



# A study on the qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL students

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## Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the characteristics of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL students. To achieve this purpose, 93 preparatory program Turkish EFL students from the Foreign Languages School of a state university located in the west part of Turkey participated in the study. The questionnaire designed by Salahshour & Hajizadeh (2013) was utilized in this study by the researcher with some minor modifications on it. The findings of this study showed that being enthusiastic and lively, having interest in his/her job and feeling responsibility for teaching, being creative and spontaneous, being self-confident, having a loud and clear voice and having patience with students were the prominent personal traits of effective EFL teachers. The findings also revealed that the majority of the students viewed their teacher as an effective EFL teacher because s/he presented the topic via a variety of examples, had adequate level of linguistic knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and communication skills and dealt with them individually and s/he was patient to them. Lastly, the findings of this study regarding (a) command in English, (b) teaching methodology, (c) evaluation method, (d) amount of teacher's emphasis on different language skills, (e) mastery over teaching, (f) teacher-student relationship and (g) classroom management were in line with those of previous studies conducted by other researchers in the related literature.

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**Keywords:** effective teachers; EFL; effective EFL teachers; EFL students; teacher qualities

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## 1. Introduction

Teaching is a multifaceted and intricate process and teachers are one of the most prominent components of this process. However, if teachers disregard the learners' needs and expectations, not only teaching but also learning processes become demotivating and the EFL classroom changes into a monotonous environment for students (Baytur & Razi,

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2015). In this vein, describing the qualities of a good EFL teacher is crucial to develop and offer quality English language teacher training programs for pre-service teachers, professional development programs for in-service teachers and promote the teaching process itself (Abu-Rahma, 2007).

Who is an effective EFL teacher? The one who speaks the English language both accurately and fluently; the one who deploys entertaining teaching activities skillfully; the one who can form a good friendship with his/her students or the one whose students get good grades in the English exams? (Aydın et al., 2009). The answer to this question is not as simple as it seems to be on the surface. The concept of an 'effective teacher' has been defined by many researchers in the related literature. William & Burden (1997, p. 5) state that an effective teacher is "one who understands the complexities of the teaching-learning process and can draw upon this knowledge to act in ways which empower learners both within and beyond the classroom situation." Benson, Schroeder, Lantz and Bird (2001) stress that an effective teacher is someone who presents information to students in a way that is obvious, comprehensible, and stimulating. According to Cruickshank and Haefele (2001), an effective teacher is someone who should contribute to higher level of student success and permanent learning.

Undoubtedly, all language teachers exhibit their individual characteristics when presenting new information and giving tasks to their students in the classroom. The qualities that effective EFL teachers possess and display while presenting the new information and giving tasks to their students in the classroom have been identified by many researchers. However, most of these attempts to identify effective teacher characteristics exhibit more or less the same descriptions of effective teacher qualities. In the following section, Cheung's (2006), Arıkan, Taşer & Saraç-Süzer's (2008) and Vialle & Tischler's (2009) identifications of effective teacher qualities will be presented.

Cheung (2006) indicates that effective teachers are inclined to:

- work in their jobs for longer timeframes;
- give more time to teaching and curricular designing;
- be willing to teach;
- give importance to their students' needs;
- be understanding to the mistakes and errors made by their students;
- deal with problem causing students for longer timeframes;
- take an interest in and add to the learning encounters of their students

Arıkan, Taşer & Saraç-Süzer (2008) describe the qualities of an effective teacher as:

- being friendly;
- being young;
- being enthusiastic;
- being creative;
- being humorous;
- being fluent in English;
- playing educational games;
- teaching grammar effectively;
- utilizing real life contexts to expound language items;
- having correct pronunciation

Vialle and Tischler (2009) defines effective teachers as:

- being polite;
- being intimate;
- being tolerant;
- being devoted;
- behaving students equally;
- motivating students
- fitting to the proficiency level of students
- being enthusiastic about teaching and assisting others.

It is evident that the effectiveness of the teacher is directly related to the amount of learning that takes place in the EFL classroom. The existence of an effective teacher in the classroom is a crucial factor that catalyzes students' learning. Even if all the other conditions are suitable, an EFL teacher's poor teaching performance in the classroom can reduce the amount of students' learning remarkably (Hajizadeh & Salahshour, 2014). Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the characteristics of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program EFL students. This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of effective EFL teachers according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?

2. Do preparatory program Turkish EFL students think that their teacher is an effective EFL teacher?
3. Why do preparatory program Turkish EFL students think that their teacher is an effective/ineffective EFL teacher?
4. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?
5. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?

By finding answers to the above mentioned research questions, the researcher hopes to help in-service EFL teachers to evaluate their language teaching methods, techniques, principles and strategies, make necessary adaptations or changes in their teaching and create a more motivating classroom environment for their students.

## **2. Literature Review**

During the past twenty years, many researchers have focused on investigating students' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers not only in various international EFL contexts but also in our national EFL context. For instance, in the Chinese EFL context, Cheung (2002) examined university students' perceptions of the qualities of the good language teacher and it was reported that native English instructors utilized the English language more efficiently, presented the target language culture more skillfully and had higher level of English proficiency than non-native English instructors. However, it was also stressed in the study that non-native English instructors were better at English grammar than native English instructors.

