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Developing and Validating a Teacher Effectiveness Scale for Iranian English Teachers at the Elementary Level

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A B S T R A C T

Purpose: This study aimed to develop and validate a multidimensional teacher effectiveness scale tailored to Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers working at the elementary level.

Methods and Materials: The study employed a mixed-methods design with an initial qualitative phase followed by a quantitative validation phase. In the qualitative stage, a grounded theory approach was used to identify the core components of teacher effectiveness based on existing literature and prior empirical findings related to elementary-level EFL teaching. These components were used to construct a 21-item Teacher Effectiveness Scale structured on a five-point Likert format. In the quantitative phase, the scale was administered to 200 Iranian elementary-level EFL teachers selected through available sampling. Data were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify the underlying factor structure, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the measurement model and overall model fit.

Findings: Inferential analyses supported a three-factor model of teacher effectiveness consisting of communicative skills, emotional skills, and elementary-level teaching skills. The scale demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding accepted thresholds for the total scale and all subscales. EFA results confirmed a clear and interpretable factor structure, while CFA indicated excellent model fit based on multiple absolute and incremental fit indices. All items loaded significantly on their intended factors, and the three latent variables showed strong, significant contributions to overall teacher effectiveness.

Conclusion: The findings indicate that teacher effectiveness at the elementary EFL level is a multidimensional construct encompassing communicative, emotional, and pedagogical competencies, and that the proposed scale is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing teacher effectiveness among Iranian elementary-level EFL teachers.

Keywords: *Teacher effectiveness; elementary-level EFL teaching; scale development; communicative skills; emotional skills; pedagogical skills*

1. Introduction

Teacher effectiveness has long been recognized as one of the most decisive factors influencing the quality of educational systems and student learning outcomes. In the domain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, teacher effectiveness becomes even more critical due to the linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and socio-cultural

complexities inherent in language learning processes. Effective EFL teachers are not merely transmitters of linguistic knowledge; rather, they are facilitators of communication, emotional support, classroom management, and meaningful learning experiences that shape learners' long-term academic trajectories (Richards, 2020; Zhang, 2017). Consequently, identifying, conceptualizing, and measuring teacher effectiveness has become a central concern in educational research across diverse contexts.

At the elementary level, the importance of teacher effectiveness is further amplified. Elementary learners are typically at the earliest stages of language exposure, characterized by limited linguistic proficiency, developing cognitive capacities, and heightened emotional sensitivity. Teaching English at this level requires specialized pedagogical knowledge, emotional intelligence, and communicative competence that differ substantially from those required at secondary or tertiary levels (De la Fuente & Goldenberg, 2022; Dong et al., 2020). Elementary-level EFL teachers must therefore possess a multifaceted skill set that allows them to manage young learners' behavior, sustain motivation, scaffold learning, and create supportive classroom environments conducive to language acquisition.

Research has consistently demonstrated that effective teachers significantly influence learners' academic achievement, motivation, and attitudes toward learning (Purnomo, 2023; Valente et al., 2019). In EFL contexts, teacher effectiveness has been associated with learners' communicative competence, engagement, and willingness to participate in classroom interaction (Tan et al., 2019; Yassine et al., 2020). Moreover, effective teachers are better equipped to adapt instructional strategies to learners' diverse needs, thereby fostering equity and inclusion in the classroom (Owusu & Cobbold, 2020; Yang et al., 2018). These findings highlight the necessity of understanding teacher effectiveness as a multidimensional construct rather than a single, isolated attribute.

Theoretical perspectives on teacher effectiveness emphasize the integration of pedagogical knowledge, interpersonal skills, emotional competence, and professional development. Early conceptualizations focused primarily on content knowledge and instructional techniques; however, contemporary frameworks underscore the importance of affective and relational dimensions of teaching (Greenberg et al., 2014; Johnson & Smith, 2014). Emotional intelligence, for instance, has been identified as a crucial determinant of classroom climate, discipline management, and teacher-student relationships (Richards, 2020; Valente et al., 2019). Similarly, communicative competence enables teachers to build rapport with learners, provide effective feedback, and facilitate meaningful interaction in language classrooms (Tan et al., 2019; Zhang, 2017).

Professional development literature further suggests that teacher effectiveness is not a static trait but an evolving capacity shaped by experience, reflection, and continuous learning (Kagen, 1992; McCormack et al., 2006). Cooperative development, peer collaboration, and reflective practice have been proposed as essential mechanisms through which teachers refine their skills and respond to classroom challenges (Edge, 1992; Underhill, 2004). Nevertheless, empirical evidence indicates that many elementary-level EFL teachers face substantial barriers to professional growth, including limited access to training opportunities, institutional constraints, and insufficient administrative support (Herzallah, 2011; Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Challenges faced by elementary-level EFL teachers are particularly pronounced in developing and non-Western contexts. Teachers often report difficulties related to classroom management, learner diversity, parental involvement, and inadequate instructional resources (Ahmed, 2003; Dajani & McLaughlin, 2009). Additionally, the cognitive and emotional demands of teaching young learners can lead to increased stress and burnout, potentially undermining teaching effectiveness (Greenberg et al., 2014; Sinclair, 2024). These challenges underscore the need for context-sensitive models of teacher effectiveness that reflect the realities of elementary-level EFL instruction.

Within the Iranian EFL context, teacher effectiveness has attracted growing scholarly attention over the past two decades. Studies have explored teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and characteristics associated with effective teaching, revealing the importance of language proficiency, classroom management, motivation, and interpersonal skills (Kaboodvand, 2013; Shahvand & Rezvani, 2016). Instrument development efforts have also contributed to the field by operationalizing constructs related to successful EFL teaching (GhorbanDordinejad & ImamJomeh, 2011; Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009). However, much of this research has focused on secondary or tertiary education, leaving elementary-level EFL teaching relatively underexplored.

