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STUDENT'S AND TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF AN «IDEAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER» AT SULEYMAN DEMIREL UNIVERSITY

The paper presents a research study conducted at Suleyman Demirel University that aimed in investigating the perceptions of characteristics of an «Ideal English Language Teacher» by students and teachers. Those characteristics are divided into two categories of personal and professional qualities. The second one includes such sub-categories as: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills. The data were collected through the questionnaires among 157 students and 17 ELT teachers at the faculty of Education and Humanities. The quantitative findings revealed that students and teachers placed an importance on both qualities. However, there were found statistic differences. Students perceive psychological skills as the most essential quality that Ideal ELT teacher should have, in contrast according to teachers' perceptions English Proficiency is considered as highly necessary quality.

Key words: ELT teacher, characteristics of ELT teacher, professional qualities, personal qualities.

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Сүлеймен Демирел университеті студенттері мен мұғалімдерінің «мінсіз ағылшын тілінің мұғаліміне» деген көзқарастары

Осы жұмыста ұсынылған ғылыми зерттеулер, «Мінсіз Ағылшын тілінің мұғалімінің» сипаттамаларын жеке және кәсіби қасиеттері негізінде зертеу және анықтау осы жұмыстың негізгі мақсаты болып табылады. Өз кезегінде бұл санаттар бірнеше санатшалар қамтиды, олар: мұғалімнің Ағылшын тілінің білу деңгейі, педагогикалық және психологиялық білімдері, коммуникативтік пен әлеуметтік-аффективтік дағдылар зерттеу барысында қарастырылаған. Сүлеймен Демирел университетінің, Педагогикалық және Гуманитарлық ғылымдар факультетінің студенттері мен мұғалімдердің көзқарастары салыстыру методы мен статистикалық зерттеумен талданды. Толық деректер 157 студент және 17 Ағылшын тілінің мұғалімдерінен сауалнама арқылы жиналды. Зерттеу нәтижесінде студенттер мен оқытушылар «Мінсіз Ағылшын тілі мұғалімі» үшін барлық қасиеттердің маңыздылығын атап өтті. Дегенмен, айырмашылық статистикалық деректерде анықталды, себебі мұғалімдер ағылшын тілін меңгеру деңгейі ағылшын тілі мұғалімінің негізгі компоненті болып табылатынын анықтады, алайда оқушылар үшін ең маңызды психологиялық компонентті болып шықты. Сол мәліметтер арқылы қазіргі заманға сай «Мінсіз Ағылшын тілі мұғалімінің» моделі құрастырылды.

Түйін сөздер: Ағылшын тілі мұғалімінің сипаттамасы, кәсіби шеберліктер, жеке қасиеттер, ағылшын тілін оқыту.

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Восприятие «идеального учителя английского языка» студентов и учителей Университета Сулеймана Демиреля

В этой работе представлено научное исследование, целью которого является исследование и выявление характеристик «Идеального учителя английского языка» на основе двух категорий: личные и профессиональные качества (которые, в свою очередь, включают в себя такие подкатегории, как: уровень владения английским языком, педагогические и психологические знания, коммуникационные навыки, а также социально-аффективные навыки), воспринятые студентами и преподавателями английского языка факультета педагогических и гуманитарных наук, по специальности два иностранных языка, Университета Сулеймана Демиреля. Все данные были собраны с помощью социального опросника путем противопоставления и статистических исследований двух разных точек зрения. В опросе участвовало 157 студентов и 17 учителей английского языка. В результате исследования и студенты, и преподаватели отметили важность всех качеств «Идеального учителя английского языка». Тем не менее, разница выявилась в статистических данных, так как студенты отметили наиболее важным психологическую составляющую, когда для преподавателей уровень владения Английском языком является главным компонентом характеристик Идеального учителя английского языка.

Ключевые слова: характеристики учителя Английского языка, профессиональные качества, личностные качества, преподавание Английского языка.

Introduction

Overall, the complexity of the teacher's work is related to his belonging to the type of "man-man" professions. Pedagogical activity is not the direct impact on a person, but their interaction. Therefore, the pedagogical process is the object of the teacher's activity, and the student moves from the object of influence to the position of the subject of activity. On this basis the values of the pedagogical profession are defined (Syrymbetova: 1) [1]:

- respect for the personality of the learner, his rights and freedoms;
- tolerance to other beliefs, views of the world and customs;
- openness to cultural diversity;
- flexibility, adaptability, ability to empathy;
- understanding of personal values, language and communication;
- skills of self-study, analytical and critical thinking; etc.