In the Cypriot EFL context, Stella and Dimitris (2013) examined Cypriot EFL students' perceptions of the qualities of good EFL teachers. The results of the study exhibited that Cypriot EFL students perceived effective EFL teachers as those who took into account their students' individual differences, language anxiety and capabilities and interests. The results of the study also exhibited that Cypriot students preferred the language teachers who used technology successfully and involved their students in communicative classroom exchanges. To put it another way, the findings showed that Cypriot EFL students perceived instructional and/ or pedagogical skills as the most important qualities of effective EFL teachers.

In the Iranian EFL context, Ghasemi and Hashemi (2011), Salahshour & Hajizadeh (2013) and Ramazani (2014) concentrated on investigating students' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers. For instance, Ghasemi and Hashemi (2011) explored students' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers based on three major categories: (1) content knowledge, (2) instructional knowledge, (3) socio-affective skills. It

was revealed in the study that students viewed some teacher qualities like proficiency in reading and speaking, the ability to increase students' enthusiasm in learning English, constructing students' self-reliance and incentive as globally approved features. It was also found in the study that students highlighted listening ability and structural ability as particularly prominent.

In another study, Salahshour & Hajizadeh (2013) investigated 42 Iranian students' views of the qualities of good EFL teachers by utilizing a 58-item questionnaire. The results of the study indicated that the most prominent ten qualities of effective EFL teachers were: (1) Being involved in his/her profession, (2) Possessing a sense of liability for his/her profession, (3) Being willing and active, (4) Being self-reliant, (5) Being prompt, (6) Stimulating students to deploy L2 everytime, (7) Presenting clear grammatical revision, (8) Presenting through clarification during reading and listening activities, (9) Stressing common spoken quizzes, (10) Stressing all language skills, particularly speaking.

Ramazani (2014) also explored 384 university students' beliefs about the qualities of effective EFL teachers by utilizing a self-report questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that students perceived their EFL teacher's pedagogical knowledge as important as his/her socio-affective skills. The results of the study also unearthed that variables such as gender and achievement had an impact on students' beliefs about the qualities of effective EFL teachers.

In the Japanese EFL context, Edington (2001) investigated students' perceptions of the qualities of the good language teacher by categorizing these qualities into three dimensions: personality, teaching skills and knowledge. It was found that smiling, being polite, liking all the students, making lessons appealing, appreciating students, showing respect to students, being cordial, behaving students fairly, being punctual, attempting to comprehend students' personalities, being humorous, being ambitious, liking teaching and being calm were related to the personality dimension. It was also found that the teacher traits like talking aloud, writing openly, telling students interesting anecdotes, monitoring students cautiously, listening to students, conversing with students, advising students what to do, being good at presentation, being good at teaching, being experienced, being prepared for the lesson, being productive, struggling to stimulate students, utilizing a wide range of teaching techniques and deploying the up-to date instructional technology in teaching were related to the teaching skills dimension. Lastly, it was unearthed in this study that being knowledgeable, being experienced and being open to learning what is new were related to the knowledge dimension.

In the Korean EFL context, Barnes and Lock (2010) explored 105 freshmen university students' beliefs about the qualities of good EFL teachers by asking them to write the qualities of good EFL teachers in their mother tongue. The findings of the study were reported in five categories comprising rapport, lesson delivery, fairness, knowledge and

credibility and organization and preparation. Korean EFL students viewed rapport and lesson delivery as the most significant qualities of the effective EFL teachers. Especially, they regarded rapport as the most prominent quality of good EFL teachers.

In the Taiwanese EFL context, it was Chen and Lin (2009) who investigated 198 Chinese students' views of the qualities of good EFL teachers by utilizing a 50-item questionnaire. The results of the study indicated that while the students viewed the instructional competence, personality, and teacher-student relationship as the most important features of an effective EFL teacher, the instructional competence was regarded as less prominent than the other two dimensions, personality and teacher-student interaction.

In the Thai EFL context, Wichadee (2010), Chen (2012) and Whichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012) focused on the students' perceptions of the qualities of the effective EFL teacher. For example, Wichadee (2010) examined the Thai EFL students' perceptions of the qualities of the effective English teacher relying on four basic categories of (1) proficiency in English, (2) instructional knowledge, (3) organization and communication abilities, (4) socio-affective abilities. The results of the study revealed that while the students gave importance to their teachers' organization and communication skills most, the teachers gave importance to proficiency in English most with respect to the most significant feature in effective EFL teaching.

In another study, Chen (2012) examined Thai university students' perceptions of the favorable and unfavorable qualities of EFL teachers by categorizing the qualities into personal trait specific and classroom teaching specific qualities. The results of the study showed that students perceived emotion, politeness, justice, tolerance and liability as the personal trait specific qualities. The results of the study also displayed that students perceived modes of lesson delivery, language utilized in teaching, organization of classroom activities and establishment of classroom atmosphere as classroom teaching specific qualities.

Whichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012) also explored Thai university students' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers within the framework of four basic categories: (1) proficiency in English, (2) instructional knowledge, (3) organization and communication abilities and (4) socio-affective abilities. It was found in the study that while both low and high proficiency students at Bangkok University regarded organization and communication abilities as the most important qualities of effective EFL teachers, they viewed proficiency in English as the least important qualities of effective EFL teachers. On the other side, socio-affective skills were accepted to be the second most important qualities of effective EFL teachers and instructional knowledge was accepted to be the third most important qualities of effective EFL teachers.

In the Turkish EFL context, Arıkan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer (2008), Telli, den Brok, and Çakıroğlu (2008) and Çelik, Arıkan, and Caner (2013) examined the students'

perceptions of the qualities of the effective EFL teacher. For instance, the study conducted by Arikan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer (2008) aimed to investigate Turkish EFL students' perceptions of the qualities of the effective English teacher. The results of the study showed that students identified their teachers as effective if they taught both formal and informal English, integrated games into their teaching and did pairwork/group work activities in the EFL classroom. The results of the study also displayed that students gave more importance to their English language teachers' personal features like willingness, productivity and fairness than their pedagogical abilities like using ICT, teaching language skills and classroom management.

Similarly, the research study done in Turkey by Telli, den Brok, and Çakıroğlu (2008) revealed that the students attributed the highest significance to the quality of teacher-student relationship. However, other features like content knowledge were viewed less important than teacher-student relationship. In another study, Çelik, Arıkan, and Caner (2013) explored 998 undergraduate Turkish EFL students' perceptions of the qualities of good EFL teachers. It was found in the study that the students described pedagogy-specific knowledge, personal traits, professional skills, and classroom behavior as the most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers.

In the literature, some researchers have focused on investigating only EFL teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers in various international EFL/ESL contexts. For instance, in the British ESL context, Borg (2006) examined EFL teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers. The results of the study showed that EFL teachers were dissimilar to teachers of other disciplines with respect to the nature of the subject, the content of teaching, the teaching methodology, teacher-student ties and differences between native and non-native speakers. In another study conducted in the Iranian EFL context, Khojastemehr & Takrimi (2009) investigated 215 Iranian EFL teachers' views on the prominent qualities of successful EFL teachers. The results of the study exhibited that Iranian EFL teachers viewed instructional strategies as more prominent for teacher effectiveness than other qualities.

Lastly, some researchers have focused on investigating both EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers in a variety of EFL/ESL contexts. To illustrate, in the Iranian EFL context, Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) attempted to investigate both EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective EFL teachers by administering a questionnaire to 59 EFL teachers and 215 EFL students. The results of the study showed that while the students viewed the teacher's positive personality as the most important qualities of effective EFL teachers, the teachers viewed the command of L2, possessing correct pedagogical knowledge and the ability to utilize specific methods, techniques and principles as the most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. In another study, Wichadee (2010) explored both 400 Thai EFL students' and 53 full-time EFL teachers' perceptions of the qualities of effective

EFL teachers by utilizing a questionnaire. The findings of the study showed that while the EFL students perceived effective EFL teachers as those having good preparation, successful communication and a good personality, the EFL teachers perceived effective EFL teachers as those with good English language proficiency.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 93 preparatory program Turkish EFL students from the Foreign Languages School of a state university located in the west part of Turkey. The age of students ranged from 18 to 23, with a mean of 20. Forty-seven students were male and forty-six students were female. Sixty-one students were at A1 level (Breakthrough), whereas thirty-two students were at B1 level (Threshold). Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents according to age, gender and English level.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to age, gender and English level

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-20	87	93.5
	21-23	6	6.5
Gender	Male	47	50.5
	Female	46	49.5
English Level	A1 (Breakthrough)	61	65.6
	B1 (Threshold)	32	34.4
Total		93	100

#### 3.2. Research questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of effective EFL teachers according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?
2. Do preparatory program Turkish EFL students think that their teacher is an effective EFL teacher?

3. Why do preparatory program Turkish EFL students think that their teacher is an effective/ineffective EFL teacher?
4. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?
5. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?

### 3.3. Instrument and data collection

The data for this study were gathered via the questionnaire ‘Characteristics of effective EFL instructors’ designed by Salahshour & Hajizadeh (2013). The first part included a series of demographic questions about students’ age, gender and English level. The second part included sixty items based on a 4-point Likert scale (from 1=not important at all to 4= very important) to unearth students’ perceptions with respect to *personal qualities, command in English, teaching methodology, evaluation method, amount of teacher’s emphasis on different language skills, mastery over teaching, teacher-student relationship and classroom management*. In the original questionnaire, there were fifty-eight items in the second part. However, the researcher integrated two more items, *emphasizing reading* and *emphasizing writing*, into the fifth section of the questionnaire so as to provide the inner consistency of the related section. The researcher translated the questionnaire into the students’ mother tongue, Turkish so as to ensure the clarity of the questionnaire items and made any necessary clarifications before and during the time the questionnaires were filled out by the respondents. To check the reliability, the instrument was analyzed through the Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient  $\alpha = 0.91$ , which showed a high level of reliability.

