Investigating English Teachers' Awareness of Pedagogical Competence and its Effect on Students' Language Learning

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Abstract
The study examined the impact of high school English teachers' awareness of pedagogical competence on student learning. A psychometric measurement instrument of English language teachers' pedagogical competence (ELTPC) was first developed through factor analysis with 320 high school teachers in Guilan, Northern Iran. Based on the developed instrument, 36 teachers were divided into two groups of aware and unaware teachers of pedagogical competence (PC) according to Contrasting Groups Method of cut score. Then, 160 high school third graders received instruction from the aware and unaware teachers for 7 weeks. Finally, a survey regarding the teachers' implementation of pedagogical competence in classrooms was conducted with 30 students. The findings from the experiment and survey supported the teachers in aware group. Although, based on the survey results, the aware teachers were reported to act better, they were not reported as highly practicing the pedagogical competence. The findings can be practically used by schools, education administration, and teacher educators.

Keywords: English teachers, awareness of pedagogical competence, high school students

Introduction

Language teachers' awareness of PC has always been the heart of students' language learning and has played a vital role in students' learning achievements and performance. Teachers' awareness raising is applied in a cyclical process, in which teachers continuously monitor, evaluate, and revise their practice, and thereby, creatively mediate developed frameworks for teaching and learning. Teachers' awareness of the language teaching situation in certain contexts makes them think and rethink of their practice and attune their teaching accordingly; their awareness results in reflection on their pedagogy, and the PC influences language teaching performance. To raise awareness among English language teachers, PC should be the main discipline of educational institutions for English language teachers. Not only should teachers be aware of what to teach, but also they should be aware of why and how that subject should be taught. As Li (2002) argues, developing pedagogical awareness and having an in-depth understanding of teaching and learning theories can help teachers convey the subject matter effectively to students.

Any successful educational system requires that the teachers' awareness of PC be high, since the awareness of the competent teachers and the value of this competence as a qualification are required as very important components of proficient teaching. In language teacher education, Johnstone (2006) notes that reflective teaching has been put forward as a way out of the teacher's dilemma and as a counteraction against the influences of "centralization and control" in which

"teachers are seen simply as deliverers of a fixed curriculum" (p. 661) and are not valued as professionals who test out their interpretations and solutions of problems. In the history of ELT, teachers' awareness of PC has always been the focus of attention for researchers and institutions. The traditional view of ELTPC is an issue of teaching practice; that is, teachers develop teaching situations to function and create conditions for learning through knowledge, methods, and actions. Altering the traditional concept of PC that considers it as merely teaching skill or ability, Thomas (1987) adds more dimensions to ELTPC. To him, teaching is not the only determining factor; teachers' managerial and disciplinary, preparatory and planning, and assessment and monitoring abilities are also critical. Furthermore, Olsson, Martensson, and Roxa (2010) certify that PC enjoys a much broader concept than that of mere teaching skill. To them, PC involves four crucial facets: (1) pedagogical practice or actual teaching activities related to student learning; (2) teaching and student learning being observed; (3) theoretical knowledge of teaching and student learning; and (4) planning as a means for improved pedagogical practice. Yet, to the researchers, PC presupposes a broad and comprehensive domain of teaching practice, and a pedagogically competent teacher demonstrates a good ability to practice teaching optimally with student learning in focus.

Components of PC

PC is multidimensional in nature as it emphasizes several broad areas of understanding used in the present study and explained as follows: (a) preparation and planning for teaching, (b) updating course subjects, (c) a disciplinary root of class management, (d) teaching practice, skills, and strategies (e) different assessment tools and the related feedback, (f) developing a positive attitude toward teaching and learning, and (g) believing in what best supports learners and learning achievement.

