Is Iranian EFL Teachers' Professional Competence Significantly Correlated with Their Job Performance? If Yes, How Much and How?

Afsheen Rezai[1,*], Zeinab Azizi[2], and Ehsan Namaziandost[3]

[1] *Corresponding author, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Ayatollah Ozma Borujerdi, Lorestan, Iran*
Orcid: 0000-0001-9010-0168 Email: afsheen.rezai@abru.ac.ir

[2]*Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Ayatollah Ozma Borujerdi, Lorestan, Iran*
Orcid: 0000-0002-7492-1932 Email: zeinab.azizi@abru.ac.ir

[3] *Lecturer, University of Applied Sciences and Technology, Ahvaz, Iran, & Mehrarvand Institute of Technology, Abadan, Iran*
Orcid: 0000-0002-8393-2537Email: e.namazi75@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study sought out to examine the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional competence and job performance quantitatively and qualitatively. To this end, a total of 330 EFL teachers, including males (n = 185) and females (n = 145) for the quantitative part, as well as a sample of 25 high school English teachers, consisting of males (n = 11) and females (n = 14) for the qualitative part were selected using a random sampling method in Khorramabad City and Borujerd City, Iran. The participants responded to an EFL Teachers' Job performance Questionnaire, an EFL Teachers' Professional Competence Questionnaire, and a reflective written statement. The collected data were analyzed through a Pearson correlation analysis, a multiple regression analysis, and a standard thematic coding analysis. Findings evidenced a positive correlation between the participants' professional competence and their job performance. Additionally, the results evidenced that the participants' job performance was mainly impacted by *skills, knowledge,* and *attitudes* factors, comprising their professional competence. The complementary qualitative findings yielded four overarching themes: "increased job effectiveness", "improved teaching self-efficacy", "increased teaching motivation", and "promoted organizational acceptance". The study concludes with offering a range of implications and avenues for further research.

Keywords: thematic coding analysis, EFL teachers, job performance, professional competence

Introduction

One of the bedrocks in apll nations is education. It includes all the teaching and training efforts provided systematically to change an individual's or a group of individuals' attitudes and behaviors (Sukrapi & Muljono, 2014). It is a systematic human-conscious endeavor designed and presented by governments to prepare and guide individuals for a better future. A nation's development is tied with the productivity of its education system. In a sense, a quality education system can guarantee a nation's development by educating quality human resources (Asmarani et al., 2021; Sulastri et al., 2020). When quality human resources are trained by the quality education system, they are capable of creating more useful things and bringing positive social, economic, political, and cultural changes.

One of the crucial elements in a quality education system making its educational objectives realized is teachers (Komila, 2019). For this purpose, teachers need to be competent, knowledgeable, responsible, committed, and active to design and offer fruitful learning opportunities for students. Teachers should be equipped with sufficient Professional Competence (PC) (Asmarani et al., 2021). As such, a teacher with a high PC has sufficient pedagogical content knowledge (e.g., the subject matter she/he teaches), is skilled at teaching educational materials effectively, and privileges positive attitudes toward instruction (Saberi & Sahragard, 2019).

Given these points, it is quite essential to make a sustainable effort for the improvement of teachers' PC. To satisfy this urgent need, many teacher training courses are held daily to equip teachers with the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes. As the PC of teachers is honed by empowering them in an education system, teachers' Job Performance (JP) is significantly improved. When teachers are capable of applying effective skills to facilitate students' learning, an education system can achieve its goals optimally and efficiently (Nabila, 2016). In this regard, it may be argued that one of the underlying reasons for the low quality of English education in the Iranian high schools is the poor performance of English teachers (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015; Riazi, 2005). And, the poor performance may be ascribed to the low PC of the high school English teachers. The high school English teachers who do their job duties well can cultivate students' spirit and motivation for continued learning (Nabila, 2016). Therefore, we can define teachers' JP as the learning activities implemented in schools with achievement orientations. Teachers' JP deals with how a high school English teacher designs and plans a lesson, implements learning tasks, and measures students' learning outcomes (Kuhlman & Knezevic, 2013).

Because high school English teachers' PC can be a strong predictor of their JP, it is of paramount importance to determine how much their PC is correlated with their JP. However, a survey of the past literature indicates that the correlation between high school English teachers' PC and JP is under-researched in the EFL context of Iran. Therefore, the present study is an early attempt to bridge this long-lasting gap by exploring the correlation between Iranian high school English teachers' PC and JP quantitatively and qualitatively. This study's findings may make

allowance for empowering the Iranian high school English teachers by amending pitfalls in their PC and, accordingly, making the way for their quality performance in teaching English at high schools.

Literature Review

EFL Teachers' Professional Competence

The term competence, according to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003), is defined as "the ability to do something well" (p. 125). Similarly, in human and social sciences, competence is defined as "a roughly specialized system of abilities, proficiencies, or skills that are necessary to reach a specific goal" (Weinert, 2001, p. 25). In educational settings, teachers' competence includes their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to perform the intended job duties well. With a focus on JP, competent teachers are capable of integrating knowledge, skills, and attitudes to act responsibly and effectively within educational settings (Kunter et al., 2013).

The competence of teachers comprises four distinct sub-components (Nabila, 2016; Vázquez et al., 2020; Weinert, 2001). The first one is *pedagogical competence* referring to teachers' sound, board, current knowledge about the subject area, knowledge of students' learning, and teaching skills. The second one is *personality competence* dealing with teachers' attitudes and understanding of school stakeholders and their capabilities of assessing teaching and learning processes. The third one is *social competence* concerned with teachers' abilities to benefit from the incentives within educational settings and their potentials to realize educational objectives (Dubovicki & Brust Nemet, 2015). The last one is *professional competence* treating teachers' readiness and abilities to do instructional duties in an adequate, independent, and responsible way. It should be stressed that PC covers pedagogical, personality, and social competencies, enabling teachers to facilitate learning processes.

