

# Studying EFL Teachers' Philosophy of ESP Teaching: Zooming on the Tunisian Higher Education Context

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**Abstract:-** Despite the expanding data stream on the importance of ESP teaching in EFL education worldwide, relatively little attention has been paid to the EFL teachers' beliefs and understanding about the pedagogy related to ESP. In the Tunisian context, there are some calls to focus on this particular concern to boost practitioners' awareness and professional development. Thus, this exploratory study focused on tracing EFL teachers' philosophy of teaching ESP in the tertiary Tunisian system, to identify their previous knowledge and experience. The data was gathered over a period of two months. Data analysis provided support for the challenges faced by the teachers in approaching ESP teaching that parallel the ones found in the literature on teacher change and teacher cognition. In light of the findings, the researcher recommends that ESP teacher educators focus on adopting a reflective model of training in order to boost teacher development and schema change in relation to the existing challenges identified in this study.

**Keywords:-** ESP Teaching, Teacher Philosophy, Teacher Education, EFL Tunisian Context.

## I. TEACHER EDUCATION PARADIGMS

Paradigms in TE reflect the beliefs about the purpose of education whether defined by governments or philosophical trends. Since TE is inevitably based on a given paradigm, a teacher's work is influenced by these views of the TE system s/he belongs to. Different terms are used to refer to "paradigms" in TE. For instance, Zeichner (1983) called them "paradigms," Freeman (1996) called them "views," Wallace (1991) called them "models" and Cochran-Smith (2001) called them "questions." No matter what term is used by the above TE theorists, all these are used like Khun's (1970) meaning "any accepted model or pattern" (p. 23). It is any views of teaching and its activities for learning to teach in a given context and a given period of time.

### A. Zeichner's Paradigms in TE

Zeichner (1983, pp. 3-9), who studied TE models in the US in the 1980's, suggested that beliefs about teaching resulted in four TE paradigms that can be grouped under four paradigms: The behaviouristic, the personalistic, the traditional-craft and the inquiry-oriented. He explains that proponents of the behaviouristic paradigm who see teaching as a set of behavioral skills in the sense that trainees can practice through repetitive performance using for reference an observed model of "good" practice. Such training focuses

on the development of specific and observable skills of teaching assumed to lead full mastery of these very skills and to have a direct effect on pupils' learning. In other words, the skills and competencies believed to be essential for the performance of "good" teaching practice, seen as behaviours and actions, are pre-defined by teacher trainers regardless of who the teachers are or where they come from. The outgoing teacher is expected to apply what are considered principles of "effective" teaching. As such, success in teaching is determined in terms of performance at a pre-specified level of mastery which in turn is assumed to be the most valid measure of teacher competence. This justifies the label "technical" Zeichner gives to this tradition.

The second paradigm in Zeichner's account is the personalistic paradigm. As explained by Zeichner (1983), this perspective is influenced by ideas on "personalized teacher education" (Fuller, 1974), "deliberate psychological education" (Sprinthall Thies-Spinthall, 1983) and other programs based on the principles of "open education" (Crook, 1974) that all focus more on teachers' perceptions and beliefs than on the mastery of specific skills, or content knowledge and behavior. He explains

[T]eacher education involves the development of adults, fostering their growth rather than simply instructing them on how to teach. The primary challenge within this framework is facilitating the transformation of perceptions and understandings, rather than merely focusing on mastering a predetermined set of behaviors and content knowledge (p. 3).

Success within this orientation to teacher training and education is measured in terms of its effects on individuals and their personal understanding of their tasks. As for the third paradigm in Zeichner's account, the traditional-craft paradigm, teaching is viewed as a craft knowledge and skill to be acquired during apprenticeship

[K]nowledge about teaching often grows through trial and error and is primarily contained within the wisdom of seasoned practitioners. In this view, a master-apprentice dynamic is considered the most effective method for passing on the valuable "cultural knowledge" possessed by skilled teachers to novices (p. 5). In Zeichner's account of this paradigm, teachers not only learn to "routinize" crafts and skills but also "to make the proper judgements about what ought to be done in a particular situation" (p. 5).

The fourth paradigm described by Zeichner, the inquiry-oriented paradigm, is a paradigm that considers teaching as a set of orientations and skills of reflective critical inquiry. In this view, as Zeichner explains, technical skills are necessary but not sufficient by themselves. Proponents of this view among teacher trainers “prioritize the development of inquiry about teaching and about the contexts in which teaching is carried out” (p. 6). The teaching of technical skills within this model is “not an end in itself, but a means for bringing about desired ends” (p. 6). In other words, technical skills need to be consolidated with the development of teachers’ capacities for reflective action. He explains: “questions about what ought to be done take on primary importance and the process of critical inquiry is seen as a necessary supplement to the ability to carry out the tasks themselves” (p. 6).

