



## العلاقة بين المعرفة التربوية لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الإعدادية العراقية وأدائهم التدريسي

م.م حسن مالك فرج

وزارة التربية / المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة القادسية

[Hasan.malek1207a@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq](mailto:Hasan.malek1207a@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq)

07807430639

### المستخلص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة العلاقة الإيجابية بين المعرفة التربوية لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الإعدادية العراقية وأدائهم التدريسي. من خلال دراسة كيفية تأثير إتقانهم للمبادئ التربوية على الممارسات الصفية ونتائج الطلاب، تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على العلاقة بين معرفة المعلمين التربوية وأدائهم في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. شملت عينة الدراسة (60) معلمًا للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الإعدادية بمحافظة الديوانية خلال العام الدراسي 2025/2024. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام اختبار المعرفة التربوية الذي تم تعديله لاستخدامه كاختبار قبلي/بعدي لتقييم معرفة المعلمين التربوية، بالإضافة إلى مقياس الأداء التربوي الذي تم تعديله لتقييم الأداء التدريسي للمعلمين. تشير النتائج إلى وجود علاقة قوية وإيجابية بين المعرفة التربوية والأداء التدريسي، مما يبرز الحاجة إلى برامج تدريب مستمرة للمعلمين في العراق.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المعرفة التربوية، الأداء التدريسي، المدارس الإعدادية.

## The Correlation between Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge and Their Teaching Performance

Asst. Lect. Hassan Malik Faraj

General Directorate of Education in Al-Qadisiya Governorate

Al-Qadisiya Governorate

### Abstract

This study explores the positive correlation between the pedagogical knowledge of Iraqi English as a Foreign Language (EFL) preparatory school teachers and their teaching performance. By examining how their mastery of pedagogical principles impacts classroom practices and student outcomes, the research aims to highlight correlation between Iraqi EFL teachers' pedagogical knowledge with language teaching performance. The study's sample are (60) Iraqi EFL preparatory school teachers Al-Diwaniya governorate during the academic year 2024/2025. Data were collected by the pedagogical knowledge test that was adapted to be used as a pre/post-test to assess the EFL teachers' pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical performance scale was adapted to assess EFL teachers' teaching performance. The findings suggest a strong, positive relationship between pedagogical knowledge and teaching performance, underscoring the need for continuous teacher training programs in Iraq.

**Keywords:** pedagogical knowledge, teaching performance, Preparatory Schools.

### 1. Introduction



Teachers' pedagogical expertise is crucial in determining how they teach and, in turn, how their students learn in the context of foreign language training. The difficulties of teaching English in a non-native setting make this expertise even more important for Iraqi EFL preparatory school instructors. With a focus on how professional development might close disparities in educational results, this study aims to examine the link between teachers' pedagogical knowledge and their effectiveness as educators. (Higgins, Fisher, and Loveless, 2006).

Without a doubt, the main goal of education is to help students learn, and instructors' intricate classroom methods support this goal. Through guided exploration of teaching and learning with a heavy focus on what makes for good teaching practices, those aspiring to teach will need to comprehend the complexity of these pedagogical methods. Preservice teachers might get helpful guidance for furthering their pedagogical growth by combining the mentor teachers' expertise in teaching practice with their understanding of successful mentoring. However, mentors must acquire pedagogical understanding practices to support them in their jobs, as mentoring might be haphazard. Hudson (2010).

There aren't many, if any, research on Iraqi preparatory school teachers' pedagogical expertise and how it relates to their ability to teach languages. This study aims to bridge the gap and elucidate the essential elements of this topic.

### **1.1 The Statement of the Problem**

Although pedagogical information is essential for improving teaching effectiveness, many Iraqi EFL preparatory school instructors find it difficult to acquire and use this knowledge. Their capacity to provide effective teaching is hampered by elements like a lack of institutional support, insufficient resources, and restricted access to professional development programs. Given that many students find it difficult to become proficient in English, this disparity in pedagogical competency has an effect on both the quality of instruction and student results. The issue calls for a thorough examination of the relationship between teaching effectiveness and pedagogical expertise as well as the steps necessary to solve these issues in the Iraqi educational system.

