

Full Length Research

Assessment of Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy, English Proficiency and Teaching Strategies: The Case of English Teachers in Seven Selected High Schools of Guraghe Zone

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The main purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy beliefs of Guraghe Zone Secondary Schools English Language teachers drawn from seven High Schools in the academic year 2009 E.C. Thirty (30) EFL teachers teaching English language at Secondary and Preparatory Schools located in different Woredas of the Zone participated in filling the questionnaires. The data were collected through a self-report questionnaire consisting of three subscales which in turn comprised of different items. The items in the questionnaires were adapted from the literature in the field. The EFL teachers' perceptions of their teaching efficacy in terms of personal abilities to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and their perceived language proficiency level were assessed. A modified version of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001 cited in Eslami-Rasekh, Z. & Fatahi Azizullah, 2008) was used to assess efficacy for management, engagement, and teaching strategies. Also one other subscale, i.e., self-report English proficiency was used. The findings showed that the teachers' perceived efficacy was positively correlated with self-reported English proficiency. The results also show that the more efficacious the teachers felt, the more inclined they were to use communicative based teaching strategies. For the purpose of this study, the researchers employed a simple descriptive qualitative method of data analysis. The findings of the present study are hoped to have implications for the improvement of teaching English language in a high school setting by raising the teachers' awareness about their beliefs regarding their Self-efficacy, English proficiency, and teaching strategies. Moreover, the findings would have practical significances to enhance high school students' overall achievement in learning the language as a result of their teachers' raised awareness regarding their perceptions about their ability, proficiency and methods of teaching. Therefore, the study highlights teachers' central role in language teaching settings and the need for a closer inspection of teacher -related variables.

Key words: Self-Efficacy, English Proficiency, Teaching Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding teachers' perceptions and beliefs about their effectiveness is important because teachers, heavily involved in various teaching and learning processes, are practitioners of educational principles and theories (Jia, Eslami and Burlbaw, 2006). Teachers have a primary role in determining what is needed or what would work best with their students. Findings from research on teachers' perceptions and beliefs indicate that these perceptions and beliefs not only have considerable influence on their instructional practices and classroom behavior but also are related to their students' achievement (Grossman, Reynolds, Ringstaff & Skkes, 1985; Hollon, Anderson & Roth, 1991; Johnson, 1992; Morine-Dersheimer, 1983; Prawat & Anderson, 1988; Wilson & Weinberg, 1988). Thus, knowing the perceptions and beliefs of teachers enables us to make predictions about teaching and assessment practices in classrooms. Understanding the perceptions and beliefs of teachers would help us make predictions/ to predict teaching and assessment practices / the classroom practices of teaching and assessment.

As the literature on teachers' perception reveals, teachers' beliefs about their own effectiveness, known as *teachers' efficacy*, underlie many important instructional decisions which ultimately shape students' educational experiences (Soodak & Podell, 1997, p.214). Teacher efficacy is believed to be strongly linked to teaching practices and student learning outcomes. For this reason, the aim of this study was to assess the high school English teachers' perceived efficacy, English proficiency and instructional strategies they have been applying in their English classrooms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although a number of studies have investigated teacher efficacy in different subject matters, little research if any has been conducted to explore the perceived efficacy of English as a Foreign Language Teachers in different ESL or EFL contexts. Because of the fast worldwide spread of the English language, the number of English language teachers has increased tremendously over the last decades. Since English as a Foreign Language teachers become a focus of research and pedagogical interest in applied linguistics, the issue of their English language proficiency is gaining significance (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). Among the self-perceived challenges that the English as a Foreign Language Teachers face are the lack of teacher confidence, biased attitudes of students and other teachers because of their nonnative status, as well as English language needs (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Although language proficiency is often listed as an area of interest in many

papers (Medgyes, 1994; Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Britt-Griffler, 1999; Mahboob, 2004; Pasternak & Bailey, 2004; Brinton, 2004; Brady & Gulikers, 2004; Lee, 2004), there are few articles that explore the question in detail. In their 1994 survey of 216 native and nonnative EFL teachers in different countries, Reves and Medgyes found that 84% of the NNES subjects acknowledged having problems with vocabulary and fluency aspects of the language; other areas of difficulty included speaking, pronunciation, listening comprehension, and writing. Similarly, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) report that 72% of their nonnative speaking graduates student subjects admitted that their insufficient language proficiency impeded their teaching.

