Teachers' Reflections on the Practicality of English In-Service Courses in Iran

SOMAYEH BANIASAD-AZAD
University of Isfahan, Iran
somayebaniasad@gmail.com

MANSOOR TAVAKOLI
University of Isfahan, Iran

SAEED KETABI
University of Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

As professional development is essential for teacher quality, many countries have made investments in designing teacher education programs. The study explores the efficacy of in-service courses in Iran from the perspective of English language teachers. Interviews were conducted to examine teachers' beliefs about the efficacy of in-service courses, their involvement in program development, the application of program material by teachers, and their preferences about teacher education programs. The findings showed that program designers adopted a traditional transmissive model to transfer pre-determined knowledge to the teachers without involving teachers in the decision making process. Teachers, in turn, did not apply the program materials in their teaching practices because they believed program materials were idealistic, impractical, generalized, and decontextualized. Moreover, what teachers considered beneficial for their development was different from what was presented to them in the in-service courses. The reason for such inconsistencies is a lack of communication and effective feedback channel between teachers and planners. The findings suggest that as teachers are the final decision makers based on the realities of their teaching situation, involving them in planning and program development process can decrease the existing gap and make program materials more realistic and consequently applicable. Implications for language planning and teacher education programs are discussed.

Keywords: English language education; professional development; teacher involvement; in-service courses; teacher autonomy

INTRODUCTION

Professional development is central to teacher quality and essential to the improvement of student learning. In different parts of the world, there has been a great effort to invest in professional development programs to meet the changing needs of the learners. In EFL context, changes in English curriculum have made teacher education programs imperative for teachers to enable them to change their traditional ways of teaching (Jacobs & Farrell 2001, Lee 2011). Research has shown the positive impact of professional development on educational outcomes (Johnson 2009, Johnson & Golombek 2011, Tedick 2005). Therefore, it is significant that teacher learning and development be improved through teacher education programs.

There has been a paradigm shift in second language teacher education from transmissive models to exploratory and continuous models (Freeman & Johnson 1998; Jacobs & Farrell 2001). Traditional transmissive models look at learning as transferring a body of knowledge about learning and teaching by an outside source to teachers, consider methods and theories of teaching generalizable and applicable to any teaching context, ignore teachers' prior knowledge and experience, and offer standardized methodology through a prescribed curriculum (Freeman & Johnson 1998, Johnson 2009, Richards 2002, Richardson 1997). In a sharp contrast with the traditional models, exploratory models emphasize the

importance of teachers' prior knowledge and reflection on their own experience, encourage effective communication among teachers, and consider teachers as the producers not just the consumers of knowledge (Ahn 2011, Borg 2006, Dunn 2011, Richards 2002, Tarone & Allwright 2005). Indeed, what distinguishes exploratory models from traditional models of teacher education programs is the importance given to teachers' autonomy and involvement.

Teacher autonomy is manifested both in teachers' capacity to improve their own teaching through personal efforts and in the freedom to be able to teach in the way they want (Little, 1995). Teachers can encourage and develop learner autonomy only if they themselves are autonomous. Teacher autonomy is vital for teachers to raise their status and contributes to job satisfaction (Morris & Easterday 2008). Traditional transmissive models of teacher development, however, ignore teachers' autonomy and prescribe standards-based methodology for all learners. This may bring about some direction and consistency, but it endangers much of the autonomy of teachers (Quiocho & Stall 2008).

Involving teachers in teacher education programs has many advantages. It can facilitate their learning process, as learning is a constructivist process through which teachers reform their existing knowledge and practices based on individual and local needs (Johnson & Golombek 2011). Moreover, since development is best understood in the light of context, culture, and social interaction (Reagan & Osborn 2002) teachers learn better by cooperating with others and being involved in the process of learning. Teachers' involvement also helps teachers to share professional experiences with their colleagues and foster a collaborative culture in their communities (Johnson 2009).

