

Please cite this paper as follows:

Shojaei, R., Bagheri, M. S., & Rassaei, E. (2022). Reconsidering the Global Criteria of Teacher Effectiveness in the Light of Learners' Perceptions and Experts' Observations. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 10 (40), 153-169.

Research Paper

Reconsidering the Global Criteria of Teacher Effectiveness in the Light of Learners' Perceptions and Experts' Observations

Rezvan Shojaei¹, Mohammad Sadeqh Bagheri^{2*}, Ehsan Rassaei³

¹Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
r.shojaei.1393@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
bagheries@gmail.com

³Associate Professor, Department of English Language, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
ehsanrassaei@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study aimed to rediscover the global criteria for English language teacher evaluation. To do so, a large body of research was reviewed, and the characteristics of effective teachers along with their indicators were compiled. Nine characteristics which proved to be the most frequently endorsed by scholars were selected as the global criteria of teacher effectiveness. Then, these criteria were utilized to employ five English language teachers in a language institute in Kerman, Iran. The classroom performance of these teachers and that of five others formerly employed based on some local criteria was observed by the institute supervisor. At the end of the semester, perceptions of the students of both groups of teachers were explored through a questionnaire developed by the authors. Finally, the performances of the two groups of teachers were compared in terms of the students' and the observer's perceptions. The results showed that the teachers employed based on the global criteria of teacher effectiveness outperformed those recruited based on the local criteria. This indicates that the selected criteria of teacher effectiveness can be reliable for English teacher performance evaluation.

Keywords: *Criteria of teacher effectiveness, English teacher employment, Indicators of effective teacher characteristics, Teacher performance evaluation*

تعین ا برای ارزیابی معیارهای مناسب برای ارزیابی عملکرد معلمان زبان انگلیسی بود. تحقیقات زیادی در زمینه شاخصهای یک معلم خوب انجام شده است. اما معیارهای به دست آمده از تحقیقات در شرایط واقعی جهت ارزیابی عملکرد معلمان استفاده نشده اند. تحقیق حاضر این معیارها را برای ارزیابی معلمان انگلیسی استفاده کرد. برای این منظور بعد از مطالعه تعداد زیادی از تحقیقات و کتب مربوطه، نه شاخصه به عنوان معیارهایی جهانی معلم کارا انتخاب شدند و سپس شاخصه های نشان دهنده دارا بودن این معیارها از لایه لایه انتخاب شدند. لایه لایه مربوط به این بخش از تحقیق به صورت کیفی آنالیز شدند. در مرحله بعد جهت بررسی امکان استفاده از این معیارها در ایران، پنج معلم زبان انگلیسی بر اساس این معیارها در یک آموزشگاه زبان در کرمان استخدام شدند. در طول ترم عملکرد این معلمان توسط سوپروایزر آموزشگاه و با نظر گرفتن معیارهای معلم کارا ارزیابی شد. بلافاصله، پایان ترم، نظرات زبان آموزان این معلمان توسط پرسشنامه ای حاوی این معیارها سنجیده شد. همین مراحل برای پنج معلم به با در نظر گرفتن معیارهای دیگری استخدام شده بودند طی شد. داده ها توسط نرم افزار SPSS آنالیز شدند. در نهایت عملکرد دو گروه معلمان مورد مقایسه قرار گرفت. نتایج نشان دادند که معلمهایی که بر اساس معیار جهانی معلم کارا استخدام شده بودند، عملکرد بهتری داشتند. نتایج این تحقیق به انتخاب معلمان کارا و در نتیجه به بهبود کیفیت آموزش زبان انگلیسی کمک خواهد کرد.

واژگان کلیدی: معیارهای مناسب برای ارزیابی عملکرد معلمان، بکارگیری معلم انگلیسی، شاخصه های نشان دهنده لارا بودن این معیارها، ارزیابی معلمان انگلیسی

Introduction

Several studies have confirmed the fact that teachers do influence their students' achievement (Akiri, 2013; Meroni, Vera-Toscano, and Casta, 2015; Sanders and Rivers, 1996 in Tucker and Strong, 2005). This has encouraged the scholars to research the characteristics of effective teachers defined as those who are the most successful in students' learning (Walker, 2008) and make them feel good about it (Tucker and Strong, 2007).

Research on effective teacher characteristics has been done in two forms: some scholars have suggested effective attributes in the form of frameworks of teacher evaluation (Strong, 2007; Danielson, 2013), and some others have selected some criteria and investigated perceptions of teachers and students to come up with the favored characteristics for a teacher (Lowman, 1996; Walker, 2008; Chen, 2012; Bullock, 2015).

