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# Perceptions of English Language Teacher Effectiveness: Insights from Students and Teachers at a Private Egyptian University

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## Abstract

Several scholars have examined teacher effectiveness over the last few decades. However, much less research has been conducted on the effectiveness of English language teachers in non-Western higher education institutions. The current study compares Egyptian university students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of English language teachers. Data were collected from 162 students and 41 teachers using Moafian *et al.*'s (2019) questionnaire which consisted of 45 items classified into 7 categories. The results showed that the participants highly valued the teachers' ability to provide attention to all. This was followed by class attendance, care and enthusiasm, morality, teaching boosters and teacher accountability respectively. The least ranked category was evaluation. The results also showed no significant differences between the students' and the teachers' perceptions as both shared similar views about the characteristics that constitute English language teacher effectiveness. The study is expected to provide suggestions to improve the understanding of the construct of the English language teacher effectiveness among teachers and students in Egypt. The study also proposes a number of relevant directions for future research.

*Keywords:* teacher effectiveness; EFL; higher education; perceptions; Egypt.

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## Introduction

The question “What constitutes an effective teacher?” has triggered a great deal of attention for over a century. However, research into teacher effectiveness has particularly gathered increasing momentum in the last few decades due to recent findings that relate teacher effectiveness to educational quality (e.g., Sitanggang *et al.*, 2021). Research has shown that teacher effectiveness greatly influences several important educational constructs, such as student achievement (e.g., Heck, 2009; Osondu *et al.*, 2022) and engagement (e.g., Cinches *et al.*, 2017; Stephenson *et al.*, 2020). Hence, several studies have highlighted varied characteristics of effective teachers, including being knowledgeable, critical, flexible, tolerant, responsive, purposeful, creative and willing to learn (e.g., Carrero, 2015; Hobbs, 2012). Other studies have proposed models for teacher effectiveness that specify several categories and subcategories, such as the model by Moafian and Pishghadam (2009) which included 47 items, divided into 12 categories (teaching accountability, interpersonal relationships, attention to all, examination, commitment, learning boosters, creating a sense of competence, teaching boosters, physical and emotional acceptance, empathy, class attendance and dynamism).

Despite this increasing attention to teacher effectiveness, research in this direction has suffered from several limitations (Mazandrani & Troudi, 2022). Four main limitations are relevant to the current study. First, research on teacher effectiveness has been largely based on studies conducted in Western contexts for several decades. Only relatively recently that research into other educational contexts has emerged because “perceptions of the most important personal characteristics of effective teachers are not universal, but vary according to national education expectations and the predominating cultural beliefs” (Klassen *et al.*, 2018, p. 72). Second, much of the research on teacher effectiveness focuses on school education to the neglect of higher education (Mazandrani, 2020). This calls for more research into teacher effectiveness in higher education institutions. Third, research in teacher effectiveness placed great focus on general education, which left several subjects, such as English language teaching, relatively less represented in the literature (Raza & Coombe, 2021). This goes against the fact that the notion of teacher effectiveness may differ across different subjects in the curriculum (Campbell *et al.*, 2003). Finally, perception research is largely dominated by students’ perceptions. Much less emphasis is placed on teachers’ perceptions although teachers’ perceptions greatly influence their instructional performance and, thus, the learning process (e.g., Griffiths, 2007; Wadmare *et al.*, 2022; Halpern *et al.*, 2023).

The current study addresses the above limitations since it compares the perceptions of university students and teachers of EFL (English as a foreign language) teacher effectiveness in a private Egyptian university. Therefore, the outcome of this study will greatly contribute to research into teacher effectiveness since it examines the relatively underrepresented context of higher education,

focuses on teachers' as well as students' perceptions, investigates teacher effectiveness in the domain of EFL and sheds light on a new cultural context, which is Egypt. The focus on Egypt is particularly interesting because of its strategic importance that stems from its unique geographic location at the heart of the Middle East, its political and economic leading role in the Arab World and Africa, and the fact that it is the most populous Arab country with over 106 million people (World Population Review, 2022). In order to situate the current study, the next sections will describe its theoretical framework and provide a survey of the relevant literature. This will be followed by listing the research questions, describing and interpreting the results and drawing relevant conclusions.