Recent research has begun to address this gap by examining teacher effectiveness from learners' perspectives and within elementary-level contexts. Notably, Moradzadeh Fard et al. (Moradzadeh Fard et al., 2025) provided valuable

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insights into the qualities of effective EFL teachers as perceived by Iranian elementary learners, highlighting communicative skills, emotional support, and pedagogical adaptability as central components. Similarly, Karvandi et al. (Karvandi et al., 2024) emphasized pluralistic views of teacher effectiveness, underscoring the interplay between verbal skills, motivational strategies, and responsiveness to learner diversity. These studies suggest that elementary-level teacher effectiveness is inherently multidimensional and context-dependent.

International research further corroborates the significance of these dimensions. Studies conducted in diverse educational settings have identified emotional competence, teacher-student relationships, and classroom interaction skills as key predictors of effective teaching (Tan et al., 2019; Yassine et al., 2020). The integration of technology and principled use of learners' first language (L1) have also been shown to enhance instructional effectiveness at the beginner level (De la Fuente & Goldenberg, 2022; Yang et al., 2018). Moreover, home and classroom literacy environments play a crucial role in shaping young learners' comprehension and engagement, indirectly reinforcing the importance of effective teaching practices (Dong et al., 2020).

Despite these advances, there remains a notable lack of empirically validated instruments specifically designed to measure teacher effectiveness among elementary-level EFL teachers in Iran. Existing scales often draw on generalized teaching competencies or are adapted from non-elementary contexts, which may fail to capture the unique pedagogical and emotional demands of teaching young language learners (Ary et al., 2010; Bowman, 2013). Furthermore, few studies have employed qualitative or theory-driven approaches, such as grounded theory, to generate contextually grounded models of teacher effectiveness (McCormack et al., 2006; Underhill, 2004).

The absence of a validated, context-specific teacher effectiveness scale has practical and theoretical implications. Without reliable measurement tools, teacher educators, policymakers, and school administrators lack empirical foundations for evaluating teaching quality, designing professional development programs, and supporting teachers' instructional growth (Johnson & Smith, 2014; Sinclair, 2024). From a research perspective, the lack of standardized instruments limits the comparability and generalizability of findings across studies and contexts (Ary et al., 2010; Bowman, 2013).

Given the increasing emphasis on evidence-based educational practices, developing a robust framework for assessing teacher effectiveness at the elementary EFL level is both timely and necessary. Such a framework must account for communicative competence, emotional skills, and pedagogical expertise while remaining sensitive to cultural and institutional contexts (Alhajiri & Alshuraiaan, 2023; Purnomo, 2023). Incorporating insights from both international literature and local empirical research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of what constitutes effective teaching in elementary EFL classrooms.

In response to these gaps, recent scholarship has called for integrative models that synthesize emotional, communicative, and instructional dimensions of teaching effectiveness (Baghel et al., 2025; Richards, 2020). Emotional intelligence research, in particular, highlights the role of teachers' self-regulation, empathy, and coping strategies in fostering positive classroom climates and enhancing learner outcomes (Baghel et al., 2025; Valente et al., 2019). When combined with strong communicative skills and developmentally appropriate teaching strategies, these attributes form the foundation of effective elementary-level EFL instruction.

Accordingly, there is a compelling need to develop and validate a teacher effectiveness scale that reflects the lived experiences, professional challenges, and pedagogical realities of Iranian elementary-level EFL teachers, grounded in both empirical evidence and established theoretical perspectives (Karvandi et al., 2024; Moradzadeh Fard et al., 2025).

Therefore, the aim of the present study is to develop and validate a multidimensional teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level by identifying its core communicative, emotional, and pedagogical components.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Design

Congruent with the objectives of the study, a grounded theory design was selected for it (Ary et al., 2010). Indeed, modeling studies lend themselves well to this type of design.

2.2. Participants

Participants included 200 Iranian elementary-level English teachers (100 males and 100 females) who were selected through available sampling. They were already

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teaching English at the elementary level language institutes in Iran. They were B.A and M.A holders in different branches of English major and had varying years of teaching experience at the elementary level from 1 to 25 years. They were in the 25-50 age range. Their mother tongue was Persian.

2.3. Instrument

2.3.1. The Proposed Teacher Effectiveness Scale

Based on the extracted components, a teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level was developed. It consisted of 21 items, structured as five-point Likert scale statements, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

The scale was structured into three sub-scales parallel with the main components of a teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level that were identified in the qualitative phase of the study. They included Communicative skills, Emotional skills, and Elementary-level teaching skills.

To ensure that the scale really reflects the qualitative data, sentences mentioned by the participants in the study by Moradzadeh Fard et al. (2025) and identified in the existing literature and documents in the same study were taken as the items of the scale (Moradzadeh Fard et al., 2025). The questionnaire was designed as a Google Form to facilitate ease of access and completion. Participants were provided a link to the questionnaire, which was distributed via WhatsApp and Telegram, enhancing accessibility and encouraging participation from diverse regions in Iran. This digital format not only allowed participants to complete the questionnaire at their convenience but also enabled efficient data collection from a broad participant pool. Completing the questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes, balancing comprehensiveness with participant engagement.

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to examine the scale's construct validity. This analysis ensured that the items accurately reflected the underlying constructs. The EFA results confirmed the scale's structural validity. Next, confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS 24 was run to further confirm the scale's construct validity. The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a reliability coefficient of .91. This level of reliability is considered acceptable in social science research. The reliability score, combined with the EFA and CFA results, provided preliminary evidence that the scale was a valid and reliable instrument.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

To collect the data, first, the main components of a teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level were identified through grounded theory approach using the results of the study by Moradzadeh Fard et al. (2025). To this end, in the axial coding stage, the connection, associations and ties between the main categories and their sub-categories were recognized. In this stage, sub-categories of the main categories were identified. Within the selective coding stage, a core category was extracted from the already clustered categories as an "explanatory whole" to build the model (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this stage, the identified categories and sub-categories were brought together to develop a teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level.