In Iran, abundant studies have been done on characteristics of an effective English language teacher (Khaksefidi, 2015; Zamani and Ahangari, 2016; Soodmand Afshar and Hamzavi, 2017); however, all the studies have probed the perceptions of students and those of teachers to discover the characteristics. To ensure that the suggested qualities can, in fact, be indicative of teacher effectiveness, we need to implement them in the educational settings. This study attempts to fill this gap by presenting a list of effective teacher characteristics, which is the result of reviewing a large body of research, and by verifying the fact that the criteria mentioned in the list can be demonstrative of English teacher effectiveness. Thus, the present study can lead to the enhancement of the quality of English language education since not only do the results of it help to select more effective teachers, but they can also be utilized by the teacher trainers to be presented at the teacher education courses.

Literature Review

Criteria of teacher effectiveness have been the concern of researchers in different parts of the world. Several researchers have probed the perceptions of students and teachers in this regard, some of which are reviewed below:

Hajizadeh and Salahshour (2014) studied Iranian teachers' and students' views of a good language teacher. Interestingly, they had nearly the same ideas of effective English teacher characteristics. They believed that good English teachers have an interest in their job and feel responsible for teaching, have a good command of English, use appropriate teaching techniques, have appropriate evaluation methods, emphasize different language skills especially speaking, have mastery over education, and are capable of communicating ideas, they respect their students, and have practical class management skills.

Al-Mahrooqi, et al. (2015) did an investigation in Oman. Teachers and students mentioned several traits to be possessed by an English teacher. Both agreed that an effective English teacher is prepared for the class, speaks and explains clearly, has effective classroom management techniques, is enthusiastic about teaching, treats students fairly, has positive attitudes toward students, and is able to raise students' interest in English lessons.

Finally, the students participating in a study done by Zamani and Ahangari (2016) valued English teachers who have the ability to develop a rapport, have a disciplined classroom, are able to create an entertaining atmosphere, listen to students' points of view, employ communicative language learning techniques, and can draw students' attention to the topic.

General Characteristics of an Effective Teacher

Effective teachers share some common characteristics. This section is a concise review of the studies on this topic done in different countries.

To define the characteristics of an effective teacher, Strong (2007) considers several factors. First is the teacher's verbal ability referring to the ability to convey their ideas productively, and communicate well with the students. The second is education coursework. Strong (2007) believes that qualified teachers understand how pupils learn and this helps them to teach more effectively. Moreover, trained teachers are aware of student's needs, provide students with diverse opportunities to learn, and have strong classroom management skills. The third is teacher certification. Students of certified teachers have high achievements. The fourth is having content knowledge. The fifth is teaching experience. Strong (2007) believes that compared to inexperienced teachers, experienced ones show better planning skills; employ various teaching strategies; and understand students' learning needs, learning style, and interests. The sixth is being caring. Caring teachers understand their students, are encouraging, and have overall love for children. The seventh is fairness and respect which is associated with being consistent and providing opportunities for students to have input into the classroom (Emmer et al., 1980 cited in Strong, 2007). The eighth factor is social interaction with students. Effective teachers involve students in decision making, pay attention to what students have to say, interact directly with students, have a good sense of humor, and motivate learning. The ninth factor is reflection. Effective teachers are reflective practitioners who reflect on their work formally or informally. The tenth is classroom management. Productive teachers establish routines for all daily tasks and needs, arrange smooth transitions and continuity of momentum throughout the day, keep a balance between variety and challenge in student activities, are aware of all actions and activities in the classroom, try to be near trouble spots in the classroom, and encourage attention, anticipate potential problems, find solutions for minor inattention before it becomes a significant problem, have eyes in the back of their heads, prepare the required material before class, and emphasize structure in both student and lesson management. Next is managing and responding to student behavior. Effective teachers react to inappropriate behavior as soon as possible, maintain clear rules, and reinforce the expectations for positive behavior. Planning and organizing for instruction is another factor. Focusing on instruction, maximizing instructional time, expecting students to achieve, and planning for teaching are the subcategories of this factor. The last factor is monitoring students' progress related to providing students with meaningful feedback, considering homework as necessary, and using assessment to meet students' needs.

In terms of what a teacher has to know and do, Danielson (2013) considers four broad categories: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Regarding planning and preparation, she highlights the importance of lesson plans, clear and accurate explanations, accurate answers to students' questions, giving informative feedback to students, and knowing students. Concerning the second category, classroom environment, she believes that teachers should create an atmosphere of respect and rapport, which happens by using body language indicative of warmth and caring, physical proximity, politeness, encouragement, and fairness. She continues to say that teachers need to have the ability to manage classroom procedures, including management of instructional groups, management of transitions, materials and supplies, and performance of classroom routines. They should manage students' behavior by setting: expectations for students, monitoring students' behavior, and responding to students' misbehavior. The organization of physical space must also be taken into consideration. Related factors are accessibility, arrangement of furniture, and arrangement of physical resources. Respecting the third category, instruction, Danielson (2013)



recommends that teachers communicate well with their students. They should communicate expectations for learning, directions for activities, and provide students with adequate explanations of the content. Using both oral and written language as well as employing questioning and discussion techniques have also been suggested. Teachers need to engage students in learnings by developing activities and assignments and using student groupings when doing activities. Using assessment in instruction is also essential to monitor students' progress and learning. The fourth category, professional responsibilities, includes reflecting on one's teaching, maintaining accurate records of students' completion of assignments and their progress in education, as well as communicating with students' families.

