

## **Dynamics of EFL Teacher Education in Iran: A Qualitative Enquiry**

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### **Abstract**

Following the shift of focus in English language teaching (ELT) from method-oriented approaches toward postmethod orientation, some teacher education programs have devoted significant attention to sociopolitical and critical approaches. However, some scholars believe that in many educational programs, critical and sociopolitical aspects are still ignored. In order to explore how accurately this perspective reflects the approach that dominates ELT teacher education in Iran, teacher education courses in three EFL centers were observed through a semistructured checklist three times, that is, early, halfway through, and late in the course. Also, three teacher educators were interviewed about the courses they would hold. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts and the observation data showed that major characteristics of these courses are detailed implementation of preplanned courses, lack of teacher learners' reflection and collaboration, lack of attention to teacher learners' critical consciousness and transformative potentials, as well as dominance of a summative approach to assessment. These findings suggest a substantial discrepancy between what postmethod promotes and how ELT is currently practiced in Iran.

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### **1. Introduction**

Over the last three decades, the idea of the most effective method for English language teaching (ELT) has been widely debated and criticized. As a result, the idea has lost its earlier importance and there has been a shift from a method perspective to a postmethod one (Richards & Rodegers, 2014). Postmethod has been referred to as a reaction to the dominance of interested knowledge in the area of second language education (Pennycook, 1989). Kumaravadivelu (1992, 1994) put forth postmethod as an alternative to method and aimed at enhancing teachers' sensitivity to classroom dynamics and fostering their capacity to develop context bound ways of teaching. Consequently, concepts such as teaching context, critical thinking, learner autonomy, problem solving, local pedagogy, and collaborative learning gained popularity. Postmethod pedagogy has three parameters of practicality, particularity, and possibility. The first one promotes interaction between theory and practice. The second one proposes a context sensitive approach to language pedagogy, and finally, possibility parameter highlights the significance of focusing on learners' critical consciousness and potential to bring about changes (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The 10 postmethod macrostrategies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006) serve as a springboard for teaching practice. Promoting learner autonomy, contextualizing linguistic input, and ensuring social relevance are examples of these macrostrategies. Kumaravadivelu (2006) believed, postmethod parameters and the macrostrategies are highly related and connected with each other.

Despite all these promising news, some scholars (e.g., Akbari, 2008; Bell, 2003) believe that in many educational settings ELT teacher education has still maintained a method-bound and apolitical focus on technical dimensions of teaching English. As a step toward gaining more insights into how English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education programs is approached and

practiced in Iran and what barriers impact on incorporation of a postmethod perspective into these programs, in this qualitative study teacher education courses in three EFL centers were observed to answer the research question that, "How is teacher education program currently practiced in EFL centers in Iran from a postmethod perspective?"

## 2. This Study

### 2.1 Participants

In order to answer the research question, three teacher education courses held in three different EFL centers in Iran were observed. Also, three teacher educators from three other language centers were interviewed about how they would conduct teacher education programs (Table 1).

Table 1  
*Description of the Courses*

Courses	Number of sessions	Number of teacher learners	Length of each session	Length of the course (per week)
A	3	12	90(Minutes)	1
B	4	8	90(Minutes)	1
C	8	20	90(Minutes)	4

Finding teacher educators to interview proved to be particularly challenging. Because of this, data were collected only from three teacher educators teaching in different language centers in Isfahan and Tehran. They are called Ali, Babak, and Mahan. Table 2 presents some background information about them.

Table 2  
*Teacher Educators' Information*

The teacher educator	Gender	Years of experience	Educational background
Ali	Male	5	MA in TEFL
Babak	Male	7	PhD in TEFL
Mahan	Female	8	PhD in TEFL

## **2.2 Instruments**

An observation checklist was developed by the researchers based on a comprehensive review of the literature on postmethod and critical L2 teacher education. The checklist focused on the content and course procedures, such as student engagement, collaborative activities, and assessment across three phases of teacher education courses, that is, early, halfway through, and late in the course. Two experts in EFL teacher education were asked to check the validity of the checklist. A few changes were made in the content of the checklist and the wording of the items based on their comments (See Appendix A). Initially, the observation sessions were meant to be audio recorded; however, the teacher educators did not consent to it. Therefore, the researcher carried out one observation session to ensure the smooth conduction of the observations in the absence of audio recording.

The interview questions were developed by the researchers based on an in-depth review of literature on teacher education and postmethod. Three experts in the area of EFL teacher education reviewed the questions and commented on the wording and content of them. After incorporating their comments, the researcher piloted the semistructured interview with a teacher educator. The questions which appeared to have very similar foci were combined (see Appendix B).

