

**THE QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE EFL TEACHERS IN ELEMENTARY  
GOVERNMENTAL SCHOOLS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EFL ELEMENTARY  
TEACHERS**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study was designed to investigate the perception of elementary teachers of English in elementary schools of Kuwait regarding the qualities of effective EFL teachers. The participants were 487 female English teachers. A 50-item adopted questionnaire was administered to these teachers asking them about qualities a good EFL teacher should possess according to three dimensions: knowledge, teaching, and personal characteristics. Results indicated that in the knowledge dimension, being familiar with the English language culture and English language proficiency are the first two qualities for effective EFL teachers; however, conducting action research was the last ranking quality. In the teaching dimension, the teacher participants believed that knowing how to evaluate pupils is the first ranking quality of teaching, followed by being aware of current teaching techniques and selecting appropriate supplementary materials. As for personal characteristics, the participants gave the first three ranks of personal characteristics to being confident, self-controlled, followed by being enthusiastic.*

**KEYWORDS:** EFL teachers, elementary, governmental schools, EFL elementary teachers

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Due to the poor quality of teaching English as a foreign language and poor performance of students in the English language, discussing the qualities of effective EFL teachers becomes mandatory in our EFL context. Muijs and Reynolds (2001) pinpointed the importance of not looking at teaching as an art but as a science. They believe that teaching should be research-based because such an approach will maximize the effectiveness of all teachers and the development of all learners. Besides, teachers are different in their actions, reactions, strategies, and decisions because they have different values, beliefs, cultures, experiences, and many other factors. William and Burden (2002) reported that teachers' beliefs may explicitly or implicitly influence what they do in their classrooms and how they behave towards their students. Thus, they view teacher belief systems as more influential than their pedagogical knowledge. The current study explored the perceptions of elementary EFL teachers in Kuwaiti governmental schools regarding characteristics of a good EFL teachers.

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### **The Importance of Discussing the Qualities of Good EFL Teachers**

Sundari (2016) emphasized the importance of considering EFL teachers' perceptions and beliefs by stating, "Teachers' perceptions about learning, language and teaching determine everything they choose for the classroom and act they behave to the students. The belief system and perception they believe about the qualities of what makes a good teacher may lead teachers to actualize them in their classroom actions" (P. 3). Davis (2001) contended that teacher-student relationships is a category through which teachers would be evaluated as effective or not - this relationship can contribute to students' learning and achievement outcomes. In addition, investigating teachers' perceptions of teachers can help stakeholders in preparing good programs for those teachers; this may eventually benefit teachers and students. Researchers further pinpointed that investigating teachers' perceptions of teachers can help stakeholders in preparing good programs for those teachers; a byproduct that may eventually benefit both teachers and students. Hanushek (1992) suggested that in order to improve educational outcomes, countries must focus on effectiveness of teachers.

Furthermore, Al-Maqtri and Thabet (2013) assured that the personalities of English teachers do influence students, be it positively or negatively. Mizuno (2004) further pinpointed that the personalities of English teachers affect students twice as strongly as those of other subjects. The reason behind this may be, as many researchers claimed, the association between language ego and second language; they identified this association as a key factor accounting for problems faced by learners (Guiora, 1994; Dornyei, 2005). Guiora (1994) explained that language ego allows learners of a second language to identify words related to their first language; language ego encouraged the learners to develop a sense of fragility against second languages. This relates to Krashen's affective filters; Krashen (1987) claimed that learners of second or foreign languages with high motivation, low anxiety, and a good self-image are equipped with larger chances of success in learning a second language. It goes without saying that such psychological issues EFL students face can successfully be controlled with effective EFL teachers. Therefore, discussing the qualities of good EFL teachers can positively affect teachers' performance.

Moreover, researchers explained that teaching a language is more complex than teaching other subjects. Borg (2006) explained that because the complexity of teaching English, language teachers need to update their methodological knowledge and maintain an increasingly positive relationship with students. In our study, we targeted English teachers in elementary governmental schools of Kuwait because elementary school is the academic level in which English is first introduced. Our goal is to investigate how elementary English teachers conceptualize the definition of "a good EFL teacher." Such data will help educate EFL teachers of qualities that allow for effective teaching in English or in clarifying misconceptions that may affect their careers.

