Feuerstein's Theory of Mediation and Its Impact on EFL Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

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 Abstract

Earlier self efficacy studies have been blamed for their methodological weakness and their mere reliance on self-report, survey, and correlational techniques for data collection. The purpose of this study; therefore, was to assess the impact of Feuerstein's theory of mediation on EFL teachers' sense of efficacy through direct observation rather than self reports and to use experimental techniques to measure changes in the three key components in teachers' self efficacy -- efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional practices, and efficacy in classroom management-- in 16beginning teachers participating in their in- service teacher development program. Intervention strategies-- modeling, rehearsal, and videotape analysis-- were implemented over a span of 15 two hour sessions. Progress was also monitored by students' engagement in a real teaching performance followed by their self/ peer evaluation. Results of this study indicated that the participants made significant gain scores for all three components.

 Key words: In-service teacher education, sense of efficacy, Feuerstein's theory of mediation.

Pre-service and in- service teacher education programs are essential in the development of teachers' sense of efficacy. However, this will not occur unless the content and nature of these programs meet the principles of standard education. Whereas recent paradigm shift in language teaching in the later part of the twentieth century, has made a demand for a parallel shift in teacher education, the educational system in many contexts, including this research context, seems to have been stubbornly resistant to such a change. To make the matter worse, the impact of disseminatory understanding towards teaching and learning has been so overwhelming that led the educationists to accept that a one and one time only teacher education program taught and supervised by professional teachers prior to the beginning of the teachers' service would be sufficient to prepare the would be teachers for the challenges of their future practices in classrooms. But since it is widely believed that what is taught by the professionals is not always equal to what is learned by the learners, the necessity of reviewing the value of such an approach becomes inevitable. This study, thus, intends to do so by letting beginning teachers have their voices heard regarding their sense of efficacy in managing the real teaching challenges they were facing soon after their pre- service teacher education course was over. To this end, a more person- centered in-service program was required to be incorporated into the teacher education— a concept which received interest in the mid-1980s. Besides, since this researcher, in line with Lange(1990: 250), views teacher development as "a process of teachers' continual intellectual, experiential, and attitude growth", one of the most important objectives of the program set by this study therefore has been to help teachers develop the ability to recognize the underlying beliefs behind their teaching practices, and reflect upon their sense of efficacy in managing their classrooms. Moreover, influenced by Feuerstein's (1980) theory of mediation, we wanted to explore

ways which could help us empower teachers to think for themselves and to know the reason why they were required to act in particular ways. Accordingly, issues, concepts and tasks were presented to the participants in the form of problems to be explored in dialogue rather than an information to be ingested and reproduced, and problem solving tasks were employed to provide the participants with opportunities to judge and verify their sense of efficacy.

The detailed account of the procedures is presented in four sections to come. The first section provides an overview of theory and research pertaining to self-efficacy, discusses the relevance of the self-efficacy construct to teacher development, and presents the rationale for this study. The second section presents the findings of this empirical research. The third and fourth sections provide a summary conclusion and recommendations for future research.

Review of literature

A person's belief in his or her ability to do well despite all the existing obstacles is what Bandura(2007) refers to as self efficacy. It is this belief, he asserts, that helps the individuals to self reflect and evaluate what they do and how they think. Theoretically speaking, it would be naïve to think that this belief would be developed through a unidimensional and linear process. Indeed various forces, though the number might vary for different people, are expected to dynamically interact to shape the individuality of each individual. For instance, social cognitive theorists postulate these factors to be three-- environmental, behavioral and internal personal, and Bandura (1997) considers four sources for fostering efficacy-- verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, physiological arousal, and mastery experiences.

