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Birzeit University Intermediate Students' Attitudes Toward Humanistic Traits Used by EFL Teachers in TEFL: An Analytical Study

السمات الإنسانية في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية من
وجهة نظر طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية ومدرسيها في جامعة بيرزيت:
دراسة تحليلية

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Abstract:

This study aimed at investigating Birzeit University EFL instructors' and students' attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits in teaching English as a foreign language TEFL. A questionnaire of 12 items was administered to a random sample of 77 intermediate students enrolled in different specializations and faculties. In addition to the questionnaire, structured interviews with five open-ended questions were conducted with EFL instructors from the Department of Languages and Translation. The data were collected and analyzed to find out the means, percentages and standard deviations for the elements presented in the questionnaire. The answers of the EFL instructors were also analyzed qualitatively. The results showed positive attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits in teaching EFL among both, students and instructors. The results also showed that having these traits while teaching EFL has very good effects on learning English as a foreign language in general.

Keywords: Humanism in TEFL, Humanistic Traits, EFL Instructors' Attitudes, EFL Learners' and teachers' Attitudes.

المخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء آراء وتوجهات طلاب و مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة بيرزيت في موضوع تبني السمات الانسانية في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية. للحصول على المعلومات المطلوبة، قامت الباحثة باستخدام استبانة مكونة من 12 فقرة مختلفة، وقد توزعت الاستبانة على 77 طالباً وطالبة من تخصصات و كليات مختلفة. وجرى اختيار الطلاب من ضمن المستوى المتوسط في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. إضافة للاستبانة فقد عمدت الباحثة إلى عقد مقابلات مع مجموعة من مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية في دائرة اللغات والترجمة لاستقصاء آرائهم حول استخدام السمات والسلوكيات الإنسانية في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. لهذا الغرض قامت الباحثة بإعداد خمسة أسئلة مفتوحة الإجابة. وجرى جمع البيانات وتحليلها باستخدام الطرق والأساليب الكمية

والنوعية الملائمة لهذا الغرض. أظهرت النتائج و بشكل واضح التوجه الإيجابي للطلبة و المدرسين نحو أهمية استخدام وتبني مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية للمنهج الإنساني. كما أظهرت كذلك أن تبني المنهج الإنساني له آثار إيجابية في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل عام.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المنهج الإنساني في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، السمات الإنسانية، توجهات طلاب و مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية لاستخدام السمات الإنسانية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية.

Introduction:

Teaching English as a foreign language in Palestine is an important necessity to improve students' learning and progression in various domains and fields. It has been related strongly to public and private education. Like other countries in the region, Palestine has been following and tracing the developmental methods, approaches, and theories in education, especially those trends related to teaching and learning English as a foreign language (TEFL). As a matter of fact, TEFL has undergone reforms concerning pedagogy, curricula, syllabi, materials, etc., to correspond with learners' recent needs. One of the important approaches, the humanistic approach, is of particular interest to educators. This approach is mainly concerned with granting rights to learners to select what matches their needs in the learning process. It gives a great deal of attention to the learners' feelings, emotions, and perspectives. This pedagogical concept tends towards less teacher dominance and more student-centeredness. Actually, it is a shift from making learners recognize and absorb the content of academic books to catering to students' learning needs; thereby, they can perceive learning as a lifelong process. In this paper, the researcher presents an analysis of Birzeit University English intermediate students' perspectives on humanistic traits in TEFL and teachers' perceptions on some suggested developmental humanism-based strategies to be integrated into TEFL.

Humanistic Traits

Humanism considers dignity, integrity, autonomy, equity, freedom, and learner's potential as its main pillars (Brockett, 1998). Aloni (2007)

points out that learners need a zone of respect, love, care, and trust inside the classroom. This means that educators must give more opportunities for learners to decide and trust their decisions.

According to Al Khalidi (2015), humanistic traits are mainly related to all humanistic traits teachers should have and show when interacting with or teaching learners, either inside the classroom or outside it. These qualities are based on love, care, and respect. They also include the ability to accept students' opinions and give priority to their interests and concerns. Strong (2002) points out that effective teachers succeed in engaging their students in the classroom environment, never leaving any student behind neglected or unnoticed. They are the educators who believe in the true meaning of inclusiveness of every learner. De Groot (2011) asserts that humanistic teachers should also let learners have control over their learning. This way, they can improve personal development and the sense of social justice, which will help them grow in well-being and positively impact the whole society.

McKenna (1995) states that teachers with humanistic traits should guide their learners towards self-actualization, to be able to grow and develop emotionally as well as intellectually to achieve the main goal of education. Veugelers (2011) argues that humanistic teaching should occur through personal experiences in the form of projects, peer teaching, and service-learning. This means that students should have all the necessary resources to achieve their objectives. Aloni (2007) states that a humanistic teacher's role as a facilitator is a fundamental part of humanistic teaching. Teachers should encourage learners to discover and improve their interests to develop more awareness of social issues.

In this research, humanistic traits are the qualities adopted by EFL teachers at Birzeit University while teaching students or interacting with students. These traits are mainly based on showing respect, love, care, and trust.

Statement of the problem

Throughout her work as an EFL teacher, the researcher has experienced the effectiveness of using the humanistic approach in teaching English.

