

Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Al-Hussain Bin Talal University Students of English

Dr. Mahmoud Sulaiman Bani Abdelrahman

Dr.muwaafaq saleem basarah

Dr-Intisar Aldarabah

Al-Hussain Bin Talal University

المخلص

خصائص معلم اللغة الانجليزية الفعالة كما يراها طلبة قسم اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة الحسين بن طلال

هدفت الدراسة إلى استقصاء آراء طلبة قسم اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة الحسين بن طلال حول خصائص معلم اللغة الانجليزية الفعالة . تكونت عينة الدراسة من 240 طالب (92 ذكور و 138 إناث) من كافة المستويات ما نسبته حوالي 52% من المجتمع كاملا. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم استخدام أداة استخدمت من قبل باحثين آخرين في إيران مع إجراء تعديلات بسيطة بما يتناسب والبيئة الأردنية. تكونت الأداة من 46 فقرة. حاولت الدراسة الإجابة عن سؤالي الدراسة وهو كيف يرى طلبة قسم اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة الحسين بن طلال خصائص معلم اللغة الانجليزية الفعالة وهل هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تعزى لجنس الطالب او مستواه الدراسي او تفاعل بينهما. وقد تم استخدام المتوسطات الحسابية والانحرافات المعيارية وتحليل التباين الثنائي للكشف عن الفروق. توصلت الدراسة إلى أن جميع الخصائص الموجودة في الأداة مهمة ويجب أن تتوافر في معلم اللغة الانجليزية وكما أشارت إلى ذلك العديد من الدراسات من خلال مراجعة الأدب التربوي . وأيضا توصلت إلى أن هناك تفاعل بين الجنس ومستوى الطالب في النظر لخصائص معلم اللغة الانجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: (خصائص المعلم، المعلم الفعال، معلم اللغة الانجليزية)

Abstract

This study aimed to find how do the students of English language Major in Al-Hussain Bin Talal University perceive the characteristics of effective English Language teacher and if there are significant differences among the students' perceptions referred to gender and level of education or interaction between them. The sample of the study was 240 students (92 male and 148 female) who are all the students in the English Department at the mentioned university. The researcher used the questionnaire which was developed by Shishavan, H and Sadeghi, K (2009). The researcher used the first part only which consists of 46 Likert scale. Shishavan, H and Sadeghi, K (2009) calculated the internal consistency index of which was to be 0.94 using Cronbach's Alpha. The present researcher found the Cronbach Alpha and it was 0.90. the finding of the study revealed that all items are important to be the characteristics of the English language teacher. Also, there are differences among the sample's means on qualities of an English language teacher due to gender and level of education.

Keywords: Teacher's characteristics, Effective teacher, English language teacher

Introduction and Background of the Study

English is taught in Jordan nowadays from the kindergarten schools. As a result of that, the Ministry of Education is in need for qualified English language teachers. So, universities in Jordan have one common major which is available in all of them that is English language major. Also, graduates for such a major not only are going to be teachers, but also they can be in different locations.

The teacher is a need to be good and effective in his/her carrying out his/her teaching process. A lot of students were seen through research that they like or dislike schools because of their teachers. As a result of that, educationalists agreed that the most important factor that students still remember after leaving schools is the teacher not methods or techniques or anything else. The researcher sees that the teacher in his practices and through his teaching period as the one who distributes pictures to learners about himself. So, the teacher should do his best to have a good picture that can be given to students through doing his job properly. In general, to be good and effective means distributing good and effective pictures to students.

Being an effective teacher in the times of Socrates and Aristotle was "to be a good person who attracted students" as cited in King (1981). Grover (1991) signified that traditionally being an effective teacher involved such skills as being effective classroom manager, providing sufficient wait time, maximizing time on task, reviewing homework, and providing time for guided

practice. Osborne (1993) noted that effective teaching meant teaching each student effectively. What worked well for one student might be ineffectual for another. Hootstein (1994) expressed that teacher needed to know what was effective and what was not when it came to motivating students. According to Hootstein, the ten most used strategies utilized by effective teachers to motivate students were (a) to have student role-play characters in situations, (b) to organize projects that resulted in the creation of products, (c) to play games with students for review, (d) to relate history to current events and students' lives, (e) to assign students to read historical novels, (f) to use thought-provoking questions, (g) to invite guest speakers from the community, (h) to show videos and films, (i) to organize cooperative learning activities, and (j) to provide small scale hands-on experiences.