The importance of giving teachers an active role in language planning, syllabus design, material development, and program implementation has long been discussed. Kumaravadivelu (2006), similarly, suggested that language teacher education programs should enable teachers to become decision makers of their own teaching context. Some researchers believed that practicing teachers are to some extent language planners (Freeman 1996, Stern 1992). According to Ur (2013), universal use of a method in EFL and ESL disciplines is no longer valid because teachers face local factors such as population of learners, expectations of the stakeholders and teacher employers, high-stakes tests, individual teacher's professional beliefs, abilities and preferences that affect the application of methods and theories. "Teachers have always adapted methods according to local needs and preferences; indeed, many methods were never widely adopted at all" (Ur 2013, p. 2). Her solution was encouraging teachers to decide based on their teaching context and situations. Li (2010) found that Chinese teachers do not implement the new English curriculum because they find it idealistic and theoretically well-designed but practically unattainable. She concluded that as the curriculum implementation is in the hands of practicing teachers at the classroom level, they should be given a more active role.

In spite of many supports given to teachers' involvement and autonomy in policy making and planning process, many language teacher education programs follow a transmissive model in which a set of predetermined body of knowledge is transferred from teacher educator to the teachers (Ur 2013, Waters 2012). The problem is even worse in EFL contexts. Lee (2011) investigated professional development in the context of Hong Kong. Her findings revealed that professional development activities for teachers are influenced by traditional models of knowledge transmission and consumption. Findings of other studies in EFL settings also confirmed that professional development programs are influenced by traditional models with teachers as implementers of programs (Hu 2005, Li 2010).

Research about English language education in Iran has addressed national policies (Kiany, Mirhosseini & Navidinia 2011), curriculum planning and practice (Atai & Mazlum 2103), problems in English teaching (Jahangard 2007, Pishghadam & Saboori 2014, Riazi & Mosalanejad 2010), and the effectiveness of curriculum or particular methodologies (Hayati

and Mashhadi 2010, Riazi 2005). However, English teacher education programs and teachers' perspectives on such programs have been neglected. Teachers' beliefs about their role in program development and material preparation for in-service courses, the effectiveness and applicability of in-services have not been explored. The investigation of these issues is the focus of the present research.

EFL TEACHER EDUCATION IN-SERVICES IN IRAN

Language policy in Iran has been formed by political, social, and economic factors. Following the hierarchical system, the Ministry of Education choose experts to make educational polices and decisions. The whole education system is under the purview of this Ministry. English language textbooks are designed by the Ministry of Education. English is formally taught in junior schools, to the students aged between 11 and 13 years, and in senior high schools, from the age of 14 to 17. From the Islamic Revolution in 197, there had not been any change in English textbooks and Grammar Translation Method dominated English language teaching. However, the changes in learners' needs, dissatisfaction of learners, families, and language teachers led to a shift in English language policy within the last five years. Attempts have been made to design and develop a curriculum based on CLT. As a result of this shift, new English textbooks, that are Prospect Series, have been designed for the students in junior schools.

Teacher education in-service courses are also designed, developed, and administered by the Ministry of Education. There are some general programs held for teachers from different disciplines; requiring teachers to read some predetermined books or articles published by the Ministry of Education and take a related exam. Other kinds of teacher education programs include seminars, workshops, and in-services, which have been infrequently held due to lack of financial supports in recent years. These programs are also conducted only when there is a change in the curriculum or teaching materials. Recent changes in English teaching policy and the move toward CLT have raised subsequent change in the English textbooks of junior schools. Prospect Series has been designed and developed by the Ministry of Education. Accordingly, new in-service programs have been developed for English teachers of junior schools. Such courses are intensively held before a new school year starts within one or at most two-weeks.

Language education in Iran is a top-down process determined by high level officials in the Ministry of Education. Under this top-down system, people at lower levels, that are English language teachers, have no role in the planning process. Teachers are perceived as passive users of the materials and curriculum (Pishghadam & Saboori 2014). Studies have shown dissatisfactions about English teaching policies in Iran, addressing problems such as having a centralized system, focusing on national tests, conformity of instruction (e.g. Pishghadam & Saboori 2014), neglecting foreign language experts (e.g. Kiany et al. 2011), and existing discrepancy between language planning and language practice (e.g. Atai & Mazlum 2013).