### **Qualities of Good Teachers of any Subject vs. English Language**

Good EFL teachers generally possess the same characteristics of other subject teachers. However, researchers pinpointed that there are a number of differences between language teachers and teachers of other subjects. For example, Kalay (2018) and Onem (2009) listed differences between them with respect to educational goals, nature of content knowledge, use of particular techniques, and methodology. Al-Maqti and Thabet (2013) also pinpointed vital differences between EFL

teachers and other subjects: possessing good mastery over English pronunciation and active roles in student participation during classroom activities. Borg's (2006) wide qualitative study which included foreign language teachers and teachers of different subjects from around the world, concluded that foreign language teachers are distinctive with respect to certain qualities such as: credibility, flexibility, enthusiasm, error correction, teaching methodology, teacher-student relationship, and being native or non-native speakers of the target language.

### **Theoretical Framework for the Qualities of Good EFL teachers**

For the purpose of answering the question "what makes a good EFL teacher?" researchers and specialists provided theoretical frameworks and models for the qualities of good language teachers (Freeman, 1989; Edge, 2002; Gabrielatos, 2002). Freeman's model (1989) and Edge's model (2002) are the first models in literature that characterized the qualities of good teachers in general. In both models, they stressed three constituents: awareness of attitudes as referred to in Freeman's model, personal traits as referred to in Edge's model, and knowledge and skill. Freeman (1989) defined awareness of attitude as belief of self, activity, and others that connects interpersonal relationships with actions and behaviors. While Edge's model, "person who teaches", has two main constituents: personality and methodology (knowledge and skills). Edge (2002) was more specific in regards to personality dimension since he divided it into six attributes: (liking their major, positive attitude towards work and development, perception of learning and teacher-student roles, interpersonal skills, abilities of observing and critical thinking, and sensitivity to context). As for knowledge and skills category, both Freeman and Edge considered knowledge and skills in teaching subject-matter and socio-cultural contexts.

Regarding qualities of good EFL teachers specifically, Gabrielato (2002) modified Edge's model by adding the word "language" to Edge's model, "person who teaches", to make it "person who teaches language" specifically characterizing language teachers. Gabrielato's model ended with three constituents: personality, methodology (knowledge and skills), and language. His modification of adding the language dimension was useful in characterizing the qualities of good EFL teachers; he gave two sub-dimensions to the word language: knowledge and skills. By knowledge, Gabrielato refers to language teachers having multiple views on language and awareness of his/her views. Skills refers to language teachers being able to do the following: analyze language, using the four skills effectively, and sensitivity to learners' language level. As for Abu-Rahmah (2008), Gabrielato's model is considered important because it incorporates three inventories: how I see language, how I see language learning, and how I can use my experience in language and language-learning to help students conceptualize language. Hence, all the discussed models emphasized those three important dimensions for the qualities of good teachers generally and language teachers in specific. Thus, in this study we specifically emphasized those three areas: knowledge, teaching, and personal characteristics.

### **The Characteristics of Effective EFL teachers as Perceived by English Teachers**

Qualities of effective language teachers have been tackled since the 1920s by many researchers. However, very few researchers discuss the qualities of good EFL teachers in the Arab world and Kuwait. Research emphasized analyzing the qualities of good EFL teachers from two different perspectives: 1) teachers' perspectives and 2) students' perspectives. In this research, we are

interested to find the qualities of good EFL teachers from the perspectives of EFL teachers in elementary schools in Kuwait.

Many researchers attempted to discover the perception of English teachers regarding the characteristics of effective EFL teachers. Some researchers discovered that according to EFL teachers, English language proficiency is one of the main characteristics of effective EFL teachers (Park & Lee, 2006; Wichadee, 2010; Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, Al-Siyabi & Al-Maamari, 2015; Qunying, 2009; Khojastehmehr & Takrimi, 2009; Shishavan and Sadeghi, 2009).

Park and Lee (2006) investigated the characteristics of effective EFL teachers perceived by 169 teachers in Korea with a self-report questionnaire consisting of three categories, i.e. English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. The results revealed that the teachers perceived English proficiency as the most important characteristics of effective EFL teachers. Also, Wichadee (2010) explored the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by 53 full-time teachers who taught four basic English courses during 2008 in Thailand based on four categories: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills. By using a five-point rating scale questionnaire, his findings revealed that the teachers ranked English proficiency as the highest of all the four characteristics.