Ron (1994) wrote some principles that ESL teachers should have been taught. The teacher should:

- 1- Learn his/her students' names.
- 2- Establish authority from the beginning.
- 3- Be overly prepared.
- 4- Always consider the learners' needs when preparing for each lesson.
- 5- Be prepared to make changes to or scrap his/her lesson plan.
- 6- Find out what teachers already know.
- 7- Be knowledgeable about grammar
- 8- Be knowledgeable about the learners' culture.
- 9- Not assume that his/her class textbook has the language that his/her students need or want to learn.
- 10- Not assume that the class textbook will work.
- 11- Choose his/her class textbooks very carefully.
- 12- Not neglect useful vocabulary teaching.
- 13- Proceed from more controlled activities to less controlled ones.
- 14- Not neglect the teaching of listening.
- 15- Turn regular activities into games or competition.
- 16- Motivate his/her students with variety.
- 17- Not leave the learners in the dark.
- 18- Be enthusiastic and should not do it just for the money.
- 19- Show interests in the students as individuals.
- 20- Allow opportunities to communicate directly with students.
- 21- Allow time for free communication.
- 22- Use humor to liven up the class.
- 23- Show an interest in the students' native language.
- 24- not have pets.
- 25- Circulate.

- 26- Make his/her instructions short and clear.
- 27- Speak up, but should not break anyone's eardrum.
- 28- Not talk too much.
- 29- Not talk too slow.
- 30- Be sensitive to his/ her students.
- 31- Not be a psychiatrist.
- 32- Respect both slow and fast learners.
- 33- Not loose his/her cool.
- 34- Be frank.
- 35- Be a coach.
- 36- Be fair and realistic in testing.
- 37- Not overcorrect.
- 38- Be reflective.
- 39- Keep in shape.
- 40- Laugh at himself/herself sometimes.

Tuckman (1995) mentioned that effective teachers were the ones whose students learned and grew the most. Fullan (1993) indicated that to be effective, the professional teacher became a career long learner of more sophisticated pedagogic and technologies and was able to form productive collaborations with colleagues, parents, community agencies, and businesses. Fullan's (1993) opinion, effective teachers should consistently (a) locate, listen to, and articulate their inner voice, (b) develop risk-taking mentalities, (c) trust process as well as people, (d) appreciate the total person in working with others, (e) commit to working with colleagues, (f) redefine their role to extend beyond the classroom, and (g) balance work and life. To be an effective teacher, Fullan claimed the teacher required the knowledge commitment, and skill to:

- 1- Work with students in an equitable, effective and caring manner by respecting diversity in relation to ethnicity, race, gender, and special needs for each learner.
- 2- Be active learners who continuously sought, assessed, applied, and communicated knowledge as reflective practitioners throughout their careers.
- 3- Developed and apply knowledge of curriculum, instruction, principle of learning, and evaluation needed to implement and monitor effective and evolving programs for all learners.
- 4- Initiate, value, and practice collaboration and partnerships with students, colleagues, parents, community, government, and social and business agencies.
- 5- Appreciate and practice the principles, ethics, and legal responsibilities of teaching as a profession.
- 6- Develop a personal philosophy of teaching that was informed by and contributed to the organizational, community, societal, and global contexts of education.

According to Ornstein (1995), the effective teacher was the one who coped with a complex classroom environment and simplified mainly through experiences by attending to a small number of important tasks. Campbell Ligon (2001) conducted a study to examine the perceptions of administrators and teachers in grades 9 through 12 in Putnam country, Tennessee, regarding effective teaching. The researcher used the survey data from secondary school teachers and administrators. She used two-data-gathering instruments. Some of her results were the largest group of participants based on department were from English. Teachers with master degree and more teaching experience provided the largest educational level.

