

The impacts of Direct and Indirect Observation on EFL Iranian Teachers' Teaching Quality Improvement

Shokofe Rezaie, Islamic Azad University, Takestan Branch

Dr. Mohammad Taghi Hasani, Imam Hossein University

Abstract

The present paper sought to examine the effectiveness of less experienced teachers' participation in experienced teachers' classes on students' achievements in terms of their proficiency levels in both Elementary and Pre-intermediate levels. This quasi-experimental design study was conducted in three Language institutes in Tehran, Iran. Twenty-one EFL teachers were selected as experienced and less experienced ones. Also 169 female students taking Elementary and Pre-intermediate courses formed the participants of this study. The participants assigned into experimental and control group. In order to test students' performance in English before the treatment, a Key English Test (KET) and a Preliminary English Test (PET) were employed to check students' English proficiency. There was a statistically significant increase in KET experimental group' final scores before ($M=53.87$, $SD= 2.822$), and after treatment ($M=70.81$, $SD=3.113$), $p\text{-value}=.000$ which is $< .05$. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 15.81863 to 18.06599. Also there was a statistically significant increase in PET scores before ($M=44.36$, $SD= 2.114$), and after treatment ($M=59.27$, $SD=1.835$), $p\text{-value}=.000$ which is $< .05$. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 14.233 to 15767. Data analysis and statistical calculations through T-TEST and one way ANOVA revealed that, although both control and experimental group students' proficiency in English enhanced, there was a significant difference in experimental group students' final scores before and after treatment and direct observation is beneficial.

Keywords: Observation, teachers' development, learners' achievement.

1. Introduction

Observation of teachers is an indispensable process for organizational effectiveness since being unobserved causes organizations to be alone, disorganized, impenetrable and stable (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990). As in all organizations, observation is a very important process in educational quality organizations. The need for and importance of educational observation have been emphasized by many authors (e.g., Pajak, 1993; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993).

Observation is commonly used in education as a tool to support understanding and development of teaching quality and it is one of the most challenging areas in program management. English language teaching (ELT) classroom observation has traditionally been seen as a part of teacher evaluation where observers are typically administrators and senior teachers. Feedback from observers, as Sheal (1989) notes, is usually unsystematic, subjective,

and impressionist. Also, the relationship between observers and observees can be tense; the observers are evaluative, while the observees tend to be defensive. Classroom observations under such conditions might not help much in the observees' professional growth and development.

ELT classroom observations nowadays, however, have emphasized the need for holding more developmental than judgmental view in classroom observations. The main purpose of observations is not to judge subjectively what is good and bad teaching, but to work with the observee to explore and identify the limitations as well as the positive aspects in a class, thereby promoting the observee's critical thinking and professional growth. Such a view, as Williams (1989) states, helps teachers to "develop their own judgments of what goes on in their own classrooms, sharpen their awareness of what their pupils are doing and the interactions that take place in their classes, and heighten their ability to evaluate their own teaching practices" (p.85). This implies that observation can serve as an intermediary between teachers' teaching philosophies and practices. Nunan (1989, p. 76) also holds that since classrooms are "where the action is", spending time looking in classrooms can enrich our understanding of language learning and teaching.

The final aim of any educational planning is to grow students in various cognitive, individual and social skills and knowledge necessary to function occupationally and sociopolitically in society (Fullan, 2001). Teachers' role in successful preparation of students is indisputable. Whether the students will be the open-minded and the informed people of tomorrow or unaware members of society will depend on teacher knowledge, teacher education and especially teacher professional development (Rizvi, 2010). One issue related to professionalism of the teaching force refers to the necessity to bridge the gap between knowledge acquired during formal pre-service studies and further developments accruing while teachers are employed (Nir & Bogler, 2007).