For EFL teachers, PC has been defined in terms of knowledge base, skills, and attitudes, and values (Kartal & Başol, 2019; Khodamoradi & Maghsoudi, 2020; Koster & Dengerink, 2008; Richards, 1998; 2010). The knowledge base comprises three different kinds of knowledge, namely content, pedagogical content, and legislation and regulation. The skills include the competency in planning to teach, designing learning environments, managing learning and teaching processes, and administering assessment practices. The attitudes and values include being committed to national and international ethical requirements, having positive attitudes toward students, communication and cooperation, and personal and professional development. As the previous studies (Helterbran, 2008; Syafar, 2014) have demonstrated, when teachers are professionally competent, they are humble and helpful to provide clear clarifications, discuss a lot and push students to think and challenge the conventional wisdom, keep classes interested, are relatable, are easy to access, and make the class's atmosphere comfortable, address students' concerns about teaching, prioritize practices over theoretical concepts, expect

students to do high quality works, make the learning materials understandable for all students, have a sense of humor, and make the class activities fun.

As Brown (2002) stresses, EFL teachers' PC is developed over an extensive period. In this regard, three key points should be considered. First, EFL teachers should constantly upgrade their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Second, EFL teachers' professional needs and interests do not remain fixed over time. Third, PC develops when there is an ongoing and personal commitment that values and cares for the educational organization and its stakeholders.

Teachers' Job Performance

The term performance is taken from "to perform", meaning that doing tasks well in terms of quality and quantity in a responsible way (Kohli & Deb, 2008). According to Cai and Lin (2006), JP is defined as the duties which an individual is supposed to carry out well to lay the groundwork for the achievement of an organization's objectives. In the case of teachers' JP, it includes all the activities facilitating student learning (Jacob et al., 2018; Kartini et al., 2020). In a sense, it is defined as the educational duties done in a committed and responsible way to increase students' achievements.

The previous studies (Butar, et al., 2020; Li et al., 2018; Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016) have demonstrated that teachers' JP is extensively affected by their commitment and loyalty to students, schools, and society, their abilities to design and develop high-quality materials, their managerial capabilities to run classes in a disciplined way, their creativities in planning and implementing learning activities, their interests in cooperating with other school stakeholders; and their personalities to be honest and friendly. According to Supardi (2014), to show quality performance, teachers' abilities should meet some criteria: to design lesson plans, implement learning activities, create positive interpersonal relationships, develop and administer assessment practices, carry out enrichment programs, and plan and administer remedial programs. From another perspective, as Suparlan (2005) notes, teachers' JP can be assessed in terms of their functions. In this regard, it can be argued that teachers' JP is acceptable if they act as educators, teachers, counselors, and coaches within the school setting. According to performance standards of teachers, they do well if a) they work individually with students; b) prepare and plan learning activities; c) use efficiently media learning; d) engage students in a range of learning experiences; and e) lead actively their classes (Adoniou & Gallagher, 2017). Toraby and Modarresi (2018) researched the views of students toward a quality teacher. He found that in the views of students, a quality teacher is cooperative, patient, consistent, fair, flexible, willing, open-minded, and democratic.

With respect to EFL teachers, Moafian and Pishghadam (2009) conducted a study to verify the determining factors of JP. They reached a model with different dimensions: *teaching accountability* (e.g., I enter the classroom well-prepared.), *interpersonal relationships* (e.g., I respect all my students.), *attention to all* (e.g., I engage all learners in learning activities.), *examination (*e.g., I am fair in designing

and administering assessment practices.), *commitment* (e.g., My pedagogical knowledge is updated.), *learning boosters* (e.g., I improve my students' self-efficacy.), *creating a sense of competence* (e.g., I can motivate my students well.), *teaching boosters* (e.g., I can manage my classes well.), *physical and emotional acceptance* (e.g., My appearance is neat.), *empathy* (e.g., I avoid belittling my students.), *class attendance* (e.g., I attend to my class on time.), and *dynamism* (e.g., I am a creative teacher.). In sum, what can be implied from the literature is that EFL teachers' JP is a very complex concept, being affected by various factors.

Linkage Between EFL Teachers' PC and JP

In the past literature, a range of studies has investigated the linkage of teachers' PC and JP. We review critically some of them to lay the groundwork for the current study. In a study, Sukrapi and Muljono (2014) explored the correlation between teachers' (n = 74) PC and JP in Kepenuhan of Rokan Hulu districts. Their findings evidenced a significant positive correlation between the teachers' PC and JP. Likewise, in a quantitative study, Althauser (2015) investigated the effects of job-embedded professional development on elementary teachers' general and personal efficacy. Her findings documented that sustained professional development can be a strong predictor for the teachers' self-efficacy. Furthermore, Rahmatullah (2016) examined the relationship between teachers' job effectiveness and PC with JP in Indonesia. The results documented a significant positive relationship between the participants' effectiveness and PC with JP. Moreover, Nabila (2016) scrutinized the effects of teachers' pedagogical competence and PC on performance both conceptually and empirically in Trowulan District, Indonesia. Their findings disclosed that the teachers with high pedagogical competence and PC performed better in designing and implementing teaching and assessment practices. Besides, Kartini et al. (2020) explored the effects of principal leadership, academic supervision, and PC on JP among teachers (n = 128) in Indonesia. Their findings indicated that the teachers' JP was highly affected by principal leadership, academic supervision, and PC. Likewise, Murkatik et al. (2020) examined if teachers' PC and pedagogical competence can affect JP. The results unraveled that the two competencies are strong predictors of the participants' JP. Further, in the research by Asmarani et al. (2021), the correlation between teachers' PC and work productivity was examined in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri1 Batang Hari, Indonesia. Their findings revealed a significant positive correlation between the participants' PC and job productivity. Finally, Rahmayanti et al. (2021) investigated the effects of PC, work motivation, and work discipline on senior high school teachers' JP in Pemalang Regency, Indonesia. They found that the participants' JP was highly influenced by their PC, work motivation, and work discipline.