These different but overlapping hypotheses since then has stimulated researchers in different disciplines to test the generality and strengths of these postulations. In education, for instance with the exception of few studies, it was found out that teachers' self efficacy beliefs affected their teaching practices. A case in point is Pajares(1996, 2002) who admitted that the stronger the teachers' self efficacy beliefs are the more chances exist for the development of their students' mastery experience. He later suggests that teachers' self efficacy development has to be continually studied and its influential factors have to be further investigated, specially during their in service training where beginning teachers have realistically faced the challenging demands of their career and tested their level of ability to tackle the problems. These findings supported Bandura's (1986, 1995) claim that efficacy beliefs are the mediators between teaching skills and performance attainments in all cultures. However, Henson(2001) in his review of the self efficacy studies, concluded that the interpretations of the construct and the attempts to measure it was not consistent and he also blamed the methodology of those studies. More specifically he was surprised to see that all those studies relied merely on self-report, survey, and correlational techniques for data collection. Pajares (1997) too recognizing this methodological weakness, called for two strategies : 1) to assess both the sources and the effects of self-efficacy through direct observation rather than self reports;2) and to increase the use of experimental techniques so as to manipulate sources and effects. (p. 30). This observation then underscores the significance of the need for more experimental (or quasiexperimental) and/or long term designs.

In addition, the studies available were all carried out in limited types of cultures and the results were generalized thereafter, but experience has shown that what is correct in one context is not necessarily right in another. Therefore, to bridge

this cross- cultural gap in the self efficacy studies, more research was required to examine the impacts of self efficacy beliefs across cultures. This need has rightly been felt by many other researchers as well *(*Eslami & Fatahi, 2008; Khodarahimi, 2010). Although these findings *too* revealed that the more efficacious the individuals felt, the more likely they were to succeed, they did not explore the role that various incentives play in developing and cultivating student and teacher efficacy beliefs. So the need to study the topic more thoroughly still remains. In other words, research has yet to investigate the factors that might increase teachers' self-efficacy.

To partly fill the gap, this study, following a mixed method approach, employed self report, peers' observation report and experimentation, to explore how a mediating role reflected in the self/ peer supervision technique, may boost self-efficacy in the beginning teachers participating in this study. This technique is claimed by Bandura (1994) to be able to help teachers broaden self-knowledge of their capabilities through peer relationships, access models of efficacious styles of thinking and behavior and enjoy highly informative comparisons for judging and verifying one's self-efficacy.

Research Questions
Accordingly three questions have guided the findings of this study:

1. What is the start efficacy level of beginning teachers' in their actual teaching experiences?
2. Are general teaching efficacy beliefs likely to change when teachers are exposed to vicarious learning experiences or social persuasion, such as coursework?
3. Which one of the three factors identified by the instrument-- efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional practices, and efficacy in classroom management-- sees more significant changes due to the treatment ?

The information reported in this article came mostly from the participants' reported responses to the items in TSES, field notes, observations, and author interpretations. Direct quotes were not often included so as not to distract from the intended message.

Method
       The central focus of the study was based on changing the classroom engagement from a position oriented to a person- oriented interaction by passing the ascribed supervisory role from the regular teacher /supervisor to the beginning teachers themselves, and to examine how through self/ peer supervision, which is said to possess all Feuerstein's (1980) twelve features of mediation; that is, *significance, purpose beyond the here and now, shared intention, a sense of competence, control of own behavior, goal setting, challenge, awareness of change , a belief in positive outcomes, sharing, individuality and a sense of belonging* we could bring about changes in teachers' sense of efficacy about teaching and learning. The details of the research strategy, together with the means of collecting data for analysis appear below.

Setting
       The setting in which this action research was conducted is a language institute in Rasht- Iran. The school contained about 800 students, from beginning to advanced proficiency levels . All the students are served by 40 teachers in all. Approximately 15 percent of the teachers' population is renewed at the beginning of every other terms (each term lasts 3 months) and teacher education programs are provided at the induction phase of the teachers' career-pre service. Dynamic assessment of teachers' efficiency based on student

assessment, parents' and school assessment guarantee the job security of the teachers'.

Participants

There were 16 beginning teachers (11 females and 5 males, with an average of around 3 years of teaching experience and an earlier Teacher Education Course –TEC experience) who enrolled in a 30 hour in- service teacher education program. It should be noted that working with in-service teachers is by nature different from working with the pre-service ones because by definition, as employees, such teachers are already supposed to be competent, so there is the potential for serious loss of face, if in-service teachers receive negative evaluations or even get suggestions for improving their teaching. Thus, to overcome the obstacle of their resistance to participation in this study, the course was offered as part of the teachers' professionalization program devised by the institute. Moreover, the researcher tried to maintain the participants' trust by establishing *transparency (*congruence between the stated purpose and follow-up actions)—assuring them that no official evaluative report of their weaknesses would be filed in the teacher's personnel file. This issue is related to Burton's point that "observation as a means of staff development must be kept separate from administrative supervisory requirements" (1987:164). Finally, they all agreed to participate in the research by providing both, verbal and written consent. The participants were in the age range of 21-30. The descriptive statistics describing the sample appears in table 1.