Dissatisfactions about language teacher education programs seem to be common in most EFL settings. Problems such as the gap between policy and practice, lack of teachers' contribution in policy making and planning process, and teachers' unwillingness to implement curriculum and program materials have been addressed in other studies (Hu 2005, Lee 2011, Li 2010). On the other hand, teachers are the final decision makers in the classroom (Stern 1992, Ur 2013). Such a status calls for the investigation of teachers' perspectives about English teacher education in-service courses. How English teachers interpret English teacher education programs and implement them in their teaching practices is examined in this study.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach to investigate the practicality, efficacy and regularity, of English teacher education in-services through English teachers' perspectives. Research question developed for the study was: What are teachers' beliefs about teacher education in-service courses and their effectiveness on teachers' professional development and autonomy?

PARTICIPANTS

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants of the study. In purposeful sampling, the researcher identifies key informants; persons who have specific knowledge of the phenomenon being studied (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006). From the population of junior high school teachers, 16 teachers who were attending EFL teacher education in-services were selected. The participants were attending an in-service course as there was a change in the curriculum and English textbooks. Detailed information of the participants are presented in table 1.

TABLE 1. Distribution of the participants

Sex	N	Teaching experience	N	Educational degree	N
Males	5	Less than 10 years	4	BA	12
Females	11	10-20 years	8	MA	4
Total	16	Above 20 years	4		

INSTRUMENT

Interviews were conducted to investigate teachers' beliefs and perspectives on teacher education in-service courses. In-depth interviewing is the hallmark of qualitative research used by researchers to explore informants' experiences and interpretations. (Rossman & Rallis 1998, p. 124, cited in Hatch 2002). Sixteen teachers were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Interview questions aimed at exploring the regularity of EFL teacher education in-service courses, teachers' role in program development, teachers' preferences, the use of program materials by teachers, and the effect of program on teachers' autonomy. Each interview lasted 40 minutes on average. The interviews were recorded for further analysis, while the interviewer took notes during the interview sessions.

PROCEDURE

Interviews with 16 teachers were carried out and audio-recorded. Interviews were conducted in Persian as the research has shown that informants are more willing and able to communicate their knowledge using their native language (Hatch 2002, p. 98). Only one interview was conducted in English with the approval of the interviewee. The questions for the participants included issues related to 1) regularity of EFL teacher education in-service courses in Iran, 2) teachers' role in developing and designing such courses, 3) teacher's beliefs about the efficacy of EFL teacher education in-service courses, and 4) teachers' preferences regarding in-service courses. Content and thematic analysis were used to analyse the interviews. To have a clear presentation, the results are discussed under five thematic topics in a descending order. The frequency of topics mentioned by participating teachers is given along with the illustrative quotations.

FINDINGS

The interview items sought to find about the regularity of EFL teacher education in-service courses, teachers' involvement in the development of the program teachers' preferences regarding teacher development programs, the application of program materials by practicing teachers, and the effect of the program on teachers' autonomy. These themes are discussed in a descending order, based on their frequency in the participants' answers.

REGULARITY OF EFL IN-SEFVICE COURSES

All the respondents interviewed reported that English teacher education programs are not regularly held in Iran. They maintained that English teacher in-service trainings have been recently limited to a change in the curriculum or English textbooks. "If there is a change especially in terms of materials, the education system offers these programs but generally they are rare" (Teacher 2). The teachers stated that since the new English textbooks have been developed as a move toward CLT, teacher training programs are held every summer, between one to three weeks, to introduce these textbooks.

The teachers stated that some general teacher education programs were previously held for teachers of all disciplines regarding issues such as ideology, political awareness or the use of technology in the classroom, which have been suspended due to lack of budget. According to the teachers' answers the most prevalent in-services are now limited to introducing materials, that are textbooks or articles published or specified by the Ministry of Education, for the teachers to self-study and attend an online exam.

TEACHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

All teachers unanimously reported that everything about the program is decided by the authorities in the Ministry of Education. There is no opportunity for the teachers to participate in making decisions about English language teaching or teacher education programs. "Decisions are made by people in higher level and one person explains these decisions to us. Nothing is shared with us" (Teacher 15). Teachers believed that they are only implementers of the policies and the decisions made by higher authorities.

Nine teachers stated that they like to be involved in making decisions about materials, time, and nature of teacher education programs, so that they could consider the practical issues and the limitations the teachers faced. However, none of the teachers had participated in policy making and program development.

> I like to have a role in developing materials, textbooks, or teacher education
> programs because I see the realities and difficulties of teaching that people at policy
> level have not experienced. But they don't ask us.   (Teacher 6)

Five teachers said that head teachers and teacher trainers are requested to send annual feedbacks and reports, but they are rarely considered.

> Sometimes, we write or say our comments and feedbacks about materials or program
> to the head teachers and they transfer them to the people in charge of policy making
> but it is for the sake of formality and nothing changes.   (Teacher 13)

Few teachers stated in rare cases that teacher trainers of a city or district request a workshop or seminar for their own district, the trainers can decide about its content and materials.

TEACHERS' PREFERENCES REGARDING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A unanimous agreement was in the teachers' comments that they preferred regular programs to be held continuously during school year as they can make a balance between the theories offered in the in-service courses and their real practices. Moreover, they can transfer their feedback to teacher trainers.

> If the programs were held during the year, it was more effective. We could discuss
> the problems we face in their teaching practices. (Teacher 1)

Focusing on practical teaching, teachers' perception, and the practicality of materials were also reported as teachers' preferences. Seven respondents believed that the program should focus on modern teaching techniques and strategies rather than prescribing or transferring a specified method. The respondents also preferred to talk about their personal experience in using the materials.

> Discussing parts of a textbook based on teachers' experiences is very useful because
> each teacher has a unique experience according to his or her teaching context. So
> teachers face a variety of ways and strategies and they can use the ones that are
> practical in their own classes. (Teacher 7)

Four teachers maintained that teacher experience is not sufficient because some teachers do not update their knowledge and teaching strategies with the changes in the field.

> I believe what we need is a balance between theory and practice. But what we see in
> the programs is either pure theories or the practices that are not well packed.
> (Teacher 9)

Four teachers reported that they do not find teacher education programs useful and try to improve their professional knowledge through other ways.

> To be honest, I think that in-service courses do not suggest me something new and I
> try to improve my knowledge by studying articles and asking other teachers.
> (Teacher 10)

The ways of improving professional development mentioned by the teachers include studying newly published articles and textbooks, browsing related websites, and consulting colleagues.

APPLICATION OF PROGRAM MATERIALS BY TEACHERS

Most teachers reported that they do not keep to the materials of the program. The main reasons for this, according to the respondents are that 1) program materials are idealistic and do not consider all types of learners and classroom contexts, 2) there is a discrepancy between program materials and students' final exams, and 3) there is no supervision and teacher evaluation.

Eleven teachers believed that program materials are idealistic and do not consider uniqueness of a teaching context. The teachers complained that the teaching methods being presented in in-service courses are practical only in SAMPAD schools (national selective schools in Iran developed specifically for the development of exceptionally talented students), while they were teaching in villages where schools have no facilities.

> Most often, in the in-service courses, we are dealing with the theories and ideals, but
> the reality of teaching is different. I am teaching at a school in which there is not
> even a computer or CD player. (Teacher 5)

The interviews' answers show that eight teachers practice spelling from early sessions although trainers of teacher education programs emphasize that Prospect textbooks do not have anything to do with spelling. Teachers' justification for practicing spelling is that students' spelling and reading will be tested in final exams.

> In in-service courses, the trainers tell us not to teach spelling, but in the final exam, spelling will be tested. What should I do? (Teacher 11)

Six interviewees believed that most practicing teachers have still stick to Audio-lingual method (ALM) and Grammar Translation Method (GMT)n their teaching and CLT method has not been fulfilled. They stated that programs surely have some effects but they are not effective enough.