She has witnessed the remarkable change this can bring to students' motivation to learn the language and use it freely and spontaneously. However, many other English language instructors are still obsessed with the idea of intensity and rigor in teaching the language. They believe that the more strictness and firmness they show, the better the learning outcomes they will achieve. This has created a sense of sadness and frustration among them, and a turning point to conduct this research to make changes in the teachers' attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits.

Humanism in TEFL

Teaching English as a foreign language is prevalent in all educational levels, from K.G. to university instruction. However, foreign languages allow few opportunities for their use by the students outside the classroom. This makes language learning and acquisition quite challenging. Such a situation may create motivation for EFL educators to search eagerly for ways and methods to make language learning more approachable to learners. Arifi (2017) points out that the humanistic approach with all the recommended traits and qualities can be the best way to make students feel secure, relaxed, and well-integrated in the EFL classroom. This way, they can learn the language with more flexibility and attainability.

The humanistic approach has contributed to significant changes in the way EFL is taught. McLeod (2007) argues that many new methodologies were associated with new language teaching and learning theories, such as communicative language learning, suggestopedia, and the silent way, which appeared in the late '70s. Of course, it is not meant here that the cognitive part should be neglected in teaching and learning. On the contrary, there is a strong need to add the affective role to the cognitive part to boost minds and enhance L2 learning. Stevick (1996) has greatly asserted the significance of the cognitive process's effectiveness for efficient memory.

Attitude

Attitude has been defined as an "evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred

on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent" (Gardner, 1985: 9). Brown defines attitude as the following, "attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents' and peers' attitudes, contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience" (1994: 168). Some scholars like Breckler (1984) have divided this term into three main components; the affective, the behavioral, and the cognitive components (ABC model) to indicate the importance and high complexity of this term.

In this paper, attitude is a way of thinking or a tendency to react or respond either positively or negatively towards a certain idea, a person, or a situation. In this study, students' attitudes towards humanistic traits in EFL teaching are measured using an attitudinal questionnaire.

Motivation in EFL

If motivation has a significant role in education, it is highly important to learn English as a foreign language. Motivation has been the main discussion of many experts in the field of education. So what does motivation mean? And what is the degree of its importance for applying the humanistic approach in teaching EFL? Motivation is defined as the energy or drive that enhances and moves individuals to carry out something in their nature (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Despite being one of the core key terms in psychology and education, there is no consensus on this term's main definition.

In this research, motivation refers to stimulating EFL students and encouraging them to learn the language with enough inducement and prompting.

Purposes of the study

This study aims at investigating Birzeit University students' attitudes towards the humanistic traits adopted by EFL teachers and their effects on enhancing learners' motivation towards learning the English language. It is also directed towards exploring some EFL instructors'

attitudes towards using the humanistic approach in EFL teaching and surveying some of their personal experience in this area.

Research questions

The study aims to answer the following questions;

1. What are the EFL students' attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits by EFL instructors at Birzeit University?
2. What are the EFL teachers' attitudes towards adopting the humanistic approach in teaching and its impact on increasing students' motivation?

Significance of the study

This study is concerned with investigating students' attitudes towards using the humanistic approach in teaching the English language at Birzeit University and its prospective positive impact on enhancing students' motivation to learn and use the language. Abu Ayyash (2015) highlights EFL learners' need to introduce new ways and adopt new traits that can change EFL learners' attitudes towards EFL learning. The researcher hopes that the results of this study may give some important insights on the importance of adopting more humanistic strategies in teaching the English language.

It is worth mentioning that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study could be one of the few studies that investigate the humanistic traits in the context of EFL teaching in the Palestinian universities.

Limitations of the study

This study is limited to the instructors at the Department of Languages and Translation at Birzeit University. It is also limited to intermediate A2/1 students at Birzeit University. Furthermore, the study is carried out during the second semester of 2018/ 2019. Finally, the instruments are limited to the attitudinal questionnaire and the instructors' interview.

The humanistic approach: A historical background

After the Second World War and during the 1950s, several social and political movements started their enthusiastic work towards a reform that can bring more stability, security, and peace to the American and European societies (Richards & Combs, 1992). These movements took their first steady steps within the American society. Education was one field not away from these changes (Samuels, 2019). Philosophical theories have influenced several philosophers and educators to create their own new visions for leading societies and education towards prosperity and success. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow had a deep influence on educators who recognized the importance of introducing humanism in the classroom. They believe that free will should be part of the individuals' practice. This means giving more choices for the way of living. They also suggest personal growth and fulfillment as the most effective life motivation (McLeod, 2007).

This new trend met the American society's passion and needs, which demanded more harmony, understanding, sympathy, and trust. In the same way, educators recognized the need to meet students' interests, satisfy their needs, and understand their emotions (Fitzgerald, Dawson, and Hackling 2009).