On-the-job professional development programs effort to bridge this gap by allowing teachers to develop new idea that will improve their teaching experience (Mtetwa & Thompson, 2000), increase and renew their teaching skills and practices (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002), change their thoughts, beliefs and perceptions (Guskey, 2002) and bring about improvements in their teaching in their students achievements (Blandford, 2000). It is believed that the poor quality of EFL teachers is partly attributable to a lack of teacher training and teacher professional development (Vo& Nguyen, 2011). As a result, observation has been introduced as one of the teachers' professional activities to help teachers to improve their teaching strategies through peer observation or observing experienced teachers classes. As Sara Bubb (2005) maintains:

"Observation is a powerful tool for assessing and monitoring a teacher's progress. Used well, it can also be a way to support teachers, because observation gives such a detailed picture and enables very specific objectives to be set. Observing someone teach gives a really detailed picture and is an opportunity to stimulate some really useful reflection on teaching and learning." (P.45)

Successful teachers make the most of any opportunities to observe others. They watch a range of teachers' classrooms. It is very encouraging to see that everyone has similar problems

and it is interesting to study the different ways people manage them (Bubb, 2005). Observation may also be helpful for teachers who are beginners in teaching and it can help them to monitor experienced teachers' classroom in order to improve their own skills and bring about changes in their own way of teaching and dealing with problems which they may face during their teaching. Researches show constantly that teacher quality is the crucial factor in student learning, the frequent problem is to identify the important characteristics of teacher quality and help teachers to develop these characteristics (Wenglinsky, 2000). Viewing the problem of improving student performance from this point of view makes the development of systematic and objective methods of classroom observation a critical component in improving teacher quality in every subject area. In order to move along the recent progress in teacher observation the researchers did investigations in this regard.

The important point motivating a work in this area is the position of teachers observation in many countries like Iran where teachers' observation has not occupied the place it merits, whether in second language class, in school or in different EFL institutes (Akbari, Ghafar Samar & Tajik, 2007). Also, as far as observation during the period of teaching practice is concerned, it can be seen as a method for current training and learning (Wajnryb, 1992).

Some studies suggest that learners will not achieve their learning goals successfully until they are given regular and systematic instruction. They also suggest that teachers can improve their teaching strategies by participating in more professional development activities in order to help students to reach their learning goals (Hayes, 2011).

Teacher education is presently facing a number of anxieties as pressures have come from many parts in the last decades, with perhaps the most powerful focus being on the issue of teacher quality (Tony & Richard, 2001).

Recent studies show constantly that teacher quality is the crucial factor in student learning, the frequent problem is to identify the important characteristics of teacher quality and help teachers to develop these characteristics, (Wenglinsky, 2000). As education advocates state, the emphasis should be placed on providing educators with the skills necessary to make a meaningful impact on student learning; Egelson and McCoskey (1998) assert that an evaluation system designed to encourage individual teacher growth is not a luxury but a necessity. Viewing the problem of improving student performance from this point of view makes the development of systematic and objective methods of classroom observation a critical component in improving teacher quality in every subject area.

Also, despite the increasing impact of direct observation as a professional development activity on teachers and students' development, it remains unclear how the process of observation will be implemented in the classroom and how it can help teachers to develop their teaching strategies in a collaborative way. Therefore this study will help less-experienced teachers to make use of experienced teachers' classroom through observation to improve their own teaching skills.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that the effects of observation as a means for professional growth are examined as a vehicle for teacher development. The observation provided to teachers is assumed to offer an enhanced opportunity to teachers to spend more time working with each other, sharing ideas and implementing new strategies. In the Iranian

teacher education context, limited research has been conducted on the process of assisting teachers to move from complete dependence to independence through observation programs.

The increasing awareness of new approaches in teacher training has made the researchers interested in the notion of classroom observation as a tool which less-experienced teachers can use to develop as effective teachers. Therefore this study has examined how development of less experienced teachers' skills through observing experienced teachers classes can affect students' outcomes.

The first main objective of this research is generally to explore and investigate the effects of observation on teachers' quality improvement on teaching profession and learning improvement process in order to find its advantages and disadvantages, and to get the most effective parts in teaching realm, and also if the teachers have been successful in representing their purposes while they are being observed and consulting their observers and colleagues. A second major objective was to analyze the interrelation between the degree of instruction and how much knowledge can teachers enhance to their instruction profession, and if the observation is helpful for learners. The results of the study are intended to create beneficial information for teachers, educational designers, and observer by encouraging them to notice to observation element and also to arise their awareness of the importance of being more thoughtful and more careful on their around.

Research question and hypothesis of the study

The present study attempts to answer the following question:

RQ. Does direct classroom observation of teachers have any effect on their professional development and their learners' outcomes in terms of their proficiency levels?

In response to the above questions, the following null hypothesis is formulated:

H0. Direct classroom observation of teachers does not affect their professional development and their learners' outcomes in terms of their proficiency levels.