> Most experienced teachers are still teaching based on ALM and there is not any supervision on teachers' practices. (Teacher 3)

The respondents also expressed that–novice teachers are more willing to apply the materials and methods proposed in the programs, while the experienced ones are reluctant to change their own ways and try the new ones.

> I had been head teacher and observed that young teachers use program materials more than the experienced teachers. Perhaps the experienced teachers find it difficult to change or they do not have enough motivation. Some teachers cannot accept the ideas just because teacher trainer has less teaching experience than them.
> (Teacher 13)

EFFECT OF IN-SERVICE COURSES ON TEACHERS' AUTONOMY

Nine teachers believed that programs do not consider teachers' autonomy as the specific materials are presented in a pre-planned way, even the trainers do not have much freedom of choice in teaching. Specified ways of teaching are conveyed from trainers to teachers, ignoring teaching context and the population of learners.

> Teacher trainers may ask teachers' opinion while starting a course but they do not use or even accept these experiences. The reason for asking such questions is just to break the ice. Because everything is pre-planned, even trainers are retelling what they have been told in Tehran. (Teacher 2)

Seven teachers argued although trainers admit that these methods may not be fully practical, their emphasis is on being as close to the given materials, methods, and teacher guide as possible. Their answers showed that they feel themselves ignored in and apart from the planning process.

> When they emphasize on following teacher guide or prescribed methods, I have a bad feeling. Am I a robot? (Teacher 8)

Interestingly, some respondents asserted that teachers are doing their own work in real practice.

> I think in reality, when teachers do not find program materials practical, they do their own work. But this output may be different from the expected output.
> (Teacher 8)

Considering the results of interviews, it can be stated that there is not any regular English language teacher education program in Iran unless when there is a change in the curriculum or the textbooks. Teachers have no role in program development and policy

making process; everything has been previously decided and teachers are only consumers of the decisions and policies. Teachers' satisfactions are not fulfilled by the in-service courses as they find the materials idealistic and purely theory-based. Besides, teachers prefer programs that are based on teachers' experience or make a balance between theory and practice. Regarding time of in-service courses, teachers prefer regular and continuous programs rather that short-term ones. At practice level, most teachers do not apply program materials in their teaching as they consider them impractical, inconsistent with students' final exams, and different from the reality of teaching practices.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the efficacy of EFL teacher education in-service courses in Iran from teachers' perspective. The data gathered form English teachers provide evidence that EFL teacher education programs in Iran are transmissive following a centralized approach, in which everything has been decided by the authorities at policy level and teachers at practice level are supposed to implement those policies and pre-planned programs. Lack of involvement of practicing teachers in policy making and program development has been reflected in other studies (Kiany et al. 2011, Lee 2011, Li 2010). Ignorance of teachers at practice level results in unsuccessful implementation of policies by teachers (Freeman 1996, Hu 2005, Li 2010).

Language teachers are not implementing program materials in a successful and comprehensive way. For some teachers, program materials are theoretically valid but ideal and not applicable in real situations (Hu 2005, Kumaravadivelu 2006, Li 2010, Stern 1992, Ur 2013). In fact, teachers apply practical knowledge and not theoretical knowledge when working in the classroom (Barrot 2016). In addition, teachers, especially the experienced ones, have no motivation to adjust their teaching to new materials due to the fact that there is no supervision and teacher evaluation (Atai & Mazlum 2013). Another major reason for the failure in applying program materials is inconsistencies between the new textbook and students' final exams; although there is a change in curriculum toward CLT, students' spelling, reading and even grammar are tested in the exams. Therefore, exam-oriented education system in Iran makes it harder for the teachers to follow the instructions of the in-service courses.

Teachers' preferences, teaching context, and learner population are another factors affecting teachers' application of theories and teacher education programs (Kumaravadivelu 2006, Ur 2013). This has been proven by the findings of the present study. Teachers' experience can provide valuable information about contextual factors to consider in developing a program or reforming a curriculum. On the other hand, realizing contextual influence can empower teachers to focus on the strategies that work for their own students (Canagarajah 2005, Kumaravadivelu 2006), since education is not limited to human interactions; it encompasses physical surroundings as well (Hashim, Alam & Yusoff 2014). However, the top-down education system of Iran limits the role of teachers and context.