In spite of what previous studies revealed, there is still a need to examine English language teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in terms of personal capabilities to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and their perceived English proficiency level as well as their teaching strategies in teaching the language. Moreover, there is not any study of this kind that has been conducted to address this topic in the country in general and in the Guraghe Zone High Schools in particular. Thus, in order to partially fill this gap, this study will replicate what previous findings revealed by exploring the relationship between three major variables: *sense of self-efficacy beliefs, English proficiency and instructional/teaching strategies* among high school English teachers in Guraghe Zone, considering that both teaching tasks and the teachers' assessment of their capabilities form part of their efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Based on the research presented above, language proficiency seems to be a factor related to EFL teachers' feelings of self-efficacy. Therefore, one of the aims of this study was to examine the relationship of/between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and language/ English proficiency as well as teaching strategies in Guraghe Zone High Schools.

For the purpose of this study, the following four research questions are designed as conceptual framework to guide the study:

1. What are the perceived levels of self-efficacy for interactive engagement, classroom management, and teaching strategies among High School English Teachers in Guraghe Zone?
2. What are the levels of self-reported English proficiency of Guraghe Zone high school English teachers in the four major language skills?
3. What self-reported pedagogical strategies do Guraghe Zone high school English teachers use to teach English?

4. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' sense of self- efficacy and teaching techniques, and students' learning outcomes and/or academic achievements?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to address the following general and specific research objectives:

General Objective

The main objective of this study was to examine English teachers' perceptions about their sense of self- efficacy beliefs, English proficiency and teaching strategies they have been using in teaching English.

Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study was intended to:

- find out the English teachers' sense of self- efficacy beliefs, English proficiency levels and instructional(teaching) strategies as they perceive these traits as far as teaching English is concerned.
- assess the English language teachers' self-reported English proficiency levels.
- examine the English teachers' self-reported pedagogical strategies they use in teaching the language.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

If this study is conducted properly and become successful, it will have the following significance contributions for both the English teachers and the high school students of the Guraghe Zone:

- The English teachers will examine their perceptions about their sense of self- efficacy, English proficiency, and instructional strategies and the effects of these factors on their students learning and achievement in the language.
- The study will raise English teachers' awareness about their perceived sense of efficacy, English proficiency and teaching strategies they have been using in teaching the language.
- The students will benefit from the findings of this study and become successful students in learning the language as a result of their teacher's perceptual changes the study could bring on them regarding their sense of self- efficacy, English proficiency and instructional strategies, which are crucial in teaching and learning English.
- Moreover, the findings of this study will have implications for language improvement centers to provide intensive

training for newly deployed/novice and in-service English teachers so as to help them improve their English proficiency and pedagogical strategies to teach the language effectively.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This part of the paper discusses those previous works which are conducted by other researchers in the field and which are related to the present study so as to support the findings of the study. Attempts have been made to review the works of other researchers that have been conducted outside Ethiopia and in other subject areas other than the English language.

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Teacher sense of efficacy, defined as a teacher's "*judgment of his or her own capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning*" (Tschannen- Moran & Hoy, 2001, cited in Akbari, R. and Karimi, N, 2010), is now regarded as a relevant variable in educational research, especially in relation to teacher performance and student achievement gains (Good & Brophy, 2003).

It is also argued that teacher efficacy may influence student achievement through teacher persistence (Good & Brophy, 2003). Teachers with high efficacy take responsibility for student learning and may view student failure as a push for greater effort to improve achievement. These teachers spend more time monitoring and working with their students (through whole-group instruction, for example), providing the means for higher levels of student achievement. Efficacious teachers are more likely to implement instructional strategies to enhance student learning, rather than just covering the curriculum. They also take more risks and have confidence in overcoming classroom challenges, which contributes to higher student achievement (Good & Brophy, 2003).