## Literature Review

### *Models of Teacher Effectiveness*

Initially, teacher effectiveness was described in terms of myriad features, including being responsible, creative, enthusiastic, impartial, among others. However, scholars have recently preferred to address the multidimensionality of the construct of "teacher effectiveness" through a fully developed model that includes several characteristics that are grouped into categories. Two of the most important frameworks in this regard are Danielson's (2007) and Stronge's (2007). In Danielson's (2007) model, teacher effectiveness is described in terms of 22 characteristics that were grouped into four domains: (a) planning and preparation, (b) classroom environment, (c) instructions and (d) professional responsibilities. In Stronge's (2007) model, teacher effectiveness delineated over 80 characteristics that were categorized into six domains: (a) prerequisites of effective teaching, (b) the teacher as a person, (c) classroom management and organization, (d) planning and organizing instructions, (e) implementing instructions, and (f) monitoring learners' progress and potential.

In the same vein, Moafian and Pishghadam (2009) developed a model that constituted 47 characteristics that were categorized into 12 categories (teaching accountability, interpersonal relationships, attention to all, examination, commitment, learning boosters, creating a sense of competence, teaching boosters, physical and emotional acceptance, empathy, class attendance and dynamism). However, due to relatively limited rigorous testing of its psychometric properties, the model was reanalyzed using Construct Factor Analysis (CFA) by Moafian *et al.* (2019). The analysis led to the removal of two items of the model and the division of the remaining 45 items into 7 categories; namely, attention to all, morality, care and enthusiasm, teaching accountability, evaluation, teaching boosters and class attendance. The current study adopts the model of Moafian *et al.* (2019) and uses it as the basis of its instrument. The characteristics that fall under each category are detailed under the results section.

*Earlier Studies on Teacher Effectiveness*

Due to the significance of teacher effectiveness to the educational process, there is a wealth of studies on the characteristics that constitute teacher effectiveness (e.g., Allan *et al.*, 2009; Catano & Harvey, 2011; Chan, 2018; Fayez *et al.*, 2023; Meng & Muñoz, 2016; Rojo-Ramos *et al.*, 2023; Shojaei *et al.*, 2022) as well as on the variables that are related to this effectiveness, such as student engagement and achievement (e.g., Akram, 2019; Fernández-García *et al.*, 2021; Ozfidan & Burlbaw, 2020; Stephenson *et al.*, 2020; Tharapos *et al.*, 2022; Toropova *et al.*, 2019). However, the current section will not survey these studies. Instead, we will cover the perception studies in specific relation to the effectiveness of language teachers because they are more relevant to our current study which focuses on the effectiveness of EFL teachers.

Some of the former studies focused on students' perceptions. For example, Hismanoglu (2019) investigated the effectiveness of EFL teachers from the perspective of Turkish EFL students who study at the university preparatory program. A total of 93 students completed a questionnaire about EFL teachers' effectiveness. The findings showed that the majority of students preferred the teachers who had a high level of linguistic knowledge, mastery of pedagogical skills and high ability of using exemplification. The findings also showed that students preferred the EFL teachers who showed enthusiasm, exhibited interest in their job, acted creatively and spontaneously and displayed enough patience with students. The students' preferences were categorized into (a) command in English, (b) teaching methodology, (c) evaluation method, (d) emphasis on language skills, (e) mastery of teaching methods, (f) teacher-student relationship and (g) classroom management.

Likewise, Bremner (2019) examined the perceptions of 13 Mexican students of effective language teaching using the "life history" approach. The students' life histories shed light on 77 examples of effective and ineffective teachers, which were later investigated in depth. The students showed great preference for modern approaches of language teaching such as the development of real-life skills and emersion in the target language. However, the students did not prefer other conservative approaches, such as theoretical learning. The students also highly valued having a positive student-teacher relationship and personalized attention to students. Unexpectedly, students did not prefer autonomous learning. Instead, students preferred teachers to be close to them to help them overcome problems.