The questionnaires were administered to the preparatory program Turkish EFL students at a state university located in the west part of Turkey (N=93) during December 2018. The return rate from these students was 100 % (N=93). After analyzing the collected data, 10 of these students were contacted again to have an interview. The purpose of the interview was to reveal students’ specific ideas with respect to characteristics of effective EFL teachers. Interview questions contained four items. These questions were asked to ten students and impressionistic transcriptions of the students’ responses to the questions were made by the researchers.

The questions posed by the researchers in the interview were as follows:

1. Do you view your teacher as an effective EFL teacher? ( ) Yes ( ) No

2. Why do you view your teacher as an effective / ineffective EFL teacher? Explain it briefly.
3. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally have?
4. What are three most important characteristics that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have?

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Students' scores on questionnaire

#### 4.1.1. Personal qualities

Participants were asked to respond to 10 items to indicate effective EFL teachers' personal qualities. Table 2 summarizes the results of descriptive statistics (percentages, means, and standard deviations) of preparatory program Turkish EFL students' responses on effective EFL teachers' personal qualities. As shown in Table 2, students identified the most important qualities effective EFL teachers should have as being enthusiastic and lively (item 5,  $M= 3.88$ ;  $SD= 0.32$ ), having interest in his/her job and feeling responsibility for teaching (item 10,  $M= 3.88$ ;  $SD= 0.32$ ), being creative and spontaneous (item 6,  $M= 3.80$ ;  $SD= 0.44$ ), being self-confident (item 4,  $M= 3.61$ ;  $SD= 0.65$ ), having a loud and clear voice (item 7,  $M= 3.58$ ;  $SD= 0.63$ ) and having patience with students (item 9,  $M= 3.53$ ;  $SD= 0.56$ ). The teacher's gender (item 1,  $M= 1.33$ ;  $SD= 0.74$ ), good appearance (item 3,  $M= 1.96$ ;  $SD= 1.04$ ), age (item 2,  $M= 2.05$ ;  $SD= 1.04$ ) and being punctual (item 8,  $M=2.82$ ;  $SD=1.09$ ) were found to be less important than the other qualities.

Table 2. Percentages, means and standard deviations for effective EFL teachers' personal qualities

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
1. Teacher's gender	79.6	10.8	6.5	3.2	1.33	0.74
2. Teacher's age	38.7	30.1	18.3	12.9	2.05	1.04
3. Good appearance	44.1	26.9	17.2	11.8	1.96	1.04
4. Being self-confident	2.2	3.2	25.8	68.8	3.61	0.65
5. Being enthusiastic and lively	-	-	11.8	88.2	3.88	0.32
6. Being creative and spontaneous	-	2.2	15.1	82.8	3.80	0.44
7. Having a loud and clear voice	-	7.5	26.9	65.6	3.58	0.63
8. Being punctual (in terms of starting the class	15.1	24.7	22.6	37.6	2.82	1.09

and returning students' papers)						
9. Having patience with students	-	3.2	39.8	57.0	3.53	0.56
10. Having interest in his/her job and feeling responsibility for teaching	-	-	11.8	88.2	3.88	0.32
Overall score					3.04	0.68

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.2. Command in English

Participants were asked to respond to 5 items related to effective EFL teachers' command in English. As shown in Table 3, accuracy of teacher structure (item 12, M= 3.88; SD= 0.43), accuracy of teacher vocabulary (item 11, M= 3.87; SD= 0.44) and accuracy of pronunciation (item 13, M= 3.82; SD= 0.50) were the most significant three qualities of effective EFL teachers according to the participants. Fluency in the foreign language (item 15, M=3.75, SD= 0.54) and accuracy of intonation (item 14, M= 3.64, SD= 0.63) were also perceived as significant by the participants.

Table 3. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers' command in English

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
11. Accuracy of teacher vocabulary	1.1	1.1	7.5	90.3	3.87	0.44
12. Accuracy of teacher structure	1.1	1.1	6.5	91.4	3.88	0.43
13. Accuracy of pronunciation	1.1	2.2	9.7	87.1	3.82	0.50
14. Accuracy of intonation	1.1	5.4	21.5	72.0	3.64	0.63
15. Fluency in the foreign language	1.1	2.2	17.2	79.6	3.75	0.54
Overall score					3.79	0.51

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.3. Teaching methodology

Participants were asked to respond to 12 items with respect to effective EFL teachers' teaching methodology. As shown in Table 4, using appropriate language teaching techniques (item 16, M= 3.67; SD= 0.53), encouraging students to use the English language all the time in class (item 27, M= 3.60; SD= 0.61), providing detailed explanations while doing reading/listening activities (item 18, M= 3.43; SD= 0.71), using the students' native language when necessary (item 19, M= 3.38; SD= 0.75), providing

explicit error correction (item 22,  $M= 3.35$ ;  $SD= 0.71$ ), going beyond the textbook when teaching (item 20,  $M= 3.23$ ;  $SD= 0.78$ ) providing cultural information about the target language's culture (item 21,  $M= 3.15$ ;  $SD= 0.93$ ) were found to be the most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. However, use of pair work (item 24,  $M= 2.66$ ;  $SD= 0.94$ ), using pantomime, pictures and acting to clarify points (item 17,  $M= 2.63$ ;  $SD= 1.09$ ), use of group work (item 25,  $M= 2.55$ ;  $SD= 0.93$ ), giving regular homework tasks (item 23,  $M= 2.50$ ;  $SD= 1.01$ ) and using suitable amount of teacher talk (item 26,  $M= 2.40$ ;  $SD= 0.98$ ) were found to be less important than the other qualities.