Table 1. Sample descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	16	21.00	30.00	24.06	2.11
experience	16	1.00	5.00	2.94	1.195

Instruments

Keeping in mind that in reflective teaching the choices of what data to collect and how to collect them rest with the individual teacher, and supervisors must collect data in service of the teachers' foci rather than their own and support teachers' efforts to collect data, all the instruments which are listed below have had this feature, as part of their inherent characteristics:

Unseen observation: The primary technique for data collection was based on a structured self-evaluation conducted by the individual teacher and then discussed with the supervisor. It involved two questionnaires completed by the teachers. The first tapped into teachers' belief systems and philosophies of teaching. Teachers filled out this questionnaire before teaching the lessons. The second questionnaire encouraged the teachers to reflect on their action. Teachers completed it immediately after teaching their lessons because its purpose was "to reveal what actually happened in the class" (Powell, 1999). Powell claims that in post-lesson discussions, these "unseen observation questionnaires persuade practitioners to articulate their general principles, then examine and analyze them for contradictions" (ibid.). In the process, teachers compare what

they had planned with what actually happened during their lessons. Powell adds that "self-observation is a very useful tool for encouraging teachers to increase their awareness of and evaluate their own teaching" (ibid.: 4).

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES): The scale, developed by Tschannen-Moran, and Hoy(2001), includes 24 items categorized into three moderately correlated factors: efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional practices, and efficacy in classroom management. The scale is reported, in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (ibid.: 798), to have the alpha of 0.90 for the whole test, 0.81 for engagement, 0.86 for instruction and 0.86 for management subscales.

Field notes: The notes taken by this researcher tightly focused on the three categories specified by the TSES (Student engagement, efficacy in instructional practices, and efficacy in classroom management), as well as the teachers' concerns, as identified in the pre-observation conference .

Peer evaluation:Language teachers were asked to be evaluated by their peers for developmental and evaluation functions. Although Alfonso(1977)noted that demands for accountability based on attaining objectives can create "a competitive environment that will detract from honest attempts at peer evaluation"(p.597),he also acknowledged that peer supervision could "breed a new sense of responsibility not only for teachers to support their colleagues but also to improve their own instructional practice" (ibid.:599).

Self-evaluation: Language teachers also provided information for evaluation. There are many common-sense reasons to invite input from teachers and their peers in both formative and summative evaluation, particularly in situations where the supervisors is absent. In that case, it is important that someone be involved who actually regularly experiences the same working conditions as the teacher being evaluated.

*Semi structured interviews:*Semi-structured interviews allowed both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss the topics in more detail, to freely and fully express their views, beliefs and thoughts, and to change and modify interview questions whenever needed(Mathers, Fox & Hunn 1998). Accordingly, rich, reliable, valid and accurate data were gathered via this means for this study.

Post- observation conference: In order to provide feedback to language teachers, the data collected formed the basis of the discussion in the post-observation conference. Murdoch emphasized: "If data collected is collaboratively reviewed, it will greatly increase the likelihood of a positive outcome – in terms of a useful dialogue about strategies, and the identification of future foci for lesson preparation/observation" (2000:58–59). For this reason, the post-observation conference was a dialogue rather than a monologue.

Intervention

All the teachers who participated in this study had an earlier pre-service teacher education experience; however, as they claimed in the pre-observation conference, it was unable

to satisfy their needs for tackling real instructional problems they were facing in their classes. To bridge this gap, this action research, used self/ per supervision derived from social constructivism to guide the participants one step ahead in their paths to professional development. Social constructivist framework claims that such passive learning procedures as imitation and rote learning may play only a minor role, if any, and instead supports the case for mediation, learner- centered instruction, experiential learning, and personalization.

