered as '2' in Table 5. 0 means no answer, 1 means male teachers and 2 means female teachers.

Table 5. data analysis of gender questionnaire, question 1 for male and female teachers and students

gender	gender teacher			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Unknown	Valid	1	1	100.0	100.0	100.0
1	Male	Valid	0	11	29.7	29.7	29.7
			1	23	62.2	62.2	91.9
			2	3	8.1	8.1	100.0
			Total	37	100.0	100.0	
	Female	Valid	0	17	39.5	39.5	39.5
			1	13	30.2	30.2	69.8

			2	13	30.2	30.2	100.0
			Total	43	100.0	100.0	
2	Unknown	Valid	0	3	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Male	Valid	0	14	31.8	31.8	31.8
			1	17	38.6	38.6	70.5
			2	13	29.5	29.5	100.0
			Total	44	100.0	100.0	
	Female	Valid	0	22	24.2	24.2	24.2
			1	15	16.5	16.5	40.7
			2	54	59.3	59.3	100.0
			Total	91	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 is the data analysis of question 2 of gender questionnaire for all students without focusing on their gender. 0 means no answer, 1 means male teachers and 2 means female teachers.

Table 6. data analysis of gender questionnaire, question 2 for all students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	29	13.2	13.2	13.2
	1	94	42.9	42.9	56.2
	2	96	43.8	43.8	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 is the data analysis of question 2 of gender questionnaire for all students regarding their gender. In column of gender, male students are considered as '1', and female students are considered as '2' in Table 7. 0 means no answer, 1 means male teachers and 2 means female teachers.

Table 7. data analysis of gender questionnaire, question 2 for male and female teachers and students

gender	gender teacher			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	Unknown	Valid	1	1	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Male	Valid	0	3	8.1	8.1	8.1
			1	29	78.4	78.4	86.5
			2	5	13.5	13.5	100.0
			Total	37	100.0	100.0	
	Female	Valid	0	10	23.3	23.3	23.3
			1	18	41.9	41.9	65.1
			2	15	34.9	34.9	100.0
			Total	43	100.0	100.0	
2	Unknown	Valid	1	1	33.3	33.3	33.3
			2	2	66.7	66.7	100.0
			Total	3	100.0	100.0	
	Male	Valid	0	6	13.6	13.6	13.6

		1	19	43.2	43.2	56.8
		2	19	43.2	43.2	100.0
		Total	44	100.0	100.0	
Female	Valid	0	10	11.0	11.0	11.0
		1	26	28.6	28.6	39.6
		2	55	60.4	60.4	100.0
		Total	91	100.0	100.0	

According to the data analysis in the above Tables, generally the students prefer female teachers; however, the difference between male and female teachers is very small. But there is an important point here that should be noted. Having a look at the detailed analysis, we conclude that although there were some data that showed some of the students preferred the teacher of the opposite gender, specifically, male students preferred male teachers and female students preferred female teachers.

Application of Results in Real Situation (Classroom and Educational System)

In order to examine the results of the present study in a real situation, the researcher chose 5 teachers (among the teachers that were under investigation in his study) and their classes and students. This was done in order to understand if the results of questionnaires match with the real situation of students' preference among appearance, gender, and proficiency. To achieve such a goal, the final marks of each teacher's students were gathered and then they were compared.

Table 8. data analysis of five teachers' appearance, gender, and proficiency of an English institute.

Table 8: Analysis of teachers' appearance, gender, proficiency					
teacher			Appearance	Gender	Proficiency
Teacher 1(male)	N	Valid	7	7	7
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		37.43	29.57	114.57
	Median		38.00	31.00	125.00
	Mode		40	20	85[a]
	Std. Deviation		4.392	7.115	21.306
	Variance		19.286	50.619	453.952
	Range		13	18	50
	Minimum		31	20	85
	Maximum		44	38	135
	Percentiles	25	34.00	20.00	86.00
		50	38.00	31.00	125.00
		75	40.00	36.00	133.00
Teacher 2(male)	N	Valid	3	3	3
		Missing	0	0	0
	Mean		34.33	22.00	80.67
	Median		34.00	29.00	107.00
	Mode		33[a]	2[a]	0[a]
	Std. Deviation		1.528	17.578	71.248
	Variance		2.333	309.000	5076.333

		Range	3	33	135
		Minimum	33	2	0
		Maximum	36	35	135
		25	33.00	2.00	.00
	Percentiles	50	34.00	29.00	107.00
		75	.	.	.
Teacher 3(female)	N	Valid	4	4	4
		Missing	0	0	0
		Mean	39.25	34.75	90.00
		Median	38.50	33.00	98.50
		Mode	36	31[a]	41[a]
		Std. Deviation	3.948	4.992	35.033
		Variance	15.583	24.917	1227.333
		Range	8	11	81
		Minimum	36	31	41
		Maximum	44	42	122
		25	36.00	31.25	53.50
	Percentiles	50	38.50	33.00	98.50
		75	43.25	40.00	118.00
Teacher 4(female)	N	Valid	7	7	7
		Missing	0	0	0
		Mean	31.14	27.14	99.57
		Median	37.00	30.00	107.00
		Mode	38	0[a]	0[a]
		Std. Deviation	13.957	13.171	45.306
		Variance	194.810	173.476	2052.619
		Range	39	40	134
		Minimum	0	0	0
		Maximum	39	40	134
		25	32.00	23.00	104.00
	Percentiles	50	37.00	30.00	107.00
		75	38.00	36.00	124.00
Teacher 5(female)	N	Valid	7	7	7
		Missing	0	0	0
		Mean	39.14	31.86	117.57
		Median	41.00	31.00	120.00
		Mode	41	30	120
		Std. Deviation	4.741	2.340	12.012
		Variance	22.476	5.476	144.286
		Range	13	6	38
		Minimum	34	30	97
		Maximum	47	36	135
		25	34.00	30.00	108.00
	Percentiles	50	41.00	31.00	120.00
		75	41.00	34.00	123.00

Table 8 is the data analysis of questionnaires about five teachers. The results show that teacher 3 (female) has the highest grade in appearance, teacher 2 (male) has the lowest grade in proficiency, teacher 5(female) has the highest grade in proficiency, and teacher 4(female) has the lowest grade in appearance. But the results in Table 9 which are about the grades of these teachers' students in final exam reveal interesting findings.