2. Review of literature

2.1 Self-efficacy

In order to perceive self-efficacy, it is better to start by perceiving the concept of *self*. People have always been thinking on the concept of self and this can be learned from the growing number of research addressing this notion (Navidinia, Mousavi, & Shirazizade, 2009). Bandura (1999) noted that among variant domains of psychology, “self-processes” have received much attention and that is because most of what happens around human “affect[s] human functioning through intermediary self-processes rather than directly” (p. 2).

Self-efficacy is people’s conceptualization of their capabilities; hence, their conceptualization may differ with their actual abilities (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). Bandura (1993) claimed that self-efficacy is related to people’s expectance of their abilities in particular situations in the future. It is about judgments that people have about

their abilities and it enables people to predict their future performance according to their past performance.

One kind of efficacy which is called collective efficacy plays a role in making teachers remain in their profession. Collective efficacy means that confidence will be greater if its components have shared purposes. So, when a teacher enters a school if their ideology is not consistent with shared purposes of that school, then s/he has two choices: either to join the majority, or to leave the school (Yost, 2006).

Personal efficacy on the contrary to collective efficacy, is a *person's* individual beliefs of their capabilities to perform a task, and these beliefs predict how much effort one will make to perform a task (Bandura, 1982).

Moreover, self-efficacy is different from self-concept. Self-efficacy is a cognitive judgment of confidence of one's abilities based on mastery criteria, whereas self-concept is a description of one's perceived self, accompanied by an evaluative judgment of self-worth (Bong & Clark, 1999; Pajares & Schunk, 2001). In the same vein, Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) pointed out that "self-efficacy is distinct from other conceptions of self, such as self-concept, self-worth, and self-esteem, in that it is specific to a particular task"(p. 7). However, Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen(2002) maintained that self-efficacy, self-esteem, locus of control, and neuroticism are strongly related and these four traits are markers of the same concept.

2.2 Sources of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is not something already existed (such as personal attributes); rather it is accumulated through achievements. Bandura (1982) assumed that self-efficacy is built up via learning and different achievements such as physical, social, and cognitive.

Self-efficacy originates from Bandura's social cognitive theory. For the first time, In 1977 Bandura presented the notion of self-efficacy in his article "self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change". Bandura (1994) maintained that self-efficacy operates via four processes: "... cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes" (p. 1). It is by means of these processes that "self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave" (Bandura, 1994, p. 1).

Intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, self-reflectiveness and self-efficacy beliefs are core features of human (or personal) agency. Human agency means that humans influence events and events are the results of humans' actions (Bandura, 2001). Intentionality is "representation of a future course of action to be performed" (Bandura 2001, p. 6). Forethought means to think about the future, set goals and take actions that bring about desired results(Bandura, 2001).Self-reactiveness is "the self-regulation of motivation, affect, and action" (Bandura, 2001, p. 8). Self-reflectiveness is people's reflection on their behaviors, deeds, and thoughts (Bandura, 1982). And finally self-efficacy is "belief in one capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p.3).

Bandura (2001) believed that among these core features, self-efficacy beliefs are the most important ones and they build the basis of human agency. The reason he cited is that if

humans think that they cannot perform effectively and reach their goals, they will not be motivated to resist when they face obstacles (Bandura, 2001). “Whatever other factors may operate as guides and motivators, they [self-efficacy beliefs] are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to produce effects by one's actions” (Bandura, 2001, p. 10). Self-efficacy beliefs are even more important than people's real capabilities, and can better predict people's success (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy is based on four sources. These four sources involve: mastery experience (or enactive self-mastery or performance accomplishment) (Chacon, 2005), vicarious experience (or role-modeling), verbal (or social) persuasion, and emotional arousal (or physiological and emotional conditions). Among these four sources, mastery experience is the most important one with regard to learners' educational attainment (Bandura, 1997).

The first source which is the most fundamental one is mastery experience. It indicates a person's “success or failure in doing a task” (Akbari & Moradkhani, 2010, p.27). It refers to a situation in which a person successfully completes a task and this feeling of success affects and enhances their self-efficacy. However, if s/he is unsuccessful, feeling of failure affects and consequently reduces their self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Helsin (1999) suggested that in order to achieve mastery experience, complicated tasks should be dismantled to be readily obtainable. Bandura (1999) commented that mastery experience “... can be achieved by tackling problems in successive, attainable steps. Success builds a robust belief in one's efficacy. Failures undermine it, especially in earlier phases of self-development” (p. 46).