In the next step, the researchers used a quantitative research method which aimed at validating the proposed scale and measuring its reliability. This step involved distributing the digital version of the scale among a relatively large group of elementary-level teachers and running EFA, CFA, and Cronbach's Alpha Test on the collected data.

3. Findings and Results

3.1. Results of the first research question

Concerning the first research question 'What are the main components of a teacher effectiveness scale for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level?', three main components including Communicative skills, Emotional skills, and Elementary-level teaching skills were extracted through merging the themes extracted from reviewing the existing literature and documents and the themes extracted as the results of the study by Moradzadeh Fard et al. (2025). To extract these components, the themes Interpersonal Skills, Strong Relationships, Building Collaboration between Parents and the School, Parent Involvement, Creating Motivation Through Engagement, Using Collaborative Learning, Building Verbal and Non-Verbal Relations with all Students, Giving Corrective Feedback to all the Students, and Generating Equal Learning Opportunities for all the Students were categorized under the component Communicative skills.

Further, the themes Emotional Intelligence, Effective Support, Using Coping Strategies, Avoiding Bias, and Enacting Classroom Fairness were categorized under the

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component Emotional skills. Finally, the themes Good Pedagogical Knowledge, Using Playful Activities, Creating a Meaningful Educational Setting, Integrating Technology into Teaching, Use of L1 in the Teaching and Learning Process, Enacting Flexibility in Teaching & Assessment, and Identifying Learning Styles of all Students were categorized under the component Elementary-level teaching skills.

3.2. Results of the second research question

With regard to the second research question '*Is the proposed teacher effectiveness scale valid and reliable?'*, the data collected through the Teacher Effectiveness Scale for Iranian English Teachers at the Elementary Level (Table 1) was exposed to a number of statistical techniques; namely, Cronbach's Alpha, EFA, and CFA.

Table 1

A Teacher Effectiveness Scale for Iranian English Teachers at the Elementary Level

A Teacher Effectiveness Scale for Iranian English Teachers at the Elementary Level	1= strongly disagree to 2= disagree to 3= no idea to 4= agree to 5= strongly agree
Components	Items
Communicative skills	1. Interpersonal Skills 2. Strong Relationships 3. Building Collaboration between Parents and the School 4. Parent Involvement 5. Creating Motivation Through Engagement 6. Using Collaborative Learning 7. Building Verbal and Non-Verbal Relations with all Students 8. Giving Corrective Feedback to all the Students 9. Generating Equal Learning Opportunities for all the Student
Emotional skills	10. Emotional Intelligence 11. Effective Support 12. Using Coping Strategies 13. Avoiding Bias 14. Enacting Classroom Fairness
Elementary-level teaching skills	`15. Good Pedagogical Knowledge 16. Using Playful Activities 17. Creating a Meaningful Educational Setting 18. Integrating Technology into Teaching 19. Use of L1 in the Teaching and Learning Process 20. Enacting Flexibility in Teaching & Assessment 21. Identifying Learning Styles of all Students

Table 2 shows the skewness and kurtosis indices of univariate normality; i.e., normality of individual items, and the Mardia's index of multivariate normality. The Table 2 displays skewness and kurtosis statistics, which assess univariate normality. Skewness measures data symmetry, while kurtosis evaluates the distribution's peakedness relative to a normal curve. Ideally, both values should be zero. As shown in the Table 2, all items fell within the ±2 range, indicating no significant deviation from normality.

Table 2

Testing Univariate and Multivariate Normality

Item	Skewness	Kurtosis	Item	Skewness	Kurtosis
q1	0.808	1.031	q12	0.234	-0.718
q2	0.290	-0.897	q13	0.140	-0.933
q3	0.227	-0.825	q14	0.210	-1.011
q4	0.316	-0.733	q15	0.220	-0.853

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q5	0.238	-0.906	q16	0.195	-0.870
q6	0.171	-0.898	q17	-0.050	-0.807
q7	0.977	1.427	q18	-0.109	-0.968
q8	-0.132	-0.544	q19	0.783	0.768
q9	0.197	-0.857	q20	0.004	-1.236
q10	0.791	0.730	q21	-0.145	-1.029
q11	0.221	-0.881	Mardia		8.505

The Table 2 also shows the Mardia index of multivariate normality. Mardia's index of 8.505 was lower than the criteria of 483. Thus, it is concluded that the assumption of multivariate normality was also retained.

Table 3 presents Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall scale and its three subscales. The reliability indices were .916 (total scale), .916 (Communicative), .905 (Teaching), and .858 (Emotional), all exceeding the widely accepted threshold of .70. Thus, the scale, and its components demonstrate strong internal consistency.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Teacher Effectiveness Scale	.916	21
Communicative Skills	.916	9
Teaching Skills	.905	7
Emotional Skills	.858	5

EFA was employed to identify the underlying structure of the 21-item scale. This section outlines the EFA process, including rotation methods, factor extraction criteria, sampling adequacy, and sphericity tests, followed by an interpretation of factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE).

First, EFA can be defined as a statistical method used to condense a number of variables, 21 items in the case of this study, into fewer latent factors. Variables that correlate highly with one another but weakly with others form distinct factors, creating coherent subsets that are relatively independent.

Second, factor rotation enhances interpretability while preserving the original data structure. Two rotation methods exist: orthogonal (assuming uncorrelated factors) and oblique (allowing inter-factor correlations). The Component Correlation Matrix (Table 4) revealed correlations exceeding ±.32, indicating interrelated factors and justifying the use of oblique rotation of which Promax rotation was used in this study.

