Self –Efficacy and Self –Awareness of Language Teachers and Their Learners' Achievement

Maria Shobeiry

University of Auckland, New Zealand

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Abstract

From Among many characteristics of teachers, this study aimed to examine the relationship between the self–efficacy (SE) and self–awareness (SA) of language teachers (77female, 70 male) and their students' achievement at intermediate and advanced levels. The participants answered a 29-item SE and SA questionnaire. The instrument consisted of four constructs, i.e. self –awareness, classroom management, instructional strategy, and student engagement. The result showed: (1) positive and moderate correlation coefficients between the constructs of the instrument, (2) no significant difference between the SE and SA of male and female teachers, (3) a significant difference between the learners' achievement with different levels of language ability and their teachers' self –awareness, instructional strategy and student engagement, and (4) self-efficacy is a better prediction ability of self-awareness on learners achievement. In the light of the findings of this study, teacher educators are suggested to make language teachers familiar with the issues related to SA and SE.
Key words: Language teacher characteristics, self –efficacy (SE), and self –awareness (SA), language achievement.

Introduction

It is generally believed that teachers can potentially have a crucial role in the success or failure of each educational system. As Galluzzo (2005) argues "one of the most often-expressed statement about teaching is that nothing is more central to student learning than the quality of teacher" (p. 142). A Teacher is suggested to be a person with a well-balanced intellectual and moral outlook, who can be a source of inspiration to his/her students; s/he must inspire them to pursue knowledge and excellence, to think correctly and critically, and to seek to understand deeply, not superficially.

Therefore, studying the major characteristics of teachers that can affect their own performance especially in students' achievement seems to be one of the most vital subjects in each educational system. So far it has been found that successful teachers attempt to fulfill a wide range of tasks, including motivating and engaging students, acquiring new knowledge and skills, and collaborating with colleagues.

Darling-Hammond (2007) and Gordon (2006) believe that the learners' improvement can be a great help to examine the success or failure of teacher; with respect to this wide range of studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between learners' academic achievements and their teachers' sense of Self-Efficacy (SE) and Self-Awareness (SA). However, it appears that few studies explored such a relationship in language learning context. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between language learners' achievements and their teachers' SE and SA.

Review of the previous research

Rivkin et al. (2005) and Rockoff (2004) suggest that there is a growing evidence showing that teacher quality plays a central role in determining student achievement. They also mentioned that the teacher's sense of efficacy is widely recognized as one of the most important factors in the process of education.

Teacher efficacy belief, as Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001) have mentioned, is one of the most important factors that has proved to be powerfully related to many meaningful educational outcomes such as teacher persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, and instructional behavior, as well as student outcomes such as achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy belief. They also believe that teachers who have a strong sense of efficacy about their capabilities can motivate their students and improve their cognitive development more than those who have a lower sense of efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) have also developed a special Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Their studies indicate that the TSES has a unified and stable factor structure that measures the following:
- ➢ Teacher efficacy for instructional strategies
- ➢ Teacher efficacy for classroom management
- ➢ Teacher efficacy for student engagement

These three factors of the TSES provide useful information regarding teachers' sense of personal teaching efficacy.

Martin (2004) considered the self-efficacy mechanism as a central determinant of a person's ability to exert action, influence, and power. He also claimed that a teacher with a high sense of efficacy not only can make a difference in student learning but also can demonstrate this belief with certain behavioral skills. Moreover, Raudenbush (1992) have shown that high level of efficacy produces a generative capability that enables teachers to adopt innovations, construct new teaching strategies, and increase their levels of effort in facing difficult circumstances. In this sense, Bandura (1997) believed that teachers' sense of efficacy can potentially influence both kinds of environment that they create as well as the various instructional practices introduced in the classroom. Englert (1983) and Westwood (1995) have found that more efficacious teachers have a high level of presentation and correct student responses in a short time.

Over the years, Bandura's other works (1993 & 1997) have been struggling with the idea that our awareness of our abilities powerfully affect our behavior, motivation, and ultimately our success or failure. He also proposed that because self-efficacy beliefs were explicitly self-referent in nature and directed toward perceived abilities, they were powerful predictors of behavior. From this perspective, it can be inferred that for teachers with a high degree of self – awareness these mediating processes will positively influence their thought patterns, regulations of motivation, self-regulation of affective states, and the selection of activities and environments.