In contrast, teachers with low efficacy level feel they have only minimal influence on students' learning outcomes. Such teachers give up more easily when confronted with difficult situations, are less resourceful, and often feel that students cannot learn because of extenuating circumstances (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1997). Such teachers tend to create classroom cultures that "undermine students' sense of efficacy and cognitive development"(Bandura, 1995, p. 20) and rely on extrinsic motivation or punishment to get students to study. According to Hoy (2000), pre-service teachers with a low sense of teacher efficacy have an orientation toward control, take a pessimistic view of students' motivation, and rely more on strict classroom regulations, extrinsic rewards, and punishments to make students

study. Teachers who lacked a secure sense of teacher efficacy were reported to "show weak commitment to teaching, spend less time in subject matters in their areas of perceived inefficacy and devote less overall time to academic matters" (Bandura, 1995, p. 20).

Teachers' sense of efficacy can potentially influence both the kind of environment that they create as well as the various instructional practices introduced in the classroom (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, teachers with a high sense of efficacy are confident that even the most difficult students can be reached if they exert extra effort; teachers with lower self-efficacy, on the other hand, feel a sense of helplessness when it comes to dealing with difficult and unmotivated students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). The literature widely documents the pervasive influence of self-efficacy beliefs and corroborates social cognitive theory that places these beliefs at the roots of human agency (Bandura, 2001).

There are two major dimensions of teachers' perceived efficacy discussed in the literature on teachers' sense of efficacy: Personal Teaching Efficacy (PTE) and General Teaching Efficacy (GTE) (Coladarci, 1992; Soodak & Podell, 1997; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Personal Teaching Efficacy refers to *teachers' beliefs about their own ability to make a difference in their students' learning*, whereas General Teaching Efficacy comprises *teachers' beliefs about the power of factors outside of the school and teachers' control in affecting student performance*. Both PTE and GTE were the two items measured in the earliest teachers' efficacy studies headed by Rand Corporation (Armor et al., 1976; Berman et al., 1977) which asked teachers to rate their responses to two statements based on a five-point Likert scale:

(a) "When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment," (GTE)

(b) "If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students"(PTE).

On the other hand, other researchers have treated teacher efficacy as a one-dimensional construct (Evans & Tribble, 1986; Guskey, 1988). Yet another group of researchers have argued that teacher efficacy is multidimensional and should be examined differently according to specific situations and tasks (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Teachers' efficacy beliefs have also been studied with reference to their behavior in the classroom, which in turn helps students' academic growth. Efficacy influences the effort teachers invest in teaching, the goals they set for their classes, and their level of aspiration (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007); in addition, teachers with a strong

sense of efficacy often tend to manifest greater levels of planning and organization (Allinder, 1994). They are also more open to new ideas and tend to experiment with new methods and strategies to better meet the needs of their students (Berman, et al., 1977; Guskey, 1987; Stein & Wang, 1988). Efficacy beliefs influence teachers' persistence when things do not go smoothly and enhance their resilience in the face of setbacks (Tschannen-Morgan & Hoy, 2001).

Greater efficacy makes teachers less critical of students when they make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986) and pushes them to work longer and better with a student who is struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers with a higher sense of efficacy show greater enthusiasm for and are more inclined towards teaching, feel more commitment to teaching and are more likely to stay in the profession (Burley, et al., 1991; Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982).

According to Strong, H. J. (2002), a teacher's sense of efficacy has an impact on how he/she approaches instructional content and students. While efficacy does change for teachers as they encounter new experiences, such as materials and grade levels, they are more likely to have additional positive experiences as they reflect on these new experiences. Teachers' confidence in their ability to facilitate the learning and understanding of material by students is observable by others. In particular, when teachers are confident, they communicate the belief of their own efficacy to students.

The Relationship between Teachers' Efficacy and Other Factors

Teacher efficacy has been linked to several personal and contextual variables, important teacher behaviors, and student outcomes. Guskey (1988) and Gaith and Yaghi's (1997a) studies examined, among other things, how teachers' sense of efficacy affects their attitudes toward implementing instructional innovation. Guskey's (1988) study involved 120 elementary and secondary school teachers who attended a staff development program which focused on mastery learning of instructional strategies and instructional innovations for the study's participants. The questionnaire used in the study consisted of four sections that combined a variety of scales. The results of the study showed that teachers who regarded instructional innovation practices (mastery of learning strategies) as congruent with their present teaching practices rated them as easier to implement. Similarly, those who deemed instructional innovation as very different from their current teaching methods rated them as more difficult to implement and therefore less important.