As a result, more attention was paid not only to the intellectual but also to the personal dimension of learners. More tendencies appeared towards self-actualization. Gertrude Moskowitz was a pioneer in humanism in education; she describes this period stating, "There seems to be a shift in our society's focus from one of academic achievement to one of self-actualization, achieving one's potential, sharing oneself, and giving and receiving support are all parts of this new area of emphasis." (Moskowitz 1978, 10)

Arnold (1998) argued for the integration of humanism in students' work and tasks. In the same way, Moskowitz (1978) asserted the importance of using humanistic strategies in teaching a foreign language. He thinks that the justification for that includes more positiveness, higher self-esteem, and self-confidence. Proponents of humanism believe that students with self-actualization

will have internal strength and security that will enhance their willingness to use foreign language with no hesitation or fear (Simon, 1993). The result will definitely be more effective learners of foreign languages, including English.

In addition to considering students' needs and interests, the humanistic approach also considers the educators' and teachers' roles highly. Teachers should be "affective". That is to say, how an experience or an action or a situation suits students' needs can positively affect their feelings and emotions (Arnold, 1999). Jain (2011) asserts that teachers should play their role as friends who are easy and available to be approached at any time. This can spare more freedom in the classroom and make it possible for students to learn according to their abilities and interests rather than to be forced to follow their teacher's style or preferences.

This leads to the result that students' needs or feelings should be the first priority even before the acquisition of knowledge. Students should be granted more freedom in the classroom by allowing them to decide which topic to choose for discussion or how to approach a particular situation. A democratic and open environment is a key factor in humanistic classrooms, where students are more improved and motivated. This leads to meaningful learning. More meaningful learning outcomes can be noticed by having more engagement of personal life, a better understanding of the meaning of things, and achieving true self-actualization (Patterson, 1977).

Several empirical studies were conducted to find out more about the importance of adopting humanistic traits by teachers and the teacher-student relationship's vital role in enhancing learning in general and EFL in particular.

Kwangsawad (2017) conducted a quantitative study on stakeholders' perceptions of effective EFL teachers. The researcher surveyed the perceptions of 472 students, 34 EFL pre-service teachers, and 70 school administrators through completing a questionnaire designed purposefully for that aim at Mahasarakham University, Thailand. According to the students who participated in the study, the results showed a significant teacher-student relationship at an effective EFL teaching state.

Similarly, Göksel and Rakıçioğlu-Söylemez (2018), in their study that aimed at exploring EFL pre-service teachers' conception of the characteristics related with effective EFL teachers, the researchers collected the data through concept maps and focus group interviews with 20 pre-service teachers. Among the most important characteristics of an effective EFL teacher is the EFL teacher's personality, such as having traits of patience, helping, humor, and establishing a good relationship with students.

Another significant study in this field of research was conducted by Kalay (2017) on what makes an effective EFL teacher. The study had 132 elementary and pre-intermediate students, in addition to 16 EFL instructors at a state university school of foreign languages in Turkey. The researcher adopted a questionnaire to survey both students' and teachers' perceptions of personal traits and qualities that can affect EFL learning. The results showed a significant relationship between adopting humanistic qualities in EFL and having a conducive and effective learning environment.

Hashim, Alam and Yusoff (2014) carried out a study to investigate the relationship between teacher's personality, monitoring, leading environment, and students' EFL performance. The researchers used a sample of college students in 12 different campus locations across Malaysia. Among the study results, it was revealed that the teacher's personality and how he/she deals with students are an important determinant of student proficiency in English.

All the previous studies that were made and conducted following the humanistic approach in teaching and learning have placed this approach in a significant position as it is conducive, motivating, enhancing, and gearing towards more EFL progression. Taking this in mind, the researcher found out that little research was conducted on humanism in teaching EFL in the Palestinian context. Therefore, this study will investigate students' perceptions on adopting more humanistic traits in EFL and will also investigate EFL teachers' views on following more humanistic techniques and their personal experiences regarding this trend in Birzeit University.

Methods and Procedures

In this section, the procedures and methods that the researcher used to conduct this research are presented. This section also consists of full descriptions of the study participants, research instruments, the validity and reliability of the instruments, and the design and administration of the instruments.

The participants of the study

This study was conducted at the Department of Languages and Translation at Birzeit University during the second semester of the academic year 2018/ 2019. The study participants consisted of 77 students from intermediate 1 level, 1201 (A2-1). These students were placed in this level after sitting for the language placement exam held by the university. Some of them have reached this level after finishing A1/ remedial courses. So they ranged between being in the first and second years at the university. Consequently, their age ranged between 18 and 19 years. As for their major specializations, they are from different faculties and majors.

Instruments of the study

For the purpose of this study, two instruments were used, the student's questionnaire and instructors' structured interviews.

As for the student's questionnaire, the questionnaire was adopted and adapted from Al Musawi and Karam (2014), a similar study conducted for almost the same purpose at Kuwaiti and Bahraini universities. The questionnaire consisted of 12 items. English was the language of the questionnaire. However, the researcher was keen to simplify the language so that all students could read and understand it before they respond. The purpose of the study was presented for the students, and they were asked to give their responses frankly.

Instructors' interviews

A semi-structured interview was prepared to scrutinize the instructors' attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits in EFL and its

prospective effect on enhancing their motivation and changing their attitudes towards EFL. The interview, which represented the qualitative aspect in this study, was based on five open questions on the teachers' awareness and attitudes towards adopting humanistic traits in EFL teaching.

Validity and reliability

As previous researchers tested the questionnaire for validity and reliability, there was no need to go through this process again.