Similarly, Alzebaree and Hasan (2021) examined the characteristics of EFL teachers' effectiveness perceived by Kurdish high school students. A total of 122 participants completed a questionnaire which was analyzed quantitatively. The study revealed that students gave high importance to the teachers' English proficiency followed by socio-affective skills and pedagogical knowledge. In terms of socio-affective skills, students highly valued the teachers who exhibited confidence, had self-control, listened to students' opinions and treated students

fairly. As for pedagogical knowledge, the students prioritized efficient lesson preparation and effective classroom management.

In the same vein, Alzubi (2022) investigated pre-university Saudi students' perceptions of EFL teacher effectiveness. Data were collected from 231 students using a survey and open-ended questions. The results showed that the students value several characteristics of EFL teachers. On top of the list came the attributes of teachers' personality. Students highly valued teachers who are helpful and fair. Language knowledge was rated second in students' ratings. The students also highly valued the importance of language proficiency and culture awareness. The students rated EFL teachers' methodology knowledge third on the effectiveness scale. They particularly appreciated the use of modern teaching methods and the use of supplementary materials.

Much fewer studies focused on teachers' perceptions of effectiveness. Tajeddin and Alemi (2019) examined the perceptions of pre-service and in-service EFL teachers of teacher effectiveness. Data were collected from 50 teachers through a mixed-method design. The results revealed significant differences in teacher beliefs between the two groups of participants. While the pre-service teachers emphasized the importance of personal teacher characteristics, such as patience and kindness, in-service teachers placed great weight on teachers' knowledge and energy. Additionally, pre-service teachers prioritized the importance of reflection to improve teachers' performance whereas the in-service teachers gave priority to teachers' positive attitude towards teaching.

Similarly, Mohammaditabar *et al.* (2019) examined the perspectives of 386 Iranian EFL teachers towards teachers' effectiveness. Data were collected using a self-reported questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The study also compared the perspectives of teachers in language institutes, high schools and universities. The results showed some significant differences between the three groups of participants in all categories in the questionnaire except class attendance. However, all the participants highly valued the categories of teaching boosters and care and enthusiasm while the least ranked category of effective language teachers was evaluation.

In addition to the studies that focused on one type of participants, whether students or teachers, a few studies compared the perceptions of students and teachers of EFL teacher effectiveness. For example, Raza and Coombe (2021) investigated the perceptions of university teachers and students of EFL teacher effectiveness in Qatar. Data were collected from 66 teachers and 527 students using a bilingual survey and from 16 teachers and 14 students using individual interviews. The results showed that both students and teachers highly valued the teacher's teaching methodology, particularly their use of interactive teaching methods, and their ability to build a compassionate and trusting relationship with students. These findings were viewed as important contributors to teachers' effectiveness regardless of age, gender, nationality and accent. The results also

indicated that university teachers need to pay special attention to cultural values to ensure efficient and effective EFL teaching.

Likewise, Pham (2022) investigated students' and teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers at a Vietnamese university. Data were collected from 22 EFL teachers and 80 students using a mixed-methods design. The study revealed teachers' slightly higher evaluation of good characteristics of EFL teachers than students. The results also showed that both teachers and students highly valued knowledge of language teaching methodologies, in addition to knowledge of language subject. Other characteristics such as knowledge of language learners, and learning in and from practice and context were also found to be highly valued by both EFL teachers and students.

The above survey of literature clearly shows that teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness have not received sufficient attention as the majority of former studies focused on students' perspectives. This comes unexpectedly since teachers' perceptions are vital to their instructional performance and the learning process (e.g., Griffiths, 2007; Wadmare *et al.*, 2022; Ozfidan & Hos, 2023; Ozfidan & El-Dakhs, 2023) and, hence, we need to examine teachers' perceptions in comparison to students' views. The literature survey also shows that no earlier studies have examined the students' and teachers' perceptions of EFL teacher effectiveness in Egypt. Considering that the cultural element affects our perceptions with reference to teacher effectiveness (e.g., Borg, 2018; Klassen *et al.*, 2018), a need arises to examine these perceptions in Egypt. The current study fills in this gap through comparing university students' and teachers' perceptions of EFL teaching effectiveness in a private Egyptian university.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

