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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND TEACHING STYLE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM MANAGMENT OF GACHSARAN'S LANGUAGE INSTITUTES

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ABSTRACT
Nowadays, classroom management styles and procedures are the most influential elements in education systems. This study seeked to investigate the EFL teachers' beliefs and teaching styles in Iranian language institutes. Fifty EFL teachers from Gachsaran, Iran, participated in the present study. The Barbara (2008) questionnaire and Grasha-Riechmann (1996) were used; moreover, an interview with the participants was scheduled in order to collect the necessary data for the study. The results of the study revealed that class disruption and incivility is quite common in Iranian classrooms and it is mostly done by male students. The findings of the study also indicated that Iranian teachers usually match their teaching styles and techniques with the students' needs; furthermore, they believe that training may help teachers to improve their abilities and proficiency in teaching. The findings of the current study could be accommodating for teachers and students in teaching and learning English.

Keywords: EFL Teachers' Beliefs, Classroom Management, Teaching Style

INTRODUCTION
Nowadays, classroom management styles and procedures are the most influential elements in education systems. Recent studies have shown that teachers' activity, personality and styles are the most significant factors in teaching and learning process. It seems that the students' familiarity with teachers' personality, characteristics and procedures can help them to improve their learning (Marzano, 2003; Nona, 2012).
Teaching styles include all techniques, activities and approaches that a teacher uses in order to help students with learning better. Teachers try to match their teaching styles with the students' learning styles in order to accomplish educational objectives (Zenhui, 2001). In recent years, finding for research in this area has increased. Teachers use different systems, techniques, styles, sources and materials that save them time and effort and, therefore, enhance their productivity. Teachers are expected to revise their classroom management practices because such improved practices could help them to accomplish the educational objectives.
The present study is an attempt to examine the beliefs that teachers hold about their classroom management approaches. In addition, an attempt will be made to determine whether there is any relationship between classroom management approaches and teaching styles. Classroom management and teaching techniques and styles have been one of the most important areas of concern for teachers and researchers in recent years. This study seeks to identify classroom management which is one of the primary areas of concern as indicated by many teachers and educators at all levels. A lot of individual and non-individual factors may have an impact on the classroom management approaches of language teachers. Among other things, teachers' personality is believed to be related to the choice of classroom management approaches. Classroom management is of significance in language classes because these classes need to be managed in the right way. Otherwise, the classroom atmosphere will not be conducive to interaction, for example, which is the center piece of modern language classes. Even in learner-

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centered classes, classroom management is a serious concern. Therefore, language classes need to be scrutinized as far as classroom management is concerned.

Classroom management is one of the most important issues in educational settings and it is necessary to investigate the teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices. Furthermore, the issue of classroom management in English classes has been discussed only from the theoretical standpoint. According to Ayers (2001), good teaching begins with good classroom management. Ralph (1994) holds that effective teaching and classroom management cannot be

separated. In other words, effective teachers are good at managing students' behavior and are good at classroom management. According to Gebhard (2006) the aim of classroom management is to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to interacting in English in meaningful ways in order to provide students with the right learning atmosphere.

Language classes are usually examined from the viewpoint of teaching materials and other instruction-related variables. In spite of the importance of classroom management, this area still remains under-researched. Therefore, it is necessary to gain more insights into this important aspect of language classes. These insights, it is hoped, will be of help to language teachers and language learners. In the light of the findings of the study, language teachers will be able to examine their classroom management practices to see whether these practices conform to informed management practices. In addition, language learners will be in a position to appreciate certain rules and regulations in language classes because they will come to see that these practices are the pre-requisite for a productive language class.

The present study seeks to scrutinize language teachers' beliefs about classroom management and to determine if there is any relationship between teachers' teaching styles and their classroom management approaches. A number of studies have shown that teachers' personal belief system guides their choices of classroom management approaches and correspondingly point out that the role that the EFL teachers play in the classroom and the styles they use affect creating a classroom climate that is positive, stimulating, energizing, and effective for language learning. Moreover, another objective of the study is to determine whether there is any relationship between EFL teachers' classroom management approaches and their teaching styles.