Preparation or planning for teaching is a prerequisite to teaching in class and is an essentially imperative division of the overlapping activities of teaching since, according to Kizlik (2008), lesson planning and preparation for teaching have long been recognized by educational institutions as an integral part of teacher preparation world-wide. Moreover, teaching skills, which is a central part of PC, is demonstrated in the ability to teach in a way that actively supports student learning. Thomas (1987) asserts that different teaching skills and strategies as a central part of PC should be employed by teachers to present language in its various facets to learners as they are teachers' classroom practices shaped by a wide range of interacting factors.

At the same time, a teacher should demonstrate a good ability to use subject knowledge in practical and pedagogical actions with student learning in focus (Shulman, 1986), and that the teachers' familiarization with the science and the dimensions of the related subject they intend to present to students in a certain class is of great importance (Zvarych, 2013). Thorough a continuous development of the knowledge about teaching skills and renewal of the strategies, English teachers can demonstrate the required PC.

Furthermore, classroom management proves to be an important factor in channelizing the way the classroom environment is controlled and managed for optimal student learning. In order for teachers' optimal preparation for course, practical teaching skills, and satisfactory subject mastery to take effect effectively, classroom management is highly required by teacher. In addition, the whole teaching should also be done in a controlled and managed class since, according to Shinn, Stoner, and Walker (2008), the issues of effective classroom management are highlighted by prior research as a key to effective student learning.

Besides, the practice of teaching and learning needs to be monitored and assessed in an ongoing process of assessment (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). Assessment, in fact, reflects all teachers'

demanding job of preparation for teaching the subjects in a manageably organized classroom in order to make sure if what has been done in a course is of a satisfactory outcome.

The components mentioned above are based on teachers' attitude about how they perceive their role and responsibility and the role and responsibility of their students (Apelgren & Giertz, 2010). The English language teaching profession and professional knowledge are developed through a scientific attitude toward the practice of teaching that allows the attitude to take a central role in an interaction with the overall pedagogical knowledge. Moreover, teachers need to own the belief that represents the way they see the English language, the stand they take against it, the belief they carry out according to the importance of language skills and sub-skills, and most importantly, their belief in the instructional objectives designated for the course. Xu (2012) states that teachers' deep-rooted beliefs about language learning would infuse into their classroom performances more than a particular methodology, and that teachers' beliefs and attitude unconsciously drive teachers to adopt different teaching-learning methods.

Therefore, as Erdem and Koc (2016) note, the development of PC of the English language teachers should be geared to aimed and continuous activities developed and designed in order to update, develop, and increase teachers' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in managerial, personal, educational, and subject field of teachers so that improvement in student learning can be fulfilled.

Conducting a mixed method of research approach on ELTPC with the inclusion of all possibly related components, the researchers intend to make an instrument of ELTPC by developing a scale through a researcher-made questionnaire analyzed via EFA. Then, based on the developed instrument, the researchers intend to investigate the degree of teachers' awareness of PC, and the impact their awareness will have on the learner's learning enhancement. Accordingly, the main research question is:

Q. Is there any statistically significant difference between high school English language teachers' awareness of PC and their learners' learning achievement?

Literature Review

In the literature, teaching quality and students' learning achievement have been mostly attributed to teachers' awareness. A study conducted by Strauss and Sawyer (1986) revealed that teachers' awareness and the quality of teachers had a major impact on student learning. Similarly, Wright and Bolitho (1993) noted that teachers' awareness might have a significant positive impact on preparing lessons, evaluating and adapting materials, interpreting and designing syllabuses, and also assessing learner's performance. Ellis (1997) believes that awareness-raising practices are needed to develop teacher's conscious understanding of the principles of the L2 teaching and the practical techniques that can be used in different kinds of lessons. Andrews (2007), however, believes that teachers' language awareness has no potential to exert a powerful effect upon teaching effectiveness, at least as far as L2 teachers are concerned. Andrew found that there were inadequacies in the knowledge of grammar and general understandings of language of prospective and practicing language teachers. Based on Andrews' study conducted with 82 trainers, more than 50% of the trainers had inadequate levels of grammatical awareness.