As can be inferred from the above-alluded studies, there are some noticeable limitations with them which call for further studies. First, the studies above only used quantitative design and the qualitative aspects of the effects of teachers' PC on JP have remained unexplored. Second, the samples of the studies were not large enough. This might have jeopardized the generalizability of the findings. Third, the correlation between EFL teachers' PC and JP is largely under-researched in Iran. To

fill up these lacunas, the present study explores the correlation between EFL teachers' PC with JP both quantitatively and qualitatively. To meet these aims, the following research questions were put forward:

1. Is there any significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' professional competence and job performance?

2. Which professional competence factors determine Iranian EFL teachers' job performance?

3. In which ways can Iranian EFL teachers' professional competence impact their job performance?

Method

Research Design

The researchers used an explanatory mixed-methods design to meet the present study's objectives. The explanatory mixed-methods design includes two distinct phases where the quantitative is followed by qualitative (Riazi, 2016). To complement or elaborate more on the quantitative findings obtained in the first phase, the qualitative data are collected and analyzed in the second phase. The underlying reason, indeed, for running the explanatory mixed-methods design was to reach triangulation. According to Mackey and Gass (2016), by using different methods and integrating different types of data, triangulation helps researchers to increase the validity and credibility of findings, as well as to overcome fundamental biases that might arise due to using a single method. Hence, the present study benefitted from an explanatory mixed-methods design to further our understanding of the correlation between EFL teachers' PC and JP in the Iranian context.

Participants

The present study was run in Lorestan Province, in spring 2021. The researchers selected a total of 330 high school English teachers in Khorramabad City and Borujerd City using a random sampling method. As Riazi (2016) notes, a random sampling method provides an equal opportunity for all individuals in a population to participate in a study. The primary reason for the selection of the participants was their availability to the researchers. They included both males (n = 185) and females (n = 145) and aged from 21 to 57 years old. They held B.A. (n = 210), M.A. (n = 106), and Ph.D. (n = 14) degrees. The participants' teaching experiences ranged from 2 to 29 years old. For the qualitative part, the researcher selected a sample of 25 of the participants who took part in the quantitative part. They were both males (n = 11) and females (n = 14) and their ages ranged from 25 to 55. They held B.A. (n = 12), M.A. (n = 11), and Ph.D. (n = 2) degrees.

To access the participants, the first researcher referred to the Deputy Education of the education offices in Khorramabad City and Borujerd City and explained to them the present study's objectives in detail. With the agreement of the

Deputy Educations, he took the phone number of the English teachers who were working in the offices at that time. Next, the researchers called them one-by-one, introduced themselves, provided a detailed explanation about the study, and asked if they were willing to participate in it. Afterward, for those who agreed to participate in the study, the researchers sent the questionnaires and reflective written statement coupled with written consent in Persian via email, WhatsApp, and Telegram. It is worth noting that the researchers underlined that the participation was voluntary and the participants could withdraw from the study as they wished. Additionally, the researchers ensured the participants that their responses would remain confidential and they informed them about the final findings.

Instruments

The researchers used three different instruments to obtain the required data. The first instrument was the EFL Teachers' Job performance Questionnaire (ETJPQ). ETJPQ, developed and validated by Moafian and Pishghadam (2009), was used to measure the participants' JP. It entailed 49 items and addressed diverse dimensions of JP, including *teaching accountability* (e.g., I answer students' questions patiently.), *interpersonal relationships* (e.g., I understand my students.), *attention to all* (e.g., I provide equal learning opportunities for students.), *examination (*e.g., I turn back the test-sheets soon.), *commitment* (I value my students' class attendance.), *learning boosters* (e.g., I appraise my students in different ways.), *creating a sense of competence* (I know all the students well.), *teaching boosters* (e.g., I feel confident in teaching.), *physical and emotional acceptance* (e.g., I have a good accent.), *empathy* (I'm not too much strict.), *class attendance* (e.g., I leave the class on time.), *dynamism* (e.g., I am energetic.). The items were designed in a five-point Likert scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5).

The second instrument was the EFL Teachers' Professional Competence Questionnaire (ETPCQ). ETPCQ, designed and validated by Khodamoradi and Maghsoudi (2020) was employed to gauge the participants' PC. ETPCQ was comprised of two parts. The first part addressed demographic information, such as gender, age, teaching experiences, and academic degree. The second part measured the participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The knowledge factor included 12 items (e.g., I think child development/psychology knowledge is important.), the skills factor consisted of 14 items (e.g., I think action research skill (doing small-scale research in the class is important).), and the attitudes factor contained 10 items (e.g., I think having commitment and feeling responsible is important.). The items were developed in a five-point Likert scale from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5).

The third instrument was a reflective written statement. It was used to disclose how PC may affect JP from the participants' perspectives. For this purpose, they were invited to reflect upon the following prompt:

Dear teachers,

Kindly write down how EFL teachers' professional competence may affect their job performance. In a sense, you are kindly supposed to reflect on how your professional competence might have affected your job performance over your teaching at high schools. We appreciate it if your report be around 300-400 words in length.

It is worth pointing out that the researchers got the questionnaires and the reflective written statement translated into Persian by two experts in translation. Next, to assure that the contents in both English and Persian versions were the same, a back-translation was done. The primary purpose of translating the instruments was to increase the reliability and validity of the participants' responses through avoiding any probable misunderstanding.