The research conducted by Heidari (2012) sought to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers "self- efficacy beliefs" and their teaching styles. 102 high school teachers (both male and female) were randomly selected. Teachers Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen- Moran and Woolfolk, 2001) and Teaching Style Inventory (Grasha, 1996) were used as the instrument to collect data in the mentioned study. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' self – efficacy and their teaching style. Another research by Zaree (2010) explored the effect of classroom observation on teaching methodology in order to determine the significance of classroom observation in assessing teaching procedure and to find appropriate ways for planning and carrying the classroom observation in a proper way carried out the study by using three observers who used the same checklist during a week in language institute to record their observations. The findings of the study indicated that classroom observation could be applied as a guide for teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices. The results also showed that classroom observation allows the educators and administrators to improve their classrooms and schools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Fifty EFL teachers from different English Language Institutes in Gachsaran, a city located in the southern part of Iran, were randomly selected based on their background through random sampling, using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula in order to decide on the sample size. Given the size of the population and based on the formula above for determining sample size,

fifty language teachers were selected through random sampling. For data collection, two instruments were used. First, an interview was conducted with the participants in order to gain insights into the beliefs teachers hold about classroom management. In order to make sure that important aspects of classroom management are touched upon, use was made of a questionnaire developed by Frey (2008). However,

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given the objectives of the study, it was not possible to use all the items in the questionnaire. Therefore, the researchers had to be selective in using the items contained in the questionnaire. The criterion for selecting the items to be included in the interview questions was that they had to reveal something about classroom management. In addition, some items were included because they sought some demographic information about the participants. This information was essential for the study. The second instrument used in the study was a teaching style questionnaire developed by Grasha and Reichman (1996). This questionnaire originally consists of 40 items. The questionnaire was originally validated by these two scholars, which was taken for granted in the current study. In order to establish coder reliability, two interviews were chosen randomly to be coded by the current researcher and a research assistant independently. It became clear that there was a 92% agreement in coding. Having resolved the disagreements, it was decided to code the rest of the interviews.

In order to analyze the data, the nature of the data to be analyzed and the research question to be answered were taken as the basis for decision-making. In order to answer the first research question, the Interviews conducted by the participants were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

At that point, they were subjected to rigorous qualitative content analysis. In order to answer the research question, which was concerned with the teaching styles adopted by the teachers, the questionnaire developed for this purpose required a specific way of analyzing the data, which was adopted in the present study. In addition, an attempt was made to see whether the beliefs which language teachers hold about classroom management are consistent with the teaching styles adopted.

RESALTS AND DISCUSSION

This study sought to investigate the beliefs which EFL teachers hold about classroom management. In addition, the study sought to shed light on teaching styles which language teachers have adopted. Moreover, the study endeavored to determine whether there was a significant relationship among EFL teachers regarding their classroom management orientations and their teaching style (s).

It was required to observe some information about the practical teaching experiences of the teachers. This data was sought through the questionnaire and the results appear in the following table. Information was sought in terms of some categories (table1).

Table 1: Practical Teaching Experience of the Participants

Experience	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-3	7	14.0	14.0	14.0
4-7	11	22.0	22.0	36.0
8-11	9	18.0	18.0	54.0
12-15	14	28.0	28.0	82.0
16-19	9	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	50	100	100	

The participants were also asked to provide the researcher with information about their employment status (i.e., whether they were full time or part time). The results appear in table 2.

Table 2: Employment Status of the Participants Frequency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Part time	37	74.0	74.0	74.0
Fulltime	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
Total	50	100	100	

Even if gender was not considered to be a variable in the current study, based on the information sought through the questionnaire, the participants were required to provide information about their gender as well. The results appear in table 3.

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Table 3: Gender of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	29	58.0	58.0	58.0
Female	21	42.0	42.0	100.0
Total	50	100	100	

One of the questions required the participants to provide information about the training which they had received in classroom management. The question posed was as follows: "What amount of training have you had in dealing with classroom management problems?" Again, the information was sought in terms of some categories (table 4).