The relation among teachers' teaching experience, efficacy, and attitude toward the implementation of Using

the 16-item version of the Gibson and Dembo (1984) teacher efficacy scale, Soodak and Podell (1997) looked at how teaching experience influenced teacher efficacy among 626 elementary and secondary pre-service and practicing teachers in the greater New York metropolitan area. The main finding from this study was that for the elementary teachers, personal teaching efficacy was initially high during the pre-service teaching years but in the first year of teaching, this sense of personal efficacy fell dramatically. However, with more years of teaching experience, their personal efficacy gradually increased but their sense of their own effectiveness never reached the same levels achieved by secondary -level teachers. On the other hand, the secondary teachers in this study were more homogeneous and stable in their personal efficacy beliefs.

Chacon (2005), meanwhile, looked at self-efficacy of a group of 100 EFL middle school teachers in Venezuela and how this related to their self-reported English proficiency. Using the short version of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale based on Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001), and two other subscales (self-reported proficiency and pedagogical strategies), Chacon (2005) found that teachers' perceived efficacy was positively correlated with self-reported English proficiency. As for the relation between teachers' sense of efficacy and their use of pedagogical strategies (communicative -oriented vs. grammar-oriented), the results indicated that the efficacy did not have an influence over the kind of strategies these teachers preferred. The EFL teachers in this study seemed to be more inclined toward adopting grammar-oriented methods of teaching.

Goker (2006) studied the impact of peer coaching on self-efficacy and instructional skills of EFL pre-service teachers in Northern Cyprus. Using Bandura's (1995) General Self-Efficacy Scale, Goker found that peer coaching improved pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. The findings of this study, similar to Hoy and Woolfolk(1990) and Sia's (1992) study, show that experiential activities, such as teaching practicum or other mastery experiences seem to have a great impact on self-efficacy of pre-service teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Description of Study Area and Sample

The study was carried out in seven randomly selected High Schools found in the Guraghe Zone in the academic year 2009 E.C. In this Zone, there are about 23 High Schools located in different Woredas. Of these numbers, only seven High Schools were selected through simple random sampling technique to serve as sources of data in order to achieve the purpose of the study.

Participants of the Study

For the purpose of this particular study, 30 English Language teachers drawn from seven secondary and preparatory schools found in different Woredas of Guraghe Zone were participated as sources of data. To select the respondents of the study, a simple random sampling technique was used. The 30 teachers who participated as respondents in the study are teaching English as a Foreign Language to high school students ranging from grades 9-12 and the teachers have teaching experiences ranging from 5 to 25 years. Regarding their qualifications, the majority of them are BA Degree holders and the rest are MA degree holders. The particular secondary schools from which the respondents were selected are Yaberus Secondary and Preparatory School, Wolkite Secondary School, Agena Secondary and Preparatory School, Mekicho Millennium Secondary School, Butajira Secondary and Preparatory School, Emdibir Secondary and Preparatory School, and Hawariat Secondary and Preparatory School.

Data Collection Instrument

To gather the necessary data from the respondents, the researchers have prepared a questionnaire that consists of four sections.

Questionnaire

In order to gather the necessary data from the participants of the study, a self-reported questionnaire consisting of three categories: Self-efficacy, English Proficiency and Teaching Strategies was prepared and used. The content of the questionnaire was adapted from the literature in the area. The items used in the questionnaire were revised and modified with the help of colleagues for the purpose of clarity and appropriateness of the items and finally, after the revision was done, the researchers piloted the questionnaire with some selected English teachers other than the subject of the study. The purpose of the pilot study was to check the clarity of the items, time of administration, and how different items function. Thus, based on the result of the pilot study, the questionnaire was revised and some items which were irrelevant were rejected and replaced with other items.