Data Collection Procedures

The researchers took some steps to carry out the present study. At the first step, they recruited two professional translators to translate the questionnaires and the reflective written statement into Persian. At the second step, they piloted the questionnaires on 63 high school English teachers to measure their reliabilities. The results of reliability indices for ETJPQ and ETPCQ yielded 0.87 and 0.92, respectively, which were found acceptable for the present study's purposes. At the third step, they invited two university professors specialized in Applied Linguistics at Lorestan University to evaluate the questionnaires and the reflective written statement in terms of wording, content, question sequencing, and bias. In line with the university professors' comments, some minor modifications were made to some items. At the fourth stage, they invited 12 EFL teachers to respond to the questionnaires and the reflective written statement. They were asked to report if the items are understandable enough and if there were any problems with them. At the fifth stage, the researchers sent the digital format of the questionnaires to the participants via email, WhatsApp, and Telegram. The questionnaires started with the written consent and if the participants agreed with its content, they were led to the items of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were accompanied by a voice podcast in which the researchers explained how the participants can answer the items. At the last stage, the researchers sent the digital format of the written reflective statement to 25 EFL teachers who responded to the questionnaires via email, WhatsApp, and Telegram. The participants' responses were stored in a digital database such that the researchers could use them later.

Data Analysis Procedures

As the collected data were qualitative and quantitative, the data analysis procedures were governed by the two approaches. Concerning the quantitative part,

SPSS version 23 was used to calculate the descriptive statistics, like mean and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to unveil the kind and amount of the relationship between the EFL teachers' PC and JP. And, the multiple regression analysis was run to disclose how much of the variance in the participants' JP can be determined by the PC's factors.

About the qualitative data, the researchers used a standard thematic coding analysis. The underlying reason to utilize the thematic coding analysis was its robust theoretical foundation and applicability easy. As Cresswell and Poth (2018) note, the thematic coding analysis is a form of qualitative analysis involving recording and identifying texts liked by a common idea or theme. It allows researchers to index texts into categories and, thus, establish a "framework of thematic ideas about it" (Gibbs, 2007). By following the procedures suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), they extracted inductively the recurring themes that represented the effects of the EFL teachers' PC on JP. In doing so, they went through some distinct stages. At the first stage, the first researcher read and reread the participants' reports as much as she could become familiarized with their underlying meanings. At this stage, he ensured that the meanings of the participants are clear enough for him. At the second stage, he examined carefully the reports to code them. Coding is defined as highlighting the participants' words in terms of codes to describe their contents (Richards & Richards, 1995). For this purpose, he underlined the statements representing the codes with colored pens and continued adding new codes as he reviewed the reports. At the third stage, he collated together all the data into themes verified by the codes. The codes allowed the first researcher to get a clear understanding of the main points recurring through the data. At the fourth stage, he inspected the codes meticulously to detect an initial draft of the themes. At this stage, the vague and irrelevant codes were discarded. At the fifth stage, he tried to define and name the extracted themes. At the last stage, he examined the extracted themes and excerpts to assure that they match together. It should be noted that having analyzed the data, the researchers measured the consistency and credibility of the findings. For the consistency, they recruited two coding analysts to code the data independently (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). They went through the data and coded them independently. The inter-reliability of their coding results yielded 0.87 which was considered acceptable for the present study. For the credibility, they used a member-checking strategy (Cresswell & Poth, 2018; Patten, 2000). For this purpose, they invited five participants to examine if the extracted themes and excerpts represented adequately their intended meanings. They participants examined the extracted themes and excerpts and confirmed that the findings highly represented their intended meanings.

<div align="center">

Results
</div>

Quantitative Results

The first research question examined if there was any significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' PC and JP. Before running the Pearson Correlation test, it was essential to check out if the normality assumption was met. For this purpose, the researchers used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The obtained findings revealed that the data were normally distributed since the statistic for **the** PC scale was (KS $_{(330)}$ = .098, p > .05) and for JP **scale was** (KS $_{(330)}$ = .094, p > .05). Next, the researchers calculated the descriptive statistics of the EFL teachers' PC and JP, reported in Table 1. As seen, for the EFL teachers' PC, the mean of 3.23 with the SD of 0.73, and for their JP, the mean of 3.20 with SD of 0.82 were calculated, in order.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the EFL Teachers' PC and JP

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Professional competence	330	3.23	0.73
Job performance	330	3.20	0.82

The correlation between the EFL teachers' PC and JP is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlation between EFL Teachers' PC and JP

		Job performance
Professional competence	Pearson Correlation	0.721
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	330

As Table 2 reports, there was a positive correlation between the EFL teachers' PC and JP with a coefficient of 72.1% (r = 0.721, p < 0.01, N = 330). The findings indicate that the EFL teachers who are more professionally competent are better performers in school settings.

The second research question investigated how much of the variation in the EFL teachers' JP could be attributed to the factors of PC. To this end, the researchers used multiple regression analysis. Prior to proceeding with the main analysis, the researchers examined the normality assumption**.** First of all, to assess

for outliers, the value of the Mahalanobis distance was compared against a critical value using a chi-square table. The maximum value of Mahalanobis distance (10.764) was less than the critical value (16.266), showing no outliers. To check out the linearity assumption, the relationship between the sub-components of PC was checked on the scatterplot matrix, and no curvilinear relationship was observed. Further, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run to check out the normality of the collected data from the sub-components of **PC** scale. The calculated results are *knowledge* (KS = .077), *skills* (KS = .085), and *attitudes* (KS = .064) which were all above the significance level ($P > .05$). Thus, this assumption was also met. After checking all the assumptions, the multiple regression analysis was run to assess the effects of the PC's factors on JP.

Table 3
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on the Effects of PC Dimensions on JP

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R^2
Regression	115.793	3	38.598	117.984	.000	.721	.521
Residual	106.649	326	.327				
Total	222.442	329					

As Table 3 reports, ANOVA analysis reveals that the regression model in this question reaches the statistical significance (F = 117.984, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, the value of R^2 (0.521) is significant, implying that 52.1% of the variance in the Iranian EFL teachers' JP can be accounted for by their PC dimensions. The next step is to determine the factors which highly contribute to the prediction of EFL teachers' JP.