Language teachers find continuous and long-term teacher education programs more advantageous than the short term ones. They also prefer an active communication between teachers and teacher trainers while teacher trainers in the in-service courses transfer a body of predetermined knowledge to the teachers, leaving no space for teachers' creativity and autonomy. Moreover, the teachers prefer in-service courses that focus on teachers' prior knowledge, experience, and teaching challenges rather than on the prescription of theories or a limited set of techniques. Numerous studies have supported the benefits of taking the above-mentioned preferences into consideration (Johnson 2009, Johnson & Golombek 2011,

Kumaravadivelu 2006, Tedick 2005). Findings of this study prove the ignorance of teachers' preferences in EFL teacher education programs, which may be resulted from lack of and feedback channel between program designers and practicing teachers (Freeman 1996, Kiany et al. 2011, Li 2010).

The implications from the findings of this study are for educational policy makers, especially in the contexts that follow a centralized top-down system. As long as teachers are not involved in the process of policy making, inconsistencies between planning and practice level remain and grow (Hu 2005, Li 2010). Therefore, policy makers need to face the challenge of creating an open education system to effectively involve teachers in policy making. Teachers' role from consumers and implementers of policies and decisions should extend to active decision makers.

The study can also contribute to English teacher education programs. Many language in-service courses are dominated by the concept of teaching method. This problem is not restricted to Iran; most language teacher education programs transfer a body of knowledge to teachers (Allwright 2003, Hu 2005, Johnson 2009, Kumaravadivelu 2006, Lee 2011, Li 2010, Richards 2002). In reality, however, teachers are not following these methods because of various factors such as their own preferences, teaching context, expectation of stakeholders, and the population of learners. Therefore, teacher education programs should move toward applying exploratory and collegial models that empower teachers to share their experience, reflect on their practice, improve their knowledge through collaboration with their peers, and make decisions based on their teaching contexts (Johnson 2009, Kumaravadivelu 2006, Richardson 1997, Tedick 2005).

While the study provided interesting findings, insights, and implications, it also has limitation with respect to its methodology. The authors used only interviews to collect data. Future studies may include other sources of data collection such as questionnaires to explore the perspectives of a larger sample and obtain more conclusive results.

REFERENCES

Ahn, K. (2011). Learning to teach under curricula reform: The practicum experience in South Korea. In K.E Johnson & P.R. Golombek (Eds.), *Research on Second Language Teacher Education: a Sociocultural Perspective on Professional Development* (pp. 239-254). New York: Taylor & Francis.

Allwright, R. L. (2003). Exploratory Practice: Rethinking practitioner research in language teaching. *Language Teaching Research. Vol. 7*, 113-141.

Atai, M. R. & Mazlum, F. (2013). English language teaching curriculum in Iran: Planning and practice. *The Curriculum Journal. Vol. 24* (3), 389-411. DOI:10.1080/09585176.2012.744327

Barrot, J. S. (2016). Examining the teaching beliefs and practices of experienced ESL teachers: A sociocognitive-transformative perspective. *3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies. Vol.* 22(1), 153-163. DOI: http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2016-2201-12

Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice.* London: Continuum.

Canagarajah, S. A. (2005). Introduction. In S. A. Canagarajah (Ed.), *Reclaiming the Local in Language Policy and Practice* (pp. xiii-xxx). Mahwah, N. J.: Erlbaum.

Davies, A. (2002). The social component of language teacher education. In H. Trappes-Lomax & G. Ferguson, *Language in Language Teacher Education* (pp. 49-67). Netherlands: John Benjamin Publishing.

Dunn, W. (2011). Working toward social inclusion through concept development in second language teacher education. In K.E Johnson & P.R. Golombek (Eds.), *Research on Second Language Teacher Education: A Sociocultural Perspective on Professional Development* (pp. 50-65). New York: Taylor & Francis.

Freeman, R. D. (1996). Dual-language planning at Oyster Bilingual School: "It's much more than language". *TESOL Quarterly, 30* (3), 557-582.