Gold and Roth (1993) defined self-awareness as "a process of getting in touch with your feelings and behaviors" (p. 141). Self-awareness seems to involve a more accurate understanding of how students affect our own emotional processes and behaviors and how we affect students as well. Unfortunately, it seems that teacher education literature was not properly able to highlight the connection between a teacher's self-awareness and his/ her ability to build and maintain meaningful relationships with students.

Teachers' maturity in accordance with Gold and Roth (1993) depends on their willingness to take risks and regularly asking themselves which of their behavior is helping or hindering their personal and professional growth. in this respect, Long (1996) states that few of us possess the inner peace to respond in a calm and professional manner without conscious effort. Awareness of our primary emotional triggers improves our chances of making rational decisions based on conscious choice rather than unconscious emotional conditioning. He, furthermore, emphasizes that teachers who are aware of their own emotional processes are more likely to minimize the frequency and intensity of these counterproductive power struggles.

The present study aims to find the possible relationship between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and self-awareness and their students' academic achievement. Researcher classified self-efficacy into three subcategories of teacher efficacy in classroom management, teacher efficacy in instructional strategies, and teacher efficacy in students' engagement. Then to achieve the above mentioned goals researcher tried to answer to the following questions

1. Is there any relationship between male and female language teachers' SE and SA and the achievement of language learners?
2. Is there any significant difference between SA and SE of male and female language teachers?
3. Is there any significant difference between language teachers' SE and SA across levels of learners' language proficiency?

Method

Subjects

Participants of this study consisted of 70 male and 77 female English teachers who taught male and female students at intermediate and advanced levels. Teachers' age ranged from 22 to 46 and they held BA in literature and translation or MA degree in literature, translation, teaching, and linguistic. The ranges of their teaching experience were from 1 to 21 years and they were chosen from Milad and Iranmehr institutes in Tehran.

Instrument

29-item SE and SA questionnaire was developed. It consisted of 15 questions related to the SE and 14 questions related to the SA of the teachers. Among 15 questions related to SE, the questionnaire contained 6 questions related to teacher efficacy for classroom management, 5 questions related to teacher efficacy for instructional strategy, and 4 questions related to teacher efficacy for student engagement. The participant were supposed to express how they felt about themselves by responding to a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

Data analysis

Participant teachers were asked to answer the questionnaire on the basis of their answers an average of the range of their SE & SA was achieved. Also, students' final course scores were considered as a measurement of the rate of their language achievement.

In order to examine the relationship between male and female language teachers' SE and SA and the achievement of their students a correlation analysis was performed and the results are presented in table 1.

As shown by the students' score, the SA of female participants was much more homogeneous than their SE; while their students' achievement was highly heterogeneous.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of female Teachers' SE and SA and their students' achievement:

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-awareness	73.46	3.55
Self- efficacy	81.28	5.05
Self-efficacy for classroom management	71.73	4.61
Self-efficacy for instructional strategies	76.29	4.13
Self-efficacy for students engagement	84.50	5.37
Students' achievement	73.29	7.13

Results of correlation analysis SHOWN in Table 2, INDICATE that students' achievement of the female teachers had low correlation with the teachers' self-awareness, classroom management, and instructional strategies while it had moderate correlation with students' engagement. However, there was a positive and moderate correlation between students of female teachers' achievement and female teachers' SE in general. The positive correlation of students' achievement of female teachers with female teachers' SA and SE showed that the learners' achievement has been influenced by teachers' SE and SA.

Table 2: Correlation coefficients of female teachers' SA, SE and learners' achievement

Items		Self-awareness Ggg	Self-efficacy	SE & classroom management	SE & instructional strategies	SE & student engagement	achievement
Self-awareness	Correlation	1	.69**	.71**	.80**	.62**	.32**
	Sig.		.000	.000	.000	.000	.004
Self -efficacy	Correlation		1	.50**	.59**	.79**	.47**
	Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000
SE& classroom management	Correlation			1	.43**	.36**	.070
	Sig.				.000	.001	.547
SE& instructional strategies	Correlation				1	.59**	.31**
	Sig.					.000	.005

Descriptive statistics of male teachers' SE and SA and their students' achievement (Table 3) showed that similar to female teachers, SA of male teachers was the most homogeneous feature and the learners' achievement was the most heterogeneous. Furthermore, the results in Table 4 showed that there was a very low correlation between male teachers' SA and SE and their students' achievement. Additionally,

there was a negative correlation between male teachers' self-efficacy in students' engagement and their students' achievement.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of male teachers' performances