To identify what was actually going on with the teachers' language teaching experiences, the researcher spent four weeks in the field with them -- watching, listening, and recording their actions, attitudes, and approaches to teaching before utilizing self/peer supervision. Then at the beginning of the experiment, they were divided into four 4-member groups and put in a class equipped by four laptops, one for each of the 4 groups to watch the teaching videos prepared for this research and to do the assigned tasks. Within their 120-minute class periods, the participants completed at least 30 minutes of solitary work and at most 60 minutes of collaborative work on expert and non-expert's teaching video analysis. The remaining time was spent on other classroom discussion. They followed this schedule, working on the program at least two days per week, for 7.5 weeks.

When the teachers worked in groups, roles were designated for each member in each group. This grouping seemed to encourage teamwork, problem solving, and collaboration among the participants. At the end of the program, each

teacher was asked to run an unseen observation of their own and their peers' classes and write a reflective essay on the experience. Extension activities that encouraged further reflection were developed and assigned to accommodate teaching at different proficiency levels.

Procedures

The processes of observation and feedback in this research is represented in figure 1(borrowed from Bailey, 2006) below.

Figure 1. The processes of observation and feedback
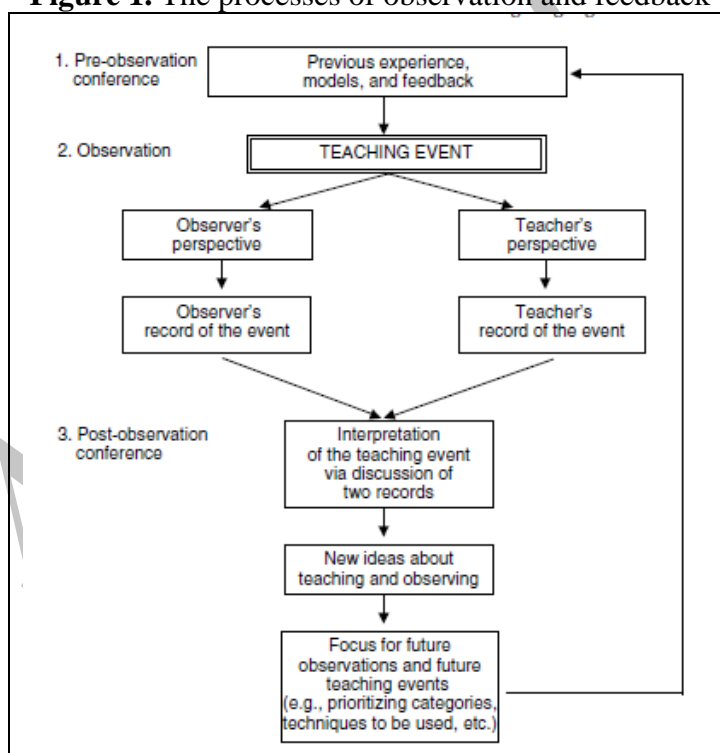
At the beginning of the course, and prior to treatment, the researcher administered TSES to gain a preliminary assessment of teachers' sense of efficacy. Next, the students received the course syllabus. As the syllabus underscored the importance of group work in this course, the researcher highlighted the importance of group work and being a part of a group. In the meantime, she unobtrusively monitored and observed the students as they worked in their groups. She collected regular reports from the students via electronic mail contacts and made sure everything had been completed accurately. Then, she used semi structured interviews, field notes, the homework assignment and the rubric as a summative assessment.

Finally, one month after the experiment was over, TSES was administered once more to examine the students' gain scores, if any, in their perceived sense of efficacy.

Data Analysis

This research consists of both qualitative and quantitative data. The former was obtained through pre observation assessment, unseen observation, post observation conference, and a questionnaire. Besides, the study employed other sources as well: (1) Self/ peer evaluation, (2) field notes which were taken on dialog/conversation during the observation sessions, (3) and the participants' reports which were sent via electronic mail contacts. In effect, the interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide because it allowed the participants to freely and fully express their views, beliefs and thoughts (Lofland & Lofland 1995; Mathers, Fox & Hunn 1998).

