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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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TITLE:

**The Relationship among EFL Teachers' Critical Thinking, Self-  
efficacy, and Their Perception of Effective Teaching**

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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS

By

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ENTITLED

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*In the Name of God  
the Beneficent,  
the Merciful*

To:

My Family, who gave me love, encouragement  
and support

My husband, who provided me with  
useful suggestions,  
patience and  
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## **Abstract**

The present study was an attempt, in the first place, to observe whether there is any relationship among teachers' critical thinking, self-efficacy, and effective teaching. For the second objective of the study, the researcher tried to examine which of the variables (critical thinking or self-efficacy) was a better predictor of effective teaching. To this end, measures of the critical thinking ability of 143 (55male and 83female) EFL teachers were obtained using Peter Honey's (2000) Critical Thinking Questionnaire (CTQ). Also, their sense of efficacy was estimated utilizing Tschannen-Moran & Hoy's (2001) Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Besides, their perception of effective teaching was determined employing Bell's (2005) Effective Teaching Questionnaire (ETQ). Pearson product-moment correlation analysis revealed the existence of a statistically significant relationship between total critical thinking and total effective teaching. However, just two of critical thinking components (analysis and evaluation) were correlated with total effective teaching. Also, critical thinking components had significant relationship with effective teaching components, namely comprehension correlated with strategies for foreign language learning, analysis correlated with standards for foreign language learning and strategies for foreign language learning, respectively, and evaluation correlated with standards for foreign language learning. Additionally, it was found that there is a positive relationship between total self efficacy and total

effective teaching. Also, all components of self efficacy (students' engagement, instructional strategies, management) correlated with effective teaching. More especially, significant relationship of components of self-efficacy and effective teaching are as follows: students' engagement with standards for foreign language learning, management with the individual learner differences, instructional strategies with both individual difference, and standards for foreign language learning. Finally, regression analysis showed that self efficacy, was a better predictor of teachers' perception of effective teaching in comparison with critical thinking though the margin of difference is not that large.



# **CHAPTER I**

## **Background and Purpose**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Teachers in general and English teachers in particular play a vital role in bringing about their learners' better learning and achievement. As it is revealed by previously done research, effective and efficient learning on the part of learners highly depends on teachers and on what they do in their classes (Markley, 2004). The methods and methodologies teachers employ in their teaching is highly affected by their perception of effective teaching and their beliefs about teacher efficacy (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1999).

Elton (2006) defines effective teaching as “a teaching that leads to effective learning” (p.1). Therefore, teachers' perceptions of an effective teacher exert influence on learners' learning (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). So it is not surprising that a tremendous range of research have been sparked by this interest in investigating distinctive features of successful language teachers, and the ways language teachers' education can lead to enhancement of such features.

In the last 60 years many researchers that have been in connection with teacher development or education in any way, tried to find standard criteria to evaluate effective teaching. While there is little consensus over this issue, researchers agree at least on some attributes that include: enthusiasm/expressiveness, clarity of explanation, and rapport/interaction (Murray, 1991). Researchers also have come to accordance on multidimensionality of this concept.

Researches in the domain of effective teaching continue to be a hotly debated topic. For instance, the development in fields of psychology and cognitive sciences has led the researchers to examine various cognitive, affective and personality characteristics of teachers on their teaching practices and professional success. Among them one can mention EFL teachers' multiple intelligence (Pishghadam & Moafian, 2007), emotional intelligence (Hashemi, 2008), and self-efficacy (Moafian & Ghanizadeh, 2009).

To follow this line of research, another viable domain to examine the concept of effective teaching in foreign and second language teaching programs is teachers' critical thinking which is a very interesting issue. Critical thinking is defined as the ability to discipline and control information more easily, effectively and efficiently (Paul, 1990; cited in Longman, Atkinson & Breeden, 1997). Critical thinking is seen to be composed of the ability to recognize an existing problem as well as an inquisitive attitude that seeks proof of the evidential. It involves gathering knowledge about the accuracy of this proof and the ability to make use of this knowledge and attitude (Daly, 1998; Simpson and Courtney, 2002).

In today's educational reform, critical thinking seems to be a prevailing concept. The notability of this concept in education is acknowledged by many educators. Schafersman (1991, cited in Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010) points out that all education must emphasis not only 'what to think', but also 'how to think'. However,

he regrets that most education is busier with transmitting and acquiring knowledge, rather than teaching the students how to think and evaluate information. But by the increased number of disciplines, the vitality of learning and teaching techniques to acquire, understand and evaluate information come to the fore.

One thing that seems obvious is that teachers need to be critical thinkers to be able to teach this ability to their students. While developing this skill is very essential in our teachers, mainstream critical thinking research has focused on ways of developing these skills in learners (e.g., Dantas-Whitney, 2002; Faravani, 2006), and its application to teachers' practice and their success has been ignored almost to a great deal. Also being a critical thinker is an attribute believed to be closely related to teachers' sense of self efficacy (e.g. Sariolghalam & Nouruzi, 2010) and self efficacy is one characteristic of an effective teacher.

According to Distad & Brownstein (2004) "efficacy describes a teacher's belief that he or she has the skills necessary to effect positive changes in student learning. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy feel more confident, affirmed, and validated by their experiences in the classroom. Their language about teaching is hopeful and positive. Teachers with high efficacy have a large repertoire of teaching skills. This is important because one teaching situation may require multiple approaches" (p. 7).