Borg (2006) examined the definitions of over 200 practicing and prospective English language teachers from a variety of contexts about the distinction between language teachers and those of other fields. In terms of content, language teaching was regarded to be more complex and varied than other subjects. In terms of methodology, in the a fore-mentioned study, the methods, the activities and the material used by or available to English Language teachers were reported to be different from those in other subjects. It was also found that English language teaching methodology was more progressive than that of other subjects, and English language teachers needed to be more up-to-date to cope with advanced and progressive nature of language teaching methodology. English language teachers were also supposed to have closer, more relaxed, and generally more positive relationships with learners in comparison to other teachers.

Park and Lee (2006) investigated the characteristics of effective English language teachers as perceived by teachers and students in high schools in Korea, with a self-report questionnaire consisting of three categories: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. Their findings indicated that on the whole the teacher's perceptions of characteristics important for an English language teacher to possess differed significantly from-those of the students in all three categories, with the teachers ranking English proficiency the highest and the students ranking pedagogical knowledge the first.

Shishavan,H and Sadeghi, K (2009) conducted a study to characterize qualities of an effective English language teacher as perceived by Iranian English language teachers and learners. The researcher developed a questionnaire of 46 statement about the characteristics of effective English language teacher (the internal consistency index of which was calculated to be 0.94 using Cronbach's Alpha), and the participant were asked to express their agreement or disagreement based on a five-point (strongly disagree, disagree, no idea, agree, strongly agree) Likert Scale. The second part consisted of 8 open-ended questions to be answered by the participant. The results indicated significant differences between teachers' and learners' views on some characteristics of effective English language teachers. Teachers seemed to agree more strongly than students that an effective English language teacher should assign homework and integrate group activities into the classroom. Other areas of significant difference in opinions included preparing the lesson well, using lesson plans and assessing what student have learned reasonably. Students agreed more than teachers that teaching English in Persian (the first

language of the learners) was one of the prominent characteristics of an effective English language teacher. Learners gave more weight to characteristics relating to a teacher's personality and the way he behaves toward his students.

Shishavan (2010) conducted another study in which English language teachers and learners engaged in teaching and learning of English in Iranian Universities, high schools and private language institutions were asked about the characteristics of an effective English language teacher. She aimed to investigate whether male and female teacher and learners of English have different views on characteristics of an effective English language teacher. The researcher used a questionnaire of 46 questions on a 1-5 Likert scale. The results indicated significant difference between the response of male and female participants in both teacher and learner groups on some characteristics of an English language teacher.

Barens and Lock (2013) carried out a study in which they used a questionnaire instrument to measure the importance that students from a Korean University place on a wide range of effective foreign language teacher attributes. The sample of the study comprised 222 students and was proportionally represents of the university colleges (pharmacy, health science, business administration, law, education, arts, engineering, natural science, social science and liberal arts). The result provided insights into student opinions about various instructional issues, such as the selective use of the students' first language, explicit grammar instruction, and particular questioning techniques.

Taqi, Al-Nouh and Akbar (2014) conducted a study to investigate the characteristics of effective teachers of English and the uniqueness of teachers of English as a foreign language. Their research based on four general categories: English language proficiency, educational perception, organization and communication skills, social and emotional skills. The researchers based their research on data collected through a questionnaire based on likert's five-point rating distributed to 150 students. The study contributes to the understanding of what students expect from EFL teachers; in addition it will enable the understanding of what students believe is required from them as teacher of English in the future.

Importance of the Study

Through his experience, the researcher feels that English language teacher should have a lot of characteristics to be effective in his job. As English language teaching to such extent is difficult for a lot of learners and the teacher can play a very important role to facilitate English language learning. So, the researcher did his best to enable English language teacher to know the importance of their job of having a lot of characteristics whether personal or professional ones.

Statement of the Problem

What are the factors that influence perceptions of English language teacher effectiveness as perceived by English language major students at Al-Hussain Bin Talal University in Jordan?

Method:

Participants:

Participant of this study who were selected as a sample were English language major students at Al-Hussain Bin Talal University. They were 240 students (92 male and 148 female) who are all the students in the English Department at the mentioned university.