Table 4

Component Correlation Matrix

Component	1	2	3
1	---		
2	.376	---	
3	.386	.372	---

Third, traditionally, scree plots determined factor extraction, but their subjectivity has drawn criticism. Instead, Parallel Analysis (Revelle, 2024) was used, suggesting a three-factor solution for 21 items of the scale (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Parallel Analysis Scree Plot

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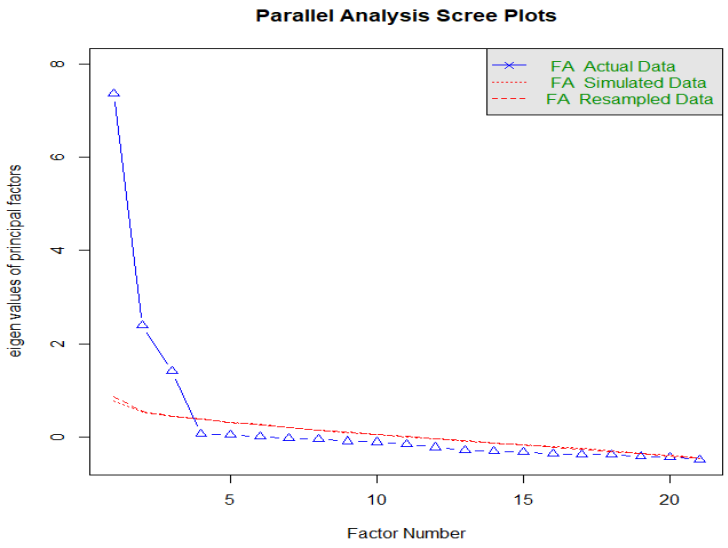

Fourth, sampling adequacy was confirmed by a KMO index of .937, classified as Marvellous sample size by Field (2024). Bartlett's sphericity test ($\chi^2(210) = 2234.90$, $p < .05$) confirmed factorability, indicating neither excessive nor insufficient correlations among 21 items of the scale.

Table 5

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.937
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2234.903
	df	210
	Sig.	.000

Fifth, Table 6 shows the number of extracted factors, and the total percentage of variance explained by those factors. As shown in the Table 6, EFA extracted three factors which accounted for 56.74% of the total variance.

Table 6

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	7.986	38.028	38.028	7.556	35.979	35.979	6.317
2	3.042	14.486	52.514	2.618	12.468	48.447	5.469
3	2.183	10.394	62.908	1.742	8.296	56.743	4.501
4	.622	2.964	65.872				
5	.589	2.806	68.678				
6	.575	2.740	71.419				
7	.551	2.625	74.044				
8	.516	2.455	76.499				
9	.499	2.374	78.873				
10	.482	2.295	81.169				
11	.453	2.159	83.328				
12	.438	2.085	85.413				
13	.424	2.020	87.432				
14	.393	1.873	89.305				
15	.374	1.779	91.084				

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16	.365	1.736	92.820
17	.349	1.661	94.481
18	.318	1.514	95.995
19	.304	1.446	97.441
20	.280	1.334	98.775
21	.257	1.225	100.000

Finally, Table 7 shows the factor loadings of the 21 items of the scale under the three extracted factors, together with their composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) indices. Before discussing the results, it should be noted that after running EFA through Promax rotation – as is the case in this study – Pattern Matrix (Table 7) shows the unique contribution of each item to its related factor. If the factor loadings in a Pattern Matrix are equal to or higher than .40, it can be concluded that the item has significant contribution to its factor. Since all factor loadings were higher than .40, it was concluded that 21 items measuring the scale had significant contributions to their constructs.

It should also be noted that CR values ≥ .70 and AVE values ≥ .50 confirmed robust construct reliability and validity respectively. Based on the results shown in the Table 7, it can be concluded that:

- Factor 1 (Communicative Skills Items 1–9): CR = .919, AVE = .748,
- Factor 2 (Teaching Skills, Items 10–16): CR = .906, AVE = .760, and
- Factor 3 (Emotional Skills, Items 17–21): CR = .859, AVE = .741.

Table 7

Rotated Factor Matrix

	Factor		
	1	2	3
First Factor = Communicative Skills, CR = .919, AVE = .748			
q9	.786		
q8	.783		
q4	.774		
q2	.756		
q5	.753		
q1	.727		
q6	.718		
q7	.717		
q3	.714		
Second Factor = Teaching Skills, CR = .906, AVE = .760			
q15		.808	
q12		.777	
q11		.769	
q16		.769	
q14		.756	
q13		.751	
q10		.689	
Third Factor = Emotional Skills, CR = .859, AVE = .741			
q20			.779
Q17			.756
Q21			.736
Q18			.718
q19			.715

The fit of the scale model, which comprised three measurement models of Communicative Skills, Teaching Skills, and Emotional Skills, was assessed through CFA. Before discussing the fit of the overall model, the fit of the three measurement models will be reported.

Figure 2 shows the measurement model of Communicative Skills. The standardized regression weights (beta) values connection items to the latent variable of Communicative Skills are analogous to Pearson Correlation. That is to say, beta values equal to or higher than .30 indicated moderate and significant contributions to the latent

