

TEACHING ENGLISH IN STATE-RUN AND PRIVATE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS IN IRAN: APPROACHES, DESIGNS AND PROCEDURES

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ABSTRACT

The present study tended to survey English language teaching (ELT) in Iranian contexts of state-run and private language schools in Mashhad, the third biggest city of the country. The comparative study aimed at presenting a microcosm of the state-of-the-art in ELT in Iran by focusing on three major levels of teaching approaches, instructional designers, and pedagogic procedures. Statistical analyses of the teacher questionnaire, taken by 299 teachers in secondary schools (199) and language institute (99), at the level of approaches showed no significant differences in the teachers' behavioral-structural, cognitive-generative, and functional-interactive perspectives in the two locations. However, the data analysis at the level of instructional designs revealed significant differences at the sublevels of educational objectives, error-correction strategies, choice of syllabus, criteria for evaluation of teachers, teaching-learning activities, teacher roles, learner roles, and media use. Despite the similarity of the two contexts in testing techniques and formats, it became clear the two groups significantly differed in their focus on assessing English language (sub)skills. The findings for the procedures showed that more form-focused, mechanical and translation techniques are in vogue in state-run schools, while more interactive-communicative techniques with a focus on the learner engagement and freedom are the prevalent trends in private language institutes.

KEYWORDS: Approach, Design, Procedures, Language Institutes, State-run Schools

INTRODUCTION

Formal instruction of English as a foreign language in Iran begins from junior high schools right after primary education and continues for five years till the end of secondary education. Despite the fact that English is regarded as an undeniable necessity for the country's development in various areas, a host of studies have shown that the post-revolutionary EFL instruction has been unsuccessful in fulfilling the formally stated objectives and learners' communicative needs. (Talebi Nejad & Akbari, 2002; Dahmardeh, 2009; Rajmjoo, 2007, Ostovar, 2006; to name a few). Surprisingly, this unfavorable outcome results in after more than 700 hours of formal instructions in secondary education cycle. The widespread dissatisfaction with the present situation has even prompted the educational planners and authorities to propose another education reform to cope with the deficiency. Pursuing the educational policies formulated by the Ministry of Education and Training (MET), all schools are obliged to use the assigned (EFL) curriculum by the High

Council of Education. Discouraged by students' low achievements and inspired by more communicative oriented methodology and curriculum in non-academic centers, some educationalists have leveled criticism at the structurally designed and traditionally sequenced EFL course books in academic centers. (Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Shahedi, 2002; Yarmohammadi, 2002; Amalsaleh, 2004, for example.)

The ELT scenario in non-academic centers is reportedly different. The rationale behind issuing certificate for privately-operated language institutes in the country has been twofold: 1) to assist the formal academic instruction of the second language; and 2) to satisfy the ever growing aspirations and needs of learners for developing more communicative aspects of language as indicated by High Council of Education for Non-Academic Institutions (2010). Compared with the state-run schools, privately-operated language institutes reportedly rely more on communicative methodology and instructional materials and hence more responsive to language needs and compensatory for the deficiency of formal ESL instruction in public schools (Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006; Razmjoo, 2007; Ahmadi, 2005). Another noticeable feature of this private sector is the provision to teach English to learners at primary education levels, which in turn has brought about a warm welcome and support of parents. Local education authorities in Mashad, the third biggest city of Iran, have recently reported that nearly 40 percent of issued certificates for privately-run academic institutions (173 out of 446) are for establishing language institutes. The increasing rate may imply the learners' desires to learn this major second language of the country for more communicative purposes so that they may better meet the demands of the contemporary brave new world.

Being the situation as such, there seems to be a need for a thorough investigation of the causes of the discrepancy by first identifying the perceptions and views of the main agents of the educational system, that is the teacher and the learner. Tending to move in the same direction, this study was conducted in the third biggest city of Iran at a large scale under the supervision of the Research Bureau of the Ministry of Education in Mashad with the hope to depict a microcosm of ELT in the country.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Along with the changes in second-language education, foreign language education in Iranian context has also witnessed great changes in theory and practice within the last thirty years or so (Farhady, 1995; Ansari & Babaii, 2003; Razmjoo, 2007). The trend in academic and formal settings which favors a more top-down pedagogic theory and practice and a marginalized role for the teacher and a passive role for the learner in formal educational centers has gradually been giving way to newer philosophical perspectives and outlooks. The winds of change have brought with them the need for reconsiderations of traditional, transmissive part teachers used to play by isolating themselves from the realities of the classroom dynamic. Comparatively, the general ELT trend in most parts of the world tends to keep away from method-oriented perspective and proceed toward post-method philosophy. However, the more prevalent concern in the country seems to be more in favor of beyond-method era, where the notion of the best method is seen

“misguided and replaced by a search for the ways for the interaction of teacher’s and specialists’ pedagogic perceptions” (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006, p. 4).