In addition, teachers' pedagogical awareness is directly related to teachers' in-classroom decision-making, classroom management, teaching methods, and assessment techniques as important elements of PC. According to OECD (2012), conditions such as students' behavior, the nature of the instructional task, and the classroom and school environment, along with teachers' characteristics and cognitive processes can impact the pedagogical decisions made by teachers. Thus, quality teaching hinges on the quality of the pedagogical awareness held by teachers.

Similarly, teachers' awareness is also directly related to teachers' practices, and their beliefs about teaching, what language is, and how it should be learned. Gebhard and Oprandy (1999) believe that awareness is related to discovering and rediscovering teaching beliefs that contribute to understanding classroom practices. Thus, awareness provides teachers with a better basis for figuring out the how and what of their teaching and also with the pertinent perceptions that play a main role in their thoughts. Accordingly, teacher belief used as a tool to tackle the problems with the questions of teaching and learning possesses (Kalaja, 2011), is a very important component of PC that is missing in previous studies.

There are also a few studies that have focused on pedagogical content knowledge or on the relationship between content knowledge and student learning. For example, studies done by Hill, Rowan, and Ball (2005) and Voss, Kunter, and Baumert (2011) indicate that teachers' better content knowledge results in higher student achievement and that higher general pedagogical/psychological knowledge leads to a higher quality of instruction, higher cognitive activation, better instructional pacing, and better student-teacher relationships. In yet another study, Allen and Swearingen (2002) found that mediated instruction resulted in progress from one stage of pedagogical awareness to another and is important for both in-service teachers and pre-service teachers.

The researchers believe that the concept of PC is so broad and comprehensive that it requires a multilateral dimension in the context of the broader curriculum and longer-term instructional plans. Therefore, the views on the development of PC should not focus on limited competences. According to Tsui, Lopez-Real, and Edwards (as cited in Yuan, 2015), teachers' endeavor to develop competence and skills to achieve full participation and engagement in different forms of practice, and negotiation of meaning with other members is valued by the teaching community.

It is also believed that PC includes awareness of alternative instructional methods. It requires that instructors actively think about their own practices in the classroom, be aware of the possible strategies for engagement, and actively choose the methods that best fit their goals. Accordingly, an improved awareness of the PC and an understanding of what teachers are doing while working are needed. Lindahl (as cited in Larsson, 2009) believes that teachers gradually become aware of their actions with regard to desirable or undesirable students' learning achievements. This suggests that increasing awareness of being reflective both regarding themselves as professionals and in relation to the students is necessary. Sheridan and Williams (2007) also mention the importance of reflective ability as an integral element of teachers' awareness while teaching high quality and using a variety of ways to enhance student learning at the same time. According to Larsson (2009), teachers' awareness about their doing and thinking make them take further steps in their professional development.

Method

To answer the research question stated above, the following procedures were utilized:

Participants

The sample population include high school English teachers chosen through the probability sampling method (Stage cluster sampling). It was taken from the province of Guilan divided into four clusters of North, South, East, and West. From each cluster, 8 towns were selected as a sample (32 towns, 41.5 %), as a stratified sample of the study. From each town, four high schools were randomly selected from different parts of the towns. In each high school, two or three English teachers were randomly selected deepening on the number of teachers practicing

teaching English in the school. The final population of the research consisted of 365 in both boys and girls schools located in the province. The teachers were of both genders with an average of 14.5 years of teaching experience and an average age of 38.5, with different university degrees from B.A. to Ph.D. in ELT.

Instrument and Procedure

In the first phase of the study, to develop the ELTPC instrument, a questionnaire of seven components in a five-point Likert scale was used through a comprehensive investigation and analysis of the extant literature.

The type of question, language used, wording, and the order of items were checked based on the criteria of relevance, clarity, simplicity, and ambiguity. The iterative revisions of the instrument based on the seven experts' opinion produced a 60-item questionnaire. The ethics of questionnaire development and the related confidentiality were fully respected. The questionnaire was, then, piloted on 65 high school English teachers to estimate its reliability coefficient through Cronbach's alpha that showed a reasonable reliability index of 0.88.