Bullock (2015) investigated teachers' and students' ideas of what makes a good teacher using an open-ended questionnaire. The results of the study showed that students liked teachers who use technology in the classroom, have broad content knowledge, have engaging lessons, are patient with students, are helpful, kind, funny, positive, provide a safe environment, listen to students, give minimal amounts of homework, trust students and have high expectations of them. However, teachers believed that to be effective, a teacher should be well- prepared, organized, engaging, flexible, a continual learner, creative, firm, patient, passionate, dependable, understanding, caring, as well as a team player. Moreover, they should have a broad content knowledge, create a safe environment, communicate with parents, form strong relationship with students, and have high expectations of students.

Based on what was reviewed above, it seems that teachers have nearly the same personal qualities regardless of the subject matter they teach. To check whether teachers with these qualities make effective English language teachers, this study tried to answer the following question:

RQ. What are the global criteria of teacher effectiveness in terms of learners' perceptions and experts' observations of classroom performance?

Method

Design

The present study mainly applied a qualitative research design. The data were collected through document review and questionnaire completion. According to Creswell (2009), in qualitative studies, the researchers collect data themselves by examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing participants, and from multiple sources.

Materials

The materials used in this study comprised the books and research papers on effective teacher characteristics, which were reviewed to discover the global criteria of teacher effectiveness and the qualities indicative of them.

Participants

Three groups of people participated in the present study, 1) the Ph.D. supervisor of a language institute in Kerman, 2) 10 English language teachers, and 3) 197 intermediate and upper-intermediate English language learners from intact classes,

Instruments

To collect the data, several instruments were used, which are elaborated below:

Observation Coding Sheet

An observation sheet containing the global criteria of teacher effectiveness and their indicators was used to investigate the institute supervisor's perception of the recruited teachers' classroom performance. This observation sheet was designed in a 5-point Likert scale form.

Questionnaire

A 53-item 5-point Likert scale questionnaire developed by the authors was used to discover the students' perceptions of the recruited teachers' productivity. Prior to the data collection, the questionnaire was piloted, resulting in a reliability index of 0.9.

Procedures

The first step taken to conduct the study was discovering the global criteria of teacher effectiveness. To do so, a large body of the related documents, including books and research papers, were reviewed, and all the recommended criteria were compiled. To find the most frequently suggested criteria, categories entitling the recommended effective teacher characteristics extracted from the literature were made. The scholars who believe in each characteristic to be a sign of teacher effectiveness were put in the categories. Next, a manual frequency analysis was done to detect the most frequent characteristics. The result of the manual frequency analysis was nine characteristics considered as the global criteria of teacher effectiveness. These nine characteristics were put into two main categories: pedagogical characteristics and personal characteristics.

The next step was to discover the qualities indicative of possession of effective teacher characteristics. For this purpose, another review of the documents was done, and the related attributes were extracted.

Next, the criteria of teacher effectiveness were used to employ five English language teachers in a private language institute in Kerman, Iran. The recruitment process took place through several stages. First, the applicants filled in an application form and had an interview in English with the educational manager. Then, they took a mock IELTS. Those who got a band score of 7 were chosen to give demos. The first demo was done in the presence of the educational manager and other applicants, which lasted for twenty minutes. The applicants whose performances were acceptable gave the second demo done in actual classes, which lasted 45 minutes. Finally, five applicants whose performances were desirable at all the stages were employed. To evaluate the recruited teachers' performances during the semester, the supervisor observed their classes twice and recorded the information on an observation sheet developed on the basis of the global criteria of teacher effectiveness. Moreover, the same coding sheet was used to observe the performance of 5 teachers who were formerly employed based on the local criteria. These teachers had taken the same mock IELTS to be evaluated in terms of general English knowledge. Nevertheless, they had given one demo in which only mastery of language teaching methods had been checked, and the personal characteristics were ignored.

To explore perceptions of the students, a 53-item 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was developed by the authors, using the global criteria of teacher effectiveness. To pilot the questionnaire, it was completed by twenty students twice with a time interval of two weeks. The reliability index proved to be 0.9, which is desirable. Next, almost at the end of the semester, the questionnaire was distributed among 97 students of the teachers employed based on the global criteria. Later on, using SPSS, frequency analysis was done to find out students' perceptions of their teachers' productivity. To investigate the students' perceptions of the employed teachers, the

same questionnaire was given to 100 students, and frequency analysis was run to come up with the criteria confirmed by the students.

Finally, having identified the students' perceptions and those of the observer, they were qualitatively compared to check whether they were compatible. The result of these comparisons would indicate whether the selected criteria of teacher effectiveness were dependable.