Data collection

Being a faculty member at the Department of Languages and Translation at Birzeit University, the researcher was able to start her research easily without any need for official or formal procedures. The distribution of the questionnaire was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2018/2019. The researcher asked for help from three of her colleagues at the department to distribute it. Their sections were 1201/1. The total number of students who answered the questionnaire was 77.

Semi-structured interviews were arranged and conducted with the instructors as another method of data collection. The semi-structured interviews implied mutual interactions, which enabled the instructors interviewed and the researcher to express their opinions towards .humanistic traits in EFL teaching

Data Analysis and Discussion

The statistical tools that were implemented to reach the inferences of the research were the following:

Findings and discussion

The research aimed to identify students and learners' attitudes concerning adopting humanistic traits in EFL learning and teaching. Two main questions were posed:

- 1- What are the learners' attitudes towards teachers' use of humanistic traits in EFL teaching?
- 2- What are the EFL teachers' attitudes towards adopting the humanistic approach in EFL teaching?

Findings and discussion of the first question

The first question of the research aimed at identifying students' attitudes towards teachers using and adopting humanistic traits in EFL teaching. To answer the question, means and standard deviations were calculated and displayed in the tables below:

Analysis of the data:

Table 1 shows the humanistic traits as follows:

Table 1
The Values of Mean, Mean Scores Percentage, and Standard Deviation for Each Statement

No.	Statement	Mean	Mean Scores Percentage (%)	Standard Deviation
1	Show respect to the students' personal feelings, beliefs, and ideas.	3.00	100.0%	.00
2	Provide help or advice (e.g., give a recommendation or a retest to the student) to the students who need it without hesitation or delay.	2.80	93.9%	.50
3	Observe the existing traditions in both the university and country.	2.50	81.8%	.80
4	Understand the reasons that the student will indicate concerning his/her absence or non-submission of works in due time.	2.60	86.1%	.70
5	Answer the students' questions and react to their comments during office hours with enthusiasm and generosity.	2.70	91.3%	.60
6	Deal with the students as mature and responsible individuals.	2.60	87.0%	.70
7	Make the students feel that they are always important individuals in the classroom.	2.50	83.1%	.80

No.	Statement	Mean	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
			Percentage (%)	
8	Use his/her authority in the class while being friendly with students.	2.70	90.5%	.60
9	Be frank and honest in dealing with students.	2.60	88.3%	.60
10	Listen attentively to the students' complaints with respect to the difficulty of the course content, the exam, or test questions.	2.80	91.8%	.50
11	Encourage students to cooperate with each other and to practice constructive group work in the classroom.	2.50	84.8%	.70
12	Admit mistakes and apologize for being wrong to students in due time.	2.70	90.0%	.60

As seen in Table 1, the attitudes of EFL learners towards teachers' humanistic traits in EFL teaching were positive. The values of mean, mean scores' percentage, and standard deviation for each statement were shown. It appeared that item 1 show respect to the students' personal feelings, beliefs, and ideas had the highest rank with a percentage of 100% and a mean of 3, which indicates that students perceive respect for their feelings and emotions as the most important humanistic trait that should be adopted by every teacher. Other items that have shown high ranking was item 2 provide help or advice (e.g., give a recommendation or a retest to the student) to the students who need it without hesitation or delay with a percentage of 93.9% and a mean of 2.80. This proves that this humanistic trait has a high position that can affect students positively. Students prefer teachers who provide help and advice to their students. Item 10 listen attentively to the student' complaints with respect to the difficulty of the course content or the exam or test questions got a percentage of 91.8% and a mean of 2.80. This illustrates the importance of giving enough attention to students' complaints by showing respect to their concerns related to the

learning material or other tasks or tests. Item 5 answer the students' questions and respond to their comments during office hours with enthusiasm and generosity gained a percentage of 91.3% and a mean of 2.70. This proves the importance of being always ready to answer students' questions and react to their comments with enthusiastic generosity. Students need to feel the warmth of sincere help and support from teachers. The students showed a high degree of attention (90%) for item 12 admit mistakes and apologize for being wrong to students in due time, and a mean of 2.70. This high percentage represents students' preference to feel that their teacher is modest and humble and ready to admit their mistakes.

However, item 3 observe the existing traditions in both the university and country received the lowest rank with 81.8% and a mean of 2.50, which illustrates that students do not feel that this is an essential trait of high importance. Other items gained medium rankings with percentages of 88.3% and a mean of 2.60 for item 9, a percentage of 87.0% and a mean of 2.60 for item 6, a percentage of 86.1% and a mean of 2.60 for item 4, and a percentage of 84.8% and a mean of 2.50 for item 11.