Second source is related to the successful experience of completing a task by others. People's self-efficacy enhances when they see other people's victory and success (Bandura, 1999). Observing other people's success helps observers through learning from others and from other people's experience. The feeling that ‘I can do this, too’ increases observers' courage and self-efficacy. Schunk and Meece (2005) pointed out that vicarious experience can have a negative impact too, that is to say when people fail to complete a task successfully, this will decrease observers' self-efficacy. Bandura (1999) believed in the same way, he maintained that if a person witnesses other people's success, this makes him or her believe that s/he can do it as well and this increases their self-efficacy. The opposite is true, too. If a person notices other people's failure in doing a task, s/he may think that the same event can happen to him or her and this decreases their self-efficacy.

The third source of self-efficacy, namely verbal persuasion is again related to others. Others can encourage people and make people believe that they are capable of performing a lot of tasks. This can increase people's confidence, and consequently their self-efficacy. Encouragement that people receive from others is critical. The positive reinforcement helps people to feel assured and encourage them to try harder which consequently leads to the development of their self-efficacy. On the contrary, negative comments and discouragement reduce self-efficacy (Schunk & Meece, 2005). In other words, *suggestion* has a key role in any individuals; if this suggestion is positive, it can increase self-efficacy and confidence; however, if it is negative and intimidating, it reduces self-efficacy. Bandura (1999) mentioned that “if people are persuaded that they have what it takes to succeed, they exert

more effort and are more perseverant than if they harbor self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when problems arise” (p. 47).

Emotional arousal as the fourth source, influences self-efficacy as well. Generally, feelings such as excitement, stress, anxiety, and so forth affect people’ self-efficacy and if they decrease, self-efficacy will increase. Of course, emotions such as happiness, calmness and so on increase people’s self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). These feelings are important because “people rely on their...emotional status to judge about their capabilities”(Navidinia et al., 2009, pp. 126-127). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) highlighted that “moderate levels of arousal can improve performance by focusing attention and energy on the task. However, high levels of arousal can impair functioning and interfere with making the best use of one’s skills and capabilities” (p. 19).

Another source which is not among the main sources of self-efficacy is attribution. Attribution is connected to the fact that self-efficacy can increase if success is attributed to elements inside a person (elements that people have control over them such as will, persistence, and so on) and can decrease if success is attributed to environmental elements (such as luck which cannot be controlled by people) (Bandura, 1993).

2.3 Teachers’ self-efficacy

Teachers’ self-efficacy is very important because it influences both teachers and learners. Generally, the start of all activities and the point of departure for reforms, are classrooms; to be more specific, educational system. A good educational system requires qualified teachers and self-efficacy is one of the most important attributes of these teachers (Caprara et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moan & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, and Ellett (2008) defined teacher self-efficacy as “a teacher’s individual beliefs in their capabilities to perform specific teaching tasks at a specified level of quality in a specified situation” (p. 752). Similarly, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) defined teacher self-efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in their capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 22). According to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), two factors are involved in teachers’ self-efficacy: One was “self-perception of teaching competence [including an assessment of internal resources and constraints] and [the others were] beliefs about the task requirements in a particular teaching situation [including an assessment of resources and constraints external to the teacher]” (p. 22).

Chacon (2005) believed that in addition to beliefs and personal knowledge, other factors such as “impact exerted by culture and society on the teachers’ expectations, roles, and social relations” (p. 258), are involved in formation of teachers’ self-efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) noted that one reason that makes teachers’ self-efficacy so powerful is its “cyclical nature”. It means that when a teacher performs a task successfully, the experience of this success will increase their self-efficacy and the more self-efficacy, the more perseverance and this will cause the teacher to get better results in their career which will enhance their self-efficacy. On the contrary, if a teacher fails to complete a task successfully, their self-efficacy decreases and this will end in less perseverance which

in turn causes them to be easily defeated and to have low teaching quality. And this will result in low self-efficacy.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

Participants were 21 female teachers. To carry out the experiment, two groups of teachers were selected as experimental groups (13 participants) having university education (Bachelor or Master degree) with minimum of 5 years of teaching. Eight teachers were less experienced, novice ones teaching at elementary (4 participants) and Pre intermediate (4 participants) levels. One group was assigned as control group (8 participants) who were beginner in teaching Elementary (4 participants) and Pre-intermediate (4 participants), having educational degree in English, though. The total number of students participated in less experienced teachers' classes (both experimental and control group) were (169 participants) female.