Table 4
The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for PC Dimensions

Dimensions	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.550	.145		3.803	.000
Knowledge	.257	.047	.269	5.532	.000
Skills	.314	.051	.329	6.176	.000
Attitudes	.248	.048	.255	5.130	.000

Dependent Variable: JP

As reported in Table 4, regarding the Beta values of the PC's sub-components, the EFL teachers' JP is impacted by *Skills* ($\beta = .329$, $p < .001$), *Knowledge* ($\beta = .269$, $p < .001$), and *attitudes* ($\beta = .255$, $p < .001$), respectively.

Qualitative Results

The third research question explored in which ways the Iranian high school English teachers' PC could impact their JP. The results of the standard thematic coding analysis yielded four overarching themes: "increased job effectiveness", "improved teaching self-efficacy", "increased teaching motivation", and "promoted organization acceptance". These themes along with the related excerpts are detailed below.

Increased Job Effectiveness

The first recurring theme that emerged from the data was "increased job effectiveness". The participants underlined that as they are equipped with a high PC, their job effectiveness increases significantly. That is, with a high level of professional competence, they are at a better position to offer their instructions more effectively. In this respect, one of the participants remarked:

> *It is a reality that to perform teaching duties in an acceptable way, we, EFL teachers, should be competent professionally. For example, if I don't have good grammatical competence, I can't instruct the grammatical structures well. Hence, this makes my students can't learn them and my teaching effectiveness decreases.*

Resonated with the previous statements, one of the participants stressed that their teaching effectiveness is completely tied with their PC. Without a good PC, he claimed that his teaching is far away from the intended effectiveness. To support his claim, he asserted:

> *Being equipped with enough knowledge and skills is of paramount importance for me. For example, one of my colleagues has good knowledge and skills in designing and administering quality assessment practices. This has resulted in a significant improvement in his students' achievement. So, all students, parents, and school officials confirm that his job effectiveness is really good.*

Improved Teaching Self-efficacy

The other theme receiving remarkable attention from the participants was "improved teaching self-efficacy". The participants pinpointed that when they enjoy a high PC, their teaching self-efficacy improves significantly. That is, with a high PC, they believe in their capabilities to handle obligations, challenges, and tasks

related to teaching English in their classes. In this respect, one of the participants quoted:

> *During my initial years at work, I didn't have any self-efficacy to handle my job. When a problem was raised, I got confused and anxious. However, as my professional competence has improved over time, I feel that now I am able to design, manage, and finish my classes successfully.*

In corroborating with the previous statement, the participants asserted that with a high PC, they feel confident in embark on new teaching activities, leading to more promising learning achievements for their students. In this respect, one of the participants wrote down:

> *Let me write down how a high professional competence leads to a better self-efficacy in teaching. For example, since I have good knowledge in syllabus design curriculum development, I feel confident in designing and developing useful supplementary materials for the students who need more input, interaction, and output.*

Increased Teaching Motivation

The next recurring theme that received considerable attention from the EFL teachers was "increased teaching motivation". This term refers to teachers' motivation and eagerness to design, implement, and evaluate their teaching activities. The participant noted that a high PC can act as a strong factor to increase their teaching motivation. By increasing teaching motivation, they put more time and energy into doing their job duties. In support of this, one of the participants noted:

> *It is crystal clear that there is a mutual relationship between motivation and achievement. I mean, as I have the required knowledge and skills to do effectively my teaching duties, I get more promising achievements. These promising achievements make me motivated to improve my professional competence and job performance.*

Similarly, the participants stressed that as a high PC helps them to handle their teaching challenges and obligations, they remain motivated to keep working well in their classes. In this respect, one of the EFL teachers remarked:

> *My motivation to do my teaching duties is immensely affected by my professional competence. For example, since I took some courses in research in applied linguistics at my M.A. study, I am skilled at running action research in my classes. This, in turn, enables me to find practical solutions when I face a problem. In this way, I don't lose my motivation in difficulties.*

Promoted Organizational Acceptance

The last theme that emerged from the participants' reports was "promoted organizational acceptance". This term indicates the degree to which teachers are praised, acknowledged, and promoted at schools due to their JP. The participants asserted that their organizational acceptance is closely related to their PC. The following excerpt represents this:

> *What I can write fairly is that a high professional competence can guarantee teachers' acceptance and promotion in the ministry of education. For example, when an English teacher excels at listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, he/she may act as a role model for students. Therefore, the students get on the right track and achieve more success. Accordingly, this makes the students and their parents respect the English teacher.*

In congruent with the previous statement, the participants noted that in prestigious schools, the English teachers who are professionally competent can get more promotions. In support of this, one of the participants reported:

> *I work at a talented school. The students are really intelligent and eager to learn. This condition demands too much content area knowledge and skills to meet their needs and interests. For instance, I have to be proficient in organizing the teaching elements to work together well. Of course, I should say that I have a very good organizational acceptance in the department education since all stakeholders know that I am a competent teacher and I am doing well at my school.*

Discussion

The first research question investigated if there was any significant correlation between Iranian high school English teachers' PC and JP. The results documented a positive correlation between the EFL teachers' PC and their JP. The findings indicated that the EFL teachers with a high PC might have benefited from the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes to handle successfully teaching tasks, obligations, and challenges in their jobs. The study's findings are largely congruent with those of the previous studies (e.g., Asmarani et al., 2021; Kartini et al., 2020; Murkatik et al., 2020; Nabila, 2016; Rahmatullah, 2016; Rahmayanti et al., 2021; Sukrapi & Muljono, 2014), reporting that teachers' PC was correlated positively with their JP. In sum, the study's findings confirmed that the higher PC, the better JP the EFL teachers show in educational settings.