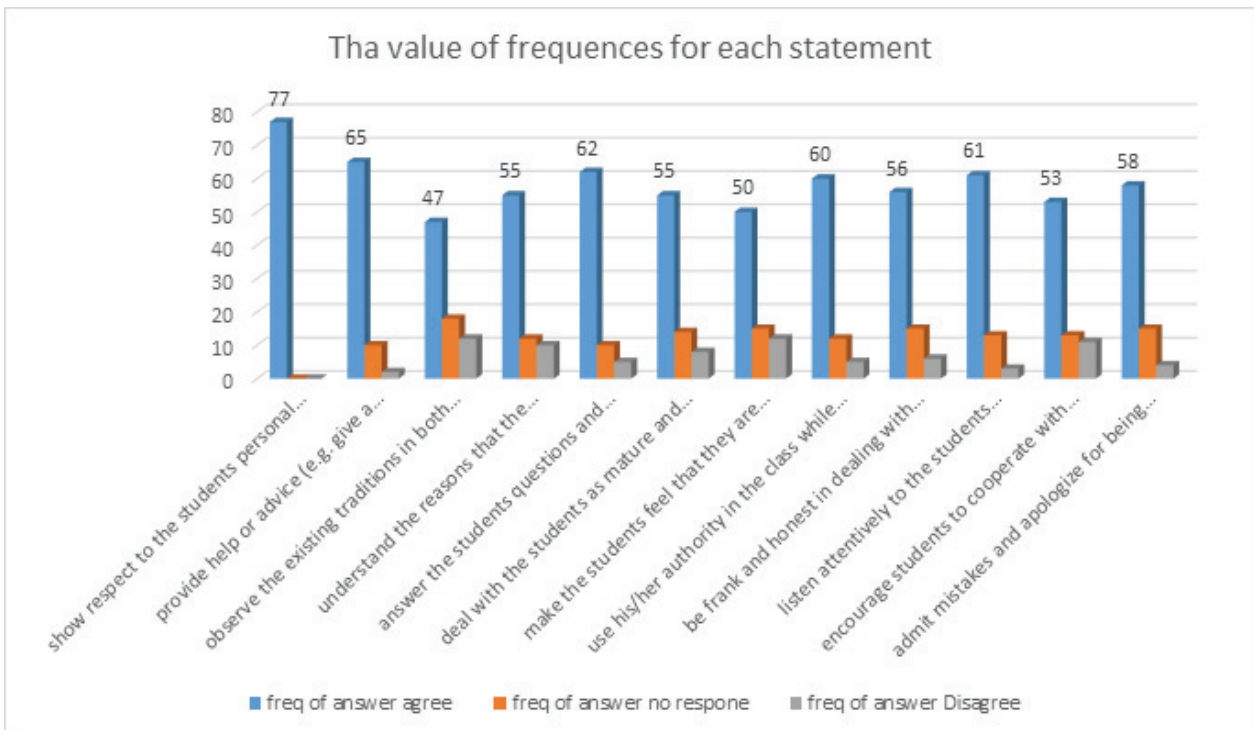
Table 2

View the Values of Frequencies and Percentage for Each Statement

Humanistic Traits								
No.	Statement	Freq. of answer agree	Freq. %	Freq. of answers no response	Freq. %	Freq. of answers Disagree	Freq. %	all freq.
1	Show respect to the students personal feelings, beliefs and ideas	77	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	100.0

Humanistic Traits								
No.	Statement	Freq. of answer agree	Freq. %	Freq. of answers no response	Freq. %	Freq. of answers Disagree	Freq. %	all freq.
2	Provide help or advice (e.g. give a recommendation or a retest to the student) to the students who need it without hesitation or delay	65	84.4	10	13.0	2	2.6	100.0
3	Observe the existing traditions in both the university and country	47	61.0	18	23.4	12	15.6	100.0
4	Understand the reasons that the student will indicate concerning his/her absence or non-submission of works in due time	55	71.4	12	15.6	10	13.0	100.0
5	Answer the students questions and react to their comments during office hours with enthusiasm and generosity	62	80.5	10	13.0	5	6.5	100.0
6	Deal with the students as mature and responsible individuals	55	71.4	14	18.2	8	10.4	100.0
7	Make the students feel that they are always important individuals in the classroom	50	64.9	15	19.5	12	15.6	100.0
8	Use his/her authority in the class while being friendly with students	60	77.9	12	15.6	5	6.5	100.0
9	Be frank and honest in dealing with students	56	72.7	15	19.5	6	7.8	100.0
10	Listen attentively to the students complaints with respect to the difficulty of the course content or the exam or test questions	61	79.2	13	16.9	3	3.9	100.0
11	Encourage students to cooperate with each other and to practice constructive group work in the classroom	53	68.8	13	16.9	11	14.3	100.0
12	Admit mistakes and apologize for being wrong to students in due time	58	75.3	15	19.5	4	5.2	100.0

Table 2 shows the values of frequencies and the percentage for each statement, which corresponds with the results shown in Table 1.



(Figure 1. Students’ Perceiving Humanistic Traits (the value of frequencies for each statement

Figure 1 shows the values of frequencies for the categories of answers: Agree, Neutral, and Disagree.

As viewed, the Agree category shows a high excellence over other answer categories.