Table 4: Amount of Training Received by the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-3 hours	14	28.0	28.0	28.0
4-6 hours	19	38.0	38.0	66.0
7-9 hours	17	34.0	34.0	100.0
Total	50	100	100	

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Teaching Styles

Teaching styles	N	minimum	maximum	mean	standard deviation
Formal authority	50	20	40	28.16	4.02
Facilitator	50	18	38	27.32	2.65
Delegator	50	13	38	25.12	2.94
Personal model	50	15	33	23.81	2.16
Expert model	50	9	24	16.46	2.0

In order to answer this research question, an interview was conducted with the teachers to find out about their beliefs about classroom management. All the participants were required to answer selected questions about classroom management. The results are given below. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and subjected to rigorous qualitative content analysis.

It makes a lot of sense to ask teachers what they think about their classroom management approaches. As one of the objectives of the study, an open-ended interview was conducted. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed interviews were subjected to rigorous qualitative content analysis. At the beginning, no decision was made regarding the number of teachers to be interviewed. However, as the data saturation point was reached after the 15th interview, the interviewing was stopped at this point. It is necessary to point out that to accomplish this, some initial analysis was carried out on the interviews before deciding whether to proceed with interviewing or not.

This section seeks to answer the first question. The first question was intended to shed light on the beliefs teachers hold about classroom management. The instrument used to answer the first research question was a semi-structured interview. The intention behind conducting these interviews was to gain insights into the language teachers' beliefs about classroom management.

As previously mentioned in Chapter Three, fifteen language teachers from different language institutes in Gachsaran were interviewed. These interviews were transcribed verbatim, and were subjected to a rigorous content analysis. In the following section, a detailed account will be given on the steps taken in subjecting the data to content analysis techniques.

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), certain steps should be followed in order to conduct qualitative content analysis. In qualitative content analysis, the analysis begins with open coding. At this stage, it is necessary for content analysts to look for concepts (which are remarkable points in the data and share common meaning and properties) and through which properties and dimensions of those concepts are discovered in data. It is called open coding because the researcher does not begin with any preconceptions

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and keeps an open eye for whatever comes his/her way. In so doing, those pieces which were similar and conveyed the same meaning were put under one "category". These were considered the categories.

After the categories were decided on, it was necessary to review the data once more to see if there were any categories inappropriately chosen or to find out if there was any chance of new categories emerging. Going through all the interviews, and making sure that the categories emerging were comprehensive enough, an attempt was made to categorize teachers in terms of their views toward classroom management. However, it was necessary to establish consistency in the classification beforehand, which was accomplished through coder reliability.

The current study was intended to shed light on EFL teachers' classroom management beliefs, their teaching style and the possible relationship between their classroom management beliefs and their teaching styles. The findings revealed that EFL teachers targeted in the current study generally believed in traditional classroom management. Additionally, it became clear that in terms of teaching style, the dominant teaching style is Formal Authority. Relatively speaking, other teaching styles were less common. Finally, the findings of the study showed that there was a correlation between the classroom management beliefs and the teaching style. Specifically, the majority of the teachers who believed in traditional classroom management adopted the Formal Authority Teaching Style. These findings will be discussed in terms of the relevant research findings in the literature.

According to Brown (2001), classroom management is extremely important in language classes. Among other things, this is because the classroom social context must be conducive of the type of learning which must take place in classroom situation. According to Laut (1999), optimal learning is possible through proper classroom management. In order to make sure that this really happens in language classes, it is necessary for the teachers to control student behavior. It is even mentioned that physical environment and seating arrangements are other important factors to be taken into consideration in this regard. Given the discussion so far about the importance of classroom management, it is necessary to have a look at the findings of the study in the broader context of the relevant findings gleaned so far.

Yilmaz (2009) carried out a study on the classroom management approaches of 204 pre-service secondary science and mathematics teachers through a questionnaire and found that teachers are interventionist in their approach. In the present study, it was revealed that teachers generally believe in traditional classroom management. This finding corroborates the findings of a study carried out by Yasar (2008).

He made use of a questionnaire in order to gather data from 256 elementary school teachers in Turkey. The finding indicated that teachers were predominantly teacher-centered in their classroom management approaches and tends to be rather strict in their classroom management.