#### ➤ *Freeman’s Review*

Freeman (1996) identified three views of teaching, or what he called ways of “telling the story of teaching” (p. 89) in his review of the history of teaching and teacher education, he distinguished between three perspectives to teaching which influenced the way teachers were trained over the decades starting from 1950 to 1980. He labelled these three views as “the behavioral,” “the cognitive” and “the interpretivist.” The behavioral view, he explains, is based on views of teaching as doing. Within this view, “the story of teaching lies in the generalized patterns of activities and behavior that are derived from what teachers and learners do in the classroom” (p. 91). Teaching is detached from the context where it happens and from the person who does it. It can be noted that this description is equivalent to what Zeichner called the “behavioristic” paradigm. Freeman’s second paradigm, the cognitive view, is based on views of teaching as thinking and doing. He explains that within this view, teacher educators “have to know how teachers conceive of what they do and to place teachers’ perceptions-their reasoning, beliefs and intentions- at the center of any research account” (p. 95).

The third view in Freeman’s account, which he describes as the interpretivist view, is based on “views of teaching as knowing what to do” (p. 98). Within this view, knowing what to do involves engaging inquiry and seeking understanding on the part of the trainers of how teachers interpret and reflect on their worlds. In Freeman’s account, this view entails that teacher educators encourage teachers to reflect and tell their story.

Being proficient in teaching goes beyond merely understanding the behavioral aspects of classroom activities. It encompasses cognitive dimensions that connect thoughts with actions, focusing on the interpretive process of discerning what actions are appropriate within a given context. This contextual understanding is acquired gradually over time, and the interpretations derived from it significantly influence genuinely effective classroom practices (p. 99).

In his analysis of the historical account of changes in understanding what is involved in teaching, Freeman demonstrated that the way teaching is viewed affects directly how TE programs are designed and implemented.

#### ➤ *Wallace’s Review*

Wallace (1991) identified three major models of professional education that he termed the craft model (based on apprenticeship from a master), the applied science model (based on scientific research and objectives), and the reflective model (based on teachers’ reflections on their practices). He also focused on the aspects of TE programmes and the procedures employed within the framework of each model.

#### • *The Craft Model*

The key feature of this model is its underlying assumption that the trainee learns by imitating experts and by following their instructions as they attempt to imitate their teaching moves. Learning teaching in the “craft” model is thus equated with learning any other craft like pottery, building, painting, metallurgy, gardening and so forth.... Wallace (1991) explains that the common TE practice within this model is one where a ‘master’ practitioner demonstrates instructions by *telling* student teachers what to do, and *showing* them how to do it. The trainees would sit in the master’s class called “demonstration lesson” and be expected to “pick up the tricks of the trade” by observing the master. Wallace (1991) comments that “in this model, the wisdom of the profession resides in an experienced professional practitioner: someone who is expert in the practice of the ‘craft’” (p. 6).

What can be deduced from the above description of the “craft model” is that teaching within this model is based on observable behaviors as already mentioned by other reviewers like Zeichner with regard to the “behavioristic paradigm” and Freeman with regard to the “behavioural view.”

#### • *The Applied Science Models*

As explained by Wallace (1991), this model was developed by departments of linguistics at British and American universities. The “applied science” model is a model whereby the trainee learns how to teach by consulting theories and then applying the discoveries of scientific knowledge and experimentation imparted by field experts. The education of future teachers is believed to be provided by experts in language, linguistics and allied disciplines in university departments in collaboration with demonstration schools and/or through reading the specialists’ articles published in the newly-established Language Teaching Journal (Howatt, 1984). Thus, the primary focus has become in 1980s based on applied linguistics as represented by the “allied disciplines” to use Strevens’ (1977) term. The trainee’s performance method was assessed within this model through observation checklists measuring teachers’ application of the theory-backed method that prescribed teaching objectives and procedures. Wallace (1991) comments that

Within this framework, practical knowledge is essentially about aligning the most suitable methods with the established objectives. Consequently, the practice of a profession is viewed primarily as instrumental in nature (p. 8).

As for Wallace, he did propose a model focusing on teacher reflection as a new trend that can be put into practice in TE. Although teacher reflection as a concept is far from being stable and uniform, the model itself, as proposed by Wallace, can be described as allowing for an interaction between the level of understanding and the level of action. A more detailed account is provided below.