Having piloted the questionnaire, the researcher administered it to high school English teachers. Forty-five teachers, however, failed to complete the questionnaire correctly, leaving 320 teachers with over 87% of the total population. The internal consistency of the questionnaire items was calculated through Cronbach's alpha to evaluate how each item could contribute to the variance of the instrument. The alpha value was 0.834, indicating that the instrument was internally reliable. Finally, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was run to determine the constructs or domains within the questionnaire and to select items or scales to be included in the measure for the purpose of data reduction.

Sampling Size and Adequacy

As the 60-item questionnaire was administered to 320 participants, the analysis was 320/60= 5.3 respondents for each variable, which conformed to the sampling size criterion (Kass & Tinsley, 1979). Nevertheless, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) were calculated, as well. The KMO sampling adequacy test statistic for all 60 variables was 0.838, which was large enough for further analysis and higher than the threshold value of 0.5. The BTS statistic was 4134.770, well over 0.05. The results supported that the variables had satisfactory characteristics to conduct the factor analysis.

Factor Extraction

Carrying out an EFA required the researchers to follow the extraction principles which determined the number of factors to be retained for the seven constructs based on eight processes of gaining correlation matrix, communalities, total variance explained, scree plot, component matrix, rotated component matrix, and components transformation matrix.

In the initial extraction stage, the researchers selected principal component analysis. Correlation matrix was used by default, and the researchers had the option of customizing the Kaiser's eigenvalue cut-off criterion of 1.0. Unrotated factor solution and scree plot were selected to aid the interpretation. The Unrotated pattern matrix was also used to compare the factors before and after rotation. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was utilized for factor Rotation. The cut-off point for a statistically meaningful rotated factor loading was set, and the variables with factor loadings of lower than .50 were eliminated. The rotation for the constructs of preparation, management, teaching, assessment, subject mastery, attitude, and teacher belief was converged in 10, 9, 7, 4, 7, 7, and 5 iterations, respectively.

Based on the results gained via the process of EFA, it was found that the total number of variables supporting the seven constructs of the questionnaire were reduced to 53 from the initial 60 variables. One variable was reduced from the constructs of 'preparation', 'management', 'teaching', 'assessment', and 'attitude'; however, no variable was reduced from the subject mastery construct, but two variables were reduced from the 'belief' construct. The final version of the psychometrically developed measurement instrument that could measure the multidimensional aspects of the high school ELTPC consisted of 53 items in seven dimensions, which was neither short nor long (see Appendix).

Results

Following the development of ELTPC instrument, in the second phase of the study, an experiment was conducted to measure the effect of the English language teachers' awareness of PC on student learning achievement. First, to figure out the degree of teachers' pedagogical awareness and unawareness, 44 out of 72high school English teachers who were practicing teaching at the third grade were randomly selected. The age of the teachers ranged between 25 and 45. They were of both genders (20 female and 16 male teachers), and all teachers were MA holders in TEFL. Then, based on the score gained from the teachers' responses to the questionnaire and according to Contrasting Groups Method of cut score and standard setting (Livingston & Zieky, as cited in Pitoniak & Cizek, 2016), teachers with a minimum of 216 responses and those with a maximum of 271 responses were divided into two groups of unaware teachers and aware teachers, respectively.

Since this dichotomous category was established based on test scores, it was advisable, according to Best and Khan (2006) to compare those at the top with those at the bottom, and omit those near the middle of the distribution from analysis because they obscure the differences that may exist. This process helped researcher achieve a sharper contrast between the two groups. Therefore, 4 teachers from the either side (8 in total) in the middle of the distribution were omitted, and the data reached from 36 teachers were left for the further analysis. Regarding the selection of the students, a total number of 224 high school students of the third grade (both genders) with an average score of 'A' (17-20) were randomly selected from the teachers' classes.