Moreover, for the quantitative data, the researcher employed Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test-- a non- parametric counterpart of matched t-test-- to test the differences between the participants' sense of teaching efficacy prior to and after

the experiment. The results are presented in the following section.

Findings
Qualitative Data Analysis

The report in this section is organized based on Miles & Huberman(1984; 1994) qualitative data analysis methodology. Accordingly, the data were summarized, codified and finally categorized. Finally, through searching for a descriptive patterns in the data, meaning and sense was given to the analyzed data. As stated earlier, this study was carried out in different phases: pre- observation, observation, and post observation and follow up. The results of each phase appear below:

Pre- observation Results

Having reviewed the initial, informal interview notes, I found that three of the 16 students—1 male and 2 females--(18.75%)had very *little* prior theoretical background from their pre- service teacher education, supporting the claim made by (ESOL Standards, 2000; Stinson & Claus, 2000) who stated that that theoretical instruction offered to the students in their teacher education classes is not enough. Besides, even those with some limited theoretical knowledge about language teaching preferred to base their teaching practices on their earlier experience with their *teachers* at school, in their TEC and their colleagues at work rather than the conceptions proposed by theories. Only one of the 16 participants actually had sufficient background knowledge, but she too , admitted in

the interview , that she did not know how to put that knowledge into practice within her multi- constraint – surrounded classroom environment. They all reported they did not believe any changes would be possible in the current educational system; however, one teacher reported that her skepticism was due to her inability to exercise new ideas rather than the uselessness of change. They all seemed to have a desire to experience working ideas and as a result enjoy their careers. The participants made comments before they underwent the program that reflected their confidence that the program could improve their language teaching experience. One teacher replied that he had not used action research much in his classes, but he had always heard that the strategy helps teachers learn and act more efficiently; therefore, he was excited about the opportunity to be able to see its effect on his own. Another said that, the use of teacher-led instruction was more satisfactory than learner centered one, so she felt that the new experience seemed "backwards" to her. These views and some more are also reflected in the students' responses to the 24 item version of TSES. The respondents' opinion about each of the statements is ranked on a scale from1-9 for the options ranging from *Nothing* to *Very Little*, to *Some influence*, to *Quite A Bit*, and to *A Great deal*. The results appear in table 2:

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) prior to observation

Std. Dev.	Mean	Max.	Min.	N	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (*TSES*)
1.75	5.56	9.00	3.00	16	1.How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?
1.45	4.67	7.00	2.00	16	2.How much can you do to help your students think critically?
1.79	7.44	9.00	3.00	16	3.How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
1.59	6.00	9.00	4.00	16	4.How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
1.86	6.44	9.00	3.00	16	5.To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?
1.26	6.38	9.00	5.00	16	6.How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?
1.82	6.63	9.00	4.00	16	7.How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?
1.57	6.25	9.00	3.00	16	8.How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?
1.90	5.44	8.00	1.00	16	9.How much can you do to help your students value learning?
2.11	6.06	9.00	2.00	16	10.How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?
1.41	5.63	9.00	4.00	16	11.To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
2.06	5.31	9.00	2.00	16	12.How much can you do to foster student creativity?
2.12	5.695	9.00	2.00	16	13.How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?
1.82	5.31	9.00	2.00	16	14.How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?
1.90	7.13	9.00	3.00	16	15.How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
2.19	5.880	9.00	1.00	16	16.How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?
2.03	5.00	9.00	2.00	16	17.How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?
1.44	5.25	8.00	2.00	16	18.How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
1.72	7.19	9.00	4.00	16	19.How well can you keep a few problem students form ruining an entire lesson?
1.59	7.00	9.00	5.00	16	20.To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
1.67	6.50	9.00	3.00	16	21.How well can you respond to defiant students?
2.23	5.19	9.00	1.00	16	22.How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?
1.37	5.50	8.00	2.00	16	23.How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
1.59	6.38	9.00	4.00	16	24.How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?
7.32	43.88	58.0	30.0	16	• **Efficacy in Student Engagement**
7.33	47.44	57.0	33.0	16	• **Efficacy in Instructional Strategies**
10.0	52.50	66.0	27.0	16	• **Efficacy in Classroom Management**

According to the data above, out of the three main categories in which the 24 items of the inventory were classified 'classroom management' seemed to have been the least problematic area for the teachers to deal with (mean= 52); whereas 'student engagement 'and 'instructional strategies' with the means of (43.88) and (47.44) respectively, needed

more attention as the participants assessed their efficacy in these areas. This observation can perhaps be partly explained in terms of the dominant role assumed for the teacher in this research context.