- *Wallace's Reflective Model*

Wallace's reflective model conceptualizes teacher education as a process that interconnects previous experience, theory, and practice. This process consists of two stages: (i) a pre-training stage and (ii) a stage of professional education or development.

The figure presented above illustrates the initial stage, emphasizing the trainees' existing knowledge and their contributions to the training environment. This aligns with Wallace's perspective that individuals rarely enter professional training situations with blank minds or neutral attitudes (Wallace, p. 50). According to Wallace (1991), teachers commence their careers with conceptual schemata, encompassing ideas, beliefs, and attitudes that consistently influence their behaviour (p. 50). This underscores the reciprocal relationship between trainees' mental constructs and the content of teacher education provision. The second stage underscores the significance of "received knowledge" and "experiential knowledge," emphasizing an ongoing process of reflection within the context of professional action or practice (p. 56). Recent research aligns with Wallace's model, asserting that learning occurs through an active interaction between the learner and an experience, where learners attribute meaning based on their prior knowledge (Guttiérrez, 1996).

The reflective model indicates a reciprocal relation between received and experiential knowledge. In fact, Wallace develops his framework around these two basic concepts and their complementary relation. First, he explains, "received knowledge" includes the vocabulary of the subject matter and the matching concepts, research findings, theories and appropriate skills, "facts, data, theories, etc... which are either by necessity or convention associated with the study of a particular profession" (p. 52). In teaching English as a foreign language, it could include description of the English language, linguistics, psychology of learning, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, educational management and TEFL (Wallace, p. 55). Second, he proposes "experiential knowledge" that he defines as a body of knowledge which "relates to the professional's ongoing experience" (p. 17). Through these two concepts, he bridges the gap he identified and contested in the applied science model. Wallace saw two levels of teacher knowledge in continuous flux: one influencing and re-constructing the

other to form what Schön (1983) called "knowledge-in-action".

Wallace explains that in terms of practice, teacher educators should focus on educating rather than training teachers and on encouraging self-directed learning rather than on spoon-feeding their trainees. He also held a view of teaching as a reflective process rather than the mere implementation of prescriptions from books, methods and methodology books. It is recommended, for instance, that teacher trainees be introduced to research on teaching, and as they develop, they can be expected to become teacher/researchers constantly evaluating their own teaching. In this model, the demonstration lesson, for instance, used to be recommended as an end in itself in the craft model, is now replaced by another training experience encouraging reflection. The aim of the reflection is to analyze and discuss and then compare "best practices" to the teacher's or trainee's own context of practice. Micro teaching, observation, peer observation and action research are all training activities that may, according to Wallace, develop reflective practice if designed to foster reflection. Practical ideas about ways to educate and train teachers following the reflective model abound. Programs cherishing this ideal generally employ action research as a TED tool, (Nunan, 1992; Bailey 1993; Gebhard, 1989-1993; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006) in addition to diaries, diary studies (Bailey, Bergthold, Braunstein, Fleischman, Holbrook, Tuman, waissbluth, & Zambo, 1996), reflective journals, logs, SRs, field notes, and case studies (Richards & Nunan, 1990).

### B. *Teachercognition*

According to Freeman (1996), one factor contributing to the previous lack of interest in studying teacher thinking or cognition was the dominance of the positivist scientist paradigm in research. Defining the positivist perspective, Crotty (2003) writes, [K]nowledge is not obtained through speculation but is firmly and solely rooted in what is posited. This posited aspect or foundation is derived directly from experience, particularly through scientific observation conducted by employing the scientific method (p. 20).

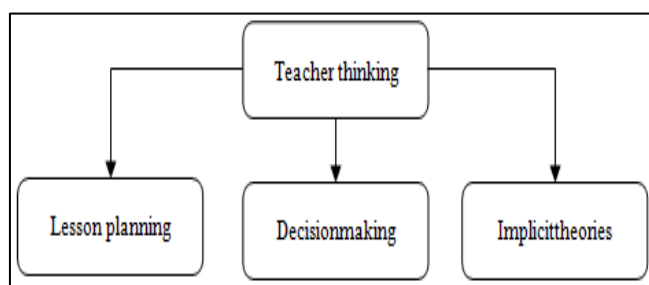
Because teachers' thought processes were once deemed inaccessible to direct observation, they were not considered a suitable subject for empirical investigation (Fenstermacher, 1976, as cited in Thomson, 1984, p. 106). However, recent studies on teachers (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Zeichner, 1983; Shulman, 1986; Kagan, 1988; Freeman, 1990) have demonstrated that teaching goes beyond mere behavior; it involves a fusion of thought and action within a real-time decision-making process. Freeman (1996) asserts, for example, that "teachers are constantly engaged in interpreting their worlds: they interpret their subject matter, their classroom contexts, and the people in it. These interpretations are central to their thinking and their actions" (p. 98).