To make sure that there was no pre-existing difference between the student participants regarding their general English proficiency and that the participants were homogeneous in their general English, a pretest was administered to the students. The test that was a Kunkour (university entrance examination) test, covered 3 lessons of the students' high school English book taught at the third grade. The pretest acted as a homogeneity test, as well. After the mean and the SD were calculated, the students with the score of 1 SD above and below the mean ($\pm$ 1SD from the mean) were selected as the participants of the study. Thus, a total number of 160 students, 80 in each class, were finally selected for the experiment.

Table 1. *Group Statistics of Students' Pretest Scores in AT and UT Groups*

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	ATs	80	12.5909	1.59341	.33972
	UTs	80	12.5652	1.34252	.27994

*ATs refers to students in aware teachers' group and UTs refers to students in unaware teachers' group

The means of two groups proved to be the same and standard deviations differed slightly. The small number of SD compared to the mean showed that the groups were homogeneous. Furthermore, to make sure of the students' homogeneity and that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups at the start of the instruction, an Independent Samples *t*-test was run.

Table 2. *The Independent Sample t-Test of Pre-test in AT and UT Groups*

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Diff.	
									Lower	Upper
pretest	Equal variances assumed	.926	.341	.059	43	.954	.02569	.43850	-.85863	.91001
	Equal variances not assumed			.058	41.109	.954	.02567	.44019	-.86323	.91461

(Levene's Test for Equality of Variances / t-test for Equality of Means)

The two-tailed sig of the test above is '0.95' which is much higher than assumed *p* value which is '0.05'. Therefore, it can be inferred that there was no significant difference between the groups at the start of the study by referring to mean difference that is '0.02'. The students received the aware and unaware teachers' instruction that covered the 3 lessons of the students' third grade high school English book. After a two-month instruction, a posttest was administered to the students a week after the last lesson. To determine if there was a significant improvement from the pretest to the posttest and to see whether there existed a significant difference between the two groups, an Independent Samples *t*-test was run on the post-test scores of the students.

The statistical analyses of the students' posttest scores were also run to compare and contrast the overall achievement of participants in the two groups and to check whether the teachers' awareness of PC was effective.

Table 3. *Group Statistics of Students' Posttest Scores in AT and UT Groups*

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	ATs	80	14.8758	1.68954	.32935
	UTs	80	13.4225	1.43951	.28192

The mean score obtained from aware teacher (AT) group is higher than that of unaware teacher (UT) group; the mean score of AT is almost 15 whereas the mean score of UT is approximately 13.5. The difference in mean score is believed to be significant.
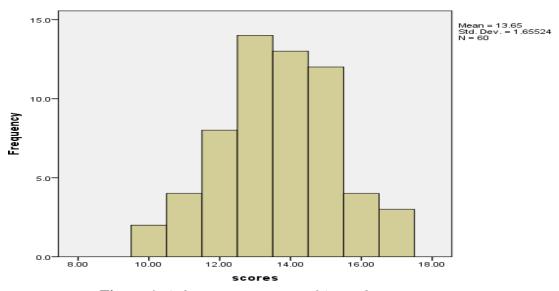
Figure 1. *Achievement posttest of AT and UT groups*

As shown in the figure above, there exists a significant difference between the performances of teachers in aware and unaware groups, which suggests that the AT group has done significantly better. It needs to be mentioned that the data obtained from the posttest was normally distributed and means and the standard deviation were appropriate measures of tendency.
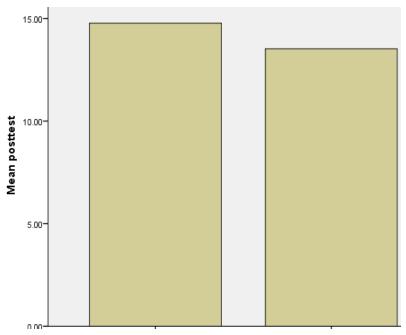