In this investigation, the cohort comprised 162 students and 41 educators who were recruited from a private Egyptian university. All participants were proficient in Arabic, their native language, and had commenced learning English at the foundational educational level. The student demographics consisted of 132 females and 30 males, aged between 18 and 22 years, with an average age of 19. These students were enrolled across diverse faculties, such as Pharmacy and Engineering. The educators were exclusively female, aged between 22 and 54 years, with an average age of 31. They possessed varying levels of academic attainment, including 32 holding Bachelor's degrees, 6 with Master's degrees, and 3 with Doctoral degrees. Their tenure in the teaching profession ranged from 1 to 32 years, with an average experience of 8.5 years. This diverse composition of participants provided a comprehensive representation for the study's objectives.

### *Research Questions*

The current study addresses the following research questions:

- *What are the characteristics of EFL teacher effectiveness according to the students' and teachers' perceptions?*
- *Are there significant differences between the perceptions of university students and teachers with regard to the characteristics of EFL teacher effectiveness?*

### *Instrument*

In this study, the questionnaire employed was adapted from the work of Moafian *et al.* (2019), comprising two distinct sections. The initial segment focused on the collection of demographic data, tailored to the respective versions for students and teachers. For the student version, demographic inquiries encompassed age, gender, and educational background, whereas the teacher version delved into age, gender, level of education, and years of teaching experience. Within the questionnaire lay 45 items derived from Moafian *et al.*'s (2019) instrument, each subjected to a five-point Likert scale, spanning from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). These ratings served to quantify the perceived significance of the attributes under scrutiny.

Despite the established validity of Moafian *et al.*'s (2019) questionnaire, a novel validation was deemed necessary due to disparities in both sample characteristics and scale deployment. Consequently, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) emerged as the methodological tool of choice to scrutinize the validation of the instrument. As delineated by Thompson (2004), CFA operates as a robust statistical procedure employed to evaluate the extent to which observed variables faithfully represent underlying constructs.

The outcomes of the CFA underscored the robustness of the statistical analyses, revealing commendable fit indices and recommended thresholds. Specifically, the calculated  $\chi^2$  (chi-square) ratio of 1.215, as delineated in Table 1, substantiates an exemplary alignment between the suggested matrix and the original variable matrix. Furthermore, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value of .039 indicates a favorable fit, in accordance with the criteria articulated by Brown and Moore (2012). Similarly, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) value of .072 and the comparative fit index (CFI) value of .90, as explicated by Hu and Bentler (1999) and Brown & Moore (2012) respectively, signify an acceptable level of fit. Moreover, the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), or Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), yielded a value of .97, underscoring a substantial improvement in fit relative to the null model. Collectively, these indices corroborate the fidelity of the data to the hypothesized measurement model, thus affirming its adept representation of the underlying constructs.

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit indices of the hypothesized measurement model

Fix Index	Resource(s)	Recommended Value	Overall model
CFI	Hu & Bentler (1990); Brown, & Moore (2012)	.90 ≤ CFI ≤ .95 (adequate fit)	.90
RMSEA	Tabachnick & Fidell (2007); Brown, & Moore (2012); Hu & Bentler (1990); Byrne (2004)	RMSEA < .08 (fair fit) RMSEA < .05 (good fit)	.039
SRMR	Hu & Bentler (1999)	SRMR ≤ .08 (good fit)	.072
TLI	Bentler (1990); Brown, & Moore (2012)	>.95	.97
χ <sup>2</sup> Test of Model Fit	Hu & Bentler (1999); Brown, & Moore (2012); Tabachnick & Fidell (2007); Jöreskog & Sörbom (1993)	Low χ <sup>2</sup> value and p > .05 If p < .05	537.213
χ <sup>2</sup> /df	Byrne (2004)	Good Fit χ <sup>2</sup> /df < 1 Acceptable Fit χ <sup>2</sup> / df < 2	1.215

Note: “χ<sup>2</sup> = chi-square, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = the standardized root mean square residual, CFI = comparative fit index, and TLI= Tucker-Lewis Index”

### Data Collection

To collect data, a questionnaire was meticulously crafted using Google Forms, a widely utilized platform for survey creation. Subsequently, the questionnaire link was disseminated among the intended cohort of students and teachers through electronic mail. Participation in the survey was contingent upon the voluntary consent of the respondents. As such, only those individuals who explicitly agreed to partake in the study proceeded to complete the questionnaire. This approach ensured the integrity of the data collection process by upholding ethical standards of informed consent.