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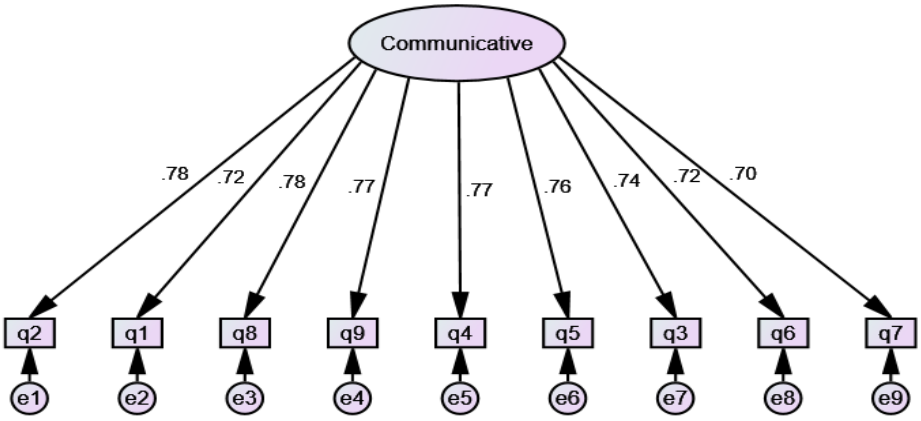
variable. Based on the results shown in the Figure 2, it can be concluded that nine items related to Communicative Skills had significant and large; i.e., >= .50, contributions to their latent variable. This will be discussed in detail when reporting Table 12. It is worth mentioning that some of the unstandardized regression weights were constrained to one due to the fact that IBM AMOS software required those initial weights for running the computations; however, they did not affect the standardized regression weights.

Figure 2

Measurement Model of Communicative Skills



Based on the results shown in Table 8, it can be concluded that the measurement model of Communicative Skills enjoyed a good fit. The Table 9 shows two sets of fit indices; absolute and incremental which examine the fit of the measurement model, and show its improvement over the null-model which has no relationships among the variables.

Table 8

Absolute and Incremental Fit Indices for Measurement Model of Communicative Skills

	Indices	Index	Criteria	Fit
Absolute	X^2	24.51	---	---
	Df	27	---	---
	P	.602	> .05	Good Fit
	X^2 Ratio	.908	< 3	Good Fit
	SRMR	.022	<.10	Good Fit
	RMSEA	.000	<.05	Good Fit
	95 % CI	[.001,.049]	<=.10	Good Fit
	PCLOSE	.955	>.05	Good Fit
	GFI	.974	>=.90	Good Fit
Incremental	RFI	.967	>=.90	Good Fit
	TLI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	CFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	NFI	.976	>=.90	Good Fit
	IFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
Hoelter (Sampling Adequacy)		326	>200	Adequate

The non-significant chi-square index of badness of fit supported the fit of the measurement model of Communicative Skills (χ^2 (27) = 24.51, p = .602). The ratio of chi-square over the degree of freedom; i.e., .908 was lower than 3. The SRMR index of .022 was lower than .10. The RMSEA of .001, and its confidence intervals [.001, .049] were lower than .10. The Probability of Close Fit (PCLOSE = .955) was higher than .05. And finally, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = .974) was higher than .90. All these absolute fit indices results supported the absolute fit of the measurement model of Communicative Skills.

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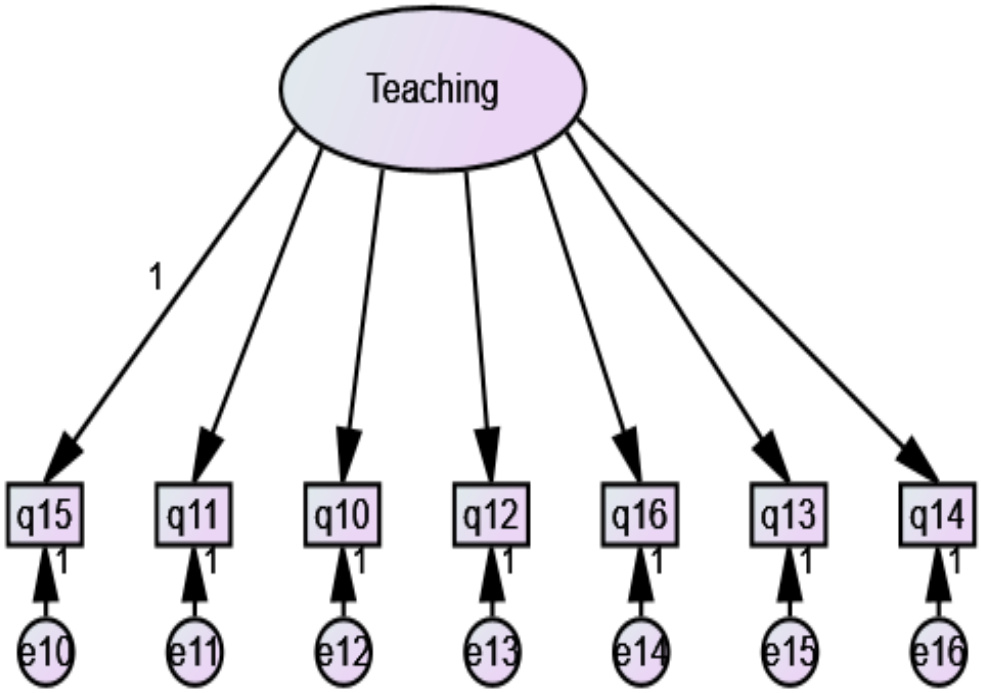
All incremental fit indices were higher than .90; Relative Fit Index (RFI = .967), Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 1.00), Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 1.00), Normed Fit Index (NFI = .976), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 1.00) were all higher than .90. All these indices supported the fit of the measurement model of Communicative Skills. And finally, the Critical N value of sampling adequacy was 326. Since this index was higher than 200, it is concluded that the present sample size of 200 was adequate for probing the fit of the model.

Figure 3 shows the measurement model of Teaching Skills. Based on the results shown in the Figure 3, it can be concluded that seven items related to Teaching Skills had significant and large; i.e., >= .50, contributions to their latent variable. This will be discussed in detail when reporting the Table 12.