In contrast to viewing teaching solely as behavior, Borg (2003) highlights "the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching - what teachers know, believe, and think" (p. 81).



Therefore, studying teachers and teaching necessitates gathering data on these cognitive processes and understandings, as mentioned by Freeman (1996) and Borg (2003). Understanding teachers' behavior requires delving into their beliefs, which influence their actions. Borg (2003) underscores the notion that "teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs" (p. 81). In essence, teachers are proactive and logical decision-makers who act based on personal convictions and the contextual factors influencing their practice.

Since as early as 1968, Jackson (cited in Clark and Peterson, 1986, p. 256) advocated for investigating teacher thinking as a means to comprehend teaching, asserting that "[A] glimpse at this hidden side of teaching may increase our understanding of some of the more visible and well-known features of the process." According to Clark and Peterson (1986), a comprehensive understanding of the teaching process cannot be achieved without grasping the constraints and opportunities inherent within it. As Clark and Peterson (1986), Shulman (1987), and Woods (1996) have outlined, teacher thinking research has been divided into three main categories: studies that focus on teacher planning, studies that examine teachers' interactive decision making, and studies that examine teachers' implicit beliefs and theories.



**Fig 1.** Teacher thinking

What follows are the three areas of investigation focusing on teacher thinking: research on lesson planning, decision-making, and implicit theories and beliefs.

### C. Teacher knowledge

Research on teacher knowledge operates under the premise that to gain a deeper understanding of language teaching, it is essential to explore what teachers know, how they acquire this knowledge, and how they utilize it (Freeman & Richards, 1996; James, 2001; Freeman, 2001; Borg, 2003). Scholars interested in teacher knowledge typically gather data on teachers' actions and reflections within their lived experiences (Gutierrez, 1996). This approach aims to capture firsthand accounts from teachers themselves, allowing them to reflect on their practices and articulate their thoughts (Freeman, 1996).

Considerable research has been dedicated to exploring teacher knowledge, leading to the refinement of existing models (Shulman, 1986). Teacher knowledge has been approached in various ways: Leinhardt & Smith (1985) differentiate between content knowledge (pertaining to the

subject matter to be taught) and instructional knowledge (pertaining to the management of lessons by effectively navigating through segments). Woods (1996), for instance, distinguishes between declarative or content knowledge (the "what" of teaching) and procedural knowledge (the "how" of teaching). The underlying concept behind this differentiation is that teachers not only require knowledge but also need to understand how to apply it in practice.

In their quest to comprehend pre-training knowledge, many teacher educators have recognized the profound impact of implicit models on teachers' future practices, echoing Lortie's notion that "we teach as we have been taught." For example, Kennedy (1990) acknowledges that "teachers acquire seemingly indelible imprints from their own experiences as students and these imprints are tremendously difficult to shake" (p. 17). This underscores the significant influence of the apprenticeship of observation in shaping teachers' teaching concepts and practices throughout their professional journey, highlighting the role of teacher education in addressing teachers' implicit theories and beliefs.

Shulman's (1986) "model of professional learning" encompasses seven categories to delineate teachers' professional knowledge:

**Knowledge of content:** Refers to the extent and organization of factual knowledge within the teacher's mind.

**Pedagogical content knowledge:** Involves integrating content and pedagogy to comprehend how specific topics or issues can be structured, presented, and adapted to suit the diverse interests and abilities of learners.

**Knowledge of the curriculum:** Entails blending content and pedagogy to understand how specific subjects or topics are organized, represented, and adjusted to meet the varying interests and capabilities of students.

**General pedagogical knowledge:** Encompasses understanding learners and learning processes, fundamental principles of instruction, classroom management techniques, and the overarching goals and objectives of education.

**Knowledge of context:** Involves awareness of the specific environment in which teaching and learning occur, including factors such as the school culture, community demographics, and available resources.

**Knowledge of learners and learning:** Focuses on understanding the characteristics, needs, and developmental stages of individual students, as well as the various ways in which learning takes place.

**Knowledge of educational goals and aims:** Encompasses an understanding of the broader objectives and purposes of education, including societal, cultural, and ethical dimensions.

These categories provide a comprehensive framework for describing the multifaceted nature of teachers' professional knowledge.

In addition to the seven types of knowledge outlined by Shulman (1987), he also discusses three other types: propositional knowledge, case knowledge, and strategic knowledge.

