

Effective Language Teacher Education



Zia Tajeddin  and Kobra Tavassoli 

1 Introduction

The burgeoning of numerous programs for English language education has prompted the emergence of a new agenda for teacher education (Ellis, 2010; Freeman, 2016; Schön, 1983) to make teachers capable of effective implementation of these programs. As a result, professional development has gained due attention in teacher education studies (Banegas et al., 2022; Johnson & Golombek, 2011, 2016; Tedick, 2005). Over the years, approaches to teacher education have gone through significant changes (Wright, 2010), including the technicist approach, in which teachers are considered as the passive agents and transmitters of the learned knowledge to implement a language education program (Schön, 1987), the reflective approach, in which teachers are granted autonomy to contextually solve problems (Dewey, 1997; Farrell, 2022), and the transformative approach, in which teachers are considered as critical agents who bring about change (Giroux, 1988; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Complexity-driven action research has also been brought to attention since the 1980s through which the complexity brings about the desired motive for focused attention to the micro-level context of teaching/learning and leads to research and improvement in teaching/learning and professional development practices (Davis & Sumara, 2006; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Zein, 2016). More recently, teacher development has been influenced by the sociocultural perspective, which regards teaching as an interactively constructed dynamic process (Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). In this perspective, teachers' knowledge is pictured as the byproduct of the interaction between their background knowledge, their experience, peculiarities of the context,

Z. Tajeddin (✉)
Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran
e-mail: tajeddinz@modares.ac.ir

K. Tavassoli
Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran
e-mail: kobra.tavassoli@kiaiu.ac.ir

and their beliefs, among others. To make language education programs efficiently practical, teacher education is mandatory. Without proper education, teachers would not be able to either effectively deliver the content of the curriculum or efficiently interact with students (Anderson, 1989; Sharma, 2000). However, the effectiveness of teacher education programs in helping teachers transfer the curriculum and in providing the ground for teachers' voices and roles is still blurred (Freeman et al., 2019; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Mayer et al., 2017).

This chapter aims to critically review the recent views on teacher education, including Kiely's (2019) framework for evaluating English teacher education programs, which focuses on the what, when, who, and how of evaluation. This model of evaluation is adopted as it is specific to target language contexts, deals with various aspects of evaluation, and is the most recent and less explored model of evaluation of language teacher education programs. To equip teachers with the required knowledge, teacher education programs need to be discreetly designed, organized, and evaluated. According to Darling-Hammond (2006), teacher preparation programs suffer from inadequate time, fragmented modules, unreliable placements, loosely-built curricula, and traditional schooling methods. We will report on a study that evaluated the components of the current English teacher education programs in Iran and the extent to which these programs prioritize teacher development for the effective implementation of language education programs.

Certificate English language teacher education programs have been experiencing a considerable upsurge over the past few years in private language institutes in Iran. However, the investigation of the quality and effectiveness of the theoretical and practical content of these programs has received meager attention (Baniasad-Azad et al., 2016). The study reported in this chapter investigated the extent to which English language teacher education programs in Iran, in contrast to traditional expert-knows-it-all approaches (Johnson, 2009) and the packaging view (Freeman et al., 2019), reinforce the construction of the teacher knowledge base and the transformative teaching. In other words, we aim to see if these programs can help teachers feel their feet in and construct the knowledge for effective teaching. Based on these findings, implications are proposed for effective language teacher education. The chapter ends with conclusions and directions for research on teacher education as central to the effective implementation of language education programs.

2 Teacher Education Programs and Their Evaluation

Target language teacher education has gained mounting attention over the past few decades, as a result of which numerous books and articles have been written on the topic (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2019; Borg, 2006; Burns & Richards, 2009; Ellis, 2010; Freeman, 2002, 2016; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Johnson, 2009; Nemati & Mousazadeh, 2021; Nguyen, 2019; Richards, 1990; Schön, 1987; Ur, 2019; Walsh & Mann, 2019; Wright, 2010; Yayin Wang, 2022). In its developmental progress,

language teacher education has witnessed different approaches. In the early behavioristic approach, the aim of teacher education was to identify patterns of good teaching and what effective teachers should do. To this aim, teacher educators transmitted the knowledge of teaching and learning to teachers, and teachers were considered to be the consumers of received knowledge (Wright, 2010). Soon, this approach was criticized for its oversimplification, depersonalization, and decontextualization of teaching that ignored the complex social, cultural, and political aspects of schools (Shulman, 1986; Wright, 2010). The behavioristic approach was gradually replaced by the reflective approach to teacher education where there is a dialog between the teacher educator and the teacher, and they convey messages to each other both in words and performance (Farrell, 2022; Schön, 1987). The student teacher discloses what s/he understood and the teacher educator replies with descriptions, explanations, criticism, and above all her/his performance. There is reflection in the dialog between them in the way that the student teacher reflects on what s/he learned and how s/he performed, and the teacher educator reflects on what was learned based on the teacher's performance and provides the necessary feedback.