Results

Based on the first-round review, nine most frequently-mentioned characteristics of effective teachers found by the scholars were identified and listed below.

A. Pedagogical Criteria of an Effective Teacher

- 1.
 2. Being familiar with the teaching methods
 3. Having planning and preparation
 4. Having classroom management skills
 5. Having clarity of presentation
-

B. personal Criteria of an Effective Teacher

6. Having the ability to build rapport
 7. Providing a safe environment
 8. Being motivating
 9. Having enthusiasm for the job and students
-

Having identified the suggested characteristics of effective teachers, finding the qualities indicative of these characteristics was imperative. To do so, the second-round review of the documents was done, with the following results:

Familiarity with teaching methods is the first trait in the category of pedagogical characteristics. Language teachers should go through the general standard steps when teaching language skills (pre-task, while-task, post-task). Moreover, they need to be familiar with different ways of presenting and practicing the new vocabularies and grammatical forms, as well as ways of teaching all aspects of pronunciation (Chastain, 1988; Harmer, 2012).

The second characteristic, having a broad content knowledge, in the field of language teaching refers to the mastery of the four language skills and subskills, which can be assessed through the international general English tests.

Planning and preparation is the third characteristic. Effective teachers have a plan for every session of the class, they prepare the materials and teaching aids in advance (Bullock, 2015; Strong, 2007), they divide the lesson into relevant sections (Jones et al., 2006), carefully link the learning objectives and activities, and consider students' attention span and learning style in their plan (Strong, 2007).

The fourth characteristic is having classroom management skills. Teachers who are adept at managing their classes give appropriate instruction for the activities i.e., they adjust their language to their students' level when giving instructions, mention the task aim, explain whether the task is done in pairs or groups, etc., inform the students of the mode of the task as well as what they are required to do as the result of the task (Scriviner, 2011). These teachers can decide on the type of group to form, they inform the students of the required time for doing the task, monitor the students, summarize the lesson and answer the questions that arise, encourage students' reflection on what they have learned, they can draw students' attention (Scriviner, 2012), can manage students' behavior (Danielson, 2013), and last but not least they keep the teacher talking time short (Harmer, 2012).

Having clarity of presentation is the fifth characteristic related to the category of pedagogical characteristics. Teachers with this characteristic speak fluently, explain the information effectively (Chesebroand Mc Croskey, 2001), know the subject matter, are articulate, give useful examples, and do not present too much material at a time (Westwood, 1996).

The literature approves of the characteristics mentioned above as being indicative of teacher effectiveness; however, the present study aims to put it into practice, the result of which is reported in the following sections.

As for the students' perception of the classroom performance of the teachers recruited based on the global criteria, the results of the questionnaire are shown in Table 1 below in terms of frequencies and percentages.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Pedagogical Characteristics of Teachers Employed Based on the Global Criteria

		Choices					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Teaching Methods	Count	6	63	213	361	125	768
	%	0.8%	8.2%	27.7%	47.0%	16.3%	100.0%
Content Knowledge	Count	0	2	14	180	92	288
	%	0.0%	0.7%	4.9%	62.5%	31.9%	100.0%
Plan and Preparation	Count	0	14	217	233	16	480
	%	0.0%	2.9%	45.2%	48.5%	3.3%	100.0%
Clarity of Presentation	Count	0	11	61	223	185	480
	%	0.0%	2.3%	12.7%	46.5%	38.5%	100.0%
Management Skills	Count	2	41	278	359	184	864
	%	0.2%	4.7%	32.2%	41.6%	21.3%	100.0%

Total	Count	8	131	783	1356	602	2880
	%	0.3%	4.5%	27.2%	47.1%	20.9%	100.0%

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents, 63.3 %, believed that their teachers were familiar with teaching methods. On the other hand, only 9% of the respondents held the opposite view, while 27.7% partially agreed that their teachers had this characteristic. The results also indicated that 94.4% of the EFL learners agreed that their teachers had broad content knowledge; 4.9% partially agreed with it, while only 0.7% did not hold such a view. Regarding the EFL teachers' planning and preparation, it was indicated that 51.8% of the students agreed that their teachers had planning and preparation; 45.2% partially agreed, while 2.9% didn't agree with it. Concerning EFL teachers' clarity of presentation, 85% of the respondents agreed that their teachers' presentation enjoyed clarity; 12.7% partially agreed, while only 2.3% did not had the opposite view. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents, 62.9 %, believed that their teachers exercised classroom management skills; 32.2% partially agreed with the idea, while 4.9% didn't believe that their teachers had classroom management skills.