Instrument of the Study

The researcher used the questionnaire which was developed by Shishavan, H and Sadeghi, K (2009). The researcher used the first part only which consists of 46 Likert scale. Shishavan, H and Sadeghi, K (2009) calculated the internal consistency index of which was to be 0.94 using Cronbach's Alpha. Students were asked to express their agreement or disagreements based on a five-point (strongly disagree, disagree, no idea, agree, and strongly agree). The present researcher feel confident to use this questionnaire as it appears has got a lot of items which were to such extent good to be distributed in talking about effective English language teacher. The present researcher found the Cronbach Alpha and it was 0.90. It was statistically significant for $\alpha \leq .05$. The correlation between the items and the total on the questionnaire was between 0.22 and 0.51. As a result it is considered a good value to carry out the study.

Data Collection and Procedure

The questionnaire was given hand to hand to students by the researcher to different groups in different courses in the second semester of the academic year 2013/2014. The researcher answered all questions raised by students mainly relating to translations of some items which were seem to be unknown to some students and it took about 25 minutes to be completed.

Data Analysis

The following value was assigned to responses provided for liker scale item. Strongly Agree: 5, Agree: 4, No Idea: 3, Disagree:2, Strongly Disagree: 1. Then the mean value and standard deviations for each item were calculated using the SPSS statistical package. Two way Anova was used to find the significance among the students' perceptions referred to gender and level of education.

Questions of the Study

- 1- How do the students of English language Major in Al-Hussain Bin Talal University perceive the characteristics of effective English Language teacher?

- 2- Are there significant differences among the students' perceptions referred to gender and level of education or interaction between them?

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study was 457 students who were in the English Department of all levels at Al-Husain Bin Talal University in the academic year 2013/2014 as shown in table (1). The sample was 240 students which formed 52.51% of the population as shown in table (2).

Table (1) Population of the Study

Year	Population		
	Male	Female	Total
1 st	37	88	125
2 nd	42	87	129
3 rd	26	93	119
4 th	32	52	84
Total	137	320	457

Table (2) Sample of the Study

Year	Sample					
	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total	percentage
1 st	23	5.03%	49	10.72%	72	57.6%
2 nd	27	5.91%	41	8.97%	68	52.7%
3 rd	20	4.38%	34	7.44%	54	45.3%
4 th	22	4.81%	24	5.25%	46	54.7%
Total	92	20.13%	148	32.38%	240	52.51%

Definition of Terms

Effective: means having the intended or expected effect on serving the purpose and producing or able to produce the desired impression or response (Webster's, 1999).

Effective teaching: is defined as either that which (a) causes students to learn and grow, or (b) is accepted by teachers and other educational professionals. (Tuckman, 1995)

Discussion and Findings of the Study

Through looking at the table 3 , it is noticed that students in general were strongly agree that teachers of English should read English well, understand spoken English well, speak English well, help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well, write English well,

be polite and respect the personality of the students, show interest in student (by remembering students' names) and their learning, listen to students' opinions and let them express themselves, be friendly to students and be attentive in the class. The other items can be considered that they have got the agreement of the students through looking at their means. The lowest item was to teach English in Arabic (students' native language). Students gave the most weight that teacher should read English well and the lowest to teach English in Arabic.

Table (3) Means and Standard Deviation for all Items Ranked Descendingly According to the Mean

Item	Std.	
	Mean	Deviation
Read English well.	4.4792	.80244
Understand spoken English well	4.4125	.73229
Speak English well.	4.2875	.83632
Pronounce English well.	4.1875	.88351
Help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well.	4.1750	.85972
Write English well.	4.1417	1.03330
Be polite and respect the personality of the students.	4.0875	.86097
Show interest in students (by remembering students' names) and their learning.	4.0667	.93945
Listen to student's opinions and let them express themselves.	4.0292	1.05258
Be friendly to students.	4.0125	1.09957
Be attentive in the class.	4.0042	.90788
Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary.	3.9875	1.01240
Be fully familiar with English grammar.	3.9750	1.00594
Have a good sense of humor.	3.9708	.91660
Be disciplined.	3.9667	.95447
Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom.	3.9583	1.00539
Be interested in his/her career.	3.9500	.99244
Be punctual.	3.9500	.92252