Another important approach to teacher education is the transformative approach, where the emphasis is on learning rather than outcomes. In this approach, practice is more important than performance (Brandt, 2006). The major aim of the transformative approach is the continued recreation of personal meaning rather than the reproduction of knowledge, which can be achieved through personal pedagogic investigation (Diamond, 1993; Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Following this approach, teacher educators should help teachers formulate their own pedagogical theories. Yet, a more recent approach to teacher education is the complexity theory (Davis & Sumara, 2005, 2006), with the assumption that in any complex system, numerous forces work and interact nonlinearly (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Since education is a complex and dynamic enterprise, different human beings (e.g., learners and teachers) are interconnected to each other in various contexts (e.g., schools and universities) (Kuhn, 2008). Following the complexity theory in teacher education programs, different parties including teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers are interconnected with each other in a dynamic system, where multiple factors unite to produce learning experiences for teachers to improve the quality of their education (Zein, 2016).

Finally, the most recent and probably influential approach to language teacher education is the sociocultural approach in which the social nature of teaching and learning is underlined (Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). The sociocultural approach follows the interpretative epistemological perspective with the assumption that knowledge is constructed socially and develops as people engage in different social practices (Freeman, 2002). In the sociocultural approach, knowing, thinking, and understanding occur in the social practices of teaching and learning within the context of the classroom. Educating teachers is seen as a dynamic process of reconstructing and transforming teaching practices to respond to local social needs. The role of teacher educators is mainly to scrutinize mediational tools and to use alternative approaches such as teacher research, action research, and reflective teaching to educate effective teachers. In this approach, language teachers are seen as learners

of teaching where both what they should know (the content) and how it is learned (the processes) are considered important (Johnson, 2009; Wright, 2010).

All teacher education approaches aim to enhance the teachers' professional development through appropriate teacher education programs (Banegas et al., 2022; Johnson & Golombek, 2016; Nemati & Mousazadeh, 2021). In fact, unless appropriate instruction is provided to teachers, they cannot perform satisfactorily or engage with students effectively (Sharma, 2000). While the professional development of teachers was traditionally done by others for teachers, it has recently been considered self-directed, collaborative, and relevant to teachers' classrooms, where there is a continuous dialogic mediation between teachers and teacher educators to provide assisted performance to teachers. To expand their professional development, teachers should socialize with their students, colleagues, and supervisors in classrooms and schools (Banegas et al., 2022; Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). According to Wright (2010), an effective teacher education program should help beginning language teachers acquire the requisite knowledge and skills they need to run their classes successfully. Since the basis of a formal language teacher education curriculum is the program itself, which integrates the curriculum aims, learning experiences, and evaluation procedures, the effectiveness of language teacher education programs should be evaluated to ensure they prepare teachers to do their tasks appropriately (Kiely, 2019; Kumaravivelu, 2006; Peacock, 2009).

Program evaluation refers to a set of strategies that are used to document and understand a specific program. It deals with the historical, social, and cultural aspects of a program and the personal development of individual participants (Kiely, 2009). Various frameworks of program evaluation have been developed and used in the literature over the past decades. One of the earlier popular frameworks was Kirkpatrick's (1996) four-level model of evaluating training programs. In this model, level 1 deals with the participants' *reaction* to the program, level 2 refers to the amount of *learning* that took place in the program, level 3 is concerned with the extent of the participants' change in *behavior* after they returned to their jobs, and level 4 deals with the final *results* achieved by the participants after they returned to work. This is a useful framework when evaluating a training program longitudinally over a few years but may not be practical in evaluating several programs in a short period of time. Another popular program evaluation model is the context, input, process, and product (CIPP) evaluation model (Stufflebeam, 2003). Context evaluation as the first component of the model deals with needs assessment, where problems, assets, and opportunities are assessed within a context and a community (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017). Input evaluation addresses the targeted needs by identifying the program's strategies, action plans, staff, and budget to achieve the intended results (Zhang et al., 2011). Process evaluation checks the process of project implementation. It documents the process and provides feedback about the degree to which the planned activities are carried out and if revisions of the plan are needed (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017). Finally, product evaluation deals with assessing the project outcomes, similar to outcome evaluation. The purpose is to assess, interpret, and judge the outcomes by checking their merit, value, and significance (Zhang et al., 2011). However, despite its popularity, the CIPP framework is not precise for teacher education programs.