Data Analysis Procedure

The questionnaire coming from the respondents was organized, categorized and tabulated in a manageable form. Then, responses given to the questionnaires were tallied according to their types and similarities for ease of interpretation. After the process of tallying was over, the following numerical values were assigned to the responses provided to the Five-point Likert Scale Items:

5=To a great extent, 4= To some extent, 3= To a small extent, 2= To a lesser extent, 1= Nothing at all for Part One items; 5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 1= No Idea for items in Part Two and Almost Always=5, Usually =4, Sometimes=3, Rarely =2, and Almost Never =1 for items in Part Three. Next, the responses were analyzed and interpreted accordingly. To analyze the data gathered through the questionnaires, the researchers employed both quantitative descriptive and quantitative procedures of data analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Data Analysis

The data collected by means of questionnaires was analyzed as follows in table forms followed by verbal interpretation of the results.

Efficacy for Student Engagement, Class Management, and Instructional Strategies

The descriptive statistics for the self-efficacy beliefs for students' interactive engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies are displayed in Table 1 showing the range of **1** (*Nothing at all*) to **5** (*To a great extent*). Thus, 15(50%) of the respondents said that they to some extent motivate students who show low interest in learning English and 12(40%) of them said that they motivate students who show low interest in learning English to a great extent. 16(53.3%) of the respondents agreed that they make the English class enjoyable for all students to a great extent whereas 10(33.4%) of them said that they make the English class enjoyable for all students to some extent. Similarly, 16(53.3%) of the teachers said that they can make students believe that they can do well in English to a great extent. Most of the teachers, that is, 19(63.4%) said that they make students appreciate the potential benefits associated with learning English to a great extent.

With regard to managing attendance in the English class, 13(43.3%) of the respondents said that they can maintain high attendance in the English class to a great extent whereas 12(40%) of them said that they maintain high attendance in English class to some extent. Similarly, 13(43.3%) of the teachers said that they can get students turn in assignments or papers promptly to some extent whereas 11(36.7%) of them said that they can get students turn in assignments or papers promptly to a great extent. The majority of the respondents, that is, 19(63.3%) said that they can calm down a student who is noisy or uncooperative in the English class to a great extent and 8(26.7%) of them said that they can calm down a student who is noisy or uncooperative in the

English class to some extent. 15(50%) of the respondents agreed that they can establish a classroom management system with each group of students to a great extent and 12(40%) of them said that they do the same to some extent. Similarly, 15(50%) of the teachers admit that they can use a variety of assessment strategies in their English class to a great extent and 9(30%) of them said that use a variety of assessment strategies in their English class to some extent. Most of the respondents, that is 19(63.3%) of the teachers agreed that they can provide an alternative explanation or examples when students are confused to a great extent and 7(23.3%) of them do this to some extent. Similarly, 19(63.3%) of them said that can craft good questions for their students to a great extent and 8(26.7%) of them agreed to this item to some extent. Finally, 15(50%) of the respondents said that they can implement alternative teaching strategies when a certain strategy does not work to some extent, whereas 10(33.4%) of them agreed that they implement alternative teaching strategies when a certain strategy does not work to a great extent.

Perceived English Language Proficiency

The respondents of this study perceived themselves as more proficient in reading (60%) and writing (43.3%) respectively, and less proficient in speaking (16.7%) and listening (20%). High proficiency in reading indicates that the English teachers in these schools give more emphasis to reading skill. As displayed, item 3 received the highest value (60%) of all items, especially more than the speaking and listening skills. This indicates that the teachers perceived themselves as fairly fluent in their use of English for instructional purposes. With regard to speaking, the teachers rated themselves as less able to use strategies to maintain a conversation (item 2), which could be related to their strategic competence. In addition, writing a paragraph or writing a short essay in English was perceived to be the easiest. Writing business and personal letters was seemed to be the most difficult skill. This is again a reflection of a highly academic orientation to English learning and teaching in EFL contexts. Teachers considered themselves to be least proficient in listening, especially in watching English/BBC or CNN news and English films without subtitles and understanding English speakers using common idiomatic expressions in their daily talks.