The idiosyncratic feature of the method era, the quest for a new method at the expense of rejecting the former methods (Pennycook, 1989), still prevails in some state-run educational centers. According to Pishghadm and Mirzae (2008), the closed system of language education is reminiscence of Paublo Freire’s banking concept of education in the sense that memorization and transfer of knowledge are widely practiced, that teachers have little chance of employing practices on their own volition, and that there is an overindulgence with the test results. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006, p. 59), the post-method era is built around the parameters of particularity (teacher sensitivity to socio-cultural aspects and context-specific features), practicality (encouraging teacher to practice their own theories and theorize from their own practice), and possibility (encouraging social transformation and sense of identity in learners). Pishghadam (2008) further claims that neither practicality nor possibility condition is present for the language teacher to adopt a more post-method perspective under such a condition.

The scenario in private language institutes seems to represent a horse of a different color. The language teacher in the institute seems to be more inclined to adopt a more liberal role by employing more practices of their own choices and responding to the neglected needs of the learners, that is the more communicative aspects of language proficiency. Assuming a communicative role for language, most teachers in language institutes experience less strict control over the syllabuses of their choice and integration of Communicative Language Teaching into the design of their instructional endeavors.

The changes in EFL theory and practice, according to Richards and Rogers (2001), may be analyzed with respect to three levels of conceptualizations, namely, language theories, learning theories and the pedagogical needs of the learners. The same authors further announce that the

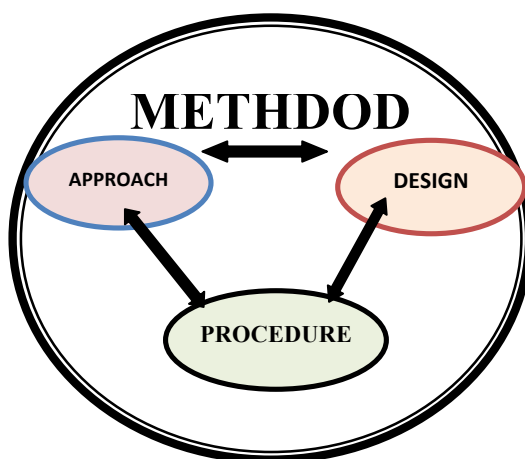


Figure 1: Richards and Rogers’ model for language teaching methodology
(taken from Jack C. Richards’ *The Context of Language Teaching*, p.18)

conceptualization model has been proved useful in tracing the causes for emergence and declines of language teaching methods. To spot the apparent disparities of language education in the two contexts and to depict a microcosm of the state of ELT in Iran, this model also seems demographically and pedagogically to serve the purpose behind this study. Richards and Rogers's model (2001) inspects pedagogical features at three levels of approach, design and procedure. The authors (2001) state that, "a method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by a design, and is practically realized in procedure" (p. 20). The framework is not without its critics, though. Kumaravadivelu (2008) regarded it an improvement over Anthony's model, but blurry in isolating the boundary between approach and design (p. 87).

Showing the interrelations among components, the model (Figure 1) illustrates that the views about language and learning will be dealt with at the approach level. Moreover, the instructional objective, syllabus types, teaching-learning activities, evaluation, the roles of teacher, learner, mother tongue, and instructional materials will be analyzed at the design level. And finally, moment-to-moment activities and practices in the classroom will be examined at the level of procedure.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Having reviewed the theoretical background and trends in Iranian context, the researcher formulated three major research questions to compare the state of ELT in state-run schools and private language institutes.