Other researchers found that aside from English proficiency, other professional characteristics are important. For example, Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) studied the qualities of an effective EFL teacher as perceived by Iranian EFL teachers. The tailor-made questionnaires were administered to 59 EFL teachers. The findings revealed that EFL teachers perceived mastery of the target language, good knowledge of pedagogy, the use of particular techniques and methods, and a good personality makes an effective EFL teacher.

Other researchers discovered other characteristics perceived as important for effective EFL teachers. For example, Al Mahrooqi et al. (2015) were interested in investigating the characteristics of good EFL teachers in the Arab Gulf specifically in Oman, as they believe that most relevant studies have been conducted in the West. They studied 233 high school Omani English teachers. They unitized a 68 questionnaire item which were grouped into seven categories: content knowledge about teaching and learning, pedagogical knowledge about teaching and learning, knowledge about oneself-general characteristics, knowledge about oneself-affective variables, knowledge about oneself-professional development, knowledge about students, and knowledge about classroom management. According to the teachers, all the seven categories are important; however, knowledge related to general characteristics (being prepared for class, speak audibly, write clearly, and come to class on time), classroom management, and effective variables are the most important factors for them.

Similarly, Khojastehmehr and Takrimi (2009) designed their study to identify teacher effectiveness factors of 215 secondary-school English teachers in Khuzestan. His questionnaire had four themes: instructional strategies, communication skills, personal characteristics, and knowledge. He discovered that for his participants, instructional strategies is more critical for

teacher effectiveness than all the other three characteristics. Similarly, Kwangsawad (2017) surveyed 34 in-service teachers in Thailand (besides others stakeholders like administrators and students) to investigate their perceptions of effective EFL teachers. He noted that according to those teachers, the three important characteristics for effective EFL teachers are: professional attributes, pedagogical approaches, and personal characteristics of good EFL teachers.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is double-fold. First, it attempts to explore and identify the qualities of good EFL teachers as perceived by elementary teachers of English in Kuwait. Second, the study attempts to determine if there are differences in the perception of elementary teachers of English due to two variables: age and years of experience. Thus, it attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the qualities of good EFL teachers as perceived by English elementary teachers in Kuwait in three main dimensions: knowledge, teaching, and personal characteristics?
2. Are these qualities perceived differently by elementary teachers of English in Kuwait due to two demographic variables: age and years of experiences?

### **STUDY METHODOLOGY**

The study adopts the descriptive approach as it suits the nature of the study and enables the researcher to describe the phenomenon, to analyze its data, and reveal the relationship between its components and the opinions regarding it, the processes it has, and effects it causes.

#### **Study Sample:**

Due to the feminization policy of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education in governmental schools, the study community includes all female teachers of English. The study sample consists of (487) female elementary teachers of English who represent different levels of age and years of experience. According to the Educational Statistical Group 2016-2017, the number of female elementary teachers of English in total is 2957. Therefore, our sample represents 16.5% of the population. As for Alma mater, 230 teachers of the sample graduated from Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET), 170 teachers graduated from Kuwait University, College of Education and 87 graduated from different colleges in Kuwait or abroad. About 324 of the participants are Kuwaiti while 163 are non-Kuwaiti. The teacher participants come from all the six school governorate of Kuwait: 134 teachers from Asimah, 47 teachers from Hawali, 112 teachers from Farwaniya, 60 teachers from Mubarak Al-Kabeer, 98 teachers from Ahmadi, and 36 from Jahra.

#### **Study Tool:**

In this study, we adopted a closed-ended questionnaire developed by Abu Raham (2008). He divided his questionnaire to three dimensions: knowledge, teaching, and personality. The questionnaire consisted of 69 question items. After studying the questionnaire in this study more carefully, the researchers removed questionnaire items that were either confusing or not applicable to school climate or environment of the study. This decision led to a 50 questionnaire item as a final version ready for distribution. In addition, the questionnaire was converted into a virtual

version using Google Docs and was administered online to teachers. Administering the questionnaire online had several benefits - including access to individuals in distant locations and the convenience of automated data collection which reduces the amount of effort required from the researcher.