Pay attention to the personal needs of students.	3.9375	.91492
Be available for students.	3.9208	1.04200
Arouse students' motivation for learning English.	3.9167	.90173
Be neat and tidy in appearance.	3.9042	1.00375
Teach English in English	3.9002	1.25394
Be open to criticism.	3.8875	1.10526
Know English culture well.	3.8875	.85316
Prepare the lesson well.	3.8833	.96103
Be flexible.	3.8792	1.09677
Use particular methods and techniques in teaching.	3.8750	.91991
Teach how to learn English outside the classroom (teach language learning strategies).	3.8667	.94566
Provide activities that arouse student's interest in learning English.	3.8625	.89270
Assess what students have learned reasonably.	3.8333	.85651
Teach English adapted to students' English proficiency levels.	3.8292	.95505
Not discriminate between students and treat them fairly.	3.8292	1.05497
Manage the class time well.	3.8292	1.03898
Assess his/her work regularly.	3.8250	.88372
Assign homework.	3.7875	.98559
Provide opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities.	3.7792	.94470
Use lesson plans.	3.7708	.87359
Maintain good classroom atmosphere using authority, if necessary.	3.7667	.91234
Stick to administrative rules and regulations.	3.7250	.92806
Alleviate students' anxiety in English class.	3.7083	.98436
Follow syllabus tightly.	3.6833	.92825
Not lose temper and get angry.	3.6708	1.08430
Be up-to-date (e.g. use internet and recent technologies in teaching).	3.6042	1.18815

Integrate group activities to class.	3.5917	1.11284
Teach English in Arabic (students' native language)	3.5458	1.24675

Through looking at the means of all items which were between 4.4792 and 3.5458. The researcher concludes that all items are important to be the characteristics of the English language teacher. The researcher sees that to teach English in Arabic got the lowest rank as the students are English major and they are able to understand the target language without using the mother tongue. It can be guessed that mostly some of the first year students prefer using Arabic as their abilities do not match the requirements of the courses in a very good range.

In considering the gender and the significance only five items have significance difference due to gender : alleviate students' anxiety in English class, be open to criticism, be attentive in class, be interested in his/her career and assess his/her work regularly. While considering the level of education, only two items have significance: not lose temper and first get angry and assign homework.

Table (4) : Means and Standard Deviation for the Sample Performance on the Questionnaire on Qualities of an Effective English Language Teacher

Gender	Level	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	First	173.3478	25.53893	23
	Second	180.8519	19.39212	27
	Third	183.8000	19.72869	20

	Forth	170.5909	22.15456	22
	Total	177.1630	22.07942	92
Female	First	183.0612	17.17485	49
	Second	178.0488	17.17113	41
	Third	178.8235	17.86222	34
	Forth	187.3333	11.97340	24
	Total	181.3919	16.79109	148
Total	First	179.9583	20.55048	72
	Second	179.1618	17.99636	68
	Third	180.6667	18.54927	54
	Forth	179.3261	19.33455	46
	Total	179.7708	19.05974	240

It is noticed from table (4) that there are differences among the sample's means on qualities of an English language teacher due to gender and level of education. To find the significant of the differences, two-way Anova was used as shown in table (5).

Table (5): Two-way Anova : Differences between Sample's Performance due to Gender and Level of Education and the Interaction between Gender and Level of Education

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	1195.160	1	1195.160	3.398	.067
Level	282.450	3	94.150	.268	.849
Gender * Level	4140.254	3	1380.085	3.923	.009