The findings of the present study also confirmed the findings of Rahimi and Assadollahi (2012). They conducted their study on 300 EFL teachers. They were interested in the classroom management approaches of these teachers working in high schools in Tehran. Among other things, they found that language teachers were controlling or Interventionist in their approach to classroom management. The studies conducted so far have at times scrutinized the effect of teaching experience, gender and the like on classroom management. However, in the present study, this was not taken into account. For example, it was revealed that novice and experienced teachers might be different in their classroom management approaches.

In addition, this study was furthermore concerned with delving into the dominant teaching style adopted by language teachers. In order to accomplish this, use was made of descriptive statistics, which revealed that Formal Authority was the predominant teaching style among EFL teachers. Moreover, it became apparent that the majority of the language teachers who believed in traditional classroom management had adopted a Formal Authority Teaching Style. This made a lot of sense, since Traditional Classroom Management is by definition teacher-centered. In this approach, the teacher is the source of the information and is responsible for departing knowledge to the students. In addition, the teacher is responsible for setting the rules, giving feedback, etc.

The findings of the present study regarding dominant teaching style corroborate with the findings of the study carried out by Faruji (2012). In that study, it was the case that Formal Authority was the

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predominant teaching style. In that stud, use was made of the questionnaire developed by Grasha (1996) to gain insights into teaching styles of language teachers. However, the findings of the present study do not confirm the findings of a study carried out by Razmjooand (2006). It is necessary to point out that their study was conducted in private language institutes. They indicated that such classes were generally student-centered. Given the different context, this finding comes as no surprise. In such contexts, teachers have the autonomy to practice what has come to light in terms of effective teaching. Apart from the context, the instruments used in their study was different from the one used in the present study.

The present study was also concerned with establishing a possible link between EFL teachers' dominant teaching style and classroom management approaches. To accomplish this, Pearson

Moment correlation was run, which revealed a significant relationship between EFL teachers' dominant teaching style (formal authority) and classroom management approaches. Correlation statistics indicated that at the level of 0.01, a significant positive correlation exist between formal authority teaching style and behavior management. Besides, formal authority teaching style was found to be significantly and positively correlated with EFL teachers' instructional management. This implies that tendency toward applying a formal authority teaching style results in a more teacher-centered instructional management.

Regarding the correspondence between classroom management and teaching style, various studies have been conducted so far. For example, Rahimi and Assodollahi (2012) found that the above-mentioned variables correlated significantly. This was the case in the present study. In addition, the findings of the present study confirm the findings of a study by Yasar (2008) in Turkey. This study indicated that there was some correspondence between classroom management and teaching style of language teachers.

It is necessary to point out that in the current study as well as others touched upon here, no reference is made to the language teaching method, although this is quite relevant. This is due to the fact that both classroom management and teaching style(s) might be affected by the language teaching method adopted by a language teacher. This does not mean that personal traits do not have a role to play. However, given that a particular method is expected to be quite pervasive in its addressing different facets of language teaching, it might well be the case that (a) particular method(s) adopted determine both the classroom management approach and the teaching style. The current study has shed light on predominant classroom management beliefs and teaching styles in language classes. Language teachers can count on these findings to scrutinize their own classroom management beliefs and the teaching style they have adopted. More importantly, given the important role which classroom management could play in accomplishing the objectives of language classes, language teachers can assess their own practices and beliefs to see whether their practices and beliefs could help them accomplishing their intended goals or not. In addition, language learners could benefit from the findings of the study. Classroom management is not a one-way street. It is necessary for both teachers and students to try their best to make sure that the classroom context is conducive to learning. Material developers may also rely on the findings of the study to make sure the latest research evidence is taken into account in material development as far as classroom management and teaching style are concerned.

Suggestions for Further Research

As argued above, it was not possible to consider the possibly effect of personal, social and instructional variables on the classroom management beliefs and teaching style of language teachers. It is possible for other researchers to design studies in which the effect of these variables could be investigated. In addition, it is possible to use instruments other than those used in the current study to see whether the same findings are replicated or not.

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