Propositional knowledge encompasses principles derived from disciplined empirical or philosophical inquiry, maxims representing the accumulated wisdom of practice, and norms embodying values and philosophical commitments such as justice and fairness that teachers and teacher trainees should embrace (Shulman, 1986, p. 11).

Case knowledge refers to knowledge of specific, well-documented, and thoroughly described events (Shulman, 1986, p. 11).

Strategic knowledge integrates both propositional and case knowledge and is applied when teachers encounter new situations or problems. It involves extending understanding beyond principles to the practical wisdom of practice (Shulman, 1986, p. 13). When strategic understanding is employed to analyze rules and cases, professional judgment becomes essential, highlighting the distinction between mere craft and a true profession.

Another notable research study that illustrates the interactive nature of teacher knowledge is conducted by Hellgren (1988). In his analysis of the relationship between theory and practice concerning student teachers, Hellgren conducted a qualitative study focusing on the various types of knowledge acquired by student teachers through different experiences. He specifically examined how teacher background knowledge interacts with the knowledge obtained in teacher education (TE) during teaching practice.

Hellgren argues that knowledge gained through experience stems from previous schooling experiences, encompassing both declarative knowledge (knowing that) and procedural knowledge (knowing how). However, he emphasizes that although experiential knowledge serves as a foundation for other forms of knowledge, it needs to be mediated by the knowledge acquired through teacher education. This knowledge, obtained through TE, can be broadened by integrating knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, and didactics (knowing that) with the understanding of underlying assumptions and research methods (knowing how).

## II. THE PARADIGMATIC STANCE

The research is also built on the Naturalistic paradigm where naturally occurring events are studied. As stated earlier, the context of this research is the primary schools in the area of Tunisia. It focuses on the questionnaire that is addressed to the newly recruited teachers' views.

Following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) point that "the knower and the known are interactive and inseparable" (p. 37), this research was undertaken acknowledging that the emic perspective "the view point of the participants" and the etic perspective "the researcher perspective" are interconnected (Bailey & Nunan, 1996 p. 3). Therefore, my perspective as a researcher reflects my convictions about how teachers should be helped to achieve professional potentials. Below is a description of the research instruments, the purpose assigned to their use and the procedures used to collect data. My hope is to ensure maximum soundness of this research and make its outcomes as convincing and trustworthy as possible.

### A. Participants

The participants who responded to the Questionnaire were ESP teachers who pertain to Tunisian Higher. 240 participants responded to the questionnaire in 2023. The main criteria for their selection were availability and willingness to take part in the study. As they were of different ages, professional backgrounds, and based in different institutions in Tunisia. The participants were informed about the general aims of the study and their roles in it and were asked to sign a consent form and bearing in mind their anonymity for ethical reasons.

### B. Research instruments

#### ➤ Rationale

In this research, a questionnaire was designed with closed-ended questions. The questionnaires were designed in the light of previous studies about ESP teaching. Twenty-one items of the Questionnaire are open-ended questions requiring certain composition efforts and skills from the teachers.

#### ➤ Description and data collection procedures

The questionnaire is especially designed for these research aims at collecting data about the new teachers in charge of the English classes in Tunisian primary schools, elicits information about the teachers' backgrounds, perceptions, attitudes and expectations. The twenty-one items of the questionnaire could be grouped into six major categories each focusing on specific areas of the research. It took the teachers about twenty minutes to be filled in.

Section one aims at collecting data that enable the researcher to collect background information from the teachers. It focuses on qualification, experience in teaching, age, diploma, studies of English and self-development in English, if any. Section two deals with teachers' perceptions of the "appropriate" methodology to use with ESP teaching. Section three aims at finding out the effects of teachers' previous studies of English on their philosophies of teaching ESP. Section four focuses on Teachers' expected difficulties in line with their nature and ways to overcome them. The last section, focuses on teacher education and more precisely on teachers' expectations from the training sessions in the future.

### III. FINDINGS

It helped collect information about the teachers' backgrounds, their major motives for joining the ECP, their perception of the rationale behind this project, their understanding of their new role(s), and finally their expectations from their trainers and training. Below is a description of the profile of the incoming teachers.

#### A. Teachers' Backgrounds

People who took part in the questionnaire were 300 new teachers to be assigned ECs during the school year 2021-2022. As reflected in Figure 4.1, the majority of the teachers (76.6%) were over thirty and 71.9% of them had a teaching experience exceeding 10 years. Their educational backgrounds depended on how they entered higher education institutions. The questionnaire also revealed that 49.2% of the teachers undertook a self-development strategy to improve their level of English by reading in English and watching educational channels, films and TV programs in English. 8.2% of them sought formal tuition by enrolling in English evening courses as an attempt to upgrade their level in English. As can be deduced from the results stated above, most of the teachers joining the experiment had an important experience in teaching ESP, and different educational levels.