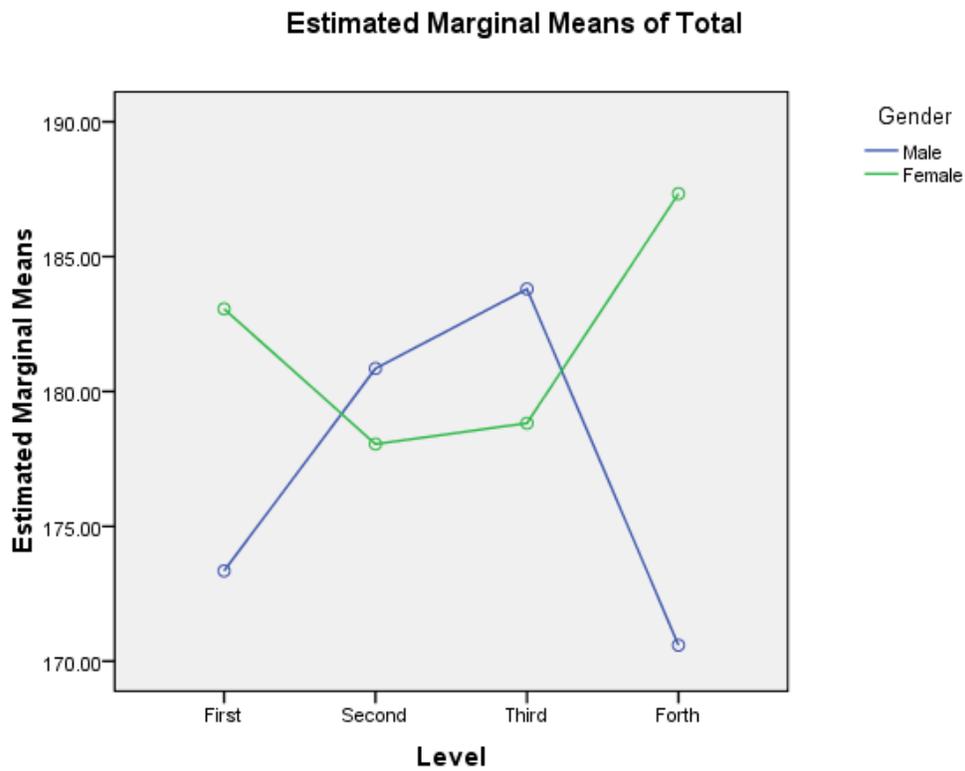
Error	81608.136	232	351.759
Total	7843035.000	240	

a. R Squared = .060 (Adjusted R Squared = .032)

Through looking at table (5), it is seen that there is no significant differences on the qualities of an effective English language teacher for the gender and level of Education but there is significant difference in the interaction between them.

The result of the gender and level of education can be due to that the sample of the study are university students who have the same educational experience related to their study plan in the English department and are coming from a similar cultural and social background. Furthermore, the difference on the qualities of an effective English language teacher might be related to the teachers' and learners' personal and cognitive variables.

Figure (1): The figure shows the means for the interaction between gender and level of education on the qualities of English language teacher.



It appears from the figure that there are significant differences between male and female who are in the first year in favor for the female, also, there are significant differences between male and female who are in the fourth year in favor for the female.

Through looking at the results, it is noticed that the results are with what the literature in previous studies agreed upon and that can clarified in the need for English language teachers to have such characteristics.

References

- Barnes, B.D., & Lock, G. (2013). Student Perceptions of Effective Foreign Language Teachers: A Quantitative Investigation from a Korean University. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(2), 19-36. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n2.2>.
- Borg, S. (2006). The distinctive characteristics of foreign language teachers. *Language Teaching Research*, 10(1), 3-31.
- Campbell Ligeon, K. (2001). *Perceptions of Effective Teaching*. Doctoral Dissertation, Tennessee State University, U.S.A.
- Fullan, M. (1993). Why teachers must become change agents. *Educational Leadership*, 50(6), 12-21.
- Grover, B. (1991). The teacher assessment dilemma: what is versus what ought to be !! *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 5(2), 103-119.
- Hootstein, E. (1994). Motivating students to learn. *Clearing House*, 67(4), 213-216
- King, J. (1981). Beyond classroom walls. Indirect measure of teacher competence. *Teacher Evaluation*, 23(7), 167-177.
- Ornstein, A. (1995). Beyond effective teaching. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 70(2), 2-15.
- Osborne, E. (1993). Teacher behaviors and methods that make a difference. *Agricultural Education Magazine*, 3, 3-15.
- Park, G. & Lee, H. (2006). The characteristics of effective English teacher as perceived by high school teachers and students in Korea. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 7(2), 236-248.
- Sheen, R. (1994). "A Critical Analysis of the Advocacy of the Task-Base Syllabus. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(2), 121-142. First published online on 4th January, 2012. DOI: 10.2307/3587202.
- Shishava, H.B. (2009). The Relationship between Iranian English language Teachers' and Learners' Gender and their Perceptions of an Effective English Language Teacher. *English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 3-10.
- Shishava, H.B & Sadeghi, K. (2009). Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Iranian Teachers and Learners of English. *English Language Teaching*, 2(4), 130-143.
- Tuckman, B. (1995). Assessing effective teaching. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 70(2), 127-137.
- Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. (1999). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster .Inc.