### **Validity of the Questionnaire:**

The internal consistency of the questionnaire has been verified through the calculation of the correlation coefficient of each statement and the total degree of the questionnaire as obtained from the survey and applied in a pilot study on a sample of (85) female teachers of English at some elementary governmental schools in Kuwait. The researchers used SPSS to calculate the correlation coefficient using Pearson correlation. The results indicated that all the correlation coefficients between each statement and the total degree of the questionnaire are statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01), while the correlation coefficients range between (0.656 – 0.876). This confirms the internal consistency and thus the validity of the construction. The calculation of the correlation coefficient of each axe and the total degree of the questionnaire was accounted for. The following table displays the results.

**Table (1)**

### **Correlation Coefficients between each Axe and the Total Degree of the Questionnaire**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Correlations</b>
Knowledge	0.872**
Teaching	0.911**
Personal Characteristics	0.926**

(\*\*) Correlation is significant at the (0.01) level

As illustrated by the table, it is notable that all the correlation coefficients between each axe and the total degree of the questionnaire are high and statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01) since the correlation coefficients range between (0.872 – 0.926). This ensures the internal consistency and thus the credibility of the construction.

### **Reliability of the Questionnaire:**

Reliability's coefficient has been calculated through finding Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each theme in the questionnaire by using the SPSS after applying it on the sample of the survey. The results are shown in the following table.

**Table (2)**  
**Reliability Coefficients of the Axes in the Questionnaire**

Domain	No. of Items	Alpha
Knowledge	6	0.89
Teaching	30	0.87
Personal Characteristics	14	0.84
Total Questionnaire	50	0.86

As indicated by the table above, it is notable that the axes of the questionnaire have a statistically significant degree of reliability as the reliability's coefficient of the questionnaire reached (0.86) and reliability's coefficient of the axes range between (0.84 – 0.89). Thus, the results can be regarded as reliable when applying them on the basic sample of the study.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The following part displays the results of the study after conducting a statistical analysis of data. To answer the questions of the study, the responses of the study samples have been collected and treated statistically using SPSS to find the arithmetic means and standard deviations for each statement in the questionnaire. The next part is concerned with displaying the results of the study.

### Results of the First Question:

*What are the qualities of good EFL teachers as perceived by elementary teachers of English in Kuwait in the three main dimensions: knowledge, teaching, and personal characteristics?*

Recurrences, percentages, arithmetic means, and standard deviations of each statement in the questionnaire have been calculated and arranged according to the means as illustrated by the following tables.

**Table (3)**  
**Percentages, Arithmetic Means, and Standard Deviations of Study Sample Responses Concerning the Field of Knowledge**

No	Items	Percentages				Mean	Std. Deviation	Order according to mean
		least important	moderately important	Important	most important			
1	Having high level of English proficiency.	2.07	6.20	25.62	66.12	3.56	0.70	2
2	Be aware of English language culture.	2.06	4.12	14.81	79.01	3.71	0.64	1
7	Know social and cultural background of the learners.	1.65	9.47	34.98	53.91	3.41	0.73	5
13	Have a good command of English.	0.41	6.20	34.30	59.09	3.52	0.63	3
20	Be aware of the culture of the target language.	3.70	6.17	34.30	56.38	3.43	0.77	4
50	Be able to solve practical problems through conducting action research.	2.06	11.93	43.62	42.39	3.26	0.75	6

Based on the table above, it is notable that the field of knowledge has (6) statements and that the study sample responses vary in regards to these statements and got the following arrangement: Statement no. (2) " Be aware of English language culture" got the first rank with an arithmetic mean (3.71). Statement no. (1) "Having high level of English proficiency" got the second rank with an arithmetic mean (3.56). Statement no. (20) " Be aware of the culture of the target language" got the lowest rank with an arithmetic mean (3.26).