The second research question examined which PC's factors determine the Iranian high school English teachers' JP. The results disclosed that the EFL teachers' JP was affected by *skills*, *knowledge*, and *attitudes*, respectively. The findings documented that all the factors of the PC are in demand such that the EFL teachers could do their job duties well. In line with the findings, it can be argued that if EFL teachers improve their knowledge, but, at the same time neglect the skills and

attitudes factors, they cannot take over their teaching challenges and obligations. These findings are in line with the previous studies (e.g., Khodamoradi & Maghsoudi, 2020; Uztosun, 2018), reporting that the EFL teachers' PC is comprised of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The third research question explored in which ways Iranian high school English teachers' PC impacts their JP. The results yielded four overarching themes, namely "increased job effectiveness", "improved teaching self-efficacy", "increased teaching motivation", and "promoted organizational acceptance". The findings disclosed that the EFL teachers with a high PC could show better job effectiveness, reach a higher level of teaching self-efficacy, get more motivated, and benefit from a better organizational acceptance. The results may be explained from this view that as the EFL teachers were competent professionally, they might have cultivated the essential knowledge, skills, and attitude to handle tasks, obligations, and challenges related to their teaching (Khodadadi & Maghsooudi, 2020). These findings lend credence to the previous studies, reporting that PC is a determining factor for teachers' job effectiveness (Tleuzhanova & Madenyatova, 2014), teachers' teaching motivation (Aji et al., 2019), and teachers' teaching self-efficacy (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011; Hatlevik, 2017).

The study's findings support this view that PC is a complex notion, including a range of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and personal characteristics who enable a teacher to act professionally in different situations (Koster & Dengerink, 2008). By acting professionally in different situations, a teacher can do job duties well and show a good JP. Additionally, a possible explanation for the findings may be ascribed to the reality that having a good PC is more essential for EFL teachers than mathematics and science teachers. Because an EFL teacher not only needs the content area and pedagogical knowledge but also needs to be skilled at using language skills (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, and writing), cooperative skills, and interpersonal skills to create an interactive environment in the classroom (Brown, 2002). This all affects directly his/her JP.

Furthermore, the study's findings may be illuminated from the perspective of Life Syllabus theory (Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2012). In line with this theory, it might be argued that a syllabus should cover both scientific knowledge and practical knowledge. The English classes need to provide a setting wherein EFL learners can make correct connections between scientific knowledge and practical knowledge. To meet this valuable objective, EFL teachers must be professionally competent in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Otherwise, the educational objectives might not be realized adequately. Additionally, one more explanation for the results may be attributed to the participants' job motivation. Along with Koster et al. (2005), it may be argued that as the EFL teachers believed in ethics, accountability, understanding students, cooperative learning, interactive teaching, individual differences in learning, creativity, and long-life learning, they might have got more motivated, resulting in designing, implementing, and evaluating teaching activities appropriately.

Besides, the study's findings may be explained in light of the Self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1989). In alignment with this theory, it may be argued that the EFL teachers who believed in their capabilities to organize and implement teaching activities, they might have gained more promising performance. In actual fact, according to this theory, the EFL teachers might have avoided situations and tasks which found beyond their knowledge and skills. In contrast, if they felt confident in their abilities, they might not have dared to enter challenging situations and demanding tasks. Besides, to illustrate the study's findings, we can refer to Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In line with theory, it may be argued that the EFL teachers' motivation to carry out their job duties might have stemmed from their innate psychological needs. That is, they might have been needed competence (i.e., feeling of self-efficacy), autonomy (i.e., feeling of control), and relatedness (i.e., feeling related to the outside setting). If these needs of the EFL teachers had been satisfied, it might have brought positive consequences in their jobs. These findings receive support from the previous studies (Aziz et al., 2014; Wetipo et al., 2015), reporting that teachers' PC is a strong predictor of their teaching motivation.

Another line of discussion for the study's results is that the EFL teachers who were competent professionally, might have been acknowledged more by other educational stakeholders. As Aziz et al. (2014) noted, the EFL teachers might have liked to be perceived as quality teachers in their educational settings. This promoted organizational acceptance and position may have acted as a strong incentive for them to hone their PC, and, accordingly, enable them to be more successful performers. Finally, the study's results may be linked to this view that the EFL teachers who privileged a high PC might have achieved higher job effectiveness (Sengottuvel & Aktharsha, 2015). That is, they might have better efficacy in instruction strategies, classroom and students' management, interpersonal relations with others, assessment, and feedback.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, the present study purported to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' PC and JP qualitatively and quantitatively. The study's findings indicated that there was a positive correlation between the EFL teachers' PC and JP. Additionally, the study's results documented that the EFL teachers' JP was mainly impacted by *skills, knowledge,* and *attitudes* factors of their PC. Moreover, the qualitative findings yielded four overarching themes, namely "increased job effectiveness", "improved teaching self-efficacy", "increased teaching motivation", and "promoted organizational acceptance". Based on the findings, it can be concluded that an EFL teacher with a high PC can handle better teaching demands and difficulties. That is, when an EFL teacher has a good command of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, they will be in a better position to meet the educational requirements. In sum, the English learning at state Iranian high schools won't be successful, unless the English teachers are professionally competent.

In light of the study's findings, some implications are suggested for different stakeholders. First, the policy-makers in the ministry of education of Iran should be aware of the significance of PC and recruit the teachers who are professionally competent. Second, the syllabus designers and developers in Teacher Education Centers in Iran should give particular attention to cultivating PC among student-teachers majoring in applied linguistics. For this purpose, it is essential that some courses be dedicated to training teacher education issues, in general, and PC, in particular. Third, education officials need to hold teachers training workshops to renew the EFL teachers' PC. At these workshops, trainers are supposed to focus on raising the needed knowledge, skills, and attitudes to handle teaching demands well. Fourth, EFL teachers should accept that their JP is highly tied with their PC and, thus, try their best to raise and keep updated by joining teacher training courses and reading textbooks and articles. Finally, as the development of PC requires lifelong learning, EFL teachers should be involved in cultivating it continuously by reflecting upon their teachings and benefiting from colleagues' experiences and comments.