As can be seen from the table above, there were 12 items of efficacy for English proficiency that ask the teachers to give their opinions whether they are applicable to them. Of these 12 items the first 3 items (1,2 and3) were focused on the communicative skills; the second 3 items(4,5and 6) were related the listening skills of the respondents; the next 3 items(7, 8 and 9) were focused on the reading abilities and the remaining 3

items (10,11 and 12) were devoted to the writing skills. Accordingly, 17(56.6%) of the teachers expressed their agreement that in face-to-face interaction with an English speaker, they can participate in a conversation in a normal speed. Whereas 11(36.7%) of them said that they strongly agree in such a way that in face-to-face interaction with an English speaker, they can participate in a conversation in a normal speed. 21 (70%) of the respondents agree that they know the necessary strategies to help maintain a conversation with an English speaker. And 8(26.7%) of them strongly agree that they know the necessary strategies to help maintain a conversation with an English speaker. When the respondents were asked whether they feel comfortable using English as the language of instruction in their classroom, 15(50%) expressed as agree and 13(43.3%) of them strongly agreed to this item. With regard to items that aimed at assessing the teachers' listening skills, most the teachers, that is, 25 (83.3%) agreed that they can understand the meanings of common idiomatic expressions used by English speakers. Again a majority 24(80%) agreed that they can understand when two native English speakers talk at a normal speed. On the other hand, 16 (53.4%) of them agreed that they can watch English news and films without subtitles.

When the teachers were asked about their reading skills, the majority, 20(66.7%), of the teachers agreed that they can draw inferences or conclusions from what they read in English. And also 19(63.3%) of them agreed that they can understand English magazines, newspapers, and popular novels and 11(36.7%) strongly agreed to this item. Whereas the majority 21(70%) of the teachers agreed that they can figure out the meanings of unknown words in English from the context. With regard to the remaining three items that focused on the writing skills, most of the respondents, that is, 23(76.7%) agreed that they can easily write business and personal letters in English and can always find the right words to convey what they want to say. Whereas, 7(23.3%) of them strongly agreed to this item. Again a large number of the teachers, that is, 19(63.3%) agreed that they can fill in different forms in English such as a job application form, a bank account form, etc. Whereas, 10(33.4%) of them strongly agreed to this item. Finally, 18(60%) of the teachers agreed that they can write a paragraph or an essay in English on a topic of their knowledge or interest. Whereas, 12(40%) of them strongly agreed that they can write a paragraph or an essay in English on a topic of their knowledge or interest.

While the teachers were asked to rate their proficiency in the four major language skills, 17(56.7%) of them said that they are fluent in speaking; 5(16.7%) said that they are excellent in speaking and the rest 8(26.6%) said that they are good at speaking. With regard to the listening skill, 14(46.7%) of them said that they are fluent in listening; 10(33.3%) said they are good at listening and

the remaining 6(20%) said that they are excellent in listening.

With regard to the reading skill, 18(60%) of the respondents said that they are excellent in reading; 11(36.7%) of them said they are fluent and the remaining 1(3.3%) said they are good at reading. On the other hand, an equal number of respondents, that 14(43.3%) said they are excellent and 14(43.3%) said they are fluent in writing skill respectively. Whereas 4(13.4%) of them said that they are good at writing.

Self-reported Use of Teaching Strategies

The descriptive statistics for the English Teachers' self-reported use of teaching strategies are shown in Table 3 below. The teachers were asked to rate their use of teaching strategies in the English classroom using a Five-point scale ranging from 5 (Almost Always) to 1(Almost Never) and the frequency and percentage values given to the items in the table were interpreted verbally below the table.

The teachers, 13(43.4%) reported using memorization for new vocabulary (item 2) and sentence translation (item 3) as least frequently used activities and reliance on meta linguistic explanations of complex sentences (item 6, 30%) as the most frequently used grammar-related activity. As for the communication-oriented instructional strategies, having dialogues with peers in English (item 9, 53.3%) as well as creating real-life problem-solving situation (item 10, 60%) received the highest ratings. In contrast, the EFL teachers' use of original English movies or incorporation of video-mediated language learning in class was reported to be the least frequently-used strategy among the teachers (item 7, (6.7%)). Some of the respondents said that they usually ask their students to memorize new vocabularies or phrases without showing them how to use the words or phrases in context. Using mother tongue to explain difficult terms and asking students to translate sentences into their mother tongue received the lowest ranks by the respondents. 11(36.7%) of the respondents agreed that they usually use grammatical rules to explain complex English sentences to their students. The majority, that is, 17(56.7%) of them said that they usually pay more attention to whether students can produce grammatically correct sentences than whether they can speak English with fluency.