**Table (4)**  
**Percentages, Arithmetic Means, and Standard Deviations of Study Sample Responses Concerning the Field of Teaching**

No	Items	Percentages				Mean	Std. Deviation	Order according to mean
		least important	moderately important	Important	most important			
3	Use different methods of teaching.	3.29	16.05	44.86	35.80	3.13	0.80	30
6	Modify language input to match learner needs and interests.	0.83	7.02	31.82	60.33	3.52	0.66	21
8	Be aware of current teaching techniques.	2.07	0.83	17.36	79.75	3.75	0.57	2
9	Know how to set objectives.	1.65	4.12	28.81	65.43	3.58	0.65	17
10	Know how to evaluate their pupils.	1.65	1.23	11.93	85.19	3.81	0.53	1
11	Know how to involve pupils in activities.	0.82	9.05	28.81	61.32	3.51	0.69	23
12	Encourage learner's contributions.	1.24	8.68	33.06	57.02	3.46	0.71	24
14	Be patient with pupils in general.	2.89	17.77	35.12	44.21	3.21	0.83	28
16	Know how to motivate learners.	4.53	13.17	40.33	41.98	3.20	0.83	29
17	Know how to give feedback.	2.07	9.92	41.74	46.28	3.32	0.74	26
18	Create appropriate principles of teaching and update new materials.	1.23	3.29	25.10	70.37	3.65	0.61	13
21	Know how to specify their teaching objectives.	1.23	2.06	23.46	73.25	3.69	0.58	7
22	Make use of resources available.	1.24	2.07	26.45	70.25	3.66	0.58	12
23	Be able to plan appropriate lessons.	0.83	5.37	26.86	66.94	3.60	0.63	16
24	Use audiovisual aids/multimedia in teaching.	2.06	4.53	26.34	67.08	3.58	0.68	18
25	Have a good rapport with pupils.	0.41	2.07	21.07	76.45	3.74	0.51	4
26	Value the opinions and students' different abilities and offer	1.23	2.06	17.70	79.01	3.74	0.55	5

	challenges to high ability students.							
27	Be able to present language in different ways.	1.65	0.82	25.51	72.02	3.68	0.58	9
28	Speak loudly and writes clearly.	1.65	3.29	18.93	76.13	3.70	0.61	6
29	Care about all students.	2.07	1.65	21.07	75.21	3.69	0.61	8
30	Vary their method of teaching to suit all learners.	1.65	2.06	29.22	67.08	3.62	0.61	15
31	Explain in a good and confident way.	0.83	2.49	38.17	58.51	3.54	0.59	19
32	Be prepared for class.	1.65	3.70	34.16	60.49	3.53	0.65	20
33	Manages the classroom properly.	1.65	4.94	33.33	60.08	3.52	0.67	22
37	Use a teacher's voice and his writing is readable.	0.82	2.47	30.45	66.26	3.62	0.58	14
39	Come to class on time.	2.49	2.90	18.26	76.35	3.68	0.65	11
40	Be creative and use a variety of teaching techniques and select appropriate supplementary materials.	2.06	2.47	13.99	81.48	3.75	0.60	3
41	Use the latest technology in teaching.	1.23	3.70	20.99	74.07	3.68	0.61	10
48	Have the skills to develop autonomy in learners.	6.20	11.16	33.88	48.76	3.25	0.89	27
49	Be able to contribute in curriculum development.	1.65	7.44	34.71	56.20	3.45	0.70	25

Based on the table above, it is notable that the field of teaching has (30) statements and that the study sample responses vary in regards to these statements that got the following arrangement: Statement no. (30) " Know how to evaluate their pupils" got the first rank with an arithmetic mean (3.81). Statement no. (8) "Be aware of current teaching techniques" got the second rank with an arithmetic mean (3.75). Statement no. (40) " Be creative and use a variety of teaching techniques and select appropriate supplementary materials" got the third rank with an arithmetic mean (3.75). Statement no. (25) " Have a good rapport with pupils" got the fourth rank with an arithmetic mean (3.74). Statement no (26) "Value the opinions and students' different abilities and offer challenges to high ability students" go the fifth rank with arithmetic mean (3.74). Statement no. (3) "Use different methods of teaching" got the lowest rank of the thirty statements with an arithmetic mean (3.13).