3.2 Instruments

To investigate the effect of classroom direct observation on students' outcomes and teachers' skills, three instruments were employed. A sample of TOEFL test was used to assess the teachers' proficiency in English. It was selected from *Longman Complete Course* for the TOEFL test book published by AddisonWesley Longman, Inc (2001). The number of questions were 60 multiple items, divided into grammar (30 items), vocabulary (20 items), and reading (10 items) sections. The TOEFL sample was piloted on (n=22) EFL teachers to determine the reliability of the test. Analyzing the result of the study using SPSS (Ver.18), the reliability was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha as 0.732. The second instrument used in this study was Key English Test (KET) and Preliminary English Test (PET) tests: In order to test students' general English proficiency before the treatment two general English tests (KET & PET) were employed as pre-test (KET for Elementary levels and PET for Pre-intermediate levels). These two tests were piloted on a random sample (n=40) of students to estimate reliability and time allocated to complete these tests. The results of the study using SPSS (Ver. 15) show a reliability of 0.820 for KET and 0.775 for PET.

3.3 Data collection procedure

The results of students' final exams in experimental group were compared to the results of students' exams in control group to assess the effect of classroom observation on teachers' professional development and students' outcomes. Prior to the experiment, the participants (teachers) were given a sample of TOEFL test to evaluate their language proficiency. Among teachers with higher scores, some were considered as less experienced and some were selected as experienced teachers based on the years they have taught English in English language institutes. Two groups of less-experienced EFL teachers who had and did not have the targeted treatment (classroom observation) were chosen to determine the effect of

treatment on Elementary and Pre-intermediate students' achievements. Less experienced teachers in control groups have already participated in Teachers Training Courses but they had no observation of experienced teachers' classes, while less experienced teachers in experimental groups participated in both training courses and experienced teachers' classes.

In order to test students' performance in English before the treatment, The KET and PET tests were employed for both control and experimental groups. They consisted of a number of multiple questions and certain skills were measured: listening, grammar, vocabulary, reading and speaking which was measured through interview. This study required at least 10 sessions with less-experienced teachers attendance in experienced teachers' classes. Teachers observed a class on an area particularly relevant to their own area of teaching. They were supposed to fill an observation checklist in order to choose the focused areas of observations according to teachers' needs and particular teaching situations. At the end of experiment the same tests (KET & PET) were conducted as post-test to measure the effect of treatment on students' performance. First the student's performance in experimental groups was evaluated. Then students' performance in experimental group was compared to the students' performance in control group.

3.5 Data analysis

In order to analyze the collected data of this study, the data were examined through the use of SPSS (Version.21), and Excel (Version 2010). In this study the differences in achievement scores of students taught by teachers who participated in one of the professional development activities (class observation) were used as the measure of effectiveness of classroom observation on students' outcomes. The students' final exams' scores in two different levels (Elementary and Pre intermediate) were compared via two different instruments (KET&PET) before and after treatment.

4. Results

4.1 Main features of the data

Before investigating the results on the scores of pretest and posttest, descriptive statistics were presented in order to summarize the available data and describe the main features of the data. Table 4.1 shows its results.

Table 4.1

Descriptive statistics of all groups in KET and PET

post test

experimental group 44 44.27 3.552
scores in pet pretest

control group scores 35 57.43 5.723
in
pet post test

control group scores 35 45.11 5.869
in
pet t pretest

	N	Mean	Variance
experimental group scores in ket post test	52	70.81	9.688
experimental group scores in ket pretest	52	53.87	7.962
control group scores in ket post test	38	68.24	9.321
control group scores in ket pretest	38	54.68	10.114
experimental group scores in pet	44	59.27	3.366

Table 4.1 shows that there is not a significant difference in mean of scores in KET pretest in experimental (M=53.87) and control group (M=54.68), since they are close to each other. Also the mean score of post-test in KET control group is 68.24 and in KET experimental group is 70.81. It seems there are differences between the mean scores. It is the same for pet pretest and posttest, in which the mean score of experimental group is 44.27 in pretest and 59.27 in posttest in experimental group and in control group the mean score is 45.11 in pretest and 57.43 in posttest.