Table 4. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers' teaching methodology

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
16. Using appropriate language teaching techniques	-	3.2	25.8	71.0	3.67	0.53
17. Using pantomime, pictures and acting to clarify points	19.4	25.8	26.9	28.0	2.63	1.09
18. Providing detailed explanations while doing reading/ listening activities (e.g., checking all the new vocabularies)	1.1	9.7	34.4	54.8	3.43	0.71
19. Using the students' native language when necessary	1.1	12.9	32.3	53.8	3.38	0.75
20. Going beyond the textbook when teaching	4.3	8.6	46.2	40.9	3.23	0.78
21. Providing cultural information about the target language's culture	7.5	14.0	34.4	44.1	3.15	0.93
22. Providing explicit error correction	2.2	7.5	43.0	47.3	3.35	0.71
23. Giving regular homework tasks	18.3	33.3	28.0	20.4	2.50	1.01
24. Use of pair work	11.8	31.2	35.5	21.5	2.66	0.94
25. Use of group work	14.0	33.3	35.5	17.2	2.55	0.93
26. Using suitable amount of teacher talk	18.3	39.8	24.7	17.2	2.40	0.98
27. Encouraging students to use the English language all the time in class	-	6.5	26.9	66.7	3.60	0.61
Overall score					3.05	0.83

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.4. Evaluation method

Participants were asked to respond to 2 items regarding effective EFL teachers' evaluation method. As seen in Table 5, asking students oral questions at the beginning of each lesson (item 29,  $M= 2.83$ ;  $SD= 0.93$ ) and giving quizzes frequently (item 28,  $M= 2.75$ ;

SD= 1.00) were perceived as somewhat significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants.

Table 5. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers’ evaluation method

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
28. Giving quizzes frequently	12.9	26.9	32.3	28.0	2.75	1.00
29. Asking students oral questions at the beginning of each lesson	7.5	30.1	33.3	29.0	2.83	0.93
Overall score					2.79	0.97

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

*4.1.5. Amount of teacher’s emphasis on different language skills*

Participants were asked to respond to 6 items with respect to effective EFL teachers’ amount of emphasis on different language skills. As seen in table 6, emphasizing speaking (item 31, M= 3.63; SD= 0.58) was found to be the most significant quality of effective EFL teachers. Emphasizing writing (item 35, M= 3.58; SD= 0.63), emphasizing vocabulary (item 32, M= 3.55; SD= 0.65), emphasizing reading (item 34, M= 3.54; SD= 0.65), emphasizing listening (item 33, M= 3.53; SD= 0.66) and emphasizing grammar (item 30, M= 3.48; SD= 0.68) were also perceived as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants.

Table 6. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers’ amount of emphasis on different language skills

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
30. Emphasizing grammar	-	10.8	30.1	59.1	3.48	0.68
31. Emphasizing speaking	-	5.4	25.8	68.8	3.63	0.58
32. Emphasizing vocabulary	1.1	5.4	30.1	63.4	3.55	0.65
33. Emphasizing listening	1.1	6.5	30.1	62.4	3.53	0.66
34. Emphasizing reading	1.1	5.4	31.2	62.4	3.54	0.65
35. Emphasizing writing	1.1	4.3	30.1	64.5	3.58	0.63
Overall score					3.55	0.64

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.6. Mastery over teaching

Participants were asked to respond to 8 items to indicate effective EFL teachers' mastery over teaching. As shown in Table 7, capability to communicate ideas, knowledge, intended teaching items (item 36,  $M= 3.77$ ;  $SD= 0.46$ ), capability to answer students' questions (item 39,  $M= 3.75$ ;  $SD= 0.50$ ) and use of efficient and adequate methods of elicitation while teaching (item 40,  $M= 3.59$ ;  $SD= 0.59$ ) were the three most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. Ability to guide students to independent learning (item 41,  $M= 3.51$ ;  $SD= 0.68$ ), ability to identify the students' learning styles (item 43,  $M= 3.41$ ;  $SD= 0.77$ ) and preparation and lesson planning (item 38,  $M= 3.38$ ;  $SD= 0.76$ ) were also identified as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants. On the other hand, knowledge of students' specialist courses (item 42,  $M= 2.86$ ;  $SD= 1.05$ ) was found to be less important than the other qualities.