**Table (5)**  
**Percentages, Arithmetic Means, and Standard Deviations of Study Sample Responses Concerning the Field of Personal Characteristics**

No	Items	Percentages				Mean	Std. Deviation	Order according to mean
		least important	moderately important	Important	most important			
4	Be tolerant with students.	1.23	1.23	13.58	83.95	3.80	0.51	3
5	Be enthusiastic (i.e. enjoys teaching).	0.82	1.23	15.23	82.72	3.80	0.49	2
15	Have a good sense of humor.	1.23	4.53	34.98	59.26	3.52	0.64	13
19	Be helpful.	3.29	9.88	38.27	48.56	3.32	0.78	14
34	Have a positive attitude towards pupils.	0.82	3.70	25.51	69.96	3.65	0.59	8
35	Create humorous or interesting atmosphere in class.	0.41	5.37	29.34	64.88	3.59	0.61	12
36	Have an acceptable appearance.	0.83	3.31	30.99	64.88	3.60	0.60	11
38	Should be patient with low achievers' students.	1.23	1.65	28.81	68.31	3.64	0.58	9
42	Cooperate with their colleagues.	1.65	0.41	19.34	78.60	3.75	0.54	4
43	Be confident and self-controlled.	0.41	2.88	11.11	85.60	3.82	0.48	1
44	Set short and long term self- goals for continued professional growth.	0.83	4.15	19.50	75.52	3.70	0.59	6
45	Have a positive attitude towards change and innovation.	2.47	1.65	19.75	76.13	3.70	0.63	7
46	Be able to reflect upon their teaching.	2.47	2.47	12.35	82.72	3.75	0.62	5
47	Be willing to participate in teacher professional growth events such as seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.	0.41	5.35	24.28	69.96	3.64	0.60	10

Based on the above table, it is notable that the field of personal Characteristics has (14) statements and that the study sample responses vary in regard to these statements that got the following

arrangement: Statement no. (43) "Be confident and self-controlled" got the first rank with an arithmetic mean (3.82). Statement no. (5) "Be enthusiastic (i.e. enjoys teaching)" got the second rank with an arithmetic mean (3.80). Statement no. (4) "Be tolerant with students" got the third rank with an arithmetic mean (3.80). Statement no. (19) "Be helpful" got the last rank with an arithmetic mean (3.32).

### Results of the Second Question:

*Which dimension of the three (knowledge, teaching or personal characteristics) that was perceived as the first dimension by the elementary teachers of English in Kuwait?*

**Table (6)**

#### Mean and Standard Deviation of the Three Domains

Domain	Mean	Std. Deviation	Order according to mean
Knowledge	3.48	0.70	3
Teaching	3.56	0.65	2
Personal Characteristics	3.66	0.59	1

Based on the table above, looking at the three dimensions and discovering that participants considered the personal characteristics (mean = 3.66) as the most important dimension followed by teaching (3.56), followed lastly by knowledge (mean = 3.48).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Regarding the first research question (more specifically regarding the first dimension for characteristics of effective teachers, knowledge), the researchers discovered that English elementary teachers believed being familiar with the English language culture is the first ranking aspect in the knowledge dimension that effective English language teachers should have. Unlike the participants in the Park & Lee' study (2006) and Wichadee' study (2010) which considered English language proficiency the first-ranking quality for effective EFL teachers, the participants in this research believed that English language proficiency is the second aspect of knowledge that good teachers should have. This may be because the nature most English teachers in Kuwait have; wanting to demonstrate their efficiency in English teaching by showing off their familiarity with English culture even if they are not as proficient in English. They use the English language to demonstrate their potentials as non-native speakers teaching English. Furthermore, they ranked solving practical problems through conducting action-based research last in terms of the knowledge dimension. This is justified because in Kuwait, conducting action research or earning a master's degree in teaching is not a requirement. Conducting action-based research may be first ranking quality for teachers in other educational EFL contexts that encourage higher-level learning.

Regarding the second dimension for characteristics of effective teachers, teaching, the participants believed that knowing how to evaluate their pupils is the first ranking quality of teaching, followed

by being aware of current teaching techniques and selecting appropriate supplementary materials. These findings were similar to the study of Khojastehmehr and Takrimi (2009). They discovered that for their participants, instructional strategies is more critical for teacher effectiveness than all the other three characteristics: communication skills, personal characteristics, and knowledge. Similarly, Kwangsawad (2017) discovered that according to his teachers participants, the two important characteristics for effective EFL teachers are: professional attributes and pedagogical approaches. Also, in Qunying's study (2009), the Chinese EFL teachers show more interest on sound pedagogical content knowledge and English language proficiency. These results are explained by the heavy emphasis in Kuwait's teaching environment of Kuwaiti governmental schools on pupil's evaluation by the ministry of education, school administration, and parents. The pressure over students' evaluation encourage teachers to properly evaluate their students. Secondly, due to regular evaluation of teachers' performance and promotion system, teachers find themselves thinking of different teaching techniques and selecting appropriate supplementary materials as a way of enhancing their teaching performance. The statement that took the last rank in the teaching dimension, different teaching methods, might be because teachers in governmental schools are guided by specific policies and methods that are followed in the planned curriculum. Thus, they do not find such a feature as important compared to other features in this dimension.