Table 9.data analysis of final marks of the five teachers' students.

Teacher 1(male)	N	Valid	7
		Missing	0
	Mean		82.00
	Variance		109.667
	Range		31
	Minimum		65
	Maximum		96
Teacher 2(male)	N	Valid	2
		Missing	1
	Mean		60.00
	Variance		200.000
	Range		20
	Minimum		50
	Maximum		70
Teacher 3(female)	N	Valid	4
		Missing	0
	Mean		92.50
	Variance		11.000
	Range		8
	Minimum		88
	Maximum		96
Teacher 4(female)	N	Valid	5
		Missing	1
	Mean		80.60
	Variance		53.800
	Range		20
	Minimum		70
	Maximum		90
Teacher 5(female)	N	Valid	6
		Missing	0
	Mean		67.33
	Variance		162.667
	Range		30
	Minimum		50
	Maximum		80

The highest mean of students' grades in final exam (92.50) belongs to teacher 3 (female) who has the highest grade in appearance while the mean of students' grades in final exam (67.33) of teacher 5(female) who has the highest grade in proficiency is one of the lowest mean. The result can show that though the students think the proficiency is the most important feature of a teacher, appearance of a teacher can cause halo effect but unconsciously.

5. Discussion

According to the results, it can be said that due to the quantitative data analysis, proficiency with the mean '114.29 %' was the first most important factor for all students. Appearance and gender with the means of '37.82 %' and '30.45%' were the other important factors for the students respectively. Considering male and female students again the results were the same. In other words, male students and female students separately considered proficiency (male: 110.02, female: 116.80), appearance (male: 36.96, female: 38.33) and gender (male: 31.38, female: 29.91) as the most important features of a teacher, respectively.

Generally, the students prefer female teachers. However, there was no meaningful difference between male or female teachers. They were at the same level of preference for all the students. Considering male and female students, male students preferred male teachers (78.4%) and female students preferred female teachers (60.4%). But entirely the results showed that there was not a great difference between the mean for male (31.5%) and female (37.9%) teachers.

The results showed that the teacher 3 (female) had the highest grade in appearance. Teacher 2 (male) had the lowest grade in proficiency. Teacher 5(female) had the highest grade in proficiency, and teacher 4(female) had the lowest grade in appearance. The largest mean of students' grades in final exam (92.50) belonged to teacher 3 (female) who had the highest grade in appearance while the average of students' grade in final exam (67.33) of teacher 5(female) who had the highest grade in proficiency is one of the lowest means. The results showed that though the students think proficiency is the most important feature of a teacher, the appearance of a teacher can cause halo effect but unconsciously. According to these results, it can be concluded that the most important features of a teacher that can affect the achievement of the students in a positive way are the appearance of a teacher.

The results of this study showed that the teacher has a central role in the process of teaching and learning. Participants of this study rated the proficiency of a teacher as the most important feature of appearance, gender, and proficiency. Considering the second part of the study, the application of the results in a real situation, it can be understood that the students of a teacher with the high rank of appearance had better results compared to other teachers in the study. According to what was mentioned, teachers can benefit from the results of this study. Teachers should be sensitive to their proficiency and most importantly their appearance. Teachers should find and follow guidelines in order to have a good and acceptable appearance. In this case, they can be influential teachers whose students wanted to follow their teacher's traits. Moreover, teachers should assess their proficiency and try to empower their ability in teaching. Following this guideline can be helpful for teachers to be up-to-date and favorable teachers for students. In this sense, they are the teachers, and the educational system seeks to hire. The educational system can also benefit from the results of this study. To have an important system, while there are other affecting factors, the educational system should be sensitive to the process of hiring and assessing teachers. Considering the results of this study, the educational system should be careful about teachers' appearance. This system should provide up-to-date codes and guidelines regarding teachers' appearance which teachers should follow. Also, there should be assessing agents who assess teachers' appearance based on these current codes and guidelines. Regarding the proficiency of teachers, educational system should provide programs to provide teachers with recent teaching methods and materials. Assessing teachers' proficiency, also, should be an important part of this

program. In this case, the validity of teachers and their quality can be insured for having a good educational system with good results that students and finally society can benefit from.

There are many aspects and characteristics related to the halo effect. Among all of them, the researcher could evaluate the appearance, gender, and the proficiency of 53teachers based on the opinions of 219 students gathered through questionnaires about appearance, gender, and proficiency. Having evaluated the other aspects and characteristics for more teachers and gathering the opinions of more students needed more time, cost, and effort beyond the scope and time budget of this study.

The number of participants at the beginning of the study was 350 students. They were given the questionnaires, but only 219 of the questionnaires were sent back to the researcher.

For the part of the application of the results in real situations, among all the institutes and teachers, just five teachers of the same institute had the same criteria, and just that Institute accepted to provide the researcher with the final marks of their students. Other students hardly accepted to be involved in the study.

Also, there were not any pre-designed questionnaires to evaluate such a triangulation of the three mentioned characteristics of a teacher due to the literature review. Thus, the researcher had to design questionnaires based on literature review, interviews, personal experiences of the researcher as English teacher, and pilot study.

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