Given the limitations imposed on the current study, some suggestions for further research are recommended. As the sample of the present study was restricted to two education departments, further studies need to be carried out with larger samples in other parts of the country to increase the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, as the sample of this study was selected from state high schools, more studies can include EFL teachers at private language institutes. Moreover, interested researchers can explore how the EFL teachers' PC affects students' achievements at state high schools and private language institutes. Besides, further research can be carried out to further our understanding of the roles of gender, teaching experience, education level, and service location on the EFL teachers' PC. Likewise, as the participants of the present study were high school English teachers, it is worth investigating university teachers' perceptions of PC and its linkage with their JP. Last but not least, since the current study addressed the correlation between EFL teachers' PC and JP, more studies are needed to disclose the relationship between PC and job satisfaction, job motivation, job effectiveness, job burnout etc. among Iranian EFL teachers.

References

Adoniou, M., & Gallagher, M. (2017). Professional standards for teachers-what are they good for? *Oxford Review of Education*, *43*(1), 109-126. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2016.1243522

Aji, A. P., Martono, S., & Fakhruddin, F. (2019). The effect of teacher motivation in mediating commitment and professional competence on teacher's performance of vocational school in Blora Regency. *Educational Management*, *8*(2), 150-156.

https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/eduman/article/view/32889

Althauser, K. (2015). Job-embedded professional development: Its impact on teacher self-efficacy and student performance. *Teacher Development*, *19*(2), 210-225. https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2015.1011346

Asmarani, A., Sukarno, S., & El Widdah, M. (2021). The relationship of professional competence with teacher work productivity in Madrasah Aliyah. *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *6*(2), 220-235. https://doi.org/10.31538/ndh.v6i2.1365

Aziz, F., Akhtar, M., & Rauf, M. (2014). Relationship between teachers' competencies and motivation at higher education level in Pakistan. *Pakistan Annual Research Journal, 50*(1), 163-174.

Bandura, A. (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist*, *44*(9), 1175-1184.

 https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.9.1175

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brown, H. D. (2002). English language teaching in the. post-method era: Toward better diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya, *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp. 9-18). Cambridge University Press.

Butar, N. Y. B., Bross, N., & Kanto, D. S. (2020). What drives teaching performance at school? The determinants of school teacher performance. *Journal of Economics and Business*, *3*(4), 1624-1630.

https://ssrn.com/abstract=3753211

Cai, Y., & Lin, C. (2006). Theory and practice on teacher performance evaluation. *Frontiers of Education in China*, *1*(1), 29-39.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s11516-005-0004-x

Cresswell, J. W., & Poth, Ch. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Davari, H., & Aghagolzadeh, F. (2015). To teach or not to teach? Still an open question for the Iranian education system. In C. Kennedy (Ed.), *English language teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, trends and challenges* (pp. 11-19). British Council.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The" what" and" why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, *11*(4), 227-268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Dubovicki, S., & Brust Nemet, M. (2015). Self-assessment of the social competence of teacher education students. *The New Educational Review*, *42*, 227-238. https://doi.org/10.15804/tner.2015.42.4.19

Ghanizadeh, A., & Moafian, F. (2011). The relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' sense of self-efficacy and their pedagogical success in language institutes. *Asian EFL Journal*, *13*(2), 249-272.

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). The nature of qualitative analysis. In *Analyzing qualitative data* (pp. 1–9)*. SAGE Publications.

Hatlevik, O. E. (2017). Examining the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy, their digital competence, strategies to evaluate information, and use of ICT at school. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, *61*(5), 555-567. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2016.1172501

Helterbran, V. R. (2008). The ideal professor: Student perceptions of effective instructor practices, attitudes, and skills. *Education*, *129*(1), 125-138.

Jacob, B. A., Rockoff, J. E., Taylor, E. S., Lindy, B., & Rosen, R. (2018). Teacher applicant hiring and teacher performance: Evidence from DC public schools. *Journal of Public Economics*, *166*, 81-97.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2018.08.011

Kartal, G., & Başol Ç. H. (2019). Generic teacher competencies and the English language teacher education program in Turkey. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language), 13*(2), 133-154.

Kartini, D., Kristiawan, M., & Fitria, H. (2020). The influence of principal's leadership, academic supervision, and professional competence toward teachers' performance. *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies*, *20*(1), 156-164.

Khodamoradi, A., & Maghsoudi, M. (2020). Development and validation of the English language teacher competencies questionnaire. *Journal of Language and Translation Studies (JLTS)*, *53*(1), 195-167. DOI: 20.1001.1.22285202.1399.53.1.6.6

Kohli, A., & Deb, T. (2008). *Performance management.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Komila, M. (2019). EFL teachers' professional competence and their effect on student education. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences, 7*(12), 1-5.

Koster, B., & Dengerink, J. J. (2008). Professional standards for teacher educators: How to deal with complexity, ownership and function. Experiences from the Netherlands. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 31*(2), 135-149. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619760802000115

Koster, B., Brekelmans, M., Korthagen, F., & Wubbels, T. (2005). Quality requirements for teacher educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21*(2), 157-176. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2004.12.004

Kuhlman, N., & Knezevic, B. (2013). *The TESOL guidelines for developing EFL standards*. Alexandria, VA: ESOL International Association.

Kunter, M., Klusmann, U., Baumert, J., Richter, D., Voss, T., & Hachfeld, A. (2013). Professional competence of teachers: Effects on instructional quality and student development. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *105*(3), 805-820. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032583

Li, M., Pérez-Díaz, P. A., Mao, Y., & Petrides, K. V. (2018). A multilevel model of teachers' job performance: Understanding the effects of trait emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and organizational trust. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *9*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02420

Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2015). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Routledge.

Moafian, F., & Pishghadam, R. (2009). Construct validation of a questionnaire on characteristics of successful Iranian EFL teachers. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji,* *54*, 127-142. https://www.sid.ir/en/journal/ViewPaper.aspx?id=170947

Murkatik, K., Harapan, E., & Wardiah, D. (2020). The influence of professional and pedagogic competence on teacher's performance. *Journal of Social Work and Science Education*, *1*(1), 58-69. https://doi.org/10.52690/jswse.v1i1.10

Nabila, H. (2016, September). The influence of pedagogic competence and professional competence on the performance of teachers social studies in Trowulan district. In *ICEBESS (International Conference on Ethics of Business, Economics, and Social Science) Proceeding* (pp. 556-565).