L2 scholars (e.g., Kiely, 2019; Peacock, 2009) also developed models specific to the evaluation of language teacher education programs. Peacock, following the principles of program evaluation and language teacher education, introduced an influential framework by presenting a new procedure for the evaluation of language teacher education programs. The procedure includes (a) reviewing the literature and producing a number of questions, (b) establishing suitable sources of data collection, (c) choosing and designing appropriate data collection tools, (d) collecting and analyzing data relevant to the questions, and (e) constructing an account by relating different explanations to each other. Peacock's (2009) framework has been the basis of many studies on evaluating language teacher education programs (e.g., Coskun & Daloglu, 2010; Karim et al., 2019; Salihoglu, 2012). Most recently, Kiely provided another framework for evaluating language teacher education programs. Kiely argued that such evaluation should be done considering four aspects. The first aspect is related to *what* in evaluating language teacher education programs, where both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs try to equip language teachers with the most appropriate and recent theories and practices of the classroom. The second aspect is concerned with *when* to evaluate language teacher education programs, where evaluation can be done either during the program or after the whole program. The third aspect deals with *who* evaluates language teacher education programs, which can be done by either external or internal evaluators. External evaluators are usually disinterested and assumed to give an objective assessment of the situation, whereas internal evaluators use the evaluation findings for the improvement of their own program. The last aspect of the framework is related to *how* to evaluate language teacher education programs, where different techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis can be used. In evaluating language teacher education programs in our study, we used Kiely's framework, which is the most recent and less explored framework.

In evaluating any teacher education program, regardless of the framework used, the most important point to investigate is the content of the language teacher education program as it provides the knowledge and skills that teachers need for their teaching career (Richards, 1998). However, Richards admitted that there is no agreement on the content of language teacher education programs because the field is influenced by various disciplines including linguistics, psychology, and sociology (Ong'ondo, 2017). To determine the content of teacher education programs, identifying the different components of the knowledge base of language teacher education is crucial. There have been different models categorizing the knowledge base of language teacher education in the literature. One of the first and most influential models of knowledge base was proposed by Shulman (1987), which encompassed "content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values" (p. 8). Richards (1998) also identified the knowledge base of language teacher education as consisting of "theories of teaching, teaching skills, communication skills, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision making, and contextual knowledge" (p. 1). In yet another pioneering work on identifying the knowledge base of language

teacher education, Freeman and Johnson (1998) attempted to answer the question: Who teaches what to whom, where? In responding to this question, they addressed three important issues including the teacher as the learner of teaching, the social context of schools where teaching occurs, and the teaching/learning process which encompasses the subject matter and the content. Later, Shulman and Shulman (2004) introduced a revised model of Shulman (1987) consisting of “disciplinary/content/interdisciplinary knowledge, curriculum, classroom management and organization, assessment, and learners” (p. 262). Further, Darling-Hammond (2006) introduced a brief model which subsumes three components: knowledge of learners and how learning happens, knowledge of curriculum goals and content, and understanding of teaching notified by evaluation and backed by the classroom environment. The teacher education knowledge base was also categorized as professional, procedural, and personal knowledge by Kumaravadivelu (2012). According to him, professional knowledge is the knowledge about what and how to teach, procedural knowledge refers to how to manage a classroom to ensure better learning and personal knowledge is related to a teacher’s instincts and reflections.

The most recent model of language teacher education knowledge base has been presented by Freeman (2020), who provided a revised model of Freeman and Johnson (1998). He shifted the work-driven definition of the knowledge base of language teachers in 1998 to a field-driven definition in 2020. The 1998 model centered on the activity of teaching, with the teacher-as-learner dimension focusing on the language teachers’ background knowledge and experiences, the social context of schooling dimension focusing on the sociocultural contexts and processes of schooling, and the activity of teaching and learning dimension focusing on who teaches what to whom where. On the other hand, the 2020 field-driven model reshaped the knowledge base of language teacher education programs by addressing “the content (what is taught), the teaching force (who is teaching it), learners (who are learning it and why), pedagogy (how it is being taught), and teacher education (how teachers are being prepared and supported in teaching)” (Freeman, 2020, p. 9). The knowledge base in 1998 focused on pedagogy and content while in 2020, it focused on changes in English as the classroom content, in addition to who language teachers and learners are. There were four areas of change in the 2020 model: the content, who teaches it, who learns it and why, and how it is being taught. English is no more seen as a thing to be taught and learned in schools; rather, it is considered a means to an end. Freeman (2020) further argued that contrary to the common belief that the key in language teacher education programs is to improve the teachers’ knowledge of general English, there should be an insistence on the professional development of teachers in such programs by encouraging them to participate in various activities. In this study, we evaluated the content of language teacher education programs following Freeman’s (2020) model, which is the newest knowledge base model.

In language teacher education programs, integrating theory and practice is a vital point as language teachers do not want to be confused with excessive theories and wish they can receive practical ideas to take them to the classroom (Ur, 2019; Yayin Wang, 2022). Ur (2019) argued that theory and practice in L2 teaching are not opposites, but are points on a continuum, where any statement about teaching/learning

can be theoretical or practical. The assumption that there is a distinction between theory and practice is wrong as they are complementary rather than opposites (Ellis, 2010; Widdowson, 2003; Yayin Wang, 2022). Teacher education programs should therefore combine theories and practical tips to bring about optimal learning for novice teachers and more expertise for experienced teachers. A good technique to sync theory and practice in teacher education programs is to bring about a theoretical concept in the classroom, explain it through discussion, challenge teachers to utilize it in different contexts, and then talk about the results (Ur, 2019).