4.2 Investigating the research question

As it is shown in table 4.2, there is a statistically increase in KET scores before (M=54.68, SD= 3.180) and after treatment (M=68.24, SD=3.053), p-value=.000 which is < .05. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 12.060 to 15.046. This increase is not statistically significant.

Table 4.2

Comparison of two control groups in KET

	paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Paired control group	13.553	4.542	.737	12.060	15.046	18.393	37	.000

Also, the paired differences between two experimental groups are shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Comparison of two experimental groups in KET

	paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Paired experimental group	16.94231	4.03618	.55972	15.81863	18.06599	30.269	51	.000

There is a statistically significant increase in KET scores before (M=53.87, SD=2.822) and after treatment (M=70.81, SD=3.113), p-value=.000 which is < .05. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 15.81863 to 18.06599. This shows a positive result. Therefore, we concluded that the means between two groups are not equal and there is a significant difference between them.

Table 4.4 and 4.5 respectively show paired differences in PET control group and experimental group.

Table 4.4

The comparison of two control groups in PET

paired Differences								
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	sig. (2-tailed)
Paired control group scores in pet test post test	12.314	3.402	.575	11.146	13.483	21.413	34	.000

There is a statistically increase in PET scores before (M=45.11, SD= 2.423) and after treatment (M=57.43, SD=2.392), p-value=.000 which is < .05. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 11.146 to 13.483. There is a statistically significant increase in PET scores before (M=44.36, SD= 2.114), and after treatment (M=59.27, SD=1.835), pvalue=.000 which is < .05. The mean increased with 95% confidence interval from 14.233 to 15767.

Table 4.5

Comparison of two experimental groups in pet

	paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Paired experimental group scores	15.000	2.524	.381	14.233	15.767	39.416	43	.000

We can conclude that the mean between the groups are not equal and there is a significant difference between them. $P\text{-value}=0.000 < 0.05$. Accordingly we can say that teachers' direct observation had significant effect on their professional development and their students' scores as we had an increase in mean scores of experimental group.

4.3 Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of classroom direct observation on teachers' professional development and their students' outcomes and to explore if it is feasible to apply it in educational setting in Iran. Three groups of teachers and students (Elementary and Pre-intermediate) were selected. Only teaches in experimental group were given the opportunity to improve their teaching methods and strategies via participating in experienced teachers classes. And both experimental and control groups of students were given the chance to improve their English performance.

Concerning the motivation in second language learning, Gardner (1985) believed that motivation is a mixture of effort and desire to attain the goal of language learning and also positive attitudes toward language learning. Further, findings of the present study are compatible with the notion that motivation is one of the factors influencing the choice of language learning strategies. (Mcgroarty, 2002; Dornyei, 2001; McGroarty, 2002).

In accordance with the result of the present study Moiin vaziri (2008), claimed that Iranian students were both instrumentally and integratively motivated to learn English. Therefore, the role of motivation in learning language is significant.

The result of the present study is consistent with previous studies (Falout et al, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009) which have shown that evaluating teachers' comotencies enhances, encourages, promotes and facilitates EFL learners' motivation in learning.

In addition, the findings of the present study corroborate those of Piggot (2008) who reported how evaluation assists learners' motivation in learning a new language.

The findings of the present study extend those of previous studies in that they support evaluation that could be utilized to assist learning motivation. Furthermore, numerous studies have proven that evaluation bears positive impact on motivation (Rahimi & Sadighpour, 2011; Maini, 2011; Elliot, 1998; Evertson, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1985).

At the same time, Darling-Hammond (1999) found the same result in accordance with the present study in enhancing reading and mathematics through motivation. Evertson, Hawley and Zlotnik (1985) found that useful way for promoting motivation is evaluating teachers' competency. This is supported by the findings of the present study.

Additionally, (Douglas, Harris and Sass, 2007) state that, classroom evaluation is beneficial, resulting in higher motivation. They mention that, the experimental group students are usually much better in performance when compared with control group. Another aspect is what Ashton & Webb (1986) explained that teachers' evaluation have the greatest impact on student motivation in achievement.

According to Darling-Hammond (2000), teachers with more preparation for teaching are more confident and successful with students than teachers who have little preparation or none (As cited in Garcia, 2011). which is supported by the findings of the present study. Moreover, it can be concluded that the proposed technique, i.e. evaluation teachers' competence, can be used to enhance EFL learners' motivation, as an effective way in language classrooms. The finding of this study is in contrast with Jacob and Lefgren (2004)' study that found no relationship between teachers' participation in professional development activity and student achievement while other studies have found higher levels of students' motivation related to teachers' professional development directly related to the area in which they are teaching (Brown, Smith, & Stein, 1995; Cohen & Hill, 1977; Wiley & Yoon, 1995).