This research is focused on English language teachers, because being an ELT teacher is both worthwhile and challenging. This occupation needs a great deal of efforts and energy to inspire, encourage and motivate students to learn English language.

However, before defining Ideal ELT teacher, the meaning of the word Ideal has to be identified. In Cambridge dictionary the definition is: "principle or a way of behaving that is of a very

high standard; the synonym is perfect (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/ru/>) [2]. We should not associate the word Ideal with theory of Idealism, which claims that Idealism is the metaphysical and epistemological doctrine that ideas or thoughts make up fundamental reality (<https://en.wikipedia.org/>) [3]. The concept of Ideal teacher has to be associated with the idea of perfectionism. It is a personality trait characterized by a person's striving for lawless and setting excessively high performance standards, accompanied by overly critical self-evaluations and concerns regarding others' evaluations (Hewit: 7) [4].

There, this research is directed to answer the following research questions:

What are the required characteristics of an Ideal English Language Teacher at current stage?

What are the student's perceptions of SDU's ELT teacher? Are they similar with the teachers' self-views?

What do teachers think about the notion of "Ideal ELT teacher"? Is it "utopian" or not?

In our research we were guided by the following research hypothesis: if the characteristics of Ideal English language teacher could be identified, then English language teaching will be improved with the help of the Model of Ideal ELT teacher, since the quality of teaching will be increased and development of the country and nation will be on high level, which is the main task according to the project "Trine of languages".

In order to test hypothesis the resolution of the following objectives have been required:

To test the effectiveness of English Teachers, by comparing students' experiences and views;

To carry out analysis of students' and English language teachers' perceptions, in order to identify the personal and professional characteristics that Ideal ELT teachers should have;

To develop recommendations for teachers, in order to become Ideal and obtain success in teaching English.

Theoretical aspects of investigation

Kazakhstan is entering new period of development and becoming a part of multilingual and multicultural community, thus people should take into consideration the fact that teaching should be considered as a way of formation intercultural communicative competence. The general level of English proficiency in Kazakhstani society according to the results of census in 2009, 15,4 % of the population understands spoken English, among them 2.6 % can read freely and 7.7 of them can read and write in English (Smailov, 2010: 1) [5]. M.S. Sarybai noted that 98 out of 101 of job advertisements require the knowledge of English language (Sarybai, 2004: 130) [6]. Moreover, according to research findings of Suleimenova and Burkitbayeva, the rate and extent of Business discourse in English language became dominant over Kazakh and Russian languages (Suleimenova, 2009: 145) [7]. Therefore, we can observe that the role of English language is rapidly increasing.

The pedagogy states that learners consider teacher not only as a source of information, but as an individual who has a whole system of knowledge with the developmental potential. To bring qualified specialists for our country is the tasks for teachers. M.M. Rubinstein wrote that teacher's issue- is the first and most important problem of the whole pedagogy, the problem of the whole system of national education and cultures (Goldhaber, 2009:2) [8]. Because, teacher is accepted as a socio-cultural lever participating in many spheres of people's lives.

Many studies focusing on conceptions of the good English language teacher can be found in the literature. Findings indicate that conceptions focus on both the professional and personal characteristics of the teacher. For instance, Goldhaber in his meta-analysis of the characteristics of teachers that affect student achievement states that effective teachers have been reported to have professional qualities such as a teacher's degree and experience in teaching their subject, their subject knowledge and pedagogic