3 An Empirical Study

3.1 Context of the Study

This was a small-scale document analysis in which we sought to answer whether and how much language teacher education programs in Iran effectively feature the teacher knowledge base. The focus was on private language institutes, not the public sector, because their policy, curriculum, education, staff, materials, and all related issues are completely different from each other. Also, in Iran, the majority of students learn English as a foreign language in private language institutes to meet their needs due to the pitfalls of language education in public schools. Potential language teachers enter a private language institute based on their performance on an entry English proficiency test selected or developed by the institute which assesses their general knowledge of English. Candidates may skip this proficiency test if they have a valid certificate showing their score on a standardized test such as FCE, CAE, IELTS, or TOEFL. Next, an oral interview is conducted by the institute supervisor or a recruitment team who decides whether the candidate is eligible for teaching in the institute or not. Successful candidates then participate in a language teacher education program designed and developed by the institute (by the supervisor, the recruitment team, or the teacher educator) for 1–2 sessions a week for a period of one month to three months. Candidates having a CELTA or DELTA certificate are privileged in some institutes but not all. Language teacher education programs in the context of Iranian private language institutes are basically pre-service to equip potential teachers with the necessary knowledge they need to handle their classes successfully in the future. At the end of most language teacher education programs in different institutes, prospective teachers present a demo of how they would run a class in the near future and they receive feedback from the teacher educator or the recruitment team on their performance. If the teacher educator or the recruitment team is satisfied with the potential language teacher's performance, the candidate will be accepted to teach in the institute.

3.2 *Evaluating Language Teacher Education Programs in Iran*

Since the language teacher education program is the gate into the teaching world in private language institutes in Iran, it is utterly important to evaluate the effectiveness of such programs. To do this, we followed Kiely's (2019) framework of evaluating language teacher education programs, where the focus is on the what, when, who, and how of evaluating language teacher education programs. Table 1 shows how we implemented this framework in evaluating these programs.

Regarding the *what* component of Kiely's evaluation framework, the syllabi of 18 pre-service language teacher education programs from private language institutes in two large cities of Iran were selected based on convenience sampling, and their contents were analyzed. Considering the *when* component of the evaluation framework, we evaluated the programs at the end of each program when instruction was completed and before potential teachers started their actual teaching. Regarding the *who* component of the evaluation framework, we were not directly involved in these programs and thus did an external evaluation to have as objective an assessment of the programs as possible. Finally, for the *how* component of the evaluation framework, we collected the required data by gathering the syllabi of 18 pre-service language teacher education programs in 2022 based on convenience sampling.

We conducted a document analysis of the syllabi to evaluate their content in terms of the components of the language teacher education knowledge base they covered. For this, we analyzed and evaluated the content of the syllabi following Freeman's (2020) model of the knowledge base of language teacher education programs to investigate whether and how much such programs prioritize teacher development and effectiveness in their future classes. Content analysis of course documents is a common technique for this purpose, which has been utilized in different studies such as Bagherzadeh and Tajeddin (2021) and Edge and Mann (2013). Freeman's (2020) model addresses the knowledge base of language teacher education programs, including what is taught (the content or the target language), who teaches it (the teaching force), who learns it and why (the learners), how it is taught (the pedagogy), and how teachers get prepared to teach (the teacher education). Tables 2–5 present the sub-categories of the five components of Freeman's (2020) knowledge

Table 1 The components of Kiely's (2019) framework for evaluating language teacher education programs

Component	The implementation in this study
What	The syllabi of 18 pre-service language teacher education programs
When	At the end of each program
Who	External evaluation by the researchers
How	Conducting document analysis of the 18 syllabi based on Freeman's (2020) model of the knowledge base of language teacher education programs

base model and their frequency of occurrence in the syllabi of 18 Iranian private language institutes.

The first component of Freeman’s (2020) knowledge base model of language teacher education programs is “content,” which refers to what language teachers teach in their classes or the English language. However, none of the teacher education programs covered this component. In recruiting language teachers, the assumption is that they have a threshold level of the English language to start their teaching career.