Figure 3

Measurement Model of Teaching Skills



Based on the results shown in Table 9, it can be concluded that the measurement model of Teaching Skills enjoyed a good fit. The non-significant chi-square index of badness of fit supported the fit of the measurement model of Teaching Skills (χ^2 (14) = 6.08, p = .964). The ratio of chi-square over the degree of freedom; i.e., .435 was lower than 3. The SRMR index of .013 was lower than .10. The RMSEA of .001, and its confidence intervals [.001, .001] were lower than .10. The Probability of Close Fit (PCLOSE = .996) was higher than .05. And finally, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = .992) was higher than .90. All these absolute fit indices results supported the absolute fit of the measurement model of Teaching Skills.

Table 9

Absolute and Incremental Fit Indices for Measurement Model of Teaching Skills

	Indices	Index	Criteria	Fit
Absolute	X^2	6.08	---	---
	Df	14	---	---
	P	.964	> .05	Good Fit
	X^2 Ratio	.435	< 3	Good Fit
	SRMR	.013	<.10	Good Fit

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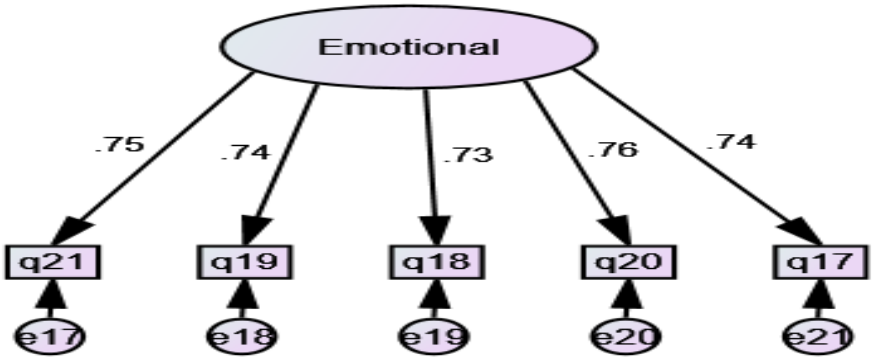
	RMSEA	.001	<.05	Good Fit
	95 % CI	[.001,.001]	<=.10	Good Fit
	PCLOSE	.996	>.05	Good Fit
	GFI	.992	>=.90	Good Fit
Incremental	RFI	.988	>=.90	Good Fit
	TLI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	CFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	NFI	.992	>=.90	Good Fit
	IFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
Hoelter (Sampling Adequacy)		770	>200	Adequate

All incremental fit indices were higher than .90. Relative Fit Index (RFI = .988), Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 1.00), Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 1.00), Normed Fit Index (NFI = .992), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 1.00) were all higher than .90. All these indices supported the fit of the measurement model of Teaching Skills. And finally, the Critical N value of sampling adequacy was 770. Since this index was higher than 200, it is concluded that the present sample size of 200 was adequate for probing the fit of the model.

Figure 4 shows the measurement model of Emotional Skills. Based on the results shown in the Figure 4 it can be concluded that five items related to Emotional Skills had significant and large; i.e., >= .50, contributions to their latent variable. This will be discussed in detail when reporting the Table 12.

Figure 4

Measurement Model of Emotional Skills



Based on the results shown in Table 10, it can be concluded that the measurement model of Emotional Skills enjoyed a good fit. The non-significant chi-square index of badness of fit supported the fit of the measurement model of Emotional Skills (χ^2 (5) = 1.84, p = .871). The ratio of chi-square over the degree of freedom; i.e., .368 was lower than 3. The SRMR index of .011 was lower than .10. The RMSEA of .001, and its confidence intervals [.001, .050] were lower than .10. The Probability of Close Fit (PCLOSE = .950) was higher than .05. And finally, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = .996) was higher than .90. All these absolute fit indices results supported the absolute fit of the measurement model of Emotional Skills.

Table 10

Absolute and Incremental Fit Indices for Measurement Model of Emotional Skills

	Indices	Index	Criteria	Fit
Absolute	X^2	1.84	---	---
	Df	5	---	---
	P	.871	> .05	Good Fit
	X^2 Ratio	.368	< 3	Good Fit
	SRMR	.011	<.10	Good Fit

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	RMSEA	.001	<.05	Good Fit
	95 % CI	[.001,.050]	<=.10	Good Fit
	PCLOSE	.950	>.05	Good Fit
	GFI	.996	>=.90	Good Fit
Incremental	RFI	.991	>=.90	Good Fit
	TLI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	CFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	NFI	.996	>=.90	Good Fit
	IFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
Hoelter (Sampling Adequacy)		1197	>200	Adequate

All incremental fit indices were higher than .90. Relative Fit Index (RFI = .991), Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 1.00), Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 1.00), Normed Fit Index (NFI = .996), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 1.00) were all higher than .90. All these indices supported the fit of the measurement model of Emotional Skills. And finally, the Critical N value of sampling adequacy was 1197. Since this index was higher than 200, it is concluded that the present sample size of 200 was adequate for probing the fit of the model.

Figure 5 shows the main model of the scale. Based on the results shown in the Figure 5 and the Table 11, it can be concluded that all 21 items had significant and large; i.e., >= .50, contributions to their latent variables. Moreover, the three latent variables of Communicative Skills (beta = .660), Teaching Skills (beta = .639, and Emotional Skills (beta = .677) had large contributions to TES.