Patten, K. (2000). *Research report*. Washington: Washington State University.

Pishghadam, R., & Zabihi. R. (2012). Life syllabus: A new research agenda in English language teaching. *TESOL Arabia Perspectives, 19*(1), 23-27.

Rahmatullah, M. (2016). The relationship between learning effectiveness, teacher competence and teachers performance Madrasah Tsanawiyah at Serang, Banten, Indonesia. *Higher Education Studies*, *6*(1), 169-181. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n1p169

Rahmayanti, R., Haryati, T., & Miyono, N. (2021). Impact of professional competence, motivation and work discipline on teacher performance. *Economic Education Analysis Journal*, *10*(2), 229-239. https://doi.org/10.15294/eeaj.v10i2.46181

Riazi, A. (2005). The Four language stages in history of Iran. In A. M. Y. Lin, & P. W. Martin (Eds.), *Decolonization, globalization: language in education policy and practice*. Multilingual Matters.

Riazi, A. M. (2016). *The Routledge encyclopedia of research methods in applied linguistics*. Routledge.

Richards, J. C. (1998). *Beyond training*. Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2010). Competence and performance in language teaching. *RELC Journal, 41*(2), 101-122. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688210372953

Richards, T., & Richards, L. (1995). Using hierarchical categories in qualitative data analysis. In U. Kelle (Ed.), *Computer-aided qualitative data analysis: Theory, methods, and practice* (pp. 80-95). SAGE Publications.

Saberi, L., & Sahragard, R. (2019). Designing and validating teachers' professional development scale: Iranian EFL contexts in focus. *International Journal of Instruction*, *12*(1), 1609- 1626.

Sengottuvel, A., & Aktharsha, U. S. (2015). Teacher effectiveness and professional competency in school education. *International Journal of Management*, *6*(1), 181-190.

Soodmand Afshar, M., & Doosti, M. (2016). Investigating the impact of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction on Iranian English teachers' job performance. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research 4*(1), 97-115.

Sukrapi, M., & Muljono, P. (2014). The relationship between professional competence and work motivation with the elementary school teacher performance. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, *2*(5), 1-6. https://www.ajouronline.com/index.php/AJHSS/article/view/1346

Sulastri, S., Fitria, H., & Martha, A. (2020). Kompetensi Profesional Guru dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan. *Journal of Education Research*, *1*(3), 258-264.

Supardi. M. (2014). *Teacher performance*. PT Raja Grafindo Persada.

Suparlan. (2005). *Manajemen Guru Efektif*. Hikayat.

Syafar, A. (2014). Self-assessment of certified EFL teachers in central Sulawesi on their professional competence. *Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora*, *1*(3), 304-319.

Tleuzhanova, G. K., & Madenyatova, A. M. (2014). The professional competence of teachers: Which skills and knowledge contribute to a teacher's effectiveness? *Education & Science Without Borders*, *5*(9), 146-148.

Toraby, E., & Modarresi, G. (2018). EFL teachers' emotions and learners' views of teachers' pedagogical success. *International Journal of Instruction*, *11*(2), 513-526.

Uztosun, M. S. (2018). Professional competences to teach English at primary schools in Turkey: A Delphi study. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 41*(4), 549-565.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2018.1472569

Vázquez, V. P., Lancaster, N., & Callejas, C. B. (2020). Keys issues in developing teachers' competences for CLIL in Andalusia: Training, mobility and coordination. *The Language Learning Journal*, *48*(1), 81-98. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2019.1642940

Weinert, F. E. (2001). Concept of competence: A conceptual clarification. In D. S. Rychen & L. H. Salganik (Eds.), *Defining and selecting key competencies* (pp. 45-65). Hogrefe & Huber Publishers.

Wetipo, W., Rante, Y., Wambraw, O., & Bharanti, E. (2015). The mediating effect of job satisfaction and job motivation to influence school leadership, teacher competence and experience of teachers on performance of teachers in SMA/SMK in Jayawijaya, Indonesia. *Journal of Resources Development and Management, 15,* 10-16.

Woodford, K., Jackson, G., & Jane, B. (Eds.). (2003). *Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary*. Cambridge University Press.

Authors' Biographies

Afsheen Rezai holds a Ph.D. in TEFL. In 2019, Rezai joined the Department of English, Ayatollah Borujerdi University, as a faculty member. His areas of interest include Teacher Education, Second Language Assessment and Testing, and Online Education. He has had ome publications in domestic and international journals.

Zeinab Azizi holds a Ph.D. in TEFL. In 2020, Azizi joined the Department of English, Ayatollah Borujerdi University, as a faculty member. Her areas of interest include Online Education, Teacher Education, and Sociocultural Studies. She has published some papers in domestic and international journals.

Ehsan Namaziandost was born in Shiraz Province of Iran in 1987. He holds an MA degree in TEFL from Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz. He got his Ph.D. in TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran. His main interests of research are CALL, TEFL, Second Language Acquisition, Educational Psychology, Motivation and Anxiety, EFL Teaching and Learning, Language Learning and Technology, Teaching Language Skills, and Language Learning Strategies. His research papers and articles have been published in different international journals. Ehsan is an international reviewer who did more than 1080 reviews, up to now, and handled 100 papers as Editor. Ehsan is a member of editorial boards of *Current Psychology*, *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *Language Testing in Asia*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, *Frontiers in Education*, *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, *BMC Psychiatry*, *BMC Psychology***,** *SAGE Open*, *Journal of Language and Education*, *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal*, *International Journal of Language Education*, *Education Research International*, *Studies in English Language and Education* (*SiELE*), and *CALL-EJ*. Ehsan is also an Associate Editor in *Frontiers in Psychology*.