knowledge (Goldhaber, 2009: 3). Similarly, Kottler also highlights that sound subject knowledge and proper methods of instruction are important professional qualities effective teachers should have (Kotler, 2000: 17) [9]. However, unlike a majority of the literature, they also emphasize the importance of the 'human' qualities such as charisma, compassion, egalitarianism, sense of humor, creativity and honesty. This supports Meador's idea that a good teacher is creative one, who conducts his/her lessons dynamically, engaging and effectively. According to Suhetskaya A.B. teacher's mastery is a basic quality that helps them to make each lesson unique (Suhetskaya, 2009:6) [10]. Research conducted by Markley supports the notion that a good teacher and his/her action to be taken on his/her part in the classroom play a vital role in provoking effective and efficient learning on the part of students (Markley, 2004: 8) [11]. Moreover, teachers have a fundamental role in their learners' achievements and their qualities can highly affect on students' outcome. In 2006, Borg has examined the definitions of over 200 participants of the research in an attempt to understand the difference of English language teachers from teachers of other fields (Borg, 2006: 19) [12]. Among participants there were teachers of different subjects, who pointed out that there is no distinctive difference between ELT teachers and teachers of other subjects. But in terms of content any language teaching is considered to be more varied and complex; in terms of methodology, used method, activities and materials were reported to be different from those that are used in other subjects. Although, the methodology of English language teaching is more progressive, which requires ELT teachers to be up-to-date to cope with advanced nature of ELT methodology. Pedagogical mastery of a teacher regarded as the most important quality of a teacher's personality, which is determined by its high level of psychological and pedagogical readiness, ability to optimally solve the educational problems and to know each components of teaching (Kuharev, 1986: p. 24) [13].

Methodology

Being aware that there is much to be learned from the various methodology books, journals and magazines, next reading materials were used as a source for this study: research works written by S.Wichadee (2011) Park G.P., Lee H.W., (2006), [14] and others.

As teachers are essential figures in ELT, the characteristics of Ideal ELT teacher should be

identified carefully. The results of this research may be highly useful, as they have been proved with the statistical investigation. In order to find out the answers to the research questions, next data collection instruments were used: literature study, observation and questionnaires.

Results and Discussion

This research's questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part is about the respondent's

background information; the second part divided into two sections: in the first section are listed personal qualities, and the second one for professional qualities. In its turn they have been divided into several subgroups; personal characteristics include communicative and socio-affective skills, and professional characteristics consist of English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge, which is also divided into pedagogical and psychological components. Main features of these components are represented on Table 1.

Table 1 – Main features of the pedagogical and psychological components

Pedagogical component	Psychological component
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Content knowledge</i> • <i>Knowledge of classroom management</i>: maximizing the quantity of instructional time handing classroom events, teaching at a steady pace, maintaining clear direction in lessons; • <i>Knowledge of teaching methods</i>: • Having a command of various teaching methods, knowing when and how to apply each method. • <i>Knowledge of classroom assessment</i>: Knowledge of different forms and purposes of formative and summative assessments, knowledge of how different frames of reference (e.g., social, individual, criterion-based) impact students' motivation. • <i>Structure</i>: structuring of learning objectives and the lesson process, lesson planning and evaluation. • <i>Adaptivity</i>: dealing with heterogeneous learning groups in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Knowledge of learning processes</i>: • Supporting and fostering individual learning progress by having knowledge of various cognitive and motivational learning processes (e.g. learning strategies, impact of prior knowledge, effects and quality characteristics of praise, etc.) • <i>Knowledge of individual student</i> • <i>Characteristics</i>: having knowledge of the sources of students cognitive motivational, and emotional heterogeneity.

Such distribution of characteristics have been adapted from the concept proposed by researchers Park and Lee, and in this part asked respondents to define important/neutral/not important criteria in correlation to ELT teachers (Park, 236) . Then the draft of questionnaire was examined by academic supervisor. Then, the draft of the questionnaire was examined by academic supervisor. Then have been rated the relevance of each item to its category by means of IOC: Index of Objective Congruence with the score of +1, 0, -1 assessment. Then the scores were taken to calculate for its value in the next formula:

$$IOC = \sum R/N$$

To ensure the validity, the items containing IOC value from 0.50 to 1.00 were acceptable. At the end, seven Items were dropped according to its low value and the recommendation of academic supervisor. The final questionnaires that were distributed to students and teachers consisted of 42 criteria.

In order to get clear results and to calculate the importance of each characteristics of Ideal ELT teacher, the following formula of Coefficient of Importance has been generated:

$$CI = \frac{\sum I(\%)}{N * 100\%}$$

To ensure importance, the items containing CI value from 0.50 to 1.00 were considered as important. The highest value 1.00 is the most important. The CI has been generated be the next steps: the sum of percentages have to be divided on the total sum of percentages of both statements:

$$CI = \frac{66.50\% + 81\%}{2 * 100\%} = 0.7$$

According to this formula the coefficient of importance of Ideal ELT teacher's English proficiency considered as important. The CIs of other characteristics have been calculated and are represented on the table 2.