The second part of the questionnaire evaluated the teachers' personal characteristics, based on local and global, demonstrated in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Personal Characteristics of Teachers Employed Based on Global Criteria

		Choices					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Build a Rapport	Count	18	42	158	343	399	960
	%	1.9%	4.4%	16.5%	35.7%	41.6%	100.0%
Create a Safe Environment	Count	1	6	63	173	333	576
	%	0.2%	1.0%	10.9%	30.0%	57.8%	100.0%
Having Enthusiasm for Job and Students	Count	4	17	104	131	128	384
	%	1.0%	4.4%	27.1%	34.1%	33.3%	100.0%
Being Motivating	Count	1	18	77	155	37	288
	%	0.3%	6.3%	26.7%	53.8%	12.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	24	83	402	802	897	2208
	%	1.1%	3.8%	18.2%	36.3%	40.6%	100.0%

These results indicate that the majority of the respondents, 77.3 %, believed their teachers were able to build a rapport, and 16.5% partially agreed with this opinion. On the other hand, only 6.3% of the respondents held the opposite view. The results also show that 87.7% of the EFL learners agreed with the idea that their teachers were able to provide them with a safe environment; 10.9% partially agreed with their teachers having this ability, while only 1.2% did not hold such a view. The majority of the respondents, 67.4 %, believed that their teachers had enthusiasm for their jobs; 27.1% partially agreed, while only 5.4% of the respondents held the opposite view. It was also indicated that 66.6% of the EFL learners agreed that their teachers were motivating; 26.7% partially agreed with it, while only 6.6% did not hold such a view. On

the whole, it seems that that the majority of the students were satisfied with their teachers' performances.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Pedagogical Characteristics of Teachers Employed Based on Local Criteria

		Choices					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Teaching Methods	Count	87	227	270	197	35	816
	%	10.7%	27.8%	33.1%	24.1%	4.3%	100.0%
Content Knowledge	Count	0	42	133	114	17	306
	%	0.0%	13.7%	43.5%	37.3%	5.6%	100.0%
Plan and Preparation	Count	22	82	273	123	10	510
	%	4.3%	16.1%	53.5%	24.1%	2.0%	100.0%
Clarity of Presentation	Count	30	121	171	155	33	510
	%	5.9%	23.7%	33.5%	30.4%	6.5%	100.0%
Management Skills	Count	45	237	398	210	28	918
	%	4.9%	25.8%	43.4%	22.9%	3.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	184	709	1245	799	123	3060
	%	6.0%	23.2%	40.7%	26.1%	4.0%	100.0%

Table 3 displays the frequencies and percentages for the respondents' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical characteristics. Based on the results, the majority of the respondents, 33.1 %, partially agreed that their teachers were familiar with teaching methods. This was followed by 27.8% who disagreed with the issue. On the other hand, 24.4% of respondents agreed that their teachers were familiar with teaching methods. The results also indicated that the majority of the respondents, 48.5%, agreed that their teachers had broad content knowledge; 43.5% partially agreed with this idea, while only 13.7% did not hold such a view. The majority of the respondents, 53.5%, partially agreed with their teachers' having planning and preparation; 26.1% of the students agreed with it. However, 20.4% had the opposite opinion. Regarding EFL teachers' clarity of presentation, 37.1% of the respondents agreed that their teachers' presentation enjoyed clarity; 33.5% partially agreed with it, while 29.6% held the opposite view. Most of the respondents, 43.4 %, partially believed that their teachers exercised management skills, while 30.7% disagreed with it. On the other hand, 26% of the respondents believed that their teachers possessed management skills.

The second part of the questionnaire evaluated the EFL teachers' personal characteristics, the results of which are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Personal Characteristics of Teachers Employed based on Local Criteria

		Choices					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Build a Rapport	Count	141	279	259	251	90	1020
	%	13.8%	27.4%	25.4%	24.6%	8.8%	100.0%
Create a Safe Environment	Count	23	98	154	193	144	612
	%	3.8%	16.0%	25.2%	31.5%	23.5%	100.0%
Having Enthusiasm for Job and Students	Count	78	153	129	46	2	408
	%	19.1%	37.5%	31.6%	11.3%	0.5%	100.0%
Being Motivating	Count	21	110	131	36	8	306
	%	6.9%	35.9%	42.8%	11.8%	2.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	263	640	673	526	244	2346
	%	11.2%	27.3%	28.7%	22.4%	10.4%	100.0%

As can be seen, the majority of the respondents, 41.2 %, disagreed that their teachers were able to build a rapport. Nevertheless, 33.7 % agreed with their teachers' ability to show affinity, while 25.4% of respondents partially agreed with this idea. The results indicated that 55% of the EFL learners agreed that their teachers were able to provide a safe environment; 25.2% partially agreed with it, while 19.8% did not hold such a view. Most of the respondents, 56.6 %, believed that their teachers did not have the enthusiasm for their jobs, and 31.6% partially agreed with it. However, only 11.8% of respondents agreed with this opinion. It was indicated that 42.8% of the EFL learners disagreed that their teachers were motivating. Another 42.8% partially agreed with their teachers' ability to motivate students, while only 14.4% did not have this opinion. Overall, the students were not pleased with their teachers' performances, especially regarding the personal characteristics.