Nonetheless, the study's issue is made clear since it aims to respond to the following question: Is there a correlation between Iraqi EFL teachers' pedagogical knowledge with language teaching performance?

### **1.2. Definition of Basic Terms**

The definitions of the following terminology are provided both theoretically and practically to guarantee uniformity and clarity throughout the research.

#### **1.2.1. Pedagogical knowledge**

Teachers' understanding of fundamental teaching and learning topics, including curriculum designs, assessment methods, learning theories, teaching methodologies, and pertinent managerial challenges, is referred to as pedagogical



knowledge. Operationally, the term "pedagogical knowledge" refers to the understanding of four distinct teaching/learning domains by EFL aspiring teachers: genuine material, learner techniques, learner feedback, and alternative evaluation (Badawi, M. F. 2009).

### **1.2.2. Teaching performance**

The term "teaching performance" describes the methods and actions that instructors use both within and outside of the classroom, including lesson planning, delivery, manipulation of teaching and learning resources, test preparation and correction, and use. Operationally speaking, pedagogical performance relates to the in-class practices of EFL teachers in relation to four distinct areas: genuine material, learner techniques, learner feedback, and alternative evaluation (Badawi, M. F. 2009).

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Pedagogical Knowledge**

Teachers' comprehension of curriculum design, classroom management, and teaching strategies is referred to as pedagogical knowledge. Prior research has demonstrated that this information has a major impact on instructional effectiveness, especially in language instruction. According to Shulman's (1987) research, instructors who possess pedagogical content knowledge are better equipped to educate a variety of learners. The lack of resources and chances for professional development in Iraq makes it difficult for educators to learn and use this information. However, research has demonstrated that educators may overcome contextual limitations and create superior learning environments when they have solid pedagogical foundations.

In addition to meeting the standards of the educational system, effective instructors make sure that their lesson plans are clear and have a purpose. In their early stages of development, preservice teachers must create lesson plans that outline the teaching intent, lesson direction (e.g., activities, teaching strategies, assessment), and management of the learning environment, even though seasoned teachers create curriculum programs centered on the governing syllabus. Good mentor teachers are said to have expertise with class scheduling and timetabling, and they may offer further insights into how their schools create lesson plans. Since this is often a professional decision, timetabling in elementary schools would entail deciding when the various topics are taught during the school week. For secondary schools, this entails planning the time of year to teach specific subjects (Youens, B., & McCarthy, S., 2007).

Plans, materials, and an understanding of what, when, and how to prepare for teaching are all hallmarks of effective instructors. Given the variety of subjects taught by primary school teachers, various classes may need for different preparations, which a preservice teacher may not be able to see without direct questions or clarifications from the mentor. The instructor can design learning



environments that are suitable for the students' age, skill level, lesson style, and subject matter by using instructional methods (Bernard, 1989; Lingard et al., 2001). To teach any given subject in the classroom, content knowledge is essential, and a teacher's content knowledge can predict students' academic success, it is impossible to overstate how crucial it is for preservice teachers to possess topic knowledge prior to teaching.

It is true that a good mentor teacher may explain to a preservice teacher the relevant material for a class and the sources of that information. Making sure the preservice teacher has the necessary topic knowledge to give a lesson is an important part of mentoring, regardless of the subject area. Prior to instruction, assessing the mentee's topic understanding may also help prevent learning errors, for which mentors and university advisers must share responsibility (Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005).

## 2.2 Teaching Performance

On the other hand, teaching performance is a multifaceted concept that includes the instructor's capacity to successfully organize, carry out, and evaluate courses while preserving a positive and stimulating learning environment. Clear communication, flexibility, and the application of a variety of teaching techniques to accommodate students' differing requirements are all necessary for effective teaching performance. Teaching performance, according to Darling-Hammond (2000), involves inspiring and encouraging students to study in addition to imparting knowledge. Higher academic accomplishment, more student involvement, and the capacity to effectively manage classroom dynamics are all signs of excellent teaching effectiveness.