Table 7. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers' mastery over teaching

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
36.Capability to communicate ideas, knowledge, intended teaching items	-	2.2	18.3	79.6	3.77	0.46
37. Knowledge of the subject matter	-	7.5	30.1	61.3	3.54	0.63
38. Preparation and lesson planning	2.2	10.8	33.3	53.8	3.38	0.76
39. Capability to answer students' questions	-	3.2	18.3	78.5	3.75	0.50
40. Use of efficient and adequate methods of elicitation while teaching	-	5.4	30.1	64.5	3.59	0.59
41. Ability to guide students to independent learning	1.1	7.5	30.1	61.3	3.51	0.68
42. Knowledge of students' specialist courses	12.9	24.7	25.8	36.6	2.86	1.05
43. Ability to identify the students' learning styles	2.2	10.8	30.1	57.0	3.41	0.77
Overall score					3.48	0.68

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.7. Teacher-student relation

Participants were asked to respond to 12 items with respect to teacher-student relation. As shown in Table 8, creating motivation (item 47,  $M= 3.80$ ;  $SD= 0.44$ ), helping to create self confidence in students (item 48,  $M= 3.80$ ;  $SD= 0.49$ ) and having respect for students (item 44,  $M= 3.79$ ;  $SD= 0.45$ ) were the three most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. Attracting and maintaining students' attention (item 49,  $M= 3.75$ ;  $SD= 0.54$ ), being kind and friendly with students (item 45,  $M= 3.73$ ;  $SD= 0.55$ ),

encouraging students' participation (item 46,  $M= 3.73$ ;  $SD= 0.55$ ), providing appropriate feedback to students (item 52,  $M= 3.58$ ;  $SD= 0.68$ ), individual help to students (item 50,  $M= 3.51$ ;  $SD= 0.76$ ), knowledge of students' mother tongue (item 51,  $M= 3.39$ ;  $SD= 0.88$ ), asking for students' feedback about the class and teaching method (item 54,  $M= 3.30$ ;  $SD= 0.85$ ) and teacher's being available outside of class (item 55,  $M= 3.25$ ;  $SD= 0.88$ ) were also found to be the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants. However, having contact with the students' parents (item 53,  $M= 1.86$ ;  $SD= 1.15$ ) was identified as the insignificant quality of effective EFL teachers by the participants.

Table 8. Percentages, means and standard deviations for teacher-student relation

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
44. Having respect for students	-	2.2	16.1	81.7	3.79	0.45
45. Being kind and friendly with students	-	5.4	16.1	78.5	3.73	0.55
46. Encouraging students' participation	-	5.4	16.1	78.5	3.73	0.55
47. Creating motivation	-	2.2	15.1	82.8	3.80	0.44
48. Helping to create self confidence in students	-	4.3	10.8	84.9	3.80	0.49
49. Attracting and maintaining students' attention	1.1	2.2	17.2	79.6	3.75	0.54
50. Individual help to students	2.2	9.7	22.6	65.6	3.51	0.76
51. Knowledge of students' mother tongue	5.4	10.8	22.6	61.3	3.39	0.88
52. Providing appropriate feedback to students	1.1	7.5	23.7	67.7	3.58	0.68
53. Having contact with the students' parents	58.1	14.0	11.8	16.1	1.86	1.15
54. Asking for students' feedback about the class and teaching method	3.2	16.1	28.0	52.7	3.30	0.85
55. Teacher's being available outside of class	3.2	19.4	25.8	51.6	3.25	0.88
Overall score					3.46	0.69

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

#### 4.1.8. Classroom management

Participants were asked to respond to 5 items related to effective EFL teachers' classroom management skills. As shown in Table 9, maintaining order in class/class control (item 58,  $M= 3.55$ ;  $SD= 0.69$ ) and using class time wisely (item 57,  $M= 3.44$ ;  $SD= 0.63$ ) were found to be the most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants. Following the material specified and guidelines provided by the institution (item 59,  $M= 3.07$ ;  $SD= 0.92$ ), movement around the class (item 60,  $M= 3.07$ ;  $SD= 0.92$ )

and using white board efficiently (item 56,  $M= 2.92$ ;  $SD= 0.98$ ) were also perceived as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers by the participants.

Table 9. Percentages, means and standard deviations for EFL teachers' classroom management

Items	Percentage (%)					
	NI	SI	I	VI	M	SD
56. Using white board efficiently (using colourful markers and writing well)	11.8	16.1	39.8	32.3	2.92	0.98
57. Using class time wisely	1.1	4.3	44.1	50.5	3.44	0.63
58. Maintaining order in class/class control	2.2	5.4	26.9	65.6	3.55	0.69
59. Following the material specified and guidelines provided by the institution	6.5	19.4	34.4	39.8	3.07	0.92
60. Movement around the class	6.5	19.4	34.4	39.8	3.07	0.92
Overall score					3.21	0.83

Scale: NI=Not important at all, SI=Somewhat important, I=Important, VI=Very important

## 4.2. Interviews

### 4.2.1. Viewing their teacher as an effective EFL teacher?

In response to the first question regarding whether the students view their teacher as an effective EFL teacher or not, while eight students (80%) indicated that they viewed their teacher as an effective EFL teacher, 2 students (20%) stated that they did not view their teacher as an effective EFL teacher.

