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Theses / Dissertation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate Arab students' perceptions concerning the teaching attitudes and behaviours that contribute to effective EFL teaching and learning in the United Arab Emirates. Adopting an interpretative approach to the research, the data was collected in three phases. In Phase One an interview was used. 17 university students studying English in Intensive English programs were interviewed. In Phase Two a questionnaire was used. 165 students responded to it. In Phase Three four students were interviewed for further information about the effective teaching characteristics identified in phases one and two. Findings from the study indicated that effective EFL teaching had two main dimensions: instructional skills and human characteristics. A wide range of categories and subcategories were classified under each dimension. Bearing in mind the descriptions and information the respondents gave throughout the Three Phases, I started to have a new understanding of what constituted effective English language teaching in the UAE universities. This considered effective EFL teachers as creators of an effective learning culture. I found that the broader picture of effective teaching that the core of the data built highlighted the significance of a learning culture in effective English teaching. The respondents talked about a web of instructional behaviour and practices as well as personal and interpersonal characteristics of effective teachers and most of which revolved around the significance of creating a learning culture that they found suitable for enhancing their learning of English. This study contributes to the knowledge of what constitutes acceptable teaching behaviour. The more that is known about successful EFL teaching and learning, the more likely FL teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers benefit in teacher preparation and evaluation.

Keywords: effective EFL teachers, Arab students' perception, university level, teaching qualities, teacher evaluation