Table 2 The Sub-categories of the teaching force component of Freeman’s (2020) knowledge base model in English language institutes

Sub-categories	English language institutes																		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	
Class management	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Lesson planning	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Assessment	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Error correction			✓	✓	✓					✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Feedback	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓				✓				✓	
Classroom phases				✓															
Using technology							✓							✓				✓	
Elicitation techniques				✓		✓					✓								
Giving instructions			✓		✓									✓					
Using pair work and group work				✓						✓									
Using games		✓												✓		✓			
Using songs		✓												✓					
Using various types of tasks			✓												✓				
Using various types of materials					✓													✓	
Using different types of questions					✓	✓			✓		✓			✓					
Peer observation										✓				✓					
Teacher roles										✓				✓		✓			
Teacher types															✓				
TTT (teacher talk time)					✓										✓				
Classroom language	✓									✓			✓		✓				
Language awareness																		✓	
Professional code of ethics					✓														
Creating positive classroom atmosphere												✓							

Table 4 The sub-categories of the pedagogy component of Freeman’s (2020) knowledge base model in English language institutes

Sub-categories	English language institutes																	
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
How to teach listening	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach reading	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach speaking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach writing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach vocabulary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach grammar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
How to teach pronunciation	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
How to teach conversation				✓		✓				✓	✓							
How to teach functions			✓		✓													
How to teach the alphabet		✓								✓								
Teaching methods		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Approaches to teaching	✓								✓									
CLT and TBLT				✓		✓	✓											✓
History of ELT										✓	✓	✓						✓
Teaching models				✓		✓												
Teaching techniques									✓			✓						
Teaching principles																		✓
Effective teaching									✓			✓						
Issues in language learning										✓			✓					
Acquisition vs. learning		✓							✓							✓		
First and second language acquisition						✓			✓									
Contextualization		✓		✓												✓		✓
Online teaching	✓	✓																
CBI (content-based instruction)							✓											
CLIL (content and language integrated learning)						✓												✓
Participatory approach							✓											
Collaborative teaching										✓								
Cooperative learning							✓											

(continued)

Table 4 (continued)

Sub-categories	English language institutes																		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	
ESA (engagement, study, activation)		✓		✓	✓	✓												✓	
ZPD (zone of proximal development)									✓									✓	
PPP (presentation, practice, production)				✓		✓													
Accuracy vs. fluency				✓															
Interaction patterns											✓								✓
Input and output															✓				✓
Syllabus design										✓									
Materials design										✓									
Curriculum design										✓									✓
Psycholinguistics										✓									
Sociolinguistics										✓									
Corpus linguistics																			✓
Phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse																			✓
ESP and EAP																			✓
Certification criteria and scoring									✓										
Various teaching certificates (e.g., CELTA, DELTA, TKT, TESOL)													✓						
Political dimension of language teaching							✓												

education programs. This shows the importance of the knowledge of language in English language education as the primary purpose of education is to improve the learners’ language ability. As to the theoretical issues that teachers should be familiar with, the most common sub-category was teaching methods, which was covered in 11 programs. A few theoretical issues appeared in some teacher education programs (e.g., history of ELT) while most of these issues were observed in only one program or two (e.g., psycholinguistics). This indicates the inconsistency in the theoretical issues included in these programs.

The last component of Freeman’s (2020) knowledge base model is “teacher education,” which refers to how teachers get prepared to teach in teacher education programs. Some of the programs included a session on course orientation and

Table 5 The sub-categories of the teacher education component of Freeman’s (2020) knowledge base model in English language institutes

Sub-categories	English language institutes																		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	
Course orientation		✓	✓		✓									✓					
Introduction to the course book		✓	✓		✓			✓							✓				
Continuing professional development					✓					✓								✓	
Teacher reflection	✓																		
Teacher identity	✓																		
Teacher autonomy																			✓
Demos and feedback on demos		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Classroom observation							✓		✓			✓							✓

an introduction to the course book to get the pre-service teachers prepared for their teaching career (Table 5). Only a few of them covered topics related to teacher development such as continuing professional development, teacher reflection, teacher identity, and teacher autonomy. However, 11 teacher education programs focused on practical aspects of teacher education including demos and feedback on demos through which prospective teachers could receive the support they needed to start their teaching. Another common practical issue is classroom observation where pre-service teachers are required to observe the classes of in-service teachers in the same institute and provide a report of their observations to get prepared for their actual teaching. Despite the significance of classroom observation, only a few teacher education programs included it in their syllabi. While classroom observations occur during the language teacher education programs, demos are usually placed in the last sessions of the programs based on which the recruitment team or the teacher educators decide whether each candidate is capable of teaching actual classes in the upcoming semester and what support they need in this regard.

Overall, it appears that the primary focus of most language teacher education programs in Iran is first on pedagogy and then on teaching force, while none of them prioritize content (which is the English language). This gap is most probably because it is assumed that prospective teachers should have an acceptable level of English proficiency to start their teaching career. Regarding the sub-categories of the pedagogy component of Freeman’s (2020) model, there was a gradual decline in the common core of the topics covered, moving from the most traditional topic in ELT course books on how to teach language skills and components, which was presented in all programs, to the latest topics in ELT sources such as CBI, CLIL, collaborative teaching, and cooperative learning, which were present sporadically in a few programs. Further, the practical focus of most language teacher education programs in the institutes was on presenting demos and receiving feedback on demos

as a sub-category of the teacher education component, which underscored how to prepare teachers for actual teaching and how to provide them with the necessary support they may need.

