The Relationship between Iranian learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Teachers' Awareness of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

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ABSTRACT
In this work, we have investigated the relationship between Iranian learning English as a Foreign Language teachers’ intercultural competence and their teaching efficacy regarding their experience, gender, and their education level. The research method including participants and sampling procedure, the research instruments, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis are described. The results indicate that, there is no significant relationship between Iranian learning English language as a Foreign Language, EFL, teachers’ intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy with regards to their level of experience, their level of education is concerned, their gender, teachers’ intercultural communicative competence awareness. Our approaches in this study are in agreement with the previously reports.

KEY WORDS: Iranian, learning English language, efficacy
INTRODUCTION

Good and qualified teachers are essential for efficient functioning of educational systems and for enhancing the quality of learning. Research supports this notion that a good teacher and actions to be taken on his part in the classroom play a vital role in provoking effective and efficient learning on the part of the students. Teachers also have a fundamental role in their learners’ academic achievement [1-3].

Special attention must be paid to the link between teachers and learners in countries like Iran where language learning happens mainly in formal classroom settings, and teachers, as the main source of language input to students, affect their learning directly. Teachers also need to encourage questions and discussions in the class which bring about autonomy of the learners and less dependency on the teachers. Hence, teachers are supposed to be patient and well-prepared for the class [4-6].

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers’ intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and their capability to adopt them in communication have come to the fore largely since the outset of the twenty-first century. Language and culture are interwoven and inseparable in language teaching and learning and in order for teachers to be efficient in language teaching, intercultural competence and teaching is a necessity. English language is currently utilized in inner, outer, and expanding-circle-countries by over two billion people, the non-native speakers of English constitute over 80% of English communicators, major employers currently seek those who can manage interconnectedness created by the diversity and that a majority of travels are now from non-English speaking countries to non-English speaking countries reveals convincing evidence apropos of vitality of promoting cultural and intercultural competence among teachers and learners to bring about efficacy on their part [6-9].
ICC and teacher efficacy are among those characteristics of instructors which have to be demonstrated if we are to move from speculations about their nature to a comprehensive characterization of the notion. The present study aims at examining the EFL teachers' understanding, awareness, and perception of and willingness toward utilizing ICC, and its proportionate relationship with their sense of efficacy.

METHODODLGY

The interest study aimed at investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ intercultural competence and their teaching efficacy regarding their experience, gender, and their education level. The research method including participants and sampling procedure, the research instruments, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis are described. Then the qualitative phase including, participants, interview checklist, data collection procedure, and data analysis are described.

The participants of the study were 300 non-native EFL teachers handling classes at English language centers in Karaj and Tehran. The sample consisted of the teachers who were undergraduates, graduates or post-graduates of the English-related branches of study, including teaching English as a foreign language, English literature, translation and consisted of teachers working part-time or full-time at English language institutes. As displayed in Table 1, the teachers were classified in accordance with their gender, level of experience, and level of education.

Table 1 The frequency of EFL teacher participants based on their experience, education, and gender
The participants were selected through convenience sampling; meaning that the participants who were judged to be representative in terms of the level of proficiency, level of education, experience and who were immediately available were chosen from the population. Convenience sampling represents the sampling technique from the participants who are readily available and willing to participate in the study. The participants were all informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that the data of the study would be kept confidentially. They were also assured that the results of the study would not affect their job status at the institutes in which they teach.

The researcher administered the two questionnaires to each participant at his/her work place. The fully answered questionnaires were collected, sorted, and coded in terms of the participants’ gender, education, and experience. The participants’ scores to the items of each instrument and different components of each instrument were computed and transformed into interval scale. Finally, the data were then analyzed used appropriate statistical procedures. Pearson Correlation coefficient was run to estimate the correlation between the teachers’ ICC and their teaching efficacy. In order to estimate the interaction between the moderator variables
(gender, education, and teaching experience) and their teaching efficacy and ICC, three different ANOVA tests were run.

**DISCUSSION**

The goals of the study are to answer the following questions:

A) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy with regards to their level of experience?

B) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy as far as their level of education is concerned?

C) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers’ intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy as far as their gender is concerned?

D) Does EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence awareness significantly predict their teaching efficacy?

Based on the above research questions, the following Null hypotheses will form:

A) There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy with regards to their level of experience.

B) There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy as far as their level of education is concerned.

C) There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy as far as their gender is concerned.

D) EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence awareness does not significantly predict their teaching efficacy.
If a success is attributed to internal causes such as ability or effort, then self-efficacy is enhanced. But if success is attributed to luck or the intervention of others, then self-efficacy may not be strengthened.

If teachers have access to more resources in the school and enjoy the principal’s support, they are more likely to have stronger self-efficacy beliefs. In addition, teachers who receive guidance from their colleagues feel more efficacious, regardless of whether it is in the form of supervision, mentoring, or interdisciplinary teams. Also, the class size can affect teachers’ sense of efficacy in that they possess stronger efficacy beliefs if they teach larger classes. Students’ characteristics might affect teacher efficacy as another related factor. For instance, it has been reported that students’ gender has no effect on teachers’ perceived efficacy (i.e., teachers are equally efficacious in teaching both males and females). Although in some study female teachers had significantly higher level of efficacy than males, this difference was not that much great [10-16].

As a result, their general teaching efficacy, GTE, decreases in the course of time because their behavior disturbed by the outside factors. There is no general agreement on the relationship between teachers’ experience and their self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, it seems that to be able to talk about the relationship between teaching experience and teachers’ sense of efficacy with certainty more studies are required. Although EFL teachers have recently frequently been involved in intercultural studies and several studies see ICC awareness as a characteristic of teachers' efficacy, the relationship between ICC and teaching efficacy has been under-addressed, providing a fertile ground for further research.

The mentioned observations indicate that the literature seems murky as one tries to see the relation between teachers’ experience and their efficacy beliefs and numerous reports indicate that educational system is not the sole source for students’ behavior and they are affected by several environmental factors [17-28].
CONCLUSION

There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' intercultural communicative competence and their teaching efficacy with regards to their level of experience, their level of education is concerned, their gender, teachers’ intercultural communicative competence awareness. Our approaches in this study are in agreement with the previously reports [10-32].

REFERENCES