Figure 2. *The normal distribution of scores*

Table 4. *The Independent Sample t-Test of Posttest Scores in AT and UT Groups*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Diff.	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	.115	.737	2.537	43	.015	1.25099	.49318	.25640	2.24558
	Equal variances not assumed			2.532	42.38	.015	1.25099	.49402	.25427	2.24770

As shown in the table, the amount of two-tailed sig, 0.015, is significantly less than the predetermined amount of *p* value, 0.05. It shows that there is a significant difference between the groups. Since the amount of *t*, 2.5, is higher than the critical value, it can be concluded that the group, which received instruction from pedagogically aware teachers, outperformed the group instructed by the pedagogically unaware teachers.

Based on the result of the student experiment, there existed a difference between teachers' awareness of PC and the improvement of language ability in learners. The difference between the performance of students from the pre- to the posttest who had received instruction from the aware and unaware teachers of PC was a valuable finding. It indicated that teachers' awareness of PC played an important role in applying what they thought was appropriate in their teaching of the students. Thus, being aware or the factor of awareness, regardless of what they did in class, was a determining factor that affected teachers' teaching and resulted in fostering students' learning achievement.

Student Survey

The experiment provided the present study with a very valuable report. However, the student evaluation of teaching practice would produce more accurate measures of teacher effectiveness if the experiment were combined with another assessment tool like a survey. In this way, as done in the present study, a structured survey was conducted with 30 students (18 male and 12 female). They were selected from both pedagogically aware and unaware teacher groups. Twenty close-ended items were adapted from the ELTPC instrument for the survey purpose. The survey questions were easily worded semantically and syntactically for the students' ease of understanding. However, they were rendered into Persian for students to avoid any misunderstanding and ambiguity. The students were covertly divided into two groups based on the teachers' categorizations of aware and unaware teachers.

Confidentiality was achieved by making the students sure that no teacher would see their responses to questions, and the result would only be used for the research purpose. All students reported answering the questions truthfully and that their relationship with their teacher did not

affect their response. The data gathered on the students' assertions of their teachers' in-class performance were first collected by means of tape recording and then transcribed for further analysis. Next, the students' answers to survey questions were categorized as 'yes', 'not sure', and 'no' that were codified as 2, 1, and 0, respectively, where applying and not applying the components of PC were indicated by 'yes' and 'no' code, and the students' doubt on the application of the components was codified as 'not sure' code (1).

Both first-level and second-level analysis were utilized for analyzing the survey results. In the first-level analysis, a description of the data- for example, how many individuals responded to each response alternative -was focused on. In the second-level analysis, the data were first analyzed (one question at a time), and the mean was obtained with the description of the data for questions.

Table 5. *Students' Answers to Survey Questions in AT and UT Group*

Questions	Students in AT			Students in UT			
	Yes (2)	Not sure (1)	No (0)	Yes (2)	Not sure (1)	No (0)	Total
1. Making the class interesting?	10	1	4	8	2	5	30
2. Going back over each lesson?	8	3	4	7	2	6	30
3. Giving homework to do at home?	15	0	0	15	0	0	30
4. Making you feel good when you do good work?	7	4	4	5	4	6	30
5. Helping you with your problems in learning English?	8	1	6	5	3	7	30
6. Explaining lessons in a way that is easy to understand?	7	2	6	7	1	7	30
7. Using a variety of classroom activities and resources?	7	3	5	8	3	4	30
8. Being well prepared for class?	6	4	5	5	4	6	30
9. Encouraging students to raise questions?	9	2	4	5	3	7	30
10. Paying attention to all students equally?	8	2	5	7	4	4	30
11. Maintaining discipline?	8	4	3	12	1	2	30
12. Asking questions to see if you understand?	8	2	5	5	3	7	30
13. Beginning lessons by explaining what and why you are going to do?	10	1	4	8	2	5	30
14. Monitoring our work, to see if you understand the lesson?	8	3	4	8	2	5	30
15. Being very knowledgeable about the subject matter?	9	3	3	9	2	4	30
16. Giving tests and quizzes?	12	0	3	12	0	3	30
17. Encouraging cooperation.	10	1	4	8	2	5	30
18. Believing passing university entrance exam is the goal of learning English?	8	5	2	9	4	2	30
19. Believing being able to communicate	8	4	3	7	2	6	30