Overall, as the findings indicate, language teacher education programs in Iran do not seem to be very effective in one important respect since they mainly focus on traditional theoretical issues and do not prioritize teacher development.

4 Implications for Language Education Programs

The study reported above aimed to show how teacher education programs at work in Iranian language institutes represented the components of effective teacher education in terms of the what, when, who, and how of evaluating language teacher education programs (Kiely, 2019) and the content, the teaching force, the learners, the pedagogy, and the teacher education (Freeman, 2020). While great attention was paid to the pedagogy dimension in all programs analyzed in this study, most of the other dimensions were underspecified. One underspecified dimension is the teacher knowledge of the content. Pedagogical content knowledge cannot be enacted effectively in language education without its foundational content knowledge. Content knowledge, i.e., knowledge of language, in language education is one of the main components of the teacher knowledge base. Effective language education programs entail the education of teachers for the construction of their knowledge of language. The exigency of this knowledge has been reiterated in recent studies on language awareness as an index of good teachers and quality assurance in language education (Andrews 2007; Andrews & Lin, 2018). As Andrews (2007) stated, it refers to “explicit knowledge about language and the role of such knowledge in language learning, language teaching, and language use” (p. 946). This knowledge is tied to the second role of teachers’ three roles: language user, language analyst, and language teacher (Edge, 1988). Competence as a language analyst requires the teacher’s ability to understand the uses of the target language, which depends on the teacher’s knowledge base of language systems. The underrepresentation of this knowledge base in teacher education programs implies that teachers are not adequately educated for their role as language analysts. This can have an adverse effect on teachers’ instructional practice and its impact on learners’ gains. Thus, teacher education programs should help teachers enhance their language awareness in pre-service programs.

Another dimension underrepresented in the programs analyzed in this study related to who learns the language and why (the learner dimension). This dimension is part of the knowledge of the context in Roberts’ (1998) model of the knowledge base. Learners are the main agents of learning and hence understanding learner variables, or who the learners are, and their needs and motivation for language learning, or why they learn it, greatly contributes to effective language education. There is a wide range of learners’ cognitive and affective factors, in conjunction with learners’ age, proficiency levels, and gender, which implicate in language learning. Teachers’ knowledge of the learner factor can greatly contribute to more effective teaching and,

in turn, learners' achievement. In view of this, teacher education programs need to embody a module on learner variables to raise teachers' awareness about these variables. By knowing about these variables, teachers can plan and implement lessons aligned with learner variables. Also, they can make their teaching strategies tailored to these variables. As such, teachers can create spaces for more inclusive learner engagement.

Teacher education was another component of effective teacher education programs, which was addressed insufficiently in most teacher education programs. This component encompasses, among others, aspects of teacher professional learning and development such as teacher autonomy, reflection, motivation, and identity. Recent studies clearly indicate that these teacher variables impact professional development, cognition, and instructional practices (e.g., Banegas et al., 2022; Barkhuizen, 2019; Farrell, 2020, 2022; Manzano Vázquez, 2018; Noonan, 2019; Pacheco, 2011; Yazan, 2022). Effective teacher education programs, seeking to educate teachers for effective language education, should consider teacher variables in pre-service education. Although the teacher knowledge base is key to effective teaching, these teacher variables can affect both the development and enactment of this knowledge base in practice. An exclusive focus on the pedagogy dimension, at the expense of overlooking teacher variables, fails to raise teacher awareness of themselves as one of the key agents in language education. Against this backdrop, the teacher education dimension of effective teacher education programs, as proposed in Freeman's (2020) model, needs to be featured strongly in the preparation of language teachers for effective instruction.

5 Conclusion and Directions for Further Research

In this chapter, we reviewed teacher education programs and models for the evaluation of these programs. This functioned as a springboard to conduct a study on numerous teacher education programs in action in private language institutes based on the categorizations proposed by Kiely (2019) and Freeman (2020). The findings showed that the pedagogy dimension of teacher education was given more weight than the other dimensions. It can be concluded that there is no balanced embodiment of these components in teacher education programs. The pedagogy dimension has long been the main concern of teacher education in most of these programs as the dominant belief is that teachers primarily need to learn how to teach the four language skills and their components. This overemphasis has resulted in the under-specification of learner variables and teacher variables. From these findings, we understand that the inclusion of the five dimensions of content, teaching force, learners, pedagogy, and teacher education can turn a teacher education program into an effective space for teachers' knowledge base construction and professional development.

The study reported in this chapter had a few limitations that could be addressed in further studies. As the programs evaluated in this study were aimed at the education

of general English teachers, one important area for studies is to analyze and evaluate teacher education programs for the education of EMI, CBI, and dual language education teachers. Second, the programs we evaluated were targeted at pre-service teachers. Kiely's (2019) and Freeman's (2020) models could be used to evaluate in-service teacher education programs to explore to what extent they meet the requirements for effective teacher education. Third, whereas the programs included in this study were developed for use in a local or national context, certificate programs used globally like CELTA and DELTA could be investigated for their coverage of the dimensions of effective teacher education. Finally, as the data source in this study was limited to document analysis, further research could be directed at the triangulation of the findings by observing teacher education programs in action and interviewing stakeholders like teacher educators and participating teachers.