1. What are the differences between state-run and private language schools in EFL teaching at the level of approach?
2. What are the differences between state-run and private language schools in EFL teaching with respect to instructional design features?
3. How are the state-run and private language schools different in terms of observed EFL teaching practices?

Taking the sublevels of the major components in the model into account, the overall research questions after further detailing would actually turn out to be eleven.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 299 EFL teachers from secondary schools (199) and language institutes (100) were selected by applying cluster sampling techniques to take part in this study. Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of participants in numbers and percentage. The second group of participants were 897 ESL learners, that is, 300 (%34) from language institutes and 597 (%66) from the schools. They were randomly selected from among the students of the teachers who had already participated in the study by filling the teacher questionnaire.

Table 1: Distribution of ESL teachers by sex, academic degree, experience, and age

Features	Sex		Degree			Experience (Years)				Age Range			
	F	M	AD/ Stu	BA	MA/ ph.D	1-5	6-10	11-15	Above 16	20-25	26-30	31-35	Above 36
F	187	112	58	215	26	77	81	68	73	83	86	82	48
P	63%	37%	19%	71%	8%	25%	27%	22%	24%	28%	29%	27%	16%

Instrumentation

The study measures consisted of two questionnaires designed by the researcher and reviewed by two other researchers and piloted before actual investigation. The Teacher Questionnaire (TQ) had 75 Licker-scaled items and was to survey attitudes, and opinions at the levels of approach, and design. The first 12 items surveyed teachers' views on language and learning theories of structural-behavioral (SBT), generative-cognitive (GCT), and functional-interactional (FIT). The remaining 63 items were to measure opinions on syllabus types, instructional objectives, error correction, appraisal of teacher performance, teaching-learning activities, roles of teacher, learners, and instructional materials/media, and finally student evaluation at the design level. The overall Cronbach's reliability value ($r=0.89$) for the questionnaire was high and for the other levels, the values were acceptable to high, as shown in Table 2. The Learner Questionnaire (LQ) consisted of 20 items on the likert scale and intended to determine frequently used techniques and activities in schools and language institutes. The Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire turned out to be 0.72.

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha for (sub)levels of teacher questionnaire

Overall Reliability		Sublevels of Approach						Instructional Design Level	
		SBT		GCT		FIT			
A	No. of items	α	No. of items	A	No. of items	A	No. of items	α	No. of items
0.89	75	0.68	4	0.61	4	0.44	4	0.90	63

Procedure

The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the TQ was administered to the selected teachers in their own respective groups as they could preview the items, ask for clarifications and more time if necessary. In the second phase, a select number of learners whose teachers had taken the TQ were randomly asked to fill in the SQ. Only three students (sometimes four or five to compensate for not fully completed forms) from each class were required to do so.

Data Analysis

To compare the groups, the measures of central tendency as well as dispersion were calculated and put to statistical tests of significance. To estimate the reliability values for the measures Cronbach's alpha was used and to ascertain the significance of differences based on test of normality, non-parametric techniques (skewness and kurtosis values or Klomogorov-Smirnov statistic) were used. Mann-Whitney U Test was employed for the distributions violating the assumption of normality and independent t-tests were used in case normality assumption was established.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Approach Level.

Functional-Interactive Approach (FIA). The results of normal t-test for comparing the group means in schools and language institutes ($t=2.00$, df 297) showed no meaningful difference between them at FIA sublevel ($\alpha= 0.46$ and $\rho<0.05$). So no confirmation was made of the study hypothesis which predicted a difference.

Generative-Cognitive Approach (GCA). The results of independent t-test for this level of approach which assessed their views on generative-cognitive perspective ($t=-0.49$, df 297) once again showed no significant difference in the means ($\alpha= 0.61$ and $\rho<0.05$).