Regarding the third dimension for effective teacher characteristics, personal characteristics, and the teacher participants gave the first three ranks of personal characteristics to being confident, being self-controlled, followed by being enthusiastic. However, being tolerant with students, cooperate with colleagues, and reflect on their teaching took the last ranks. The qualities that took the first ranks were to be confident and self-controlled. This is also a part of making them successful teachers in their educational contexts in which evaluation of teachers are measured in regular base from different people. Other 12 important personal characteristics were not one of the first rank qualities such as having a positive attitude towards pupils, creating an interesting atmosphere in class, having an acceptable appearance reflect on their teaching. And being patient with low achievers. Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) in their study discovered that EFL teachers perceived a good personality as one of the important features of an effective EFL teacher. Also, Al Mahrooqi et al. (2015) found effective variables are the most important aspects of effective EFL teachers.

As for the second research question, regarding the ranking of the three dimensions, personal characteristics took the first rank, followed by teaching, and lastly, knowledge. Findings demonstrate that teachers generally after having some experience in teaching, discovered that their profession requires communication with different people: colleagues, students, head-teachers, administrators, supervisors, and parents. As pinpointed earlier, teaching environments in governmental schools rely on evaluating and testing teachers, a mechanism that make most teachers reflect on how to improve their teaching. Thus, it is logical that personal characteristics and teaching come before knowledge for the teacher participants of the study. In Kuwaiti school culture, teacher participants regarded personal characteristics and teaching as largely important because strengthening these qualities allow them to receive promotions. This hinders teaching professionalism.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To conclude, in this study we discovered that the cultural context has a strong influence on the teachers' perceptions regarding the qualities of good EFL teachers. This can clearly be noted in the results since some qualities took first ranks while others do not. As for the study participants, out of the six qualities of the knowledge dimension, being familiar with the English language culture and English language proficiency are the first two qualities for effective EFL teachers while conducting action-based research was the last ranking quality. In the teaching dimension, the teacher participants believed that knowing how to evaluate pupils is the first ranking quality followed by being aware of current teaching techniques and selecting appropriate supplementary materials. In the third dimension, personal characteristics, the teacher participants gave the first three ranks of personal characteristics to being confident, being self-controlled, followed by being enthusiastic.

It is without a doubt that all the qualities in the three dimensions play a significant role in effective teaching and may significantly change their performance. However, participants were interested in qualities that can enhance their performance because it increases their evaluation points which fast-track receiving promotions instead of qualities that can help boost their skill and professionalism. In ranking the three dimensions, participants perceived personal characteristics and teaching as the first-ranking dimensions, followed by knowledge. This confirms our previous interpretation of the results: participants view these qualities as pathways to faster promotions rather than for professionalism.

Policy makers and educators should start creating specific regulations to modify our teachers professionally by allowing them to professionally consider the qualities of effective EFL teaching due to their current neglect of it. This may happen by raising awareness of the qualities of good EFL teachers to EFL teachers through seminars and workshops. This may also happen through theoretical and practical courses given in colleges of education regarding effective characteristics of EFL teaching. This can help our training teachers understand the true meaning of the three dimensions: knowledge, teaching, and personal characteristics. William and Burde (2002) emphasized the importance of teachers' belief system as it reflects their behavior in the classroom with their students. Also, Sundari (2016) declared that the belief systems of teachers on effective EFL teaching qualities may motivate teachers to practice those qualities in their classrooms. In addition, Hanushek (1992) suggested that countries considering teacher effectiveness are on the track to improving the country's educational strength. This may happen by identifying the competencies required for effectiveness and use them to prepare pre-service teacher preparation programs in their countries. Finally, the Ministry of Education should develop regulations for teacher evaluation systems that will encourage EFL teachers to implement the qualities of effective EFL teaching in their professions.

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