With regard to the remaining 5 items which are communicatively related ones, 14(46.7%) of the teachers said that they usually give students the opportunity to get into groups and discuss answers to problem-solving activities. 16(53.7%) of them said that they almost always make their students to converse with one another in English and encourage them to find opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. A large number,

that is, 18(60%) of the respondents admitted that they usually present students with real-life situations and ask them to come up with responses or answers in English that are appropriate to these situations. Most of the respondents 13(43.4%) said that they never play audio tapes that feature native English speakers' conversation exchanges and ask students to answer questions related to the conversation and 17(56.6%) of them admitted that they never play English films and videos in class and engage student in discussions about the films or videos. Therefore, playing audio tapes and English films or videos in class are not appropriate to the participants of this study.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

On the basis of the data analyzed, the results found from the analysis of the data suggest the following aspects of interest. First, the study shows that the teachers in this study feel more efficacious in applying instructional strategies than in managing an EFL class. They also perceived their efficacy to motivate and engage students to learn English not as high as their efficacy for teaching strategies. Second, the teachers perceived their reading skill to be the most highly developed language skill and listening skill to be the least developed language skill. This is similar to the findings of a previous study (Eslami, R.Z., 2008). Third, the teachers reported that their use of grammatically oriented teaching strategies is lower than that of communicatively oriented strategies.

The most important result of this study was the positive relationships between the perceived level of language proficiency and sense of self-efficacy. The higher the teachers' perceived proficiency in language skills, the more efficacious they felt.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the premise that teachers are key agents of change (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1999) and that their self-efficacy should be considered in the successful implementation of educational practice, these findings suggest implications for programs concerned with professional development of teachers. School administrators should develop intervention programs either to maintain or enhance teachers' sense of efficacy. Since language proficiency was related to a teacher's sense self-efficacy, it is suggested that teacher education programs and schools should provide English language enhancement classes for EFL teachers in order for them to maintain or improve their language proficiency. English language teachers need adequate preparation in all four

skills so that they could build a strong sense of efficacy to use the language and engage students in learning English.

Recommendations

Since this study was conducted in a particular school settings and in a particular point of time and assessed only the English Language Teachers' sense of efficacy beliefs in terms of English proficiency, teaching methods and teaching strategies, further research is needed in order to determine the various factors that contribute to teachers' sense of efficacy across different fields of study. The teaching experience of the teachers in this study ranged from 1-11 years. Further research is needed to examine how the difference in years of experience influence the perceptions of teachers and their sense of efficacy and under what conditions efficacy is maintained and enhanced. More specifically, it would be important to examine the role of such factors as teachers' English language enhancement, professional preparation, readiness to teach, and in-service training in maintaining and enhancing teachers' sense of efficacy.

The findings in this study are based on self-reported data which has some inherent limitations. The desirability factor, meaning that teachers may have reported what they perceived to be desirable, is a limitation of this self-reported data. It is therefore important to investigate whether and under what conditions teachers actually implement communicatively oriented teaching strategies they reported. Observational studies need to complement the results of this study and determine the difference or similarity of actual use of teaching activities with the reported data. It would be insightful to investigate students' perceptions and compare it with that of teachers (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004).

Further studies should look at the personal and environmental factors collectively in explaining teacher efficacy. The construct of teacher efficacy should be further developed to reflect the standards and competencies that EFL teachers in different settings are expected to perform. Longitudinal studies should follow teachers to determine if personal and environmental factors influence teacher efficacy at different points throughout the teacher development process.

Moreover, it would be necessary to examine the relationships between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and English proficiency levels, pedagogical strategies and students' learning outcomes.

Finally, it would be necessary to make a comparative analysis of the perceived self-efficacy of teachers in different regions of the country or at national level and different subject areas. Such a study would make it possible to reveal how different factors might interact with teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching and learning settings.

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