References

- Anderson, L. W. (1989). *The effective teachers: Study guide and readings*. McGraw-Hill.
- Andrews, S. (2007). Researching and developing teacher language awareness: Developments and future directions. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 945–959). Springer.
- Andrews, S., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2018). Language awareness and teacher development. In P. Garrett & J. M. Cots (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of language awareness* (pp. 57–74). Routledge.
- Bagherzadeh, R., & Tajeddin, Z. (2021). Teachers' curricular knowledge in teacher education programs: A case of Iran's sociocultural context. *International Journal of Society, Culture, and Language*, 9(1), 43–57.
- Banegas, D. L., Edwards, E., & Villacañas de Castro, L. S. (Eds.). (2022). *Professional development through teacher research*. Multilingual Matters.
- Baniasad-Azad, S., Tavakoli, M., & Ketabi, S. (2016). EFL teacher education programs in Iran: The absence of teachers' involvement. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 61–86. <https://doi.org/10.29252/ijal.19.2.61>
- Barkhuizen, G. (Ed.). (2019). *Qualitative research topics in language teacher education*. Routledge.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. Continuum.
- Brandt, C. (2006). Allowing for practice: A critical issue in TESOL teacher preparation. *ELT Journal*, 60(4), 355–364. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl026>
- Burns, A., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (2009). *The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education*. Cambridge University Press.
- Coskun, A., & Daloglu, A. (2010). Evaluating English language teacher education program through Peacock's model. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(6), 24–42. <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol35/iss6/2>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, B., & Sumara, D. (2005). Challenging images of knowing: Complexity science and educational research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 18(3), 305–321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390500082293>
- Davis, B., & Sumara, D. (2006). *Complexity and education: Inquiries into learning, teaching, and research*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dewey, J. (1997/1933). *How we think*. Henry Regnery.

- Diamond, C. T. P. (1993). In-service education as something more: A personal construct approach. In P. Kahaney, L. Perry, & J. Janangelo (Eds.), *Theoretical and critical perspectives on teacher change* (pp. 45–66). Ablex.
- Edge, J. (1988). Applying linguistics in ELT training for speakers of other languages. *ELT Journal*, 42(1), 9–13. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/42.1.9>
- Edge, J., & Mann, S. (Eds.). (2013). *Innovations in pre-service education and training for English language teachers*. The British Council.
- Ellis, R. (2010). Second language acquisition, teacher education, and language pedagogy. *Language Teaching*, 43(2), 182–201. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444809990139>
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2020). Professional development through reflective practice for English-medium instruction (EMI) teachers. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 23(3), 277–286.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2022). *Reflective practice in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, D. (2002). The hidden side of the work: Teacher knowledge and learning to teach. *Language Teaching*, 35, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444801001720>
- Freeman, D. (2016). *Educating second language teachers*. Oxford University Press.
- Freeman, D. (2020). Arguing for a knowledge base in language teacher education, then (1998) and now (2018). *Language Teaching Research*, 24(1), 5–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818777534>
- Freeman, D., & Johnson, K. E. (1998). Reconceptualizing the knowledge base of language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(3), 397–417. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588114>
- Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1996). *Teacher learning in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, D., Webre, A. C., & Epperson, M. (2019). What counts as knowledge in English language teaching? In S. Walsh & S. Mann (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of English language teacher education* (pp. 13–24). Routledge.
- Giroux, H. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals. Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Bergin & Garvey.
- Johnson, K. E. (2009). *Second language teacher education: A sociocultural perspective*. Routledge.
- Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2011). *Research on second language teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on professional development*. Routledge.
- Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2016). *Mindful L2 teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on cultivating teachers' professional development*. Routledge.
- Karim, A., Shahed, F. H., Mohamed, A. R., Rahman, M. M., & Ismail, S. A. M. M. (2019). Evaluation of the teacher education programs in EFL context: A testimony of teachers' perspective. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 127–146. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.1219a>
- Kiely, R. (2009). Small answers to the big question: Learning from language programme evaluation. *Language Teaching Research*, 13(1), 99–116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168808095525>
- Kiely, R. (2019). Evaluating English language teacher education programmes. In S. Walsh & S. Mann (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of English language teacher education* (pp. 82–95). Routledge.
- Kirkpatrick, D. (1996). Great ideas revisited: Techniques for evaluating training programs. Revisiting Kirkpatrick's four-level-model. *Training & Development*, 50(1), 54–59.
- Kuhn, L. (2008). Complexity and educational research: A critical reflection. *Education Philosophy and Theory*, 40(1), 177–189. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00398.x>
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macro-strategies for language teaching*. Yale University Press.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language teacher education for a global society: A modular model for knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing, and seeing*. Routledge.