Observation Results

According to all participants , the most import aspect that they had taken from this class was the building of friendships and standing together. The next aspect they had found was that their level of confidence had improved, and with that a much great sense of pride.

The critical reflection part of the course where they had to integrate theory into practice, was the most difficult part because it needed so much of concentration and discussion. The key point to this job was to not only learn about their own teaching problems, and their possible solutions, but also to see what the other members of the class had thought as well. The satisfaction expressed by the participants signaled that everything was done correctly.

All the participants agreed that they really enjoyed this type of learning and that it was a great experience of teaching. Students realized the importance and value of using videos of other teachers' practices in their professional development process in general, and expressed disappointment that the course was not used more often.

The results confirmed that the cooperative critical reflection which accompanied self/ peer supervision turned this experience into a really fruitful activity, with only one downside as reported by the participants-- it was very time consuming. Students really enjoyed the group work, and the freedom to make any modifications they had thought necessary in their plans. Self/ peer supervision apparently helped student in not only learning about a certain teaching point but gave them an experience with cooperative reflection that they would never forget.

Post Observation Results

Having discussed the findings with the participants in the post observation conference, the researcher administered TSES for a second time after the experiment was over. The results appear in table 3:

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) after experiment

Std. Devi.	Mean	Max.	Min.	N	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (*TSES*)
.719	7.88	9.00	7.00	16	1.How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?
.719	7.38	9.00	6.00	16	2.How much can you do to help your students think critically?
1.125	7.75	9.00	6.00	16	3.How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
.58	7.75	9.00	7.00	16	4.How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
1.58	6.69	9.00	5.00	16	5.To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?
.63	7.50	9.00	7.00	16	6.How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?
.87	7.69	9.00	6.00	16	7.How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?
1.153	6.56	9.00	5.00	16	8.How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?
.957	6.88	8.00	5.00	16	9.How much can you do to help your students value learning?
.957	7.38	9.00	6.00	16	10.How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?
.72	7.38	9.00	6.00	16	11.To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
1.25	7.31	9.00	6.00	16	12.How much can you do to foster student creativity?
1.50	6.38	9.00	5.00	16	13.How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?
1.18	7.25	9.00	5.00	16	14.How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?
1.76	7.19	9.00	4.00	16	15.How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
1.59	6.38	9.00	5.00	16	16.How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?
1.15	7.00	9.00	5.00	16	17.How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?
1.18	7.25	9.00	5.00	16	18.How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
1.72	7.19	9.00	4.00	16	19.How well can you keep a few problem students form ruining an entire lesson?
.87	7.69	9.00	6.00	16	20.To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
1.45	6.63	9.00	5.00	16	21.How well can you respond to defiant students?
1.24	7.25	9.00	5.00	16	22.How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?
.96	7.63	9.00	6.00	16	23.How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
1.02	7.88	9.00	6.00	16	24.How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?
.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	16	• **Efficacy in Student Engagement**
3.87	59.19	67.00	53.00	16	• **Efficacy in Instructional Strategies**
3.99	59.88	66.00	53.00	16	• **Efficacy in Classroom Management**
8.03	54.75	68.00	40.00	16	

The table reveals a noticeable gain in the three major components of TSES-- student engagement; instructional strategies , and classroom

management-- with the mean scores of 59.19, 59.88 and 54.75 respectively; and the smaller standard deviation indicates that the participants became more homogeneous after the experiment. To make a parallel comparison possible, the results of the two sets of responses prior to and after the experiment are presented in table 4:

Table 4. Comparing TSES results before and after the experiment by its three major components