#### B. Teachers' Understanding of the Motives of the General Policy

##### ➤ Teachers' Comprehension of the Underlying Motives of the Overarching Policy.

As to their interpretation of the reasons for introducing English in primary schools, the majority believed that the decision was based on research and future plans to reform education. Indeed, 32.7% of the teachers inferred that ESP was introduced to ensure better learning of the language. In other words, they believed that the policy was informed by the perceived need to teach and learn ESP in the Tunisian context in relation to different domains. 31.7% of the teachers thought that ESP was introduced to pave the way to a possible switch to English as a medium of instruction in certain levels especially the beginners. 7.9% of the teachers believed that the promotion of ESP was the solution to upgrade the current poor level of students' English. 20.8% of the teachers' thought ESP was introduced simply because of its importance and dominance in the world today. 6.9% of the teachers believed it was one way to foster language learning and development so that students have more time to learn more vocabularies in the English language.

What can be deduced, here, is that all teachers saw that the decision to introduce ESP at the Tunisian tertiary level was well-founded. Indeed, 46.5% believe that the policy is meant to promote English among students so that they can master English early and achieve better results in their future professional lives.

#### C. Teachers' Perceptions of the "Appropriate" Methodology

Two open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to elicit teachers' perceptions of the appropriate method to use in teaching ESP. The participants were asked (i) "English courses are based on "animation", what does this term mean to you? "And (ii) "What is your perception of "animation"? An examination of the answers to the above questions revealed that teachers focused either on the techniques, the rationale, or both. Key recurring words and expressions in teachers' answers describing the Active method (AM) were: "learning in fun", "cheerful atmosphere", "motivation", and "good rapport between teachers and learners". Therefore, they emphasised the humanistic aspect where affective factors and humane relationships play a vital role in creating a good learning environment. Below more details will be provided about how the teachers defined the method in focus.

Teachers linked the concept of animation to the saying "Teach the children while playing" and justified it in the questionnaire as "... learning in a cheerful atmosphere to make students motivated, eager to practise the language and to learn it through songs, games, drawings, projects, and role plays". Moreover, 23.4% of the teachers defined it as "learning a simplified language to keep learners motivated and interested in another culture and to make students acquire new skills and a new competence without getting deep into it." In other words, "it is a teaching style that facilitates learning and makes pupils like the subject," "Active methods familiarize pupils with English and make them like it through simple and active tasks." They viewed it as a motivating teaching method that would help learners "develop mentally and culturally." 7.8% of the teachers focused on the AM as leading to the development of communication skills "the AM enables students to communicate with more freedom and ease." One teacher emphasised that the AM promotes "interaction, dynamism and communication between teachers and pupils, and hence resulting in the development of listening and speaking skills."

"Active methods familiarize students with English and foster their fondness for it through engaging and interactive tasks," noted some teachers. They perceived these methods as motivating for learners and conducive to their mental and cultural development. Additionally, 7.8% of teachers highlighted that active methods facilitate the development of communication skills, enabling students to communicate more freely and confidently. One teacher emphasized that active methods promote interaction, dynamism, and communication between teachers and students, thereby enhancing listening and speaking skills."

#### D. Teachers' Expected Difficulties: Their Nature and Ways to Overcome Them

According to 57.8% of teachers who answered the question about whether they expected difficulty in the role of facilitator of ECs, there would be no difficulty. Among the remaining 42.2%, 42.2% expect to face difficulties. The majority of responses to the follow-up question concerning

the difficulties and how they intend to overcome them focused on the teachers' lack of proficiency in the language. As reflected in Figure 4.6, an overwhelming 83.3% of the teachers who answered “yes” expected linguistic difficulties rather than difficulties with applying “*animation*” techniques.

The difficulties with “*animation*” that will be expected result from their personal characters, and their own consciousness of their social status. They could not see the teacher other than a serious-looking person. Therefore, they could not imagine themselves singing, dancing, and playing the clown in their classroom to make pupils laugh. As for the solutions to these difficulties, teachers mentioned teacher training sessions, self-development, and practice.

27.0% saw the solution in the training and mainly in continued training and development. The teachers stated in the questionnaire that continued training development ensures language development, especially good pronunciation skills. Furthermore, teachers emphasized the importance of effective mentoring in classrooms. Forty percent of them stated that by engaging in self-development, they could address anticipated challenges. They mentioned various strategies for problem-solving, including reading, consulting dictionaries, listening to English programs and CDs, and watching educational or English-speaking content. Additionally, some teachers expressed readiness to pursue supplementary instruction, such as evening courses at language schools, or seek guidance from specialists, including English language teachers or proficient students.