- Manzano Vázquez, B. (2018). Teacher development for autonomy: An exploratory review of language teacher education for learner and teacher autonomy. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 12(4), 387–398. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2016.1235171>
- Mayer, D., Dixon, M., Kline, J., Kostogriz, A., Moss, J., Rowan, L., Walker-Gibbs, B., & White, S. (2017). Studying the effectiveness of teacher education. In D. Mayer et al. (Eds.), *Studying the effectiveness of teacher education* (pp. 1–12). Springer.
- Nemati, M., & Mousazadeh, O. (2021). Evaluating EFL teacher education program in Farhangian University: A triangulated study based on CIPP model. *Foreign Language Research Journal*, 11(4), 763–780. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jflr.2020.252651.477>
- Nguyen, M. H. (2019). *English language teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on preservice teachers' learning in the professional experience*. Springer.
- Noonan, J. (2019). An affinity for learning: Teacher identity and powerful professional development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(5), 526–537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118788838>
- Ong'ondo, C. O. (2017). The knowledge base for language teacher education revisited: A review. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijelt.v4n2p27>
- Opfer, V., & Pedder, D. (2011). Conceptualizing teacher professional learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 81, 376–407. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311413609>
- Pacheco, A. Q. (2011). Reflective teaching and its impact on foreign language teaching. *Actualidades Investigativas en Educación*, 5(3), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.15517/aie.v5i3.9166>
- Peacock, M., (2009). The evaluation of foreign-language-teacher education programmes. *Language Teaching Research*, 13(3), 259–278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168809104698>
- Richards, J. C. (1990). The dilemma of teacher education in second language teaching. In J. C. Richards & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Second language teacher education* (pp. 1–25). Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (1998). *Beyond training*. Cambridge University Press.
- Roberts, J. (1998). *Language teacher education*. Routledge.
- Salihoglu, U. M. (2012). Pre-service teachers' and their instructors' beliefs on the effectiveness of an English language teacher education program. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 3440–3444. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.081>
- Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Maurice Temple Smith.
- Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. Jossey-Bass.
- Sharma, S. R. (2000). *Modern teaching strategies*. Omsons Publications.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4–14.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411>
- Shulman, L. S., & Shulman, J. H. (2004). How and what teachers learn: A shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(2), 257–271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027032000148298>
- Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003). The CIPP model for evaluation. In D. L. Stufflebeam & T. Kellaghan (Eds.), *International handbook of educational evaluation* (pp. 31–62). Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Stufflebeam, D. L., & Zhang, G. (2017). *The CIPP evaluation model: How to evaluate for improvement and accountability*. The Guilford Press.
- Tedick, D. J. (2005). *Second language teacher education: International perspectives*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Ur, P. (2019). Theory and practice in language teacher education. *Language Teaching*, 52(4), 450–459. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444819000090>
- Walsh, S., & Mann, S. (Eds.). (2019). *The Routledge handbook of English language teacher education*. Routledge.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2003). *Defining issues in English language teaching*. Oxford University Press.

- Wright, T. (2010). Second language teacher education: Review of recent research on practice. *Language Teaching*, 43(3), 259–296. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444810000030>
- Yayin Wang, A. (Ed.). (2022). *Competency-based teacher education for English as a foreign language: Theory, research, and practice*. Routledge.
- Yazan, B. (2022). A conceptual framework to understand language teacher identities. *Second Language Teacher Education*, 1(2), 185–208. <https://doi.org/10.1558/slte.24908>
- Zein, M. S. (2016). Government-based training agencies and the professional development of Indonesian English for Young Learners teachers: Perspectives from complexity theory. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy*, 42(2), 205–223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2016.1143145>
- Zhang, G., Zeller, N., Griffith, R., Metcalf D., Williams, J., Shea, C., & Misulis, K. (2011). Using the context, input, process, and product evaluation model (CIPP) as a comprehensive framework to guide the planning, implementation, and assessment of service-learning programs. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 15(4), 57–84.

Zia Tajeddin is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Tarbiat Modares University, Iran. He co-edits two international journals: *Applied Pragmatics* (John Benjamins) and *Second Language Teacher Education* (Equinox). He is the co-editor of the Springer book series *Studies in Language Teacher Education*. His research interests center on teacher education and L2 pragmatics pedagogy in the context of EIL/ELF. He is the co-editor of *Lessons from Good Language Teachers* (with Carol Griffiths, Cambridge University Press, 2020), *Pragmatics Pedagogy in English as an International Language* (with Minoo Alemi, Routledge, 2021), and *Teacher Reflection: Policies, Practices and Impacts* (with Atsuko Watanabe, Multilingual Matters, 2022).

Kobra Tavassoli is an assistant professor of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran. She teaches language assessment, research methodology, and language teaching methodology courses in B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. programs. Her areas of interest are language assessment and language teacher education. She has published in different journals and presented in national and international conferences on these topics.