Behavioral-structural Approach (BSA). For this level, the t-test again showed no meaningful difference of the means for teachers' views in the two places ($t=-0.26$, df 297 and $\alpha= 0.79$ while $\rho<0.05$). The results for analysis at the approach level are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3: T-test results for the groups at approach sublevels

APPROACH	t-value	df.	2-tailed <i>sig.</i>
FIA	2.00	297	0.46
GCA	0.49	297	0.61
BSA	0.27	297	0.79
P<0.05			

No meaningful difference could be detected at the approach level which underlies theoretical notions about language and language learning. This is contrary to Richards and Rogers' model which assigns a determining role for approach in content selection, objectives and overall features of instructional design (in Kumaravadivelu 2006, p.86). In other words, the teacher's notions and convictions on what language and learning are could specify his/her subsequent behavior and preferences in teaching-learning situation. The study revealed that opposite to institute teachers, secondary school teachers employ interactive-communicative activities less frequently despite of sharing notions with their associates in institutes on the nature of learning and language. Therefore, the driving force for EFL teachers to instruct communicatively or otherwise may be more affected by external and environmental factors rather than by internal and thoughts. More specifically, to be communicative demands both theoretical as well as pragmatic considerations if it is going to be down-to-earth and practical. In secondary school contexts teachers may be willing to resort to alternative teaching approaches and procedures, however, the textbook, social context, and preconceptions of learners might be preventing or limiting variables for them to take place in the classroom.

B. Instructional Design Level

Syllabus Types. The syllabuses were classified into three major types of lexico-grammatical (LGS), student-generated (SGS), and functional-communicative (FCS). Because of violation of the normality assumption, Mann-Whitney U Test was employed for comparing the means. Table 4 and Figure 2 show the Z-values for sublevels of LGS ($z=-10.00$), SGS ($z=-12.64$), and FCS ($z=-5.25$),

Table 4: Results of Mann-Whitney U Test for the types of syllabus in the groups

	SGS	FCS	LGS
Mann-Whitney U	6315/5	1066	2922
Wilcoxon W	26215/5	20966	7972
Z	5/252	12/649	10/005
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Effect Size	0.30	0.73	0.57

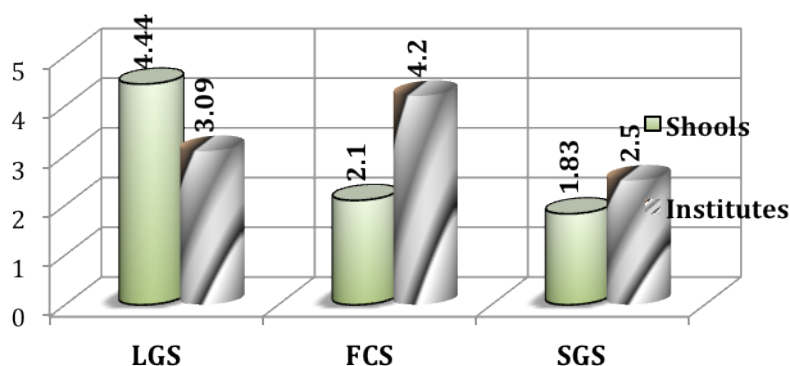


Figure 2: Comparison of means for the syllabus types for the groups

while $p=0.000$ and this meant that the alternative hypothesis was supported. This finding justified the prediction in the study which claimed for differences in the types of syllabus in state-run and language schools. The effect sizes for LGS ($r=0.57$) and FCS (0.73), based on Cohen (1988) criteria, were large while the value for SGS (0.30) was significant, but small.

Instructional Objectives. Results of Mann-Whitney U Test for instructional objectives, as shown in Table 5, indicated the teachers pursued different ESL instructional objectives in state-run schools and language institutes. The effect size was large ($r=0.62$) and greater than the criterion value for the large effect criterion. So the study hypothesis which predicted a difference of objectives was confirmed.

Error Correction. Statistical analyses showed a significant difference of error correction strategy in teachers in schools ($Md=3.7$, $n=299$) and institutes ($Md=4.14$, $n=100$). The size effect was 0.37 and the alternative hypothesis which forecast significant differences for error correction strategy by teachers was again supported. See Table 5 for details.

Table 5: Results of Mann-Whitney U Test and effect sizes for instructional design sublevels for the groups

Variables	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z-values	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size
Instructional objectives	2386	22286	-10.75	0.000	0.62
Error Correction Strategy	5409.5	25309.5	-6.46	0.000	0.37
Teacher Performance Appraisal	6002.5	25902.5	-5.61	0.000	0.37

Teacher Performance Appraisal. Mann-Whitney U Test for the data concerning teacher appraisal (Table 5) showed a meaningful difference in the evaluation procedure and criteria in schools (Md=3.20, n=299) and institutes (Md=3.60, n=100) as the probability value (p) was less than 0.05. This difference was already anticipated in the study and confirmed through statistical analyses.