### *Data Analysis*

Our investigation employed two distinct analytical approaches to address the research inquiries. Initially, descriptive statistics were scrutinized to elucidate the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding the efficacy of EFL instructors, thereby addressing the primary research query. Subsequently, a T-test was conducted utilizing STATA software to explore the possibility of discernible variances between the perceptions of students and teachers, thereby tackling the secondary research question. This methodological strategy facilitated a comprehensive examination of the data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the research objectives.

## **Results**

The findings section is divided into two subsections as per our research questions:

*What are the characteristics of EFL teacher effectiveness according to the students' and teachers' perceptions?*

We conducted descriptive statistics to identify the students' and teachers' perceptions of EFL teacher effectiveness. The category "Attention to all" received an overall percentage of 88.22% in terms of "agree" and "strongly agree" in the questionnaire scale. As for its individual characteristics (see Table 2), the participants highly valued avoiding discrimination among students and involving students in learning. Of less importance came the characteristics of paying attention to all students and creating equal opportunities for participation. The characteristic that received the least importance was related to creating opportunities for discussion and asking questions.

*Table 2. Descriptive statistics of "Attention to all"*

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Pays attention to all students	4.1	6.6	89.3	4.5	1.0	203
Involves all students in learning	3.4	4.8	91.8	4.7	1.1	203

Creates equal opportunities for learners' participation in the classroom	5.3	6.9	87.8	4.4	1.2	203
Creates opportunities for discussion and asking questions	9.6	12.3	78.1	4.3	1.1	202
Avoids discriminating against learners	2.4	3.5	94.1	4.8	1.0	203

Note: "1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree."

The second category of morality received an overall rating of 83.72% in terms of "agree" and "strongly agree" in the questionnaire scale. Regarding the individual characteristics (see Table 3), the participants prioritized teachers' respect of all ideas and of students as individuals and teachers' understanding of students. This was followed by the teacher being good tempered, patient and impartial in grading. Of least importance were the characteristics of avoiding making fun of learners and being too strict.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of "Morality"

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Respects learners as individuals	3.2	5.5	90.3	4.6	1.2	203
Understands learners well	4.5	4.7	90.8	4.6	1.0	203
Is good tempered	6.3	7.9	85.8	4.4	1.3	203
Is patient	8.6	11.3	80.1	4.2	1.1	203
Respects all ideas	3.1	4.2	92.7	4.5	1.4	203
Is impartial in grading	5.8	6.2	88	4.4	1.0	203
Avoids making fun of the learners	11.8	15.8	72.4	3.7	1.6	203
Avoids being too strict	12.6	17.7	69.7	3.6	1.2	202

Note: "1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree."

The third category of “care and enthusiasm” was rated at 85.34% under “agree” and “strongly agree” on the questionnaire scale. As shown in Table 4, the participants particularly preferred the teachers who enjoyed teaching and were friendly to learners. Next came the teachers who could stimulate learners in learning, behaved dynamically and energetically and created self-confidence in learners. Of least importance were exhibiting interest in the subject matter and possessing a sense of humor.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of “Care and Enthusiasm”

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Is friendly towards learners	3.2	3.5	92.3	4.6	1.0	203
Has a sense of humor	10.5	15.7	73.8	3.6	1.1	202
Enjoys teaching	2.3	3.9	93.8	4.7	1.3	203
Is interested in the subject matter he/ she is teaching	8.5	12.1	78.4	4.0	1.6	203
Has the ability to stimulate learners in learning	5.1	6.2	88.7	4.3	1.2	203
Is a dynamic and energetic person	5.8	6.2	88	4.3	1.2	203
Creates self-confidence in learners	6.8	10.8	82.4	4.1	1.4	203