Figure 5

Main Model of Teacher Effectiveness Scale

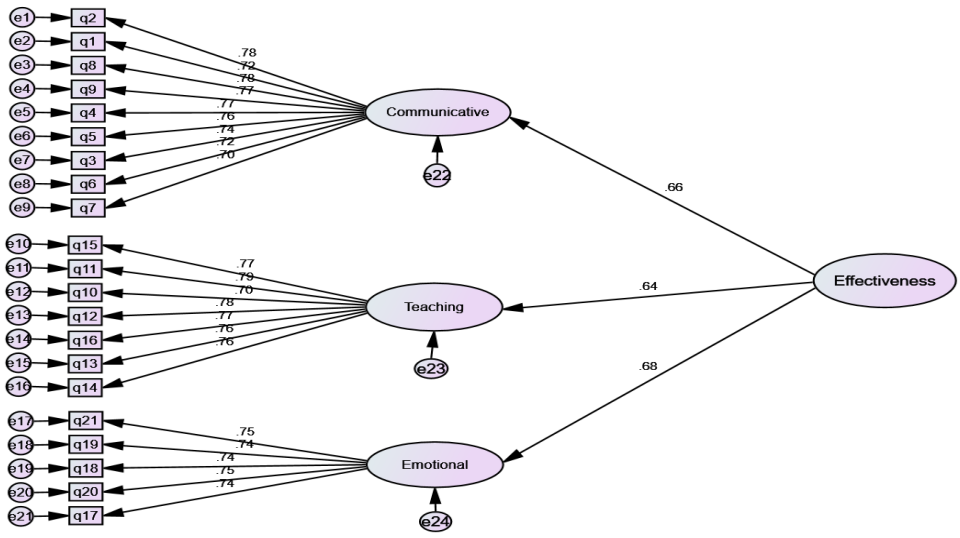

Table 11

Unstandardized (b) and Standardized (beta) Regression Weights

			B	S.E.	C.R.	P	Beta
Communicative	<---	Effectiveness	1.000				.660
Teaching	<---	Effectiveness	.913	.198	4.613	.001	.639
Emotional	<---	Effectiveness	.743	.163	4.563	.001	.677
q2	<---	Communicative	1.000				.783
q1	<---	Communicative	.590	.055	10.726	.001	.719
q8	<---	Communicative	.730	.061	11.888	.001	.783
q9	<---	Communicative	.926	.080	11.609	.001	.768

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q4	<---	Communicative	.934	.080	11.642	.001	.769
q5	<---	Communicative	.928	.082	11.384	.001	.756
q3	<---	Communicative	.880	.080	11.061	.001	.738
q6	<---	Communicative	.864	.080	10.803	.001	.724
q7	<---	Communicative	.583	.056	10.356	.001	.699
q15	<---	Teaching	1.000				.772
q11	<---	Teaching	1.023	.088	11.696	.001	.792
q10	<---	Teaching	.639	.063	10.112	.001	.699
q12	<---	Teaching	.951	.083	11.452	.001	.778
q16	<---	Teaching	.995	.087	11.387	.001	.774
q13	<---	Teaching	.960	.086	11.200	.001	.763
q14	<---	Teaching	.995	.090	11.071	.001	.756
q21	<---	Emotional	1.000				.748
q19	<---	Emotional	.873	.088	9.955	.001	.741
q18	<---	Emotional	.968	.098	9.882	.001	.736
q20	<---	Emotional	1.152	.114	10.097	.001	.752
q17	<---	Emotional	.976	.098	9.911	.001	.738

Based on the results shown in the Table 12, it can be concluded that the main model of the scale enjoyed a good fit. The non-significant chi-square index of badness of fit supported the fit of the main model (χ^2 (186) = 115.45, p = 1.00). The ratio of chi-square over the degree of freedom; i.e., .621 was lower than 3. The SRMR index of .028 was lower than .10. The RMSEA of .001, and its confidence intervals [.001, .001] were lower than .10. The Probability of Close Fit (PCLOSE = 1.00) was higher than .05. And finally, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = .951) was higher than .90. All these absolute fit indices results supported the absolute fit of the main model of the scale.

Table 12

Absolute and Incremental Fit Indices for Main Model of Teacher Effectiveness Scale

	Indices	Index	Criteria	Fit
Absolute	X^2	115.45	---	---
	Df	186	---	---
	P	1.00	> .05	Good Fit
	X^2 Ratio	.621	< 3	Good Fit
	SRMR	.028	<.10	Good Fit
	RMSEA	.001	<.05	Good Fit
	95 % CI	[.001,.001]	<=.10	Good Fit
	PCLOSE	1.00	>.05	Good Fit
	GFI	.951	>=.90	Good Fit
Incremental	RFI	.944	>=.90	Good Fit
	TLI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	CFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
	NFI	.950	>=.90	Good Fit
	IFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
Hoelter (Sampling Adequacy)		378	>200	Adequate

All incremental fit indices were higher than .90. Relative Fit Index (RFI = .944), Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 1.00), Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 1.00), Normed Fit Index (NFI = .950), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 1.00) were all higher than .90. All these indices supported the fit of the measurement model of Emotional Skills. And finally, the Critical N value of sampling adequacy was 378. Since this index was higher than 200, it is concluded that the present sample size of 200 was adequate for probing the fit of the model.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study sought to develop and validate a teacher effectiveness scale specifically designed for Iranian English teachers at the elementary level. The results provided strong empirical support for a three-component model of teacher effectiveness consisting of communicative

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skills, emotional skills, and elementary-level teaching skills. The findings demonstrated that the proposed scale possesses satisfactory psychometric properties, including high internal consistency, clear factorial structure, and strong construct validity. These outcomes not only confirm the multidimensional nature of teacher effectiveness but also underscore the contextual specificity required when evaluating EFL teachers working with young learners.

The extraction of communicative skills as a central component of teacher effectiveness highlights the fundamental role of interaction in elementary-level EFL classrooms. The results revealed that skills such as building strong relationships, providing corrective feedback, fostering collaboration, and generating equal learning opportunities significantly contributed to overall teacher effectiveness. This finding aligns with research emphasizing that effective communication forms the backbone of successful teaching, particularly in language classrooms where interaction is both a means and an objective of instruction (Tan et al., 2019; Zhang, 2017). Elementary learners rely heavily on verbal and non-verbal cues to comprehend meaning, maintain engagement, and feel emotionally secure, making teachers' communicative competence indispensable.