Table 5 below displays a summary of the students' perceptions of the teachers employed based on the global criteria and those of the supervisor.

Table 5

Students' and Supervisor's Perceptions of the Pedagogical Characteristics of the Teachers Employed Based on Global Criteria

Pedagogical Characteristics	Students' Perceptions (the most significant percentage among all)	Observer's Perception
Familiarity with teaching methods	47% agree	agree
Having broad content knowledge	62.5% agree	agree

Having planning and preparation	48.5% agree	Strongly agree
Having clarity of presentation	46.5% agree	agree
Having classroom management skills	41.6% agree	agree

Comparison between the observer's evaluation of the classroom performance of the teachers employed based on the global criteria and those of their students is elaborated below.

Regarding the first component of the pedagogical characteristics, familiarity with teaching methods, the observer agreed that on the whole, the classroom behavior of the teachers indicated that they use proper teaching methods and that they go through the required stages to teach the language skills and subskills. Reviewing students' perceptions shows that 47% of them agreed that their teachers had proper teaching methods. Therefore, the ideas of the observer and those of the students seem to be compatible in this regard.

The second component is having broad content knowledge. Observation results revealed that the observer confirmed the broad content knowledge of the teachers. As 62.2% of the students acknowledged it, the perceptions of the observer and students are in line.

With respect to the third component, having planning and preparation, the ideas of the two groups are a bit different. While the supervisor strongly agreed with the teachers' having planning and preparation, 48.5% of the students agreed with it.

Clarity of presentation is the fourth component. Based on the observation results, the supervisor approves of the teachers' being articulate which is in line with the students' perceptions as 46.5% of them believed that their teachers' instruction enjoyed clarity.

The fifth and the last component of pedagogical characteristics pertains to teachers' classroom management skills. Like the observer who believed that these teachers were skillful at managing their classes, the majority of the students agreed that their teachers had good classroom management skills.

Table 6

Students' and Supervisor's Perceptions of the Personal Characteristics of the Teachers Employed Based on Global Criteria

Personal Characteristics	Students' Perceptions	Observer's perception
Having the ability to build a rapport	41.6% agree	Strongly agree
Having the ability to create a safe environment	57.8% agree	Strongly agree
Having enthusiasm for the job and the students	34.1% agree	agree
Being motivating	53.8% agree	agree

Respecting the first component of personal characteristics, the ability to build a rapport, the supervisor believed that these teachers are very good at developing a proper relationship with their students. 46.1% of the students confirmed that their teacher could build rapport. Therefore, the observer and students' ideas are compatible.

In terms of teacher's ability to provide a safe environment, the supervisor's and students' ideas seem to be perfectly in line. The supervisor strongly agreed that the teachers provide their students with a safe environment, and 57.8% of the students strongly agreed with it.

As to having enthusiasm for the job and students, 34.1% of the students agreed that their teachers were enthusiastic. The results of the supervisor's observations revealed that the teachers were interested in their students and in what they did as a job. Thus, the ideas are consistent.

Respecting the fourth component, being motivating, 53.8% of the students agreed that their teachers were motivating like the supervisor who agreed that the teachers showed this characteristic in class.

All in all, the ideas of the observer and those of the students regarding the classroom behavior of the teachers employed based on the global criteria seem to be compatible, which indicates the teachers are doing the job well.

A comparison between the observer's ideas of the quality of the performance of the teachers recruited based on the local criteria and those of the students is also required. Table 7 and Table 8 represent perceptions of the majority of the students and those of the observer.

Table 7. Summary of Students' and Supervisor's Perceptions of the Pedagogical Characteristics of the Teachers Employed Based on Local Criteria

Pedagogical Characteristics	Students' Perceptions (the biggest percentage among all)	Observer's Perception
Familiarity with teaching methods	33.1% partially agree	Partially agree
Having a broad content knowledge	43.5% partially agree	Agree
Having planning and preparation	53.5% partially agree	Partially agree
Having clarity of presentation	33.5% partially agree	Disagree
Having classroom management skills	43.4% partially agree	Partially agree

Regarding the first component of pedagogical characteristics, the two groups are in agreement. The observer partially agreed with the teachers' familiarity with the teaching methods, and 33.1% of the students had exactly the same idea. According to the results, the observer agreed that the teachers had a broad content knowledge. However, 43.5% of the students partially agreed with the issue.

As for the third component of pedagogical characteristics, the observer partially agreed that the teachers are prepared for the class, and over half of the students had exactly the same idea as the observer. Thus, the ideas seem to be in line. The ideas of the observer and those of the students seem not to be compatible in terms of teachers' having clarity of presentation. While the observer disagreed that the teachers could present the content clearly, 33.5% of the students reported that the teachers' presentations enjoyed clarity.

Having classroom management skills was another characteristic about which the observer and the students were in agreement. The observer partially agreed with the idea that the teachers had the required skills for classroom management, and 43.4% of the students had the same idea.