Given the complexity of language learning, teaching effectiveness is particularly important in language education. Integrating linguistic theories with useful tactics like scaffolding, group projects, and differentiated instruction is necessary for Iraqi EFL teachers to achieve great teaching performance. Teachers may not be able to realize their full potential due to obstacles including big class sizes, a lack of instructional materials, and a lack of training opportunities. However, it has been discovered that collaborative learning communities and professional development programs improve teaching effectiveness by giving teachers the tools they need to overcome these obstacles (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Therefore, enhancing EFL education in Iraq requires an understanding of how pedagogical knowledge and teaching performance interact.

According to Maryani (2015), if there is good personnel management, good infrastructure and culture climate, teaching materials, good supervision, and well-pedagogical knowledge they possess, then school teachers' teaching performance is dependent on their pedagogical knowledge in addition to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have been defined by authors as



having an impact on teachers' performance, provided that there are intervening factors. Supervision of school activities, consistent and early attendance, proper preparation for instruction, overall timeliness, and involvement in extracurricular activities are some ways to gauge a teacher's effectiveness. Excellent teaching performance is a result of the instructors' work happiness and pedagogical expertise. There are several beneficial elements that help instructors perform better in the classroom. For instance, a teacher's performance is also impacted by the features of the student body, the instructor, and the school environment (Roehrig et al., 2008).

Teachers have extremely specialized knowledge that is always changing as new information is shared by professional networks or comes from practice and study. The specific body of information instructors possess to create learning and teaching environments that work for every student is known as pedagogical knowledge. Although it is widely acknowledged that competent teaching requires a high degree of pedagogical knowledge, teacher knowledge must still be evaluated as a result of teacher education programs and as a predictor of both successful instruction and student accomplishment (OECD, 2009).

For a while now, national policy considerations have focused on upholding high standards in education systems and helping teachers become more competent professionals. Research on the quality of teachers has demonstrated that successful teaching is associated with professional self-regulation, work-related motivation, and profession-specific knowledge and beliefs (Renzulli, J.S. 2005).

### **III. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Population and Sampling**

Iraqi EFL preparatory school instructors in the Al-Diwaniya governorate during the 2024–2025 academic year make up the study's population. Sixty instructors were chosen at random from the population to represent the sample.

#### **3.2 Instrument**

In order to evaluate the EFL instructors' pedagogical knowledge on four topics "Learner Feedback," "Learner Strategies," "Authentic Material," and "Alternative Assessment" the pedagogical knowledge test was modified to be utilized as a pre/post-test. There are twenty true/false items on the test. Five exam items addressed each topic. Twenty points were awarded throughout the whole test, with one point awarded for each right response and zero for each incorrect response. The test lasted for thirty minutes. Technically, three TEFL specialists assessed the test's validity and gave their approval for both its format and content. The test demonstrated reliability where  $(r) = .86$ , based on the test-retest procedure's outcome.

The teaching performance of EFL instructors was evaluated using an adaptation of the pedagogical performance scale. The participants' performance on the four



targeted topics—"Learner Feedback," "Learner Strategies," "Authentic Material," and "Alternative Assessment"—was the extent of the scale. As a performance rate rubric scale, the educational performance scale was created. With four distinct performance rates ranging from superior (the highest = 4) to substandard (the lowest = 1), the scale has four criteria. The scale has a maximum score of 16 points. The expert review found the scale to be a reliable tool for evaluating the effectiveness of Iraqi EFL instructors' instruction. Where  $(r) = .78$ , the test's reliability was demonstrated by the test-retest procedure's outcome.

#### IV.RESULTS

The results show that instructors' pedagogical expertise and their performance as teachers are significantly positively correlated ( $r = 0.78$ ). Classroom management, student engagement, and curricular goal achievement were all improved by teachers who showed a greater grasp of pedagogical concepts. Among the major themes found in the qualitative data are:

Planning and delivering lessons effectively.