These findings are consistent with studies indicating that strong teacher–student relationships positively influence classroom climate, learner motivation, and behavioral regulation (Greenberg et al., 2014; Yassine et al., 2020). Moreover, communicative skills such as parent involvement and collaboration between school and home reflect broader educational responsibilities placed on elementary teachers. Prior research has shown that when teachers actively engage parents and establish cooperative relationships, students benefit from increased consistency, emotional support, and academic reinforcement (Dong et al., 2020; Owusu & Cobbold, 2020). Thus, the prominence of communicative skills in the present model reinforces their centrality in effective elementary-level EFL teaching.

The second major component identified in the study was emotional skills, encompassing emotional intelligence, effective support, coping strategies, avoidance of bias, and classroom fairness. The results indicated that emotional skills had a substantial contribution to teacher effectiveness, underscoring the emotional demands inherent in teaching young learners. This finding resonates with contemporary views that teaching is an emotionally intensive profession requiring teachers to manage their own emotions while responding sensitively to learners' affective needs (Richards, 2020). Emotional intelligence enables teachers to regulate stress, maintain positive classroom interactions, and respond constructively to challenging situations.

Empirical support for the role of emotional skills in teacher effectiveness has been widely documented. Valente et al. (Valente et al., 2019) demonstrated that teachers with higher emotional intelligence are more effective in managing classroom discipline and creating supportive learning environments. Similarly, Baghel et al. (Baghel et al., 2025) emphasized that emotional intelligence enhances teacher effectiveness by fostering empathy, resilience, and adaptive coping strategies. In the elementary context, where learners are particularly sensitive to emotional cues, teachers' emotional competence becomes even more critical. The present findings reinforce the argument that emotional skills are not peripheral but central to effective teaching.

Avoiding bias and enacting classroom fairness emerged as particularly salient emotional skills in the model. These findings align with research suggesting that perceived fairness significantly influences learners' trust, engagement, and academic self-concept (Yassine et al., 2020). Elementary learners are especially vulnerable to perceived inequities, and even subtle forms of favoritism or bias can have lasting negative effects. Therefore, emotionally skilled teachers who consciously promote fairness contribute to more inclusive and equitable learning environments, a conclusion supported by prior studies on classroom management and teacher ethics (Greenberg et al., 2014; Sinclair, 2024).

The third component, elementary-level teaching skills, reflects pedagogical competencies uniquely suited to young EFL learners. This component included good pedagogical knowledge, use of playful activities, creation of meaningful learning environments, integration of technology, principled use of L1, flexibility in teaching and assessment, and identification of learning styles. The prominence of this component confirms that effective elementary teaching requires specialized instructional strategies that differ from those employed at higher educational levels. Young learners benefit from experiential, playful, and contextually meaningful activities that align with their cognitive and emotional development (De la Fuente & Goldenberg, 2022; Fatehi Rad et al., 2024).

The findings are consistent with research demonstrating that play-based and activity-oriented approaches enhance engagement and learning outcomes among young EFL learners (Yang et al., 2018). Furthermore, the integration of technology as a component of teaching skills reflects

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contemporary educational realities. Technology-enhanced instruction has been shown to support literacy development, motivation, and differentiated learning when used appropriately (Johnson & Smith, 2014; Yang et al., 2018). The present study's results suggest that elementary-level teacher effectiveness increasingly depends on teachers' ability to blend traditional pedagogical practices with digital tools.

Another notable result concerns the principled use of learners' first language (L1) in instruction. The inclusion of L1 use as an element of effective teaching aligns with growing evidence that strategic code-switching can scaffold comprehension, reduce anxiety, and facilitate early language acquisition (De la Fuente & Goldenberg, 2022). In contexts where learners have minimal exposure to English outside the classroom, L1 use can function as a pedagogical bridge rather than a hindrance, a conclusion supported by earlier EFL research (Purnomo, 2023).

The psychometric results of the study further strengthen its contributions. High Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall scale and its subcomponents indicate strong internal consistency, suggesting that the items coherently measure their intended constructs. The exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses confirmed a stable three-factor structure, lending empirical support to the conceptualization of teacher effectiveness as a multidimensional construct. These findings are in line with previous scale development studies that emphasize the importance of factorial validity in educational measurement (Bowman, 2013; Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009). The robust model fit indices further indicate that the proposed scale provides a reliable and valid tool for assessing teacher effectiveness among Iranian elementary-level EFL teachers.

Collectively, the results of this study extend existing literature by offering a context-specific, empirically validated framework for understanding teacher effectiveness at the elementary EFL level. While prior studies have identified various characteristics of effective teachers, the present study integrates these characteristics into a coherent model grounded in empirical data and local educational realities (Karvandi et al., 2024; Moradzadeh Fard et al., 2025). By doing so, it addresses a significant gap in the literature and provides a foundation for both research and practice in elementary EFL education.

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to several limitations. First, the sample was limited to Iranian elementary-level EFL teachers, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or educational contexts. Second, the reliance on self-reported data may have introduced response bias, as participants' perceptions of effectiveness may not fully correspond to their actual classroom practices. Third, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to draw conclusions about the developmental or causal nature of teacher effectiveness over time.

Future research could address these limitations by examining the applicability of the proposed teacher effectiveness scale in other EFL contexts and educational systems. Longitudinal studies could explore how teacher effectiveness develops across different career stages and how it relates to student outcomes over time. Additionally, incorporating classroom observations and student performance data could provide a more comprehensive and triangulated understanding of teacher effectiveness at the elementary level.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study can inform teacher education and professional development programs by highlighting the importance of communicative, emotional, and pedagogical skills in elementary-level EFL teaching. Teacher educators may use the scale to diagnose strengths and areas for growth among teachers, while school administrators can employ it as a formative evaluation tool. Ultimately, fostering these core components of teacher effectiveness may contribute to improved instructional quality and more positive learning experiences for young EFL learners.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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