Note: “1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

The fourth category of teacher accountability was rated at 81.39% for “agree” and “strongly agree” on the scale. As shown in Table 5, the participants highly valued the teachers who were aware of new teaching methods and possess up-to-date information. This was followed by attending to learners’ problems, having creativity in teaching, having the ability to organize the subject matter and emphasizing the important materials. Of the least importance came the characteristics of using additional teaching materials and dividing the class time well as per the required language skills.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of “Teacher Accountability”

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Has up-to-date information	3.3	6.4	89.3	4.6	1.1	203
Is aware of new teaching methods and strategies	2.8	6.7	90.5	4.6	1.0	203
Uses extra instructional materials such as tapes, movies, etc.	16.3	12.8	70.9	3.6	1.3	203
Emphasizes important materials and points	9.5	9.4	81.1	4.0	1.0	203
Has the subject matter well organized according to the number of sessions and hours	8.1	9.2	82.7	4.0	1.3	203
Has creativity in teaching	5.8	9.2	85	4.1	1.0	203
Attends to the learners’ problems in learning	5.2	8.9	85.9	4.1	1.2	203
Divides class time appropriately for the different language skills according to the purposes of the course	15.6	18.7	65.7	3.5	1.0	203

Note: “1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

The fifth category of “evaluation” received an average rating of 77.8% for “agree” and “strongly agree” on the questionnaire scale. As shown in Table 6, the participants appreciated the characteristics of encouraging learners, being prompt in returning test results and knowing their learners well. They moderately preferred the teachers who use good learners to help weaker ones, give a sufficient number of assignments and hold an adequate number of tests.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of "Evaluation"

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Knows his/ her learners well (talents, abilities, weaknesses)	5.2	7.5	87.3	4.5	1.3	203
Uses good learners to help weaker ones	14.6	14.7	70.7	3.6	1.2	203
Gives a sufficient number of assignments	16.3	13.9	70.8	3.5	1.0	202
Holds an adequate number of tests	18.5	21.3	60.2	3.3	1.2	203
Is prompt in returning test results	5.1	6.2	88.7	4.5	1.0	202
Encourages learners in different ways (encouraging diversity)	5.7	5.2	89.1	4.5	1.1	203

Note: "1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree."

The sixth category of "teaching boosters" garnered a rating of 81.56% for "agree" and "strongly agree" on the questionnaire scale. Participants placed a high value on teachers who demonstrated a strong command of the subject matter and thorough preparation for class. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of clear pronunciation, tailored presentations to match learners' comprehension levels, and attentiveness in addressing learners' inquiries with precision. Conversely, characteristics such as self-confidence, effective classroom management, and personal appearance ranked lower in significance among respondents.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of “Teaching Boosters”

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Has a good knowledge of subject matter	3.8	4.2	91.0	4.7	1.4	203
Has the ability to manage the classroom well	12.9	16.7	70.4	3.6	1.1	203
Has self-confidence	15.7	12.8	71.5	3.6	1.3	203
Is well prepared for the class	5.5	4.4	90.1	4.6	1.2	203
Is careful and precise in answering learners’ questions	9.1	10.2	80.7	4.0	1.2	203
Speaks clearly with a correct pronunciation	5.6	5.2	89.2	4.5	1.0	203
Has a clean and tidy appearance	13.2	15.9	70.9	3.6	1.4	203
Presents materials at learners’ level of comprehension	5.6	5.7	88.7	4.4	1.5	203

Note: “1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

The seventh category of “class attendance” was rated overall at 86.13% in terms of “agree” and “strongly agree” on the questionnaire survey. The participants emphasized the importance of entering and leaving class on time. However, they granted much less importance to emphasizing the students’ presence in class.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of Class Attendance

Items	Strongly Disagree-Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree-Strongly Agree (%)	Mean	SD	N
Enters the classroom on time	3.3	4.6	92.1	4.7	1.2	203
Leaves the classroom on time	3.7	4.8	91.5	4.7	1.0	203
Emphasizes the presence of students in the classroom	10.3	12.9	74.8	3.9	1.6	203

Note: “1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

*Are there significant differences between the perceptions of university students and teachers with regard to the characteristics of EFL teacher effectiveness?*

A hypothesis test employing an independent-samples t-test was undertaken to ascertain potential disparities in the attributes related to successful EFL instructors between students and educators. The findings revealed a comparable perception of successful EFL instructors among both groups, as evidenced by the absence of statistically significant distinctions between the ratings provided by students and teachers across all seven delineated categories (refer to Table 9) and for all identified characteristics.