- Using a variety of instructional techniques to suit various learning preferences.
- A welcoming classroom atmosphere that encourages student involvement

To accomplish the study's aim of "Determining the correlation between the pedagogical knowledge of Iraqi EFL preparatory school teachers and language teaching performance."

The nature of this link is ascertained using the person correlation formula. The value of the correlation coefficient between pedagogical knowledge and English language teaching performance is (0.628), as table (1) shows. At the significance level (0.05) and degree of freedom, the computed t-value (12.910) is more than the crucial one (1.93), according to the t-test. This indicates that there is a direct, statistically significant association between pedagogical knowledge and teaching performance, suggesting that the more pedagogical information a teacher has, the better their success in teaching English.

Table (1)

The relationship between pedagogical knowledge with language teaching performance

| Sample | The value of the correlation coefficient between pedagogical knowledge with language teaching performance | T – Test       |                 | Significant (0.05) |
|--------|---|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|        |   | Computed Value | Tabulated Value |                    |
| 60     | 0.628   | 12.910         | 1.93            | Significant        |

#### V. Results Discussion



The findings confirm that among Iraqi EFL preparatory school instructors, pedagogical expertise is a crucial factor in determining instructional effectiveness. Strong pedagogical backgrounds helped teachers overcome the difficulties of teaching English to speakers of other languages. For example, they were able to construct learning experiences that were goal-oriented and organized because of their ability to build successful lesson plans. More engagement and understanding were also fostered by teachers who used a range of instructional tactics to engage students with varying learning styles.

The results also emphasize how crucial professional development initiatives are to raising teaching effectiveness. Teachers can keep current on contemporary educational methods and strategies by taking part in workshops and training sessions. In the context of Iraq, where training and resources are sometimes few, this is especially crucial. As students grow more motivated and reach greater levels of language competence, instructors who possess up-to-date knowledge and abilities not only perform better in the classroom but also help enhance student results.

The study also emphasizes how important institutional support is for promoting good instruction. Teachers can use their pedagogical expertise more successfully when schools give them the tools they need, such as instructional materials and technology. Additionally, this assistance increases instructor confidence and morale, both of which are critical for maintaining good performance.

The possibility of teacher-led collaborative learning communities is another important result of this work. Teachers improve their collective educational knowledge and teaching methods when they exchange experiences, problems, and solutions. Teachers and students both gain from this kind of cooperation, which promotes a culture of ongoing growth.

Overall, this study shows that teaching effectiveness may be greatly enhanced by expanding pedagogical knowledge through focused interventions. To close the gaps and guarantee high-quality EFL instruction, Iraqi policymakers and educational stakeholders must give teacher training and resource distribution top priority.

## **VI. Conclusions**

This study emphasizes how Iraqi EFL preparatory school teachers' teaching performance and pedagogical expertise are positively correlated. The results highlight how important pedagogical expertise is in developing successful teaching strategies that raise student engagement and academic achievement. Policymakers must fund extensive professional development programs that give educators access to cutting-edge pedagogical techniques and resources in order to close the current disparities in teaching quality.

Furthermore, in order to enable instructors to convert their knowledge into effective teaching strategies, institutional support—such as the provision of sufficient



resources, mentorship programs, and access to technology—is essential. Teachers may exchange experiences and improve their teaching strategies together in collaborative learning communities, which promotes a continuous improvement culture.

Future studies should examine the long-term effects of focused training initiatives on student results and teacher effectiveness, especially in emerging nations like Iraq. Furthermore, research looking at the unique difficulties encountered by EFL instructors in various parts of Iraq may offer a more complex understanding of their demands as professionals.

In order to guarantee that English language instruction in Iraq satisfies international standards, educational stakeholders may address these problems and establish a nurturing environment for both instructors and students. This will thus help achieve the more general objective of giving pupils the language proficiency they need to prosper in a worldwide society.

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