Teaching-Learning Activities. The anticipated difference in the types of instructional activities in academic and non-academic centers could again be detected and confirmed. The effect size for this variable ($r=0.64$) was greater than the criterion value ($r=0.5$). Therefore, there were great differences in teaching activities in the two educational locations.

Roles of Instructional Materials. Statistics for this level of instructional materials (Table 6) statistically justified the rejection of null hypothesis ($p=0.000 < 0.05$) and confirmation of the study hypothesis. So teachers in state-run schools (Md=2.62, n=299) and teachers in language institutes (Md=3.75, n=100) used different forms of teaching materials and media.

Table 6: Results of Mann-Whitney U Test and effect sizes for roles of instructional materials, teacher, and learners for the two groups of teachers

Variables	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z-values	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect Size
Teacher Roles	2137	22037	-11.10	0.000	0.64
Learner Roles	3359.5	23259.5	-9.37	0.000	0.54
Roles of Instructional materials	1221.5	21121.5	-12.39	0.000	0.64

Roles of Teacher and Learners. Analysis of data for the roles the teachers and students play in learning situations demanded Mann-Whitney U Test. The results indicated significant differences in roles for both teachers and learners in the two learning contexts. As for teacher roles in schools (Md=3.20, n=299) and language institutes (Md=4.400, n=100) the effect size was rather great, $r=0.64$. Similarly, the results for learner roles in state-run schools (Md=2.83, n=299) and language institutes (Md=3.66, n=100) showed meaningful and significant differences with a great effect size, i.e. $r=0.54$. See Table 6 for detailed statistics.

Students Assessment. The items for this level were to assess test genres and test techniques. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for test techniques proved to be positive, so an independent t-test was employed to compare the means. As shown in Table 7, the t-value observed for the groups is 1.48 (df=297) and t-value in the Sig.(2-tailed) is 0.13 (greater than 0.05), so there is no significant difference between the two groups and the observed difference is due to error of measurement.

Thus, the hypothesis, claiming for a difference in the test techniques for evaluating learners in the two locations was rejected.

For the test genres, the normality test did not show normality of distribution, so Mann-Whitney U Test clarified school teachers (Md=2.79, n=299) and institute teachers (Md=4.50, n=100) used different testing approaches and test types to assess language skills and components. The effect size and other statistics are as follows $r=0.71$, $U=1246$, $Z= -12.386$, and $p=0.000$ and Figure 4 represents the means of the groups for test techniques and types.

Table 7: Independent t-test for the groups at the sublevel of testing techniques

		Equal variances assumed
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	F	.438
	Sig.	.509
t-test for Equality of Means	T	1.48
Degree of freedom		297
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.13

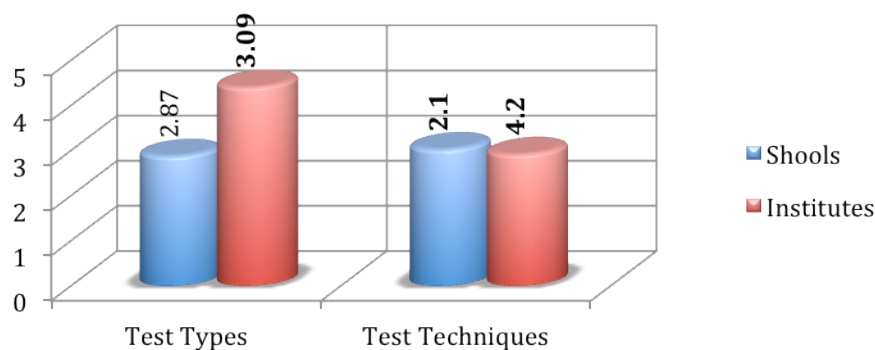


Figure 3: Bar graphs for the test types and techniques in the groups

At design level teachers in language institutes relied more heavily on analytic, communicative syllabi while teachers in schools were obliged to use the same lexico-grammatical syllabus by MET. In neither context, learner-generated syllabi are utilized. Razmjoo (2009), and Ostovar (2009) also have reported similar results in their studies on ESL textbooks in Iran. The instructional objectives in public schools revolve around developing structural accuracy and ultimately reading comprehension while in non-academic centers developing ESL accuracy along with fluency are the goals. The errors are also treated differently and the teacher's strategy varies based on the distinguishable educational objectives prevailing in the two centers. In schools, grammatical errors are more important and hence corrected frequently while in institutes correction is not limited to errors of structure per se.