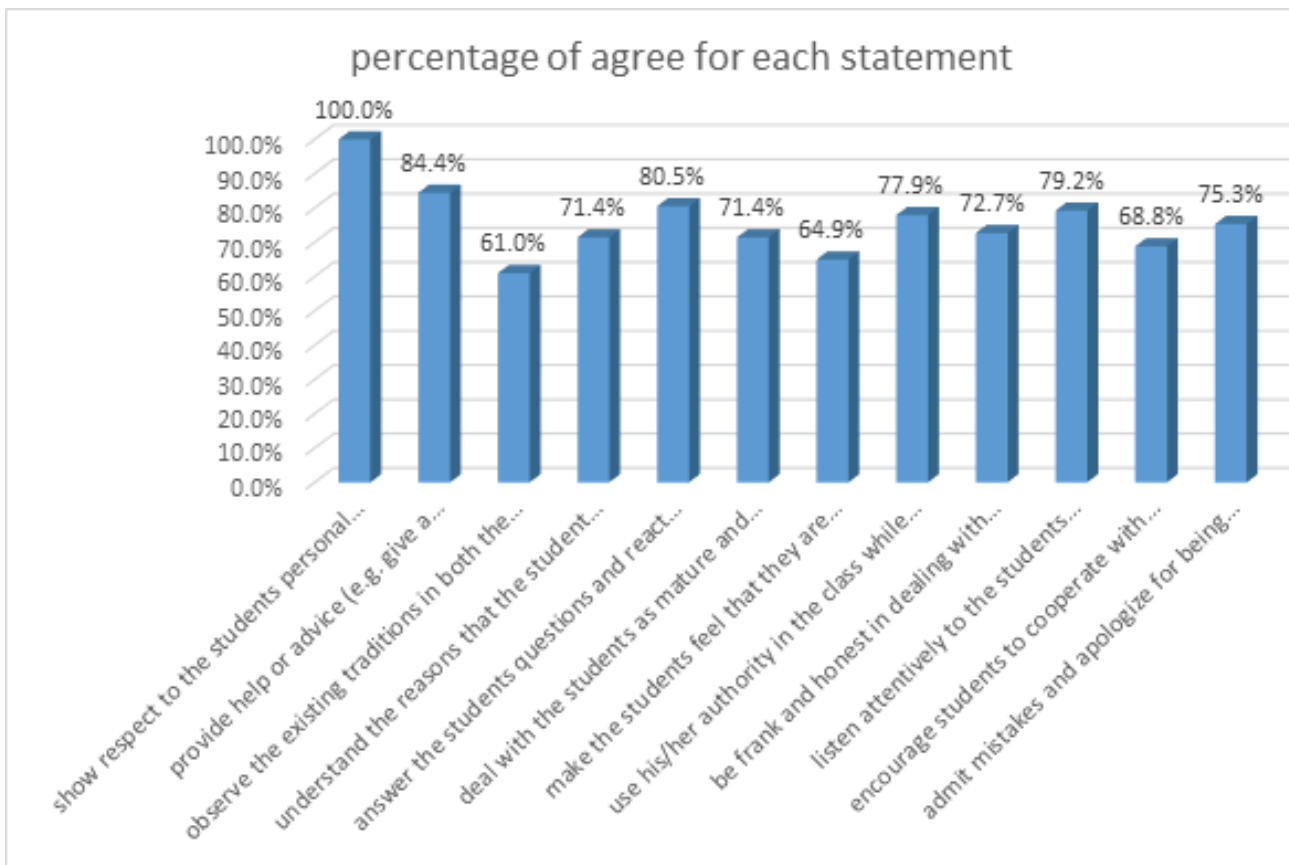


Figure 2. Teachers’ Humanistic Perceived Traits.