is the goal?							
20. Testing only the materials covered?	13	0	2	11	2	2	30
Total	179	45	76	160	46	94	300

The data collected from the survey as shown in Table 5 represented almost considerable differences among the students' assertions of their teachers' in-class performance in two AT and UT groups. As Table 5 shows, the difference between 'yes' code (2) in two groups is 19, collectively, 179 $(\bar{x} = 11.93)$ for AT and 160 $(\bar{x} = 10.66)$ for UT, which is perceptible to show a statistically significant difference. This difference is somehow the same in 'no' code (0) with 18 differences. It means that students in AT and UT groups reported 25.33% $(\bar{x} = 5.06)$ and 31.33% $(\bar{x} = 6.25)$ of the components of PC not implemented by teachers. With regard to 'not sure' code (1), both groups had approximately the same percentage of 15% and 15.33%, respectively.

Comparing the number of responses given to the 'yes' code (2), the researchers found that questions 3, 6, 14, 15, and 16 received equal responses. That is, both groups had the same idea of their aware and unaware teachers. However, the big differences in the responses lay in question 9 with 4 differences and questions 4 and 12 with 3 differences for each. It indicated that teachers in UT group showed a difference of 4 with AT teachers revealing that "*they maintained discipline in the classroom*" to a higher extent.

The questions 1, 4, 10, 17, and 20 were given two more responses by AT group compared to UT group's responses. However, questions 7, 18, and 19 were given one more response by UT group compared to AT students' responses meaning that teachers in UT group showed a difference of one compared to AT group in "*using a variety of classroom activities and resources*", and "*believing that passing university entrance exam is the goal of learning English in high schools*".

Regarding the 'no' code (0), the survey revealed that the questions 16, 18, and 20 received equal values of 3, 2, and 2, respectively; the questions 7, 10, and 11 received one less 'no' code in UT group than that of AT group. However, the other 12 questions received fewer 'no' code in AT group compared to the same codes in UT group. Questions 2, 4, and 12 were utilized less in UT group but were paid more attention to in AT group. Question 3 received 100 % of the students' response of 'yes' code in both groups, and question 20 received 86% of the responses in AT group and 73% in UT group. However, questions 8 in AT and 4 and 5 in UT received the least percentage of 40% and 33%, respectively.

Discussion

The results showed that students in AT group reported a more positive aspect of the implementation of PC components in their classrooms. The result of the survey was in line with the result of the experiment revealing that pedagogically aware teachers outperformed the pedagogically unaware teachers, and pedagogical awareness fostered the students' learning mastery of their English language. It also proved that the awareness of the PC was an important factor leading to the utilization of PC in the action setting of the classrooms. However, the key point worth mentioning is that although the results were in favor of AT group in terms of implementing PC and students' learning achievement, they were not very much different from the results achieved by UT group. Moreover, the AT group's implementation of PC, although aware of it, was not high by itself.

Although, based on the survey results, the AT group was reported to exhibit better performance than that of the UT group, the AT group was not reported as highly practicing the

PC components. The survey analysis revealed that no one teacher in the AT group achieved 100% implementation of any component of PC; they hardly reached over 65% of implementation. It showed that the components of PC were not implemented at a satisfactory level by pedagogically aware teachers. The highest rate of implementation was between 53 % and 66.6 %. Moreover, they did not implement 40 % of some components. This implies that pedagogically aware teachers could not practically show their awareness in their teaching practice, and that there was a low match between what the teachers' claimed to act and what they really acted in classrooms.