### 4.2.2. Reasons for preparatory program Turkish EFL students' viewing their teacher as an effective/ineffective EFL teacher?

The participants were asked the reason why they viewed their teacher as an effective/ineffective EFL teacher. Related to viewing their teacher as an effective EFL teacher, eight students expressed basically three reasons which were (a) presenting the topic via a variety of examples, (b) having adequate level of linguistic knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and communication skills and (c) dealing with students individually and being patient to students. The following quotations exhibit the views expressed by the participants:

*"I view my teacher as an effective EFL teacher because s/he presents us the topic via a variety of examples. "* (Participant 15)

*"In my view, my teacher is an effective EFL teacher because she has adequate level of linguistic knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and communicational skills and she transfers her knowledge to us successfully." (Participant 26)*

*"My teacher is effective because she deals with us individually and she behaves us patiently." (Participant 18)*

Related to viewing their teacher as an ineffective EFL teacher, two students indicated mainly two reasons which were (a) being inexperienced due to being young and (b) being inadequate in teaching speaking to students. The following quotations illustrate the participants' views on why they regarded their teacher as an ineffective EFL teacher:

*"I view my teacher as an ineffective EFL teacher because she is inexperienced due to being young. " (Participant 49)*

*"In my viewpoint, our teacher is an ineffective EFL teacher because she is inadequate in teaching speaking to us. We learn grammar but we cannot speak. I think that our lessons do not focus on speaking." (Participant 89)*

#### *4.2.3. Three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?*

In response to the third question related to the three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally have, the majority of the participants stressed the prominence of (a) having a good command of the English language, (b) speaking English accurately and fluently and (c) being friendly. The quotation below display the participants' views with respect to the three most prominent qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally have:

*"In my view, having a good command of the English language, speaking English accurately and fluently and being friendly are three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally possess. " (Participant 22)*

#### *4.2.4. Three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have according to preparatory program Turkish EFL students?*

In response to the fourth question related to the three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have, most of the participants expressed (a) being impatient, (b) being dependent on the coursebook and (c) being disrespectful to the students. The following quotation illustrates the participants' views with respect to the three most significant qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally have:

*"From my point of view, three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have are being impatient, being dependent on the coursebook and being disrespectful to the students." (Participant 28)*

## **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

In this research study, the characteristics of effective EFL teachers were identified according to eight subcategories. Related to the subcategory entitled personal qualities, the results of this study revealed that being enthusiastic and lively, having interest in his/her job and feeling responsibility for teaching and being creative and spontaneous, being self-confident and having a loud and clear voice were the five most important qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. At this juncture, it can be stated that the majority of previous research studies that have investigated effective EFL teachers' personal qualities emphasized being enthusiastic and lively (e.g. Arıkan, Taşer & Saraç-Süzer, 2008), having interest in his/her job and feeling responsibility for teaching (e.g. Salahshour & Hajizadeh, 2013), being creative and spontaneous (e.g. Malikow, 2006), being self-confident (e.g. Khaerati, 2016) and having a loud and clear voice (Ribahan, 2018) as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers.

Relevant to the subcategory entitled command in English, the results of this study indicated that preparatory program EFL learners perceived accuracy of (a) teacher structure, (b) teacher vocabulary, (c) pronunciation and (d) intonation as well as fluency in the foreign language as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. These results are in line with the results of Brosh (1996) who indicated that possessing knowledge and command of the target language was the desirable quality of effective language teachers.

With respect to the subcategory entitled teaching methodology, this study revealed that utilizing suitable language teaching techniques, stimulating students to deploy L2 all the time in class, offering thorough clarifications while doing reading/listening activities, employing the students' mother tongue when necessary, presenting overt error correction, going beyond the textbook when teaching and presenting cultural information regarding the target culture were the prominent qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. In this vein, it can be indicated that a plethora of previous research studies that have examined effective EFL teachers' qualities stressed utilizing suitable language teaching techniques (e.g. Edington, 2001), stimulating students to deploy L2 all the time in class (e.g. Salahshour & Hajizadeh, 2013), offering thorough clarifications while doing reading/listening activities (e.g. Kember & Wong, 2000), employing the students' mother tongue when necessary (e.g. Chen, 2005), presenting overt error correction (e.g. Rammal, 2006), going beyond the textbook when teaching (e.g. Faranda & Clarke, 2004) and presenting cultural information regarding the target culture (e.g. Cakir, 2006; Cheung, 2002) as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers.

Regarding the subcategory entitled the evaluation method, this study showed that asking students oral questions at the beginning of each lesson and giving quizzes frequently were the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. These findings were in line with those of previous studies conducted by Baytur & Razi (2015) and Farahian & Rezaee (2012) that stressed giving quizzes and asking students questions in teaching.