However, 33% of the teachers believed that difficulties could only be overcome through experimentation, specifically through “trial and error.” They subscribed to the notion that “practice makes perfect” by actively using the language and implementing practical ideas. They mentioned, for instance, that they would, “plan lessons in a way to keep things simple”, that they would “gather the necessary teaching aids”, and “rely on the cassette in the listening part to avoid mispronouncing words or running into difficulties.” They mentioned that they would “apply the ‘survival skills’ presented and practised during the training sessions.”

#### E. Teachers' Expectations from the Trainer

As depicted in Figure 4.9, besides the 19.4% of teachers who provided vague answers, such as stating, “we expect all the best, and a great deal of benefits from the trainer,” the remaining teachers have clearly outlined the profile of their ideal trainer.

An analysis of their responses reveals that teachers have both professional and personal expectations from their trainers: 34% anticipated the trainer to possess competence, 53.3% expected them to adopt what they referred to as “the appropriate training style,” and 10.7% expected them to possess specific personal traits. The flowchart below illustrates the themes emerging from the data.

On a personal level, teachers sought specific characteristics such as being “helpful,” “considerate,” “encouraging,” and possessing a “positive and proactive” attitude in their trainers. However, their perception of the trainer's professionalism is multifaceted. Their responses revealed three main categories: the trainer as a resource (more knowledgeable), the trainer as a model pedagogue (master teacher), and the trainer as a guide. These perspectives imply a particular view of the supervisory role, which can be placed along a continuum between apprenticeship and reflection.

Within the apprenticeship perspective, teachers mentioned aspects like “modelling” and being provided with practical skills to use in their classrooms. As stated in the questionnaire, they believed that “the trainer should equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and strategies,” including lesson plans, test samples, and other instructional materials. On the other hand, within a more reflective approach, they expected the trainer to facilitate “constructive training,” encourage self-directed learning and development, and provide opportunities for teachers to engage in critical reflection and discussion about training input.

#### F. Concluding Remarks

As can be seen from the above analysis, the general features of this group can be summed up in what follows: 76.6% of them were over thirty, 71.9% have been teaching for more than ten years. One of their reasons for participating in the study was to become part of ELT profession and connect with English as a world language. They believed they could improve their proficiency level in English by teaching it. 46.4% were attracted to the teaching of English as part of the clubs to experiment hoping to become more proficient in English-as a world language. 43.6% of the teachers were aware of the importance of English as the language of the world, 38.9% of them reported they were attracted by what they referred to as “the beauty of the language” and or 7.4% were marked by a previous teacher of English they admired.

Moreover, it appears that all the research participants are in support of the policy. The data have no instance of statements that are counter to it. Furthermore, teachers have positive attitudes towards ESP teaching and are conscious they should be teaching it according to what they termed the “fun approach.” They understand the ultimate purpose of promoting English in tertiary education as the development in learners' communicative skills.

Being aware of their specific “weakness” as converting teachers, 42.2% of them expected difficulties in their new assignment with linguistic difficulties reaching a level as high as (83.3%). As to ways to overcome them, 40% of the teachers proposed self - development, 33% suggested practice and 27% thought of training.



#### IV. DISCUSSION

Concerning the professional development of EFL teachers through participation in English clubs, it's notable that only a small percentage, 10.4%, were motivated by a desire to gain new pedagogical skills. This suggests that the majority of teachers did not anticipate a significant pedagogical shift when teaching ESP. They likely viewed the experience as augmenting their existing skills rather than necessitating a reconsideration of established practices. Consequently, teaching in a club format wasn't a primary concern for them and wasn't seen as requiring substantial effort.

Furthermore, these teachers didn't express a belief in the necessity of specific pedagogical skills for teaching English, nor did they perceive a significant need for language and professional development. They seemed to rely on their limited English proficiency, assuming that if they could speak the language, they could teach it—an erroneous belief common among those learning to teach ESP. This misconception indicates an underestimation of the importance of language proficiency and specialized pedagogies.

Moreover, prior to their participation, the teachers held the misconception that if they could teach grammar or other subjects, they could also teach ESP. This demonstrates a lack of awareness regarding the unique challenges and methodologies involved in teaching ESP.

Their extensive experience in the apprenticeship of observation may have led to the internalization of teaching practices that could hinder their performance in new assignments. Their self-perception as experienced teachers may have also inflated their confidence in their abilities, potentially blinding them to the need for further professional development and adaptation to new teaching contexts.