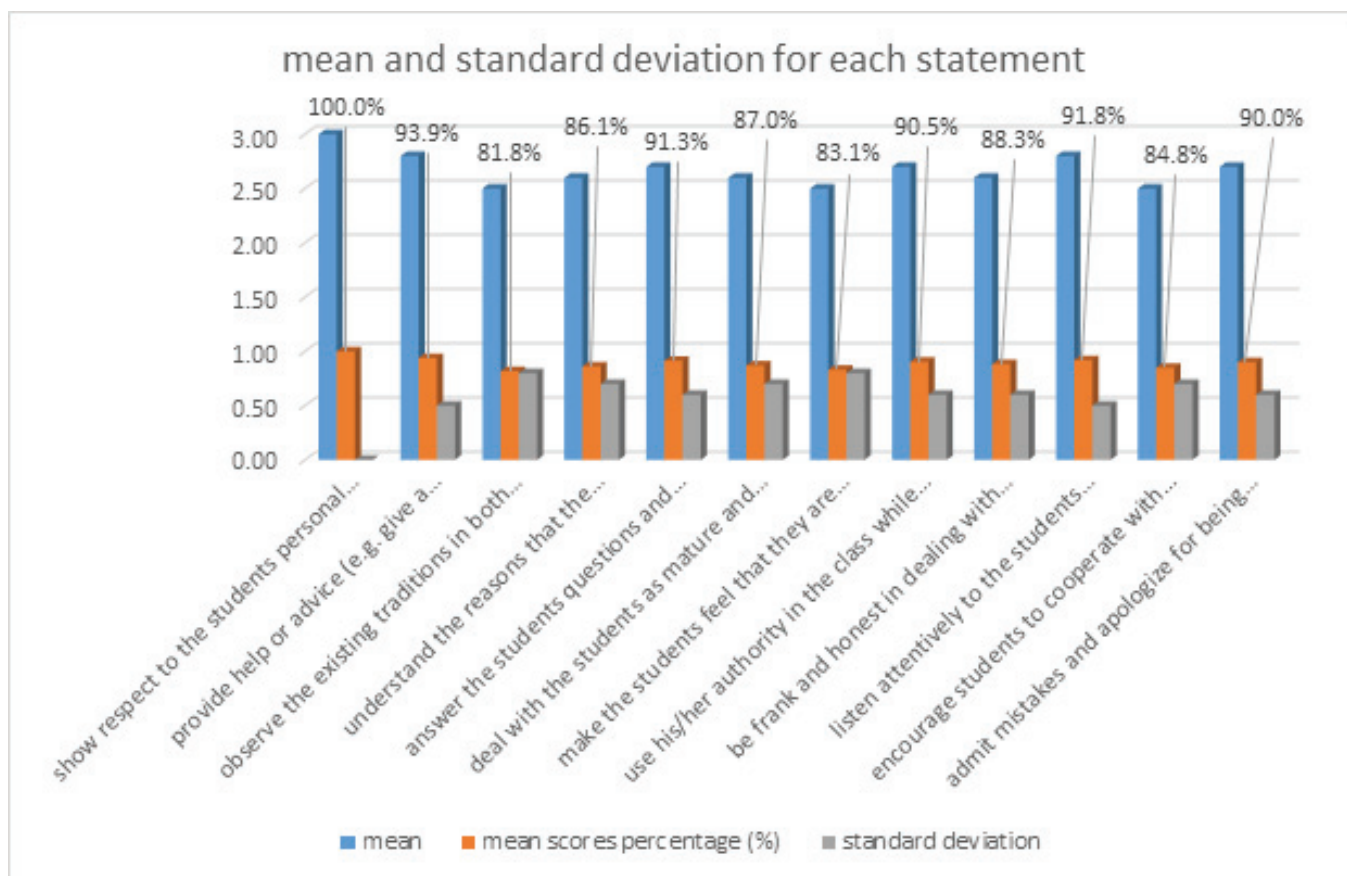


Figure 3. Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Statement.

Findings and discussion of the second question:

The second question of the research aimed at investigating EFL teachers' attitudes towards some humanistic traits in teaching EFL. The researcher, as an EFL teacher at the Department of Languages and Translation at Birzeit University, interviewed five of her colleagues and asked them the following questions:

1. As an EFL teacher, how do you perceive the following humanistic traits in EFL teaching?
2. Handling students' emotions.
3. Improving EFL teachers' personality
4. Cultivation of supporting and inclusive classroom atmosphere
5. More learning choices

Personalization (Making the learning material relevant)

The answers of the interviewees on the questions were as follows:

Q 1 Handling students' emotions.

The first interviewee asserted that this is a very important part of the mission of any teacher. He quoted a well-known saying of a scholar who said, "You can't succeed as a professional teacher unless you understand your stuff," referring to students' feelings.

The second teacher's response to the same question was that she absolutely takes students' feelings and emotions into consideration, especially while working in groups, and she understands that there are differences among students, females and males, which any EFL teacher should consider very well.

The third interviewee thinks that teachers cannot stop students' reactions towards the material. In her opinion, one important provocative element in the learning process is trying to create a link between the content and students' emotions and feelings. She believes that students' feelings and emotions are of high importance in the progression of the learning process and can create an interactive atmosphere, and it can

make students feel that they are a core part of the educational process.

The fourth EFL teacher believes that caring how the students feel in general is one of her traits in teaching EFL. According to her, this helps her understand the students' attitudes towards the material in general and makes them feel more motivated as motivation is an important factor in learning any foreign language.

The last teacher thinks that she puts her students' emotions into consideration as she strongly believes in the importance of making students feel that their emotions count. She believes that the English language is a challenge, and not being able to make students accept the teacher as a person will not help them learn and make progress. She thinks that we, as teachers, need to put ourselves in their place to understand their challenges and problems. In her opinion, this can make them accept learning English more effectively.

The answers of the first question have shown very positive tendencies towards handling students' emotions and taking their feelings into high consideration. EFL teachers think that this can have very good effects on students and their attitudes towards English classes.

Q 2 Improving EFL teachers' personality

The first teacher answered this question by quoting a famous saying in this regard that says that some teachers are born teachers, whereas others need to work on themselves to get professionally and personally improved to approach their students successfully. He thinks that it is very important for an EFL teacher to keep working on his/her personality to achieve his/her work as a teacher successfully.

The second teacher perceives this trait as very important, especially for newcomers, the fresh teachers. She believes that teachers need to adapt their personalities to a certain limit that breaks the ice but does not spoil the students.

The third teacher thinks that it is important for any teacher to be caring, loving, humorous,

and warm-hearted since that teacher deals with humans not with machines, but again to the extent that may keep the class management and the class discipline as it should be, especially with university students. She pointed out that teachers always need to adapt their personalities because they need to meet students' different needs and styles in learning.

The fourth teacher believes that it is very important for her to be kind and caring but consistent and firm. She thinks listening to students' needs and adapting to their different needs and styles is very important. Students need to see this type of care, sometimes more than their need for formal instruction. However, she believes that the teacher should also show consistency to keep discipline and order.

The fifth teacher feels that some may perceive being emotional with students as a weakness that teachers should avoid. However, she believes that this can be a distinguishing trait that can make students relieved in an EFL class rather than being harsh, tough, or following rules literally. It also affects the teacher him/herself by making him/her feel more confident in his/her profession.