Table 9. T-test results of the students’ versus teachers’ perceptions

Construct	Students’ Perceptions		Teachers’ Perceptions		T	df	P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Attention to all	23.75	3.45	22	2.93	-1.314	20	.229
Morality	32.12	2.98	30.76	2.56	-2.412	18	.078
Care and Enthusiasm	29.23	4.09	27.12	3.62	-1.111	21	.193
Teaching accountability	28.01	4.02	27.18	3.59	-1.310	27	.143
Evaluation	37.10	3.51	34.71	3.99	-1.401	25	.198

Teaching boosters	39.12	3.39	37.32	3.17	-1.634	23	.176
Class attendance	25.75	3.45	23	3.23	-1.126	17	.142

## Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the students' and teachers' perceptions of EFL teacher effectiveness in a private Egyptian university. The first research question focused on the participants' ratings of the teacher characteristics. Interestingly, the students highly valued the teachers' ability to provide attention to all. This was followed by class attendance, care and enthusiasm, morality, teaching boosters and teacher accountability respectively. The least ranked category was evaluation. This finding is aligned with the results of Mohammaditabar *et al.* (2019) which ranked evaluation as the least typical category of teacher effectiveness. It seems that students and teachers perceive evaluation as part of the teachers' responsibilities, but not the most important in terms of effectiveness. This may be explained in two ways. First, the participants may not highly value the role of the teacher as an evaluator. They rather give more priority to their role as providers of knowledge. Second, evaluation in many institutions is managed by course supervisors, not by individual teachers. Hence, the teacher's role as an evaluator is undermined.

The highly ranked characteristics, which received a score of 90% and above for "agree" and "strongly agree" on the questionnaire scale, are avoiding discrimination among students and involving students in learning [category: attention to all], respecting all ideas and students and showing understanding [category: morality], enjoying teaching and acting in a friendly manner [category: care and enthusiasm], being aware of new teaching methods and having updated information [category: teacher accountability], being knowledgeable of the subject matter and preparing well for class [category: teaching boosters] and entering and leaving class on time [category: class attendance]. These results come in line with former studies that emphasized the importance of the teacher's teaching methods, knowledge of the subject matter, relationship with students, lesson preparation, classroom management and positive personality traits, such as being confident, impartial and helpful (e.g., Alzebaree & Hasan, 2021; Alzubi, 2022; Bremner, 2019; Hismanoglu, 2019; Pham, 2022; Raza & Coombe, 2021). These characteristics, thus, seem typical of university teachers regardless of cultural contexts since they are found in several studies. Some characteristics of teacher effectiveness may thus be universal.

The characteristics that were ranked the least in the current study (i.e., less than 80% for "agree" and "strongly agree" on the questionnaire scale) are "paying attention to all students" and "involving students in learning" [category: attention to all]. The low ranking of these statements reflects that the participants do not prioritize student-centeredness as an educational approach. This matches with

the fact that university classes in Egypt are often dominated by lecturing and are, thus, characterized as more teacher-centered. In fact, recent educational research calls for higher educational institutions in Egypt to take serious steps towards implementing more student-centered approaches (e.g., Aly, 2017; del Valle, 2022).

As for the category of morality, the participants ranked “avoiding making fun of students” and “avoiding being too strict” the least in importance. This again further supports the teacher-centeredness of the university classrooms in which teachers seem to dominate and act in a strict manner. This ranking may also be linked to the collectivistic nature of the Egyptian society in which hierarchical structure is highly emphasized. In such a community, university teachers assume a powerful position to which students need to show respect. This is different from Western societies in which university professors exhibit more egalitarian relationships (e.g., Manikutty *et al.*, 2007; Zhai, 2023).