Related to the subcategory entitled the amount of teacher's emphasis on different language skills, the results of this study showed that emphasizing speaking was the most prominent quality of effective EFL teachers. The results of this study also indicated that emphasizing writing, vocabulary, reading, listening and grammar were also the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. These results were in parallel to those of the study conducted by Salahshour & Hajizadeh (2013) that emphasized the importance of speaking as well as the importance of other language skills in L2 teaching.

Relevant to the subcategory entitled mastery over teaching, the results of this study unearthed that capability to communicate ideas, knowledge, intended teaching items, capability to answer students' questions and use of efficient and adequate methods of elicitation while teaching were the three most important qualities of effective EFL teachers. Several previous studies (e.g. Çelik, Arıkan, & Caner, 2013; Ramazani, 2014; Stella & Dimitris, 2013) also emphasized the prominence of EFL teacher's instructional and/ or pedagogical skills as the most important qualities of effective EFL teachers. To illustrate, Çelik, Arıkan, and Caner (2013) found that the students identified pedagogy-specific knowledge, personal traits, professional skills, and classroom behavior as the most important characteristics of effective EFL teachers.

With respect to the subcategory entitled teacher-student relation, the results of this study indicated that creating motivation, helping to create self confidence in students and having respect for students were the three most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. At this point, it can be indicated that most of the previous research studies that have investigated teacher-student relation highlighted creating motivation (e.g. Vialle and Tischler, 2009), helping to create self confidence in students (e.g. Ghasemi and Hashemi, 2011) and having respect for students (e.g. Edington, 2001) as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers.

Regarding the subcategory entitled classroom management, the results of this study revealed that maintaining order in class/class control and using class time wisely were the most significant qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of preparatory program Turkish EFL learners. The results of this study also revealed that following the material specified and guidelines provided by the institution, movement

around the class and using white board efficiently were also the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers. In this vein, it can be stated that most of the previous research studies that have investigated classroom management stressed maintaining order in class / class control (e.g. Badshah, 2016), using class time wisely (e.g. Nghia, 2015), following the material specified and guidelines provided by the institution (e.g. Salahshour & Hajizadeh, 2013), movement around the class (e.g. Wall, 1993) and using white board efficiently (e.g. Mercer, Hennessy & Warwick, 2010) as the significant qualities of effective EFL teachers.

In this research study, ten of the preparatory program EFL learners were also asked four interview questions so as to unearth their specific ideas with respect to the characteristics of effective EFL teachers. In response to the first question regarding whether the students view their teacher as an effective EFL teacher or not, eight students indicated that they viewed their teacher as an effective EFL teacher. In response to the second question regarding the reasons why they viewed their teacher as an effective EFL teacher, they indicated basically three reasons which were (a) presenting the topic via a variety of examples, (b) having adequate level of linguistic knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and communication skills and (c) dealing with students individually and being patient to students. In the literature, many research studies emphasized the importance of (a) presenting the topic via a variety of examples (e.g. Case, 2013), (b) having adequate level of linguistic knowledge (e.g. Arıkan, Taşer & Saraç-Süzer (2008), pedagogical knowledge (e.g. Çelik, Arıkan, & Caner, 2013; Ramazani, 2014; Stella & Dimitris, 2013) and communication skills (e.g. Wichadee, 2010) and (c) dealing with students individually and being patient to students (e.g. Vialle and Tischler, 2009) as effective EFL teacher characteristics.

In response to the third question regarding the three most important qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally have, the majority of the participants emphasized the importance of (a) having a good command of the English language, (b) speaking English accurately and fluently and (c) being friendly. In the literature, there are research studies that stress the significance of a) having a good command of the English language (e.g. Wichadee, 2010), (b) speaking English accurately and fluently (e.g. Arıkan, Taşer & Saraç-Süzer, 2008) and (c) being friendly (e.g. Baytur & Razi, 2015).

Lastly, in response to the fourth question regarding the three most significant qualities that an effective EFL teacher should generally not have, most of the participants expressed (a) being impatient, (b) being dependent on the coursebook and (c) being disrespectful to the students. At this juncture, in the literature, there are research studies that indicate (a) being impatient (e.g. Edington, 2001), (b) being dependent only on the coursebook (Richards, 2001) and (c) being disrespectful to the students (e.g. Edington, 2001) as the undesirable characteristics of effective EFL teachers.

Finally, it can be indicated that both the quantitative and the qualitative findings of this study are complementary to each other and these findings are beneficial not only for in-service EFL teachers but also for pre-service EFL teachers. In-service EFL teachers should attribute importance to how Turkish EFL learners identify the qualities of effective EFL teachers and they should adapt, develop or modify their teaching techniques, strategies and principles so as to meet their students' needs and expectations in the EFL classroom. Likewise, pre-service EFL teachers should also try to learn what qualities are described as the qualities of effective EFL teachers and why these qualities are appreciated by the Turkish EFL learners before they begin the teaching profession. Thus, being aware of the qualities of effective EFL teachers from the perspectives of Turkish EFL learners, the EFL teachers can create a motivating classroom environment where a successful communication can be realized between the teacher and the students.

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