Table 2 – The CIs of other characteristics

№	Groups of characteristics	$\sum I$	N * 100%	CI
Personal Qualities				
1	Communicative skills	110%	300%	0.8
2	Socio-affective skills	371.4%	700%	0.7
Professional Qualities				
3	English Proficiency	147.5%	200%	0.7
4	Pedagogical component of Ped. knowledge	1273.9%	1500%	0.8
5	Psychological component of Ped. knowledge	663.5	700%	0.9

Table 3 – The CIs of other characteristics

№	Groups of characteristics	$\sum I$	N * 100%	CI
Personal qualities				
1	Communicative	192%	300%	0.6
2	Socio-affective	504%	700%	0.8
Professional qualities				
3	English proficiency	184%	200%	0.9
4	Pedagogical component	984%	1500%	0.6
5	Psychological component	512%	700%	0.7

As we can observe on the table 3 represented above, all characteristics are perceived as important for being an Ideal English language teacher. However, the psychological component of pedagogical knowledge of a teacher have been indicated as highly important. Which contradicts to teachers’ perceptions. For teachers being Ideal ELT teacher means have a high level of English proficiency (see table 3).

On the basis of statistical results obtained during the study, have been proposed the structures of characteristics of Ideal ELT teacher from both teachers’ and students’ perspectives.



Figure 1 – The hierarchy of Ideal ELT teacher’s qualities from teachers’ perspectives

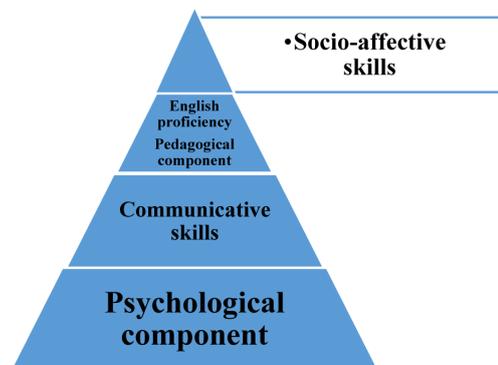


Figure 2 – The hierarchy of Ideal ELT teacher’s qualities from students’ perspectives

According to statistical calculation of ELT teachers’ answers English proficiency is considered as the most important (at the bottom) characteristic of Ideal ELT teacher (see Figure 2). Because English language is the subject matter that they are teaching. The results could be supported by Thompson who stated in his research that “... good teachers knew the information they were teaching

and were confidently able to explain things...” (Thompson S., 2008: 8) [15]. But it is controversial to Saovapa Wichadee's findings: from the results of quantitative and qualitative data, she has concluded that Bangkok University teachers define effective ELT teachers as the ones with good preparation, effective communication and pleasant personality (i.e. indicating on their communicative and socio-affective skills) (Wichadee, 2010: 34) [16].

In contrast to teachers' perceptions, students value mostly psychological component of pedagogical knowledge of an Ideal ELT teacher (see Figure3). Namely, it is significant for teachers to be aware about students' individuality and knowledge of learning processes, such as supporting and fostering individual learning progress by having knowledge of various cognitive and motivational learning processes (learning strategies, impact of prior knowledge, effects and quality characteristics of praise and so on); having knowledge of the sources of students' cognitive, motivational and emotional heterogeneity. The least important category is socio-affective skills, which involves teacher's personal characteristics of behavior and personality, such as friendliness, empathy, honesty and others. But teachers should not neglect that, because as Thompson states that friendliness can lead to student's commitment to participate in the learning procedure (Thompson, 2008: 5).

Therefore S. Wichadee's findings support our results: students at Bangkok University prefer students with interpersonal harmony, which could be considered as a part of socio-affective skills (Wichadee, 2010: 35).

Conclusion

Thus, statistic calculations revealed the significance of all characteristics. Although, we have identified that teachers and students perceive differently Ideal ELT teacher. Having informed views of the students enables English language teachers to understand their learners better and to adjust themselves to suit their needs. It is recommended to teachers to reconstruct and make decisions for adjusting their existing ideas of Ideal teachers and practice it in order to suit students' perceptions due to the fact the system of education in Kazakhstan is centered on learners. In general, aims and objectives of the study have been reached. The main characteristics of Ideal English language teacher have been identified and the models have been proposed on the basis of statistic data.

Therefore, recommendations for further research have been proposed:

There should be a research done to investigate the standards of a teacher in Kazakhstan;

The factors and characteristics contributing to the quality of Ideal teachers have to be examined.

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