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-awareness	72.78	3.88
Self-efficacy	80.66	4.40
Self efficacy for classroom management	70.36	4.66
Self-efficacy for instructional strategies	75.94	4.19
Self-efficacy for students engagement	84.50	4.74
Achievement	73.36	7.27

Table 4: Correlations coefficients of SA and SE of male teachers and their learners' achievement

		Self-awareness	Self-efficacy	SE & classroom management	SE & instructional strategies	SE & instructional strategies	achievement
Self-awareness	Correlation	1	.619**	.772**	.865**	.352**	.121
	Sig		.000	.000	.000	.003	.318
Self-efficacy	Correlation		1	.493**	.581**	.707**	.060
	Sig			.000	.000	.000	.624
SE & classroom management	Correlation			1	.579**	.306**	.093
	Sig				.000	.010	.443
SE & instructional strategies	Correlation				1	.386**	.129
	Sig					.001	.286
SE & students engagement	Correlation					1	-.038
	Sig						.753

To compare the male and female participants' SE and SA an independent t-test is used. The results reported in table 5 show that there is no significant difference between the SE and SA of male and female participants.

Table 5: Comparison of male and female teachers' SE and SA

Item	sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	Sig.
Self – awareness	female	77	73.46	3.55	1.108	145	.27
	male	70	72.78	3.88			
Self – efficacy	female	77	81.28	5.05	.783	145	.43
	male	70	80.66	4.40			
SE & classroom management	female	77	71.73	4.61	1.791	145	.07
	male	70	70.36	4.66			
SE & instructional strategies	female	77	76.29	4.13	.512	145	.60
	male	70	75.94	4.19			
SE & student engagement	female	77	84.50	5.37	-.007	145	.99
	male	70	84.50	4.74			

Language teachers' SE and SA across levels of learners' language proficiency

To classify learners into different levels of achievement, the mean and standard deviation of learners' achievement were used. This classification resulted in unequal number of learners in each group; therefore, a percentile rank is used to come up with equal number of learners in each group. The distribution of learners' classification on the basis of their achievement appears in Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of learners on the basis of their achievement

Levels of learners' achievement	Minimum score	Maximum score	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
low achiever	0	67.15	36	24.5	24.7
intermediate achiever	67.16	71.85	37	25.2	50.0
upper intermediate achiever	71.86	79.86	37	25.2	75.3
Advanced	79.87	100	36	24.5	100.0

In order to find out an answer to the third question of this study a one way ANOVA was performed. The results, as appear in Table7, showed that there was a significant difference between the achievements of learners who belonged to different groups of language ability and the SA of their teachers. Moreover, as it is appeared in table7,

there was a significant difference between the learners' achievement who belonged to different groups of language ability and SE of their teachers (f $_{(3,142)}$ =7.1, p=0.000).There was also a significant difference between students' achievement belonging to different groups of language proficiency and SE in students' engagement (f $_{(3,142)}$ =4.8, p=0.003) and SE in instructional strategies of their teachers (f $_{(3,142)}$ =3.9, p=0.009).

However, there was not a significant difference between the SE in classroom management of the teachers and the achievement of their students belonging to different levels of language proficiency (f$_{(3,142)}$=1.7, p=0.164).

Table7: Analysis of variances of teacher SA and SE across levels of learners' achievement

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-awareness	Between Groups	160.88	3	53.62	4.20	.007
	Within Groups	1812.01	142	12.76		
	Total	1972.90	145			
Self-efficacy	Between Groups	420.82	3	140.27	7.10	.000
	Within Groups	2801.82	142	19.73		
	Total	3222.64	145			
SE& classroom management	Between Groups	106.73	3	35.57	1.72	.164
	Within Groups	2923.56	142	20.58		
	Total	3030.29	145			
SE& instructional strategies	Between Groups	194.07	3	64.69	3.99	.009
	Within Groups	2299.33	142	16.19		
	Total	2493.40	145			
SE& student engagement	Between Groups	338.49	3	112.83	4.88	.003
	Within Groups	3281.22	142	23.10		
	Total	3619.71	145			

Post Hoc Scheffe test of SA and the learners' achievement appeared in table 8; the results showed that there was a significant difference between lower achiever and advanced learners while the difference between the other groups was not significant. Such a finding indicated that the contribution of teachers' SA to the achievement of learners varied in low and advanced groups while there was no significant difference in intermediate groups.