What ties in well with this description of the university classes in Egypt is the participants’ ranking under the category of “care and enthusiasm.” The participants ranked “exhibiting interest in the subject matter” and “possessing a sense of humor” as the least typical of EFL teachers. This again shows the domination of a teacher-centered approach in which teachers would act strictly, would not utilize humor often in class and would not discuss their interests in the subject matter.

Under the remaining categories, the participants also ranked several characteristics under the threshold of 80%. These characteristics are “the use of additional teaching materials” and “the efficient division of class time” [category: teacher accountability] and “possessing self-confidence”, “managing the class effectively” and “having a clean and tidy appearance” [category: teaching boosters]. The participants do not seem to view the use of additional materials as extremely important despite the fact that additional materials will be helpful for modern approaches to teaching, such as differentiated instruction. The participants also do not seem to prioritize effective classroom management because students would typically behave respectfully and teachers would not exercise additional effort to control the class in a teacher-dominated classroom. What is surprising is that the participants did not prioritize the teachers’ sense of self-confidence or tidy/neat appearance, but this may reflect their preference to avoid commenting on the university teachers’ personality or appearance since the university teacher still somehow acts as a figure of authority.

Regarding the two last categories of “evaluation” and “class attendance,” the least ranked characteristics are “using good learners to help weaker ones,” “giving sufficient number of assignments”, “holding an adequate number of tests” and “emphasizing students’ presence in class”. These ratings reflect the way that the participants see the teachers. It seems that they highly value the role of the teachers in presenting and/or sharing knowledge and improving skills. However, they do not seem to give as much importance to the process of assessment and evaluation or to the teachers’ monitoring of class attendance.

The second research question in the current study was related to the comparison between the students' and the teachers' perceptions of EFL teacher effectiveness. Unexpectedly, no statistical differences emerged between the students' and teachers' perceptions, whether for the overall categories or the individual characteristics. This should be somehow surprising since teacher education and training should make teachers view such educational issues differently than students who did not receive training in education. It seems that the culture of the place plays a prominent role in minimizing differences among the participants. This could especially be the case since all the participants study/work at the same institution.

## Conclusion

The current study was designed to compare Egyptian students' and teachers' perceptions of English language teachers' effectiveness. Unexpectedly, no significant differences were found between the perceptions of the two groups. The participants highly valued the teacher's ability to provide attention to all students. To a less extent, the participants appreciated the teacher's class attendance, care and enthusiasm, morality, teaching boosters and accountability. The category they ranked least was evaluation. Under these categories, the participants appreciated some characteristics much more than others. For example, they greatly appreciated the teachers who avoid discrimination among students, respect students as individuals, are aware of new teaching methods, have updated information and are knowledgeable of the subject matter. On the contrary, they ranked other characteristics to a much less extent, including involving students in learning, avoiding being too strict, having a sense of humor, managing class effectively, using good students to help weaker students and giving sufficient assignments.

Based on these results, we can infer that the participants are more aware of the EFL teacher's role as a provider of knowledge rather than other roles, such as being an assessor and an evaluator. We can also infer that students are more used to a teacher-centered class in which the teacher may not attempt to involve students in learning, may not use her sense of humor and may act in a strict manner. Based on this understanding, we recommend the incorporation of the models/characteristics of teacher effectiveness in teacher training programs. Once teachers become more aware of their different roles and varied characteristics, this will reflect in the classroom performance and, thus, will change the picture of the typical EFL teacher in the eyes of the students as well. Additionally, the culture of student-centeredness and new approaches of active learning need to be emphasized to avoid the negative consequences of teacher-centeredness.

It is important to note that the results of the current study need to be cautiously interpreted since the current study focused on only one private university in Egypt and employed only a quantitative measure. Further research is needed to explore the construct of EFL teacher effectiveness across more higher education institutions

in Egypt to come up with generalizable results. Additionally, it is recommended to use a mixed methods approach for data collection since the qualitative part will help us better understand the participants' ratings of the characteristics of effectiveness. It will also be intriguing to compare the perceptions of students and teachers across other variables, such as age, gender, language proficiency and type of educational institution.

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