Most of the studies consider some form of impact of professional development on teachers' knowledge and practice which includes; the effectiveness of programs on personal changes of teachers' cognitions, beliefs, practice and teachers' satisfaction as well as pupil change (Avolas, 2011). There are different results on the relationship between teachers' participation in professional development activities and student outcomes.

In sum, the fact of observing teachers in many different settings will likely suggest variations they can try to improve their strategy. In other words, as they evaluate teachers implementing a strategy in different ways, they, too, can gain the ability to see and act more flexibly in their own teaching.

5. Conclusion and implications

5.1 Summary of the findings

The findings of this study show that teachers' participation in experienced teachers' classes had a significant effect on teachers' professional development and students' outcomes. The results of students' scores in experimental group was compared to the scores of students in control group in order to investigate, if, class observation had any significant effects on students' outcomes. A significant increase in the use of direct observation was noted with

regard to experimental group. Therefore, statistically significant differences were found on the experimental group when compared to control group.

Although learning outcomes are influenced by a complex interplay of factors particular to an institution, teaching context, and student disposition, when employed carefully and thoughtfully, student outcomes may contribute to judgments of teaching.

In this study, the teachers were interviewed to reveal their specific ideas regarding the effect of experienced teachers' class observation on their professional development. Almost all teachers reported high satisfaction with their participation in experienced teachers' classes and processes in which they were involved. They had become more creative in enlarging their teaching in order to make their lessons more interesting. The participants said that they have become more motivated in teaching as a result of observation. The fact of observing teachers in many different settings will likely suggest variations they can try to improve their strategy. In other words, as they observe teachers implementing a strategy in different ways, they, too, can gain the ability to see and act more flexibly in their own teaching.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present study, we can conclude, experienced teachers' class direct observation is acceptable for EFL less experienced teachers and its introduction is beneficial and effective for both teachers and students.

Promoting teacher evaluation is clearly in the national interest as well as serving students and their families and communities. Teachers need feedback on their performance to help them identify how to better shape and improve their teaching practice and, with the support of effective school leadership, to develop schools as professional learning communities. At the same time, teachers should be accountable for their performance and progress in their careers on the basis of demonstrated effective teaching practice.

Developing a comprehensive approach may be costly but is critical to conciliate the demands for educational quality, the enhancement of teaching practices through professional development, and the recognition of teacher knowledge, skills and competencies. The expectation is that teachers engaging in reflective practice, studying their own methods of instruction and assessment, and sharing their experience with their peers in schools, becomes regular a routine part of professional life. The result of this study has demonstrated that there is a difference between the effect of direct and indirect observation on teachers' development and their students' achievements and all the null-hypothesis was rejected.

5.3 Pedagogical implications of the study

This study, like other studies, has some implications for different individuals including EFL teachers, researchers, and curriculum designers. The results of the study are intended to create beneficial information for teachers, educational designers, and observer by encouraging them to notice to observation element and also to arise their awareness of the importance of being more thoughtful and more careful on their around. It suggests teachers trust their observations of experienced teachers' behaviors; that teachers should consider the experienced teachers'

views about teaching and their anticipations regarding instruction so that they can make well-versed decisions about curriculum and teaching; and develop and teach in a way that is encouraging. In spite of abundant research on the effectiveness of direct observation, the research question in this paper has not yet been fully answered. There are, for example, still indecisions concerning the best methods of dealing with the influence of context, individual differences and social factors in dealing with direct observation.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

The followings are some suggestions and insights regarding teachers' self-efficacy and development for future researches. Future researches can seek to answer several issues that have not been investigated in this study as follows:

First, as the focus of this study was only on direct observation and indirect observation, other studies can be conducted on the other variables like participants' major, motivation, psychological characteristics, and attitude.

Second, as the number of participants were limited into two groups with twenty one EFL teachers. Other studies can be done with more participants.

Third, as all participants of this study studied English language in English language institutes, future studies can be done with higher level participants in universities to see whether the results are different or not.

Fourth, as gender was considered as a variable in this study, future studies can be done just by male participants or female participants simultaneously in order to understand whether there are any differences between the results of male and female participants.

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