Efficacy in Classroom Management(2)	Efficacy in Instructional Strategies(2)	Efficacy in Student Engagement (2)	Efficacy in Classroom Management(1)	Efficacy in Instructional Strategies(1)	Efficacy in Student Engagement(1)	
40.00	53.00	53.00	27.00	33.00	30.00	Minimum
68.00	66.00	67.00	66.00	57.00	58.00	Maximum
54.75	**59.88**	**59.19**	52.50	47.44	43.88	Mean
8.03	3.99	3.87	10.01	7.33	7.32	Std. Deviation
16						N

Finally, in order to check for the significance of these differences in the gain scores, we employed the statistical test of *Wilcoxon Signed Ranks* – a non-parametric equivalent of matched t-test. The results, shown in the table 5, indicate that the gain scores for all three components-- student engagement, instructional strategies, and efficacy in classroom management**--** were statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance (Z= 0.000; 0.000 and 0.007 respectively).

Table 5. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test *of* statistical significance

CM2 - CM	IS2 - IS	SE2 – SE	
-2.687(a)	-3.519(a)	-3.519(a)	Z
.007	.000	.000	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)

b Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Conclusion, Discussion, Implications

This study intended to examine how a modification in the instructional mode of an in service teacher training could bring about change in the participant teachers' self of efficacy. The results indicated that due to the treatment in this study the participants gained a noticeable improvement in their self efficacy as well as in their self confidence. Besides unlike their feeling at the beginning of this experiment, they started to see themselves as more than deskilled teachers who were unable to deal with their context specific issues. Instead they claimed that this experience made them feel the usefulness of reflection and cooperation in their career. This approach provided the learners with the opportunity to experience how to analyze, investigate, collaborate, share, build and generate based on what they had already learned, rather than what facts, skills, and processes they had parroted. In other words, the teachers in this study functioned both as a learner and a researcher, who aimed at greater awareness of the environments and the participants in a given teaching situation. This is in line with what Cross (1990) held: "As educators we have an obligation to understand the teaching/learning process well enough to improve it." (p.11). Similarly, this   exploration illustrated that a social constructivist perspective with its suggested cooperative reflection practiced in a non-threatening context is of crucial importance in developing teachers' sense of efficacy. What we now know is that within the social context of the classroom, the actions of learners affect those of the teachers as well as the other way round. Thus, it is important to see the learner as an active participant in the mediation process, and that this process is truly interactive rather than unidirectional.

Moreover, as the students commented, despite all the problems in adjustments, this way of working with a group lessened their tension and enhanced their awareness, and allowed them to apply the useful points that they had been learning through group discussions, and therefore, they were able to actually contribute in their own ways. As a follow-up activity, discussions were held, during which the students were able to refer to the skills learned from the program. Their use of some of the activities that they had practiced in the program showed that they perceived the program to be useful in improving their teaching practice.

However, there are several challenges present for the field of EFL teacher education. In the contexts where teachers' voices have little place in policy making, the first challenge is to create locally appropriate responses to support the preparation and professionalism of FL teachers. A second challenge is to explore more fully the ways teachers can overcome their old habits and accept the changes required by the new millennium paradigm shift. This might be more difficult than it sounds, because as Ghaith and Yaghi (1997) found, the more teaching experience teachers in their study had, the less likely they were to implement new instructional methods in their class. And finally, a third challenge for L2 teacher education is to equip teachers with the intellectual tools of inquiry that will enable them to resist the unwanted politics imposed by the national/ global curricular mandates. This would enable teachers to create educationally sound, contextually appropriate, and socially equitable learning opportunities for the L2 students they teach.

Moreover further research is still needed to respond to the question raised by (Pajares, 1992): if efficacy beliefs are critical to the process of teaching, how can they be made an explicit focus of teacher education programs, and to what end?

In conclusion, this study has implications for curriculum developers and EFL teachers whose present curricula for EFL teacher education are still lagging behind; this calls for a careful and painstaking revision and modification. Not only should this change be oriented towards the revision of the courses, but also towards a revision of the suggested methodology, and materials used in those

programs. In the meantime, teachers must have the time to reflect on their practices and study themselves to determine their own teaching problems and solutions. Purposeful teachers know it cannot be put off until they get around to it. This time for reflection is a requirement for maximum efficacy.

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