This issue might be due to the existence of a mismatch between what the teachers perceive of PC and the degree to which their perception of PC would be practically operationalized in the context of classrooms. That is, the aware teachers, for instance, may be convinced of the importance of, say, lesson plan, assessment, importance of subject mastery, updating knowledge, and so on. They may not act upon them, however, for quite a lot of reasons such as not owning the required knowledge of preparing a lesson plan, assessment principles, not having time to update their knowledge via reading journal articles and attending conferences, not being in mood of any change in their instruction due to being unmotivated as a result of their financial problems, students' poor learning condition, etc.

Regarding the financial and economic problems being mostly objected to by Iranian teachers, which influence the quality of any job, including teaching, Kazeem (as cited in Kamoh, Ughili, & Abada, 2013) and Elmore (2002) believe that the payment of salaries, allowances, and economic rewards are important and are the key factors that shape teacher attitudes toward their work. Teachers tend to remain contented and reasonably motivated as long as adequate salaries are paid on time.

The finding certifies Kumaravadivelu's (2012) argument that the post-method teacher needs to be aware of all aspects of teaching practice. Studies conducted by Strauss and Sawyer (1986) and Wright and Bolitho (1993) also confirmed the findings of present study. The authors asserted that teachers' awareness may bring up a significantly positive effect on preparing their lessons, evaluating and adapting the course materials, interpreting and designing the course syllabi, and assessing their learner's performance.

In addition, Parrott (2015) also asserts that teachers' awareness of PC leads them to select materials which will aid their learners' understanding and use of the language they are teaching, identifying instances of the language which illustrate the aspects teachers want learners to focus on in the lesson. According to Crawford (as cited in Evagroru & Dillion, 2011), teachers' knowledge and awareness of pedagogical strategies influence how they structure their lessons and how they respond to student's queries. In addition, improving teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, which has been receiving increasing attention in recent years, helps them in deepening their understanding of the content and improving their instruction (Banilower et al., cited in Kaya, Kablan, Akaydin, & Demir, 2015).

The finding that teachers' awareness is critical to students' learning achievement is, however, in contrast with Andrews' (2007) report that the teacher language awareness does not levy the potential and powerful effect upon teaching effectiveness, as far as L2 teachers are concerned.

With regard to the overall goal of the research pertinent to the student evaluation of teacher's performance, the present research is in line with the research conducted by Chapman and Sammons (2013) who reported that student feedback, as part of teaching evaluations, have often been developed in schools as part of a wider school self-evaluation program as a means of achieving school improvement. Furthermore, a study done by Coe, Aloisi, Higgins, and Major

(2016) revealed that student ratings is one of the approaches that demonstrate moderate validity in signaling effectiveness. Student evaluation is a reliable and valid approach that contributes to teachers' formative assessment.

Conclusion

The difference in the performance of students in two groups of the aware and unaware teachers of PC produced valuable data. It indicated that teachers' awareness of PC played an important role in students" learning achievements. Thus, being aware of PC was influential in raising students' learning achievement.

However, being aware of the PC does not lead to the employment of the elements of the competence wholly, and the operationalization of the PC may be a failure. The students' survey on their teachers' performance in terms of their implementation of PC provided the present research with a very valuable report. In such a case, one may not find a perceptible difference between the performance of the aware and unaware teachers in terms of students' achievement in the classrooms according to the instructional objectives decreed by school administration.

In this regard, the education administration and the English language committees should stress the need for developing pedagogical awareness as an integral part of PC to ensure the quality of education that will end up with learners' achievement. Teacher education programs should be designed to link theoretical concepts with practical, real-world teaching settings. To narrow or bridge the gap observed between theory and practice, the implementation of PC in teacher education needs to be promoted. More to it, in designing curriculum for teacher training, courses related to school curriculum, classroom management, planning of teaching, and instructional techniques need to be prioritized.

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