Business-wise the atmosphere in non-academic centers is more competitive and hence more strict measures for teacher evaluation are required. Direct observations of teachers in classrooms,

distributing opinion surveys and forms to get learners / parents views and teacher's performance in training classes are the standards by which to appraise teacher performance in institutes. Evaluation of teachers in public schools is more subjective, without direct observations or opinion surveys and questionnaires. As for teaching-learning activities, they differ considerably in frequency and variety. In public schools activities tend to be more traditional, relying on translation techniques, memorization of grammar rules and lexis, and repetition drills. In contrast, in language institutes activities are more communicative with a focus on cooperation, interaction, simulation, and role-play.

The roles of learner and teachers may be defined in terms of their degree of control over content, and patterns of groupings, their impact on the learning of others, and their function and status (Richards and Rogers2001). Classes in public schools are predominantly teacher-fronted, contrary to the language institutes where greater degrees of control over content, grouping patterns, and overall learning roles can be detected for the learners. In neither schools nor institutes could we see self-monitoring or self-evaluation being implemented and practiced. Technologically, academic centers are more equipped than language institutes but ESL school teachers benefit from the aids and media available less frequently than their counterparts in institutes where fewer teaching aids are available. The online and computerized technology are used sporadically and infrequently in both locations. Concerning ESL assessment, teachers give tests with similar formats and the noticeable dissimilarity can be traced in translation and reading aloud as frequent techniques in public schools. Teachers in institutes give more contextualized, semi-communicative tests of listening, speaking, and writing, the neglected skills in formal ESL education in the country.

C. Teaching Procedure Level

The Klomogorov-Smirnov test as well as the histograms of distributions for the level of procedures indicated that the distribution was not normal. Therefore, the results of Mann-Whitney U Test showed that from the learners' perspective techniques employed by teachers in formal school contexts (Md=2.200) were statistically and significantly different from those of teachers in language institutes (Md=2.90). See Table 8 for detailed statistics. The effect size for the difference turned out to be the highest of all ($r=0.8$) which was indicative of sharp disparity of the groups at this level of comparison. The other statistics for procedure were $u=1646$, and $Z=-24.10$ and this provided the support for the alternative hypothesis of the study which argued for differences between the two locations at the level of techniques and procedures.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics for the level of Procedure

Location	Md	\bar{X}	SD
Schools	2.20	2.22	0.18
Institutes	2.90	2.92	0.25
Total	2.35	2.45	0.39

It was possible to categorize the techniques into 1) mechanical-traditional types(MTT) and 2) interactive-communicative types(ICT). Statistical analyses revealed that teaching techniques in

non-academic centers were more interactive-communicative while in academic centers they were more mechanical-traditional techniques. As shown in Table 9 and illustrated in Figure 4, the effect size for this meaningful difference in mechanical-traditional is so great ($r=0.81$) and for the interactive-communicative techniques, the effect size is above medium ($r=0.46$).

Table 9: Results of Mann-Whitney U Test for Types of Techniques

Techniques & Procedure	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z-values	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
ICT	42.50	178545.5	-24.50	.000
MTT	38515.5	83665.5	-14.04	.000