Hashim, N.M.H.N., Alam, S. Sh. & Yusoff, N.M. (2014). Relationship between teacher's personality, monitoring, learning environment, and students' EFL performance. *GEMA Online$^®$ Journal of Language Studies. Vol. 14* (1), 101-116. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17576/GEMA-2014-1401-07

Hatch, J.A. (2002). *Doing Qualitative Research in Education Settings*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Hayati, A.M. & A. Mashhadi. (2010). Language planning and language-in-education policy in Iran. *Language Problems and Language Planning. Vol. 34*(1), 24-42.

Hu, G. (2005). Contextual influences on instructional practices: A Chinese case for an ecological approach to ELT. *TESOL Quarterly. Vol. 39*(4), 635-660.

Jacobs, G. & Farrell, T.S.C. (2001). Paradigm shift: Understanding and implementing change in second language education. *TESL EJ. Vol. 5*(1).

Jahangard, A. (2007). Evaluation of the EFL materials taught at Iranian high schools. *The Asian EFL Journal. Vol. 9*(2), 130-50.

Johnson, K. E. (2009). *Second Language Teacher Education: A Sociocultural Perspective*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Johnson, K. E. & Golombek, P. R. (2011). *Research on Second Language Teacher Education: A Sociocultural Perspective on Professional Development*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Kiany, Gh., Mirhosseini, A. & Navidinia, H. (2011). Foreign language education policies in Iran: Pivotal macro considerations. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning. Vol. 53*(222), 49-70.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding Language Teaching: From Method to Postmethod*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Lee, I. (2011). Teachers as presenters at continuing professional development seminars in the English-as-a-foreign-language context: 'I find it more convincing'. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education. Vol. 36*(2). http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2011v36n2.3

Li, M. (2010). EFL teachers and English language education in the PRC: Are they the policy makers? *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher. Vol. 19*(3), 439-451.

Little, D. (1995).Learning as dialogue: The dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy. *System. Vol. 23*(2), 175-182.

Lodico, M.G., Spaulding, D.T. & Voegtle, K.H. (2006). *Methods in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Morris, K. A. & Easterday, J. (2008). Amplifying autonomy and collective conversation: Using video iPods™ to support mathematics teacher learning. *Issues in Teacher Education. Vol. 17*(2), 47.

Pishghadam, R. & Saboori, F. (2014). A socio-cultural study of language teacher status. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language. Vol. 2*(1), 63-72.

Quiocho, A. & Stall, P. (2008). Nclb and teacher satisfaction. *Leadership. Vol. 37*(5), 20-24.

Reagan, T. G. & Osborn, T. A. (2002). *The Foreign Language Educator in Society: Toward a Critical Pedagogy*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Riazi, A. (2005). The four language stages in the history of Iran. In A.M.Y. Lin & P.W. Martin (Eds.), *Decolonization, Globalization: Language-in-education Policy and Practice* (pp. 98-114). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Riazi, A. & N. Mosalanejad. (2010). Evaluation of learning objectives in Iranian high school and pre-university English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language. Vol. 13* (4), 1-16.

Richards, J. C. (2002). 30 years of TEFL/TESL: A personal reflection. *RELC Journal. Vol. 33*(1), 1-35, doi:10.1177/003368820203300201.

Richardson, V. (1997). Constructivist teaching and teacher education: Theory and practice. In V. Richardson (Eds.), *Constructivist Teacher Education: Building New Understandings* (pp. 3-15). London: The Falmer Press.

Stern, H. H. (1992). *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tarone, E. & Allwright, D. (2005). Second language teacher learning and student second language learning: shaping the knowledge base. In D. J. Tedick (Eds.), *Second Language Teacher Education: International Perspectives* (pp. 5-25). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Tedick, D. J. (2005). *Second language teacher education: International perspectives*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Ur, P. (2013). Language-teaching method revisited. *ELT Journal. Vol. 6*(4), 468-474.

Waters, A. (2012). Trends and issues in ELT methods and methodology. *ELT Journal. Vol. 66*(4), 9-440.