Regarding their reasons for joining English clubs, it's notable that 82.6% of teachers cited their motivation as primarily centered on the language itself, which can be categorized as integrative motivation. This suggests that their decision to join was driven more by emotional factors rather than a rational assessment of their professional capabilities. Analysis of the questionnaire responses indicates that these teachers perceived their new role as motivators primarily through the lens of motivation being the solution to all learning problems. Consequently, they may prioritize the enjoyable aspects and motivational elements over the linguistic proficiency necessary for the task at hand.

However, it's important for these teachers to recognize that while motivation is indeed significant, effective teaching and linguistic accuracy are paramount. They may come to understand that motivation alone cannot overcome deficiencies in teaching quality or language proficiency (Jerrim et al, 2023).

Of the surveyed teachers, 57.8% expressed an expectation of encountering no difficulties, while the remaining 42.2% anticipated primarily linguistic challenges. This indicates that nearly half of the teachers recognized the limitations of their English proficiency in the context of teaching ESP from the outset.

In terms of their expectations from the training, 51.7% were able to articulate their expectations clearly, which were closely aligned with the demands of their job. The remaining 48.3% mentioned "professional growth," suggesting a desire to acquire new techniques or teaching styles. This underscores the tendency to underestimate language difficulties, as these teachers may assume that teaching effectiveness hinges solely on tailored training that addresses their specific needs, including language proficiency.

Regarding strategies to overcome difficulties, 33% of the teachers advocated for the apprenticeship model and the belief that "practice makes perfect." They expressed confidence that language proficiency could be enhanced through trial and error, with mistakes corrected during subsequent classes. While this approach may seem unconventional, it could be accepted on the grounds that experimentation raises awareness of individual difficulties and motivates teachers to swiftly address them to minimize potential issues stemming from language limitations, as perceived by learners.

#### V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Starting from answers to the two questions above related to the teacher variable in this situation of change, a close reading of the data leads to inferences about factors that can accelerate learning, make training input turn into intake possible, and hence produce change (Pennington, 1990). The primary factors contributing to the teachers' readiness for teaching ESP include their initial positive attitudes towards the subject, their empathetic approach to instructing ESP students, and their voluntary participation in policy implementation, which positions them as adopters rather than resistant individuals. Motivated by their enthusiasm, these teachers are inclined to overcome any weaknesses and prioritize their professional growth, as emphasized by Rogers (1983).

- The novelty of the situation made teachers feel like pioneers and therefore ready to invest themselves as expressed in their answers.
- Experienced teachers possess a well-established schema, particularly in terms of general pedagogical knowledge (Malva et al., 2023). This knowledge enables them to critically reflect on and assess their new teaching assignments, discerning what is effective and what is not based on their past experiences.
- The commitment level of tertiary teachers referred to by Dewey (1933) as "openness, responsibility and wholeheartedness" and their easy rapport with pupils was true to the three teachers.
- Their beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge of teaching and learning referred to as BAK by Woods (1996) were mostly congruent to their newly acquired knowledge.



Their predisposition to be learners again and to embark on an on-going learning experience was noticeable (Kakazu and Kobayashi, 2023). Additionally, (Basturkmen, 2020; and Mostafavi et al., 2021) have highlighted the important role of focusing on the students' needs and level of achievement in ESP teaching.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the main goals of this research is to reflect on the impact of the training course on ESP and to come up with recommendations addressing the problem areas depicted-from within- for future training programs. Most of the suggestions emanated mainly from the participants, the informants of the questionnaire, the teacher researcher and from the literature on TE practice. It is important in this context to point out to main features of the pedagogical orientations adopted by the ESP teachers at the tertiary level. It is based essentially on modelling and craft work spiced up with some reflective, inquiry-oriented approach. Most teachers are learning and teaching at the same time. What they need most at this stage of their "conversion" is emergency survival skills to manage their classes if the "conversion" is to be successful (Haug, and Mork, 2021).

The suggestions I will be making aim at making ESP more teacher-centred by giving primacy to the reflective model over the craft one, to the personalized aspects of teaching over the technical ones (Derbel, 2001). The intended future training should help teachers 'become' and not just 'perform' (White & McCallum, 2020). Nonetheless, Basturkmen (2020, p. 9) highlighted a deficiency in "robust discussion of ideas and theories concerning the teaching and learning" of ESP, advocating for further investigations to attain a more nuanced understanding of classroom processes. Academic initiatives, such as those by Zand-Moghadam et al. (2018) and Zohoorian et al. (2011), have underscored the imperative of focusing on authentic materials in ESP teaching.

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