Table 8

Summary of Students' and Supervisor's Perceptions of the Personal Characteristics of the Teachers Employed Based on Local Criteria

Personal Characteristics	Students' Perceptions	Observer's perception
Having the ability to build a rapport	27% disagree	Disagree
Having the ability to create a safe environment	31.5 agree	Partially agree
Having enthusiasm for the job and the students	37.5% disagree	Disagree
Being motivating	42.8% partially agree	Disagree

As to the ability to build a rapport, the observer disagreed that the teachers are able to develop proper relationship with their students. 27% of the students had exactly the same idea, and 13.8% strongly disagreed that their teacher had this quality. On the whole, as only a small percentage of the students think that their teacher is good at building a rapport, it is concluded that the observer and the students' perceptions are compatible. The observer partially agreed that the teachers provided the students with a safe environment, while 37.5% of the students disagreed that their teachers had this characteristic. So, the ideas of the observer and those of the students are not compatible. Concerning enthusiasm for the job and the students, the ideas seem to be in line. The observer disagreed that the teachers are enthusiastic; 37.5% of the students disagreed as well. The observer disagreed that the teachers motivated their students well. According to the results, 42.8% of the students partially agreed that their teachers were motivating. Therefore, the ideas are not exactly the same in this regard.

Altogether, observer's perceptions and those of the students of the teachers employed based on the global criteria are compatible. However, the perceptions of the observer's and those of the students of the teachers employed based on the local criteria are different in terms of teachers' being motivating and having clarity of presentation, and close but a bit different with regard to teachers' content knowledge and their ability to provide a safe environment.

Overall, the perceptions of the students, and those of the observer are compatible regarding the majority of the teachers' characteristics.

The last aim of the study was to explore whether the teachers employed based on the global criteria outperformed those employed based on the local criteria. To this end, the percentages of the students who were satisfied with the teachers' classroom performance and observer's ideas about the two groups were compared. The results are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9
Comparison of the Two groups of Teachers' Performances

Characteristics	Students of the teachers recruited based on global criteria		Students of the teachers recruited based on local criteria	
	Satisfied students	Observer	Satisfied students	Observer
Familiarity with teaching methods	63%	agree	28.4%	partially agree
Broad content knowledge	94.4%	agree	42.9%	agree
Planning and preparation	51.8%	strongly agree	26.1%	partially agree
Clarity of presentation	85%	agree	36.9%	disagree
Classroom management skills	62.9%	agree	26%	partially agree
Rapport	77.3%	strongly agree	33.4%	disagree
Safe environment	87.8%	strongly agree	55%	partially agree
Enthusiasm for the job	67.4%	agree	11.8%	disagree
Being motivating	66.6%	agree	14.4%	disagree

As can be seen from the table, the majority of the students of the teachers employed based on the global criteria were satisfied with their teachers' classroom performance. The same is true regarding the supervisor who observed their classes. On the contrary, only a few of the students of the teachers employed based on the local criteria seemed to be content with their teachers' performances. The observer wasn't very pleased either. This verifies the fact that the teachers employed based on the global criteria of teacher effectiveness outperformed those employed based on the local criteria, which implies that the chosen criteria can truly be indicative of teacher effectiveness.

Discussion

Selecting effective language teachers who can help students make the best use of the class is crucial. For this purpose, we need to know the required characteristics of an effective language teacher. Numerous studies have investigated teachers' and students' perceptions in this respect. The present study made use of the results of previous studies to find the most frequently-mentioned characteristics of an effective teacher. Besides, the factors indicative of possession of these qualities by a teacher candidate were found, and were employed to recruit English language teachers. The perceptions of these teachers' students and the institute supervisor were also explored. Moreover, the performances of the teachers employed based on the global criteria of teacher effectiveness were compared to those of the teachers employed based on the local criteria. The results indicated that the teachers employed based on the global criteria outperformed those employed based on the basis of local criteria.

The results of the studies done by Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2014), Chen (2012), Hajizadeh and Salahshour (2014), and Miller (1987) have the most similarity with the results of the present study. The identified common characteristics are: having a good command of English i.e., broad content knowledge, building proper relationship with the students, being friendly with and respecting students, having classroom management skills, managing pleasant classroom environments, clarity of presentation, being prepared for the class, and being enthusiastic about their job and their students.

The results of the present study are also in line with those of the studies conducted on the qualities of effective teachers regardless of the subject matter they teach. The common characteristics are as follows: clarity of presentation, broad content knowledge, creation of safe environment, classroom management skills, and ability to build a rapport.

According to the obtained results, there seems to be a dearth of research on implementing effective teacher characteristics to make sure they work in real situations. The present study attempts to fill in the gap in the context of Iran. It should be done in other contexts as well to increase the chances of generalizability.