Table 8: Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self awareness

DV	Achievement level	(J) Achievers level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Self awareness	low achiever	intermediate achiever	-.72	.83	.85
		upper intermediate achiever	-.62	.83	.90
		advanced	-2.80*	.84	.01
	intermediate achiever	upper intermediate achiever	.10	.83	.99
		advanced	-2.07	.83	.10
	upper intermediate achiever	advanced	-2.17	.83	.08

As it is revealed in table 9, the Post Hoc Scheffe test of SE and learners' levels of achievement has been performed. The results showed that there was a significant difference between lower achiever and advanced learners, intermediate achiever and advanced learners, and also upper intermediate and advanced learners groups.

Table 9: Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self efficacy

DV	(I) Achievers level	(J) Achievers level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Self -Efficacy	low achiever	intermediate achiever	-.48	1.03	.97
		Upper intermediate achiever	-1.13	1.03	.75
		advanced	-4.37*	1.04	.001
	intermediate achiever	upper intermediate achiever	-.64	1.03	.94
		advanced	-3.88*	1.03	.004
	upper intermediate achiever	advanced	-3.23*	1.03	.024

Table 10 reveals the Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self-efficacy in classroom management and learners' achievement levels. Results showed that there was no significant difference between the language learners' achievement and teachers' self – efficacy in class room management.

Table 10: Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self efficacy in classroom management

	Achiever level	(J) Achiever level	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Self –efficacy in classroom management	low achiever	intermediate achiever	-1.54	1.06	.54
		upper intermediate achiever	-.46	1.06	.97
		advanced	-2.17	1.06	.25
	intermediate achiever	upper intermediate achiever	1.08	1.05	.78
		advanced	-.62	1.06	.95
	upper intermediate achiever	advanced	-1.70	1.06	.46

The results of the Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' SE in instructional strategies and learners' achievement levels as is comprehensible in Table 11 described that there was a significant difference between lower achievers and advanced learners. In addition, since table 12 has shown the results of Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self-efficacy in students' engagement and language learners' levels of achievement, it can be realized that there was a significant difference between lower achievers and advanced learners and also there was a significant difference between intermediate achievers and advanced learners.

Table 11: Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self Efficacy in instructional strategies

	(I) achiever level	(J) achiever level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Self–efficacy in instructional strategies	low achiever	intermediate achiever	-.816	.94	.86
		upper intermediate achiever	-1.25	.94	.62
		advanced	-3.15*	.94	.013
	intermediate achiever	upper intermediate achiever	-.43	.93	.97
		advanced	-2.34	.94	.10
	upper intermediate achiever	advanced	-1.90	.94	.25

Table 12: Post Hoc Scheffe test for teachers' Self efficacy in students' engagement

	(I) Achiever level	(J) Achiever level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Self –efficacy in students' engagement	low achiever	intermediate achiever	-.45	1.12	.98
		upper intermediate achiever	-1.23	1.12	.75
		advanced	-3.95*	1.13	.008
	intermediate achiever	upper intermediate achiever	-.78	1.11	.92
		advanced	-3.49*	1.12	.025
	upper intermediate achiever	advanced	-2.71	1.12	.12

Conclusion

Present study was designed to see the relationship between male and female langauge teachers' SE and SA and their students' achievement. Positive correlation between the achievement of students of female teachers with their SA and SE showed that the learners' achievements had a relationship with female teachers' SE and SA. A very low correlation between male teachers' SA and SE and their students' achievement showed that learners' achievements had not any obvious relationship with male teachers' SE and SA. Additionally, there was a negative correlation between male teachers' SE in students' engagement and their students' achievement. This study also aimed at finding the difference between SA and SE of male and female language teachers the results of the independent t-test showed that there was no significant difference between the SE and SA of male and female participants.

Researcher also intended to see the difference between language teachers' SA and SE across levels of language learners' proficiency; to do this, the results of one way ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference between the achievements of learners who belonged to different groups of language proficiency and SA of their teachers. Moreover, there was also a significant difference between the learners' achievement belonging to different groups of language proficiency and SE of their teachers.

In this way, there was a significant difference between the students' achievement from different groups of language proficiency and their teachers' SE in students' engagement and SE in instructional strategies; however, there was not a significant difference between the teachers SE in classroom management and the achievement of students belonging to different levels of language porficiency.

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