The answers to this question have shown positive responses and a kind of general agreement that EFL teachers need to keep changing and modifying their personalities so that they can adapt to students' needs, interests, and styles of learning. However, some of the answers show that a teacher should have consistency in dealing with students to keep class discipline.

Q 3 Cultivation of supporting and inclusive classroom atmosphere

The first teacher responded to this question by expressing his strong beliefs that teachers need to adopt cooperative learning as the main strategy, also changing the way they teach and apply differentiation can help a lot, and above all, teachers need to stand fairly at the same distance to each learner even the low achievers.

The second teacher thinks that having an environmentally friendly EFL classroom that includes all students is very healthy and essential

in regards to efficient EFL learning and teaching.

The third teacher believes that a well-organized and goal targeted EFL classroom is the inclusive one. She believes that all students should be warmly included to be motivated to learn better even outside the classroom; they will be more motivated to learn English.

The fourth teacher believes that one of her main goals is not to leave anybody behind. Everybody has the right to be included. Excluding some students can harm the teacher before it harms the students. Students need to feel that they are all important and encouraged to learn and participate enthusiastically.

The fifth teacher feels that this can melt the barriers between students and teacher. They will feel that the classroom is a good and secure environment, which will ultimately lead to more effective language learning.

All EFL teachers' answers were consistent and positive towards creating an inclusive classroom environment. All EFL teachers agree that an EFL classroom needs to be inclusive for everyone. Nobody should be ignored or left behind, especially low achievers. This can motivate all students to work hard since they can feel that they are important.

Q 4 More learning choices

The first interviewee thinks that it would be a good idea at the beginning of each year or semester to figure out students' needs so that we can adapt the content of the learning material according to students' needs. He believes that giving more learning choices to EFL learners can improve the learning quality.

The second teacher believes that this depends on the objectives, so wherever or whenever we meet the objectives, there is no need to change the learning material. However, if the teacher feels that the objectives were not met properly, he/she should then give more choices concerning the learning material.

The third teacher believes that teachers should teach students to achieve the objectives planned for, which means "Don't teach the book,

but rather teach what the book aims at." Teachers can differentiate and give students choices as long as they achieve the main objectives wished for. Teachers need to change and give more choices, especially when the learners have either higher or lower standards than the taught book's level.

According to the fourth teacher, teachers need to engage students through using varying teaching methods. They should introduce different and new things every time to make students active, enthusiastic, and feel no boredom, which can create a huge impact in the classroom.

The fifth teacher believes that this should be a central point in any classroom in general and in the EFL classroom in particular. Giving more choices and adapting the material according to students' needs and context can humanize learning and make it a part of the learners' lives.

Most answers show a positive tendency towards differentiating and giving more learning choices. For EFL teachers, this can help make the learning material more interesting and can also create an atmosphere that is positive and democratic.

Q 5 Personalization (Making the learning material relevant)

The first teacher seemed very motivated when asked about this question; he strongly believes in personalizing the learning material and make it relevant to students' context and lives. He added that from his personal experience, once a teacher relates the learning material to students' lives, he can start eliciting hundreds of ideas from the students themselves in a surprising and interesting way.

The second teacher also strongly agreed that giving examples from students' lives and engaging them to relate their experiences to the learning material can enrich the learning material and make students more motivated in the EFL classroom.

The third teacher perceives this trait as very essential. She asserted that she always follows this strategy in her classroom by changing the task and localizing it so that students can relate things

to their personal experiences and interact better.

The fourth teacher thinks this can make students more attracted to the learning material since it will be more related to their lives and activate their scheme to use their own ideas and words, and actively interact.

The last teacher does believe that personalization is extremely important as she thinks that when students feel that the learning material is relevant to their personal life, they will get more interested, and when they become interested, they will learn better, and they will even start linking their life experiences which reflect a learning experience outside the classroom. This can lead to more engagement, more active work, and ultimately more academic achievements in terms of language teaching.

The answers to this question show EFL teachers' total agreement that personalizing and relating the learning material to students' lives can be very effective. It can also achieve positive results concerning students' active engagement and better academic outcomes. Teachers can activate students' schema and include students' personal experiences in the learning process.

This research paper has proved what other studies have already asserted in the field of EFL teaching and learning concerning more integration of humanistic traits in the EFL education process. Lei (2007), Brown (2007), and Ghaith and Diab (2008), as many other researchers have shown that using humanistic methods in EFL teaching can lead to remarkable results especially concerning students' motivation towards learning EFL.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Learning English as a foreign language adds a further challenge to the difficulties of learning in general. Students make great efforts to overcome different learning challenges in English, which means that teachers should integrate humanistic traits in teaching English to facilitate the learning process. Adopting humanistic traits in teaching English as a foreign language can motivate students towards learning EFL. This can also improve their attitudes positively towards learning English. Students need to feel that they are cared

for and respected in the classroom. They need to feel that their teachers are ready to provide help and support at any time with love and generosity. To conclude, adopting humanistic traits in EFL has proved its positive effectiveness in improving students' attitudes towards learning in general and EFL in particular. Therefore, the researcher recommends adopting humanistic traits in teacher education programs and teaching EFL at Birzeit University.

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