Conclusion

This current study aimed to explore and reconsider the effective teacher characteristics recommended by the majority of the scholars, and examine them in a foreign language learning context. To do so, the researchers reviewed the documents including the books and research papers on effective teacher characteristics, and came up with nine frequently mentioned characteristics which are considered as the global criteria of teacher effectiveness; that is, familiarity with teaching methods, broad content knowledge, planning and preparation, classroom management skills, clarity of presentation, ability to build a rapport, creation of safe learning environment, motivation, and enthusiasm for the job and the students. Moreover, the factors indicative of possession of these characteristics were extracted from the documents. Then, these data were used to employ five English language teachers. The classroom behavior of these teachers was compared with those employed based on some local criteria. The results indicated that the teachers employed based on the global criteria outperformed the other group. This means that the identified global criteria of teacher effectiveness are reliable.

This study has implications for language teachers, language teacher educators, and language teacher employers. Language teachers can make use of the results of this study to work on their weaknesses and become effective teachers. Language teacher educators can incorporate

the criteria of teacher effectiveness into their teacher training courses to educate effective prospective teachers. Using the results of this study, language teacher employers can employ effective teachers and consequently improve the knowledge level of the students studying at their language schools.

As a final word, the present study was done in the context of Iran. It is recommended that other researchers replicate it in other contexts to discover whether the results are generalizable. It is also suggested that researchers work on the way these criteria can be taught in language teacher training courses to provide the teacher candidates with more fruitful classes in which they learn far more than language teaching methods.

References

- Akiri, A.A. (2013). Effects of teacher effectiveness on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(3), 105-111. DOI: 10.5901/jesr.2013.v3n3p105.
- AL-Mahrooqi, R., Denman, Ch., Al-Siyabi, J., & Al-Mahrooqi, F. (2015). Characteristics of a good EFL teacher: Omani EFL teacher and student perspectives. *Sage Open*, 5(2), 1-15. DOI: 10.1177/2158244015584782.
- Bullock, M. (2015). What makes a good teacher? Exploring students and teacher beliefs on good teaching, *Rising Tide*, 7, 1-30. Retrieved from <http://www.smcm.edu/mat/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2015/06/Bullock-2015.pdf>
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Chen, J. (2012). Favorable and unfavorable characteristics of EFL teachers perceived by university students of Thailand. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(1), 213-219. DOI:10.5539/ijel.v2n1p213.
- Chesebro, J.L., & Mc Croskey, J.C. (2001). The relationship of teacher clarity and immediacy with student state receiver apprehension, affect, and cognitive learning. *Communication Education*, 50 (1), 59-68. DOI: 10.1080/03634520109379232
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Danielson, Ch. (2013). *Framework for teaching evaluation instrument*. Princeton: Danielson Group.
- Hajizadeh, N., & Salahshour, N. (2014). Characteristics of effective EFL instructors: Language teachers' perceptions versus learners' perceptions. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 3 (1), 202-214. DOI: 10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v3n.1P.202
- Harmer, J. (2012). *Essential teacher knowledge*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Khaksefidi, S. (2015). Foreign language teaching in Iran: A model for effective EFL teaching in the Iranian context. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5 (5).1060-107. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0505.22>.
- Lowman, J. (1996). Characteristics of exemplary teachers. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 65, 33-40. DOI: 10.1002/tl.37219966508.
- Meroni, E., Vera-Toscano, E., & Costa, P. (2015). Can low skills teachers make good students? Empirical evidence from PIAAC and PISA. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 37,308-323. DOI: 10.1016/j.jpmod.2015.02.006.

- Miller, P. (1987). Ten characteristics of a good teacher. *English Teaching Forum*, 25 (1),36-38. Retrieved from [http://www.scirp.org/\(S\(i43dyn45teexjx455qlt3d2q\)\)/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=713418](http://www.scirp.org/(S(i43dyn45teexjx455qlt3d2q))/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=713418).
- Scriviner, J. (2012). *Classroom management techniques*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Soodmand Afshar, H., & Hamzavi, R. (2017). An investigation into characteristics of Iranian EFL teachers of senior secondary schools and language institutes. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 5(1), 21-36. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1132551.pdf>.
- Strong, J. (2007). *Qualities of effective teachers*. Virginia: ASCD, Alexandria.
- Tucker, P. D., & Strong, J. H. (2005). *Linking teacher evaluation and student learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/104136.aspx>.
- Walker, R. J. (2008). Twelve characteristics of an effective teacher: A longitudinal, qualitative, quasi-research study of in-service and pre-service teachers' opinions. *Educational Horizons*, 87 (1), 61-68. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ815372>.
- Westwood, P. (1996). Effective teaching. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 21(1), 66-84. DOI: 10.14221/ajte.1996v21n.1.5.
- Zamani, R., & Ahangari, S. (2016). Characteristics of an effective English language teacher as perceived by learners of English. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 4 (14), 69-88. Retrieved from http://jfl.iaun.ac.ir/article_17138.htm.