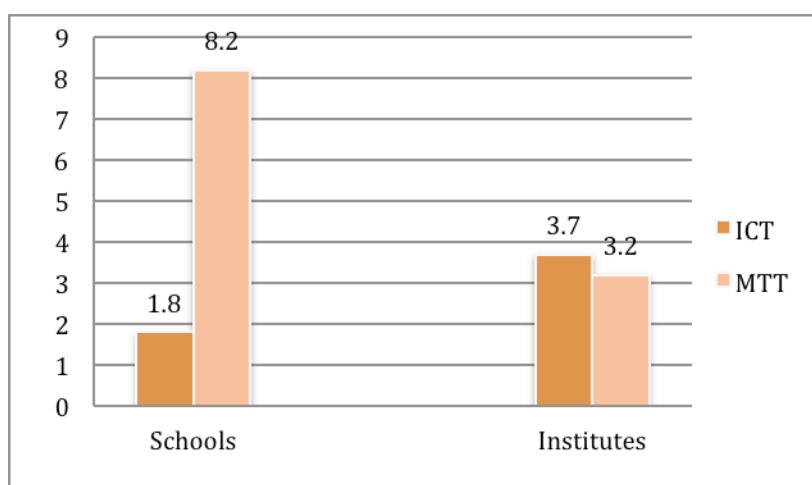


Figure 5: Bar graphs for ICT and MTT in Schools and Institutes

Concerning the last level of analysis, techniques and procedure were considerably and significantly different. Reading aloud mostly by the teacher, translation into L1, mechanical drills, memorization of rules and vocabulary out of context are typical techniques in public school classes. In language institutes, however, pair-work and group-work rather than individual practice, situational teaching instead of deductive explanations, creating a stress-free social context through attending to learners feelings and employing games and role-plays, interactive question-and-answer techniques, and teaching ESL culture predominate ESL learning context. The reason for this great difference may be explained in the light of the problems associated with formally assigned textbooks for not allowing for applying more communicative ESL teaching designs.

CONCLUSION

The comparative study of views of EFL teachers and learners in schools and language institutes in Mashad, the third biggest city of Iran, at the three levels of teaching approaches, instructional designs, and procedures showed great changes at two of the three-layered levels of analysis. It became evident that EFL teachers regardless of their formal and informal teaching locations have a preference for more functional-interactive approaches to language instruction. More specifically, teachers in both settings do not differ significantly in terms of notions on adopting structural-behavioral, generative-cognitive, or functional-interactive positions. This finding can imply that Iranian teachers of English are moving away from method-based tradition towards beyond-method position where there is a demand for incorporation of teacher's and specialists' pedagogic perceptions.

The differences at the design levels were so noticeable and could be traced at all sublevels of the instructional design, implying the need for some modifications in the educational design of ELT in the country. More specifically, there seems to be the need for designing a more communicative-based syllabus, reconsiderations of objectives of a EFL, redefinitions of the roles of teachers and learners, incorporations of more learner-centered teaching activities and practices. Changes in perspectives at the design level of education would naturally bring about incorporation of newer assessment approaches and techniques to meet the new educational demands as well.

Finally, the reliance on more form-focused practices in academic locations and more interactive tasks and practices in informal non-academic language classes may be perceived as a natural consequence of the differences at the level of design. Modifications of the educational design can give way to more interactive teaching techniques and tasks in keeping with the communicative needs of the learners and the expectations of the teachers. Obviously, these changes can be by themselves motivating enough to enhance performances of both EFL learners and teachers in both academic and non-academic language-learning schools and institutions.

Some implications

The study has some implications for language teachers and language planners. The similarity of views at the approach level can imply that the situation is ripe for radical changes in the theory and practice of ELT. Teacher cognition is believed to be a determining factor for realization of pedagogic objectives and the study indicated that teachers in both locations are ready for assuming new roles and responding to the needs of the community, that is developing communicative language proficiency in the learners. The implication for the language planners and policy makers on language education might be the need to reconsider both the objectives of English instruction programs in the national curriculum as well as the role the English language can play in educational system. More realistic objective today can be developing both oral and written language ability to satisfy the communicative needs of the learners. To achieve these, they need to make changes at the design level and more specifically replace the present syllabus with a more interactive-communicative materials and course-books.

Limitations of the study

The study is not without its own limitations. The present study heavily relied on questionnaires as the major research tool for gathering data and hence was quantitative in nature. A mixed-method research design that incorporates qualitative means of data collection as well may prove helpful in revealing teacher's beliefs and cognition; however, the large number of participants made it difficult to employ an interview in addition to the questionnaires for further transparency of views and cross-sectional evaluation of views or analysis of data. Another limitation of the study caused by the large sample size is the fact that neither proficiency levels nor gender was taken into account in the study design; hence, their probable effects as moderator variables remained unspecified. Finally, inspecting the differences at the level of instructional procedure would yield more naturalistic results when direct observations are made of the teachers in classroom. Once again, indirect means of questionnaire was used in the study for this purpose.

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