The participants were asked about the language they prefer to answer the questions. All of them preferred to answer the questions in Persian. Through follow-up questions on their initial answers, they provided further explanations and gave necessary information which took around 45 minutes for each interview.

### **2.3 Data Collection**

As mentioned previously, the center directors and the teacher educators did not consent to the observer's audio recording the sessions, so the observer had to write down every detail which would enrich the observation data in addition to those prompted by the checklist items. The first observation was conducted in the first session of the courses. The second observation was carried out in the middle of each course, which was the second, third, and fourth session in Course A, B, and C, respectively. The last observation was done in the assessment session. Immediately after each observation, the observer expanded on the notes she had made and added details which she still vividly remembered from the observed session but had failed to include in her initial notes during the observations due to lack of time.

Each interview took around 45 minutes and the interviewees preferred to answer the questions in Persian. Through follow-up questions on their initial answers, they provided further explanations and gave necessary information.

### **2.4 Data Analysis**

The notes made in the observations of each teacher education course were subjected to thematic analysis following the stages proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) which were "familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

After coding the data generated by interviews and observations, they were analyzed vertically, for each course per se as well as horizontally, across the three courses. This way, the overlaps and differences were identified, the interim findings were refined, and more general themes were developed which best reflected the commonalities identified in the observations and interviews. Constant comparison of different parts of data and refining interim themes in light of similarities and differences among

codes across the different datasets and informants were other techniques of data analysis. Also, an expert in qualitative studies was asked to analyze some data excerpts and the results were used to identify biases in the researchers' own interpretations.

### **3. Findings**

The results revealed four main themes. In the following sections each theme will be explained.

#### **3.1 Detailed implementation of preplanned courses**

The first dominating theme revealed by data analysis was a high structure approach to the content of the courses and their implementation which indicated no learners' involvement in decisions concerned with planning or implementing the courses. This lack of negotiation with teacher learners and their subsequent lack of ownership over the process and content of teacher education were seen to dominate the courses. For example, no negotiation took place over selection of the materials or duration and number of the sessions. In course B, for example, the materials given to the participants as part of the content of training was a pamphlet written by the teacher educators in the center, focusing on theories and steps of teaching language skills and components. The interviews also showed that time of the sessions and duration of the courses were preplanned. For example, Ali said about a recent training course he had conducted

Each session, I prepared and categorized the materials for teaching and then I estimated the time for teaching each part. This way, I made a general estimation for the time needed for that course. I followed this plan and I think I was successful because this way I was clear about what I did in the class.

Results of the observation data and interview analysis showed that the teacher educators did not ask about the teacher learners' preferences with regard to how the materials should be presented in class. For example, in the first session, the teacher educator of course B told them

the class procedure for each session is almost the same. After giving a particular explanation about the skills I am supposed to cover in a particular session, I will explain the steps of teaching one by one. You should listen carefully and ask questions, if any. Later you will practice teaching each skill in groups of three or four.

The teacher educators did not ask for their students' opinions about how they would like to be assessed either. The teacher educator in course A, for instance, said

parts of the book you are supposed to teach in this center will be used as the material of your teachings in the assessment session and your teaching will be judged based on the teaching methods you learned during the course.

Even less transparency was observed in the response the teacher educator in course B gave to the teacher learners' questions about the assessment "Trust my evaluation method and don't ask about it now. I am sure on the exam day you will be surprised to see it is easier than what you expected".

Interview analysis also showed that a similar approach was implemented by the interviewees for selection of training materials, method of teaching, and assessment procedures. In none of these aspects did the interviewed teacher educators show any willingness to incorporate teacher learners' ideas and interests. This deprives teacher learners of the chance of using the

linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical capitals they bring with them to programs of teacher education (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2006). Babak, for example, said: "I never ask for the teachers' opinions and I myself make all decisions about the program content and methods of teaching and assessment".

### **3.2 Lack of teacher learners' reflection and collaboration**

Reflection has been reported to be particularly effective when done in a collaborative manner. Therefore, the importance of incorporating collaborative tasks into teacher education programs has also been strongly emphasized (e.g., Dobber et al., 2014). Research shows that, among other benefits, collaboration fosters a safe climate of trust between teacher learners, resulting in opportunities to give and receive feedback and reflect collaboratively (Chamberlin-Quislick, 2010) and helps teacher learners master skills necessary for conducting cooperative instruction in classroom (Veenman et al., 2002).

The observations and interviews showed little encouragement of teachers to reflect on their teaching as the process of teacher education mainly involved transfer of information to them in a lecture based manner. For example, the observed teacher educators often stood in front of the class and started the session by presenting theoretical aspects of teaching language skills. Then they presented some practical techniques to the teacher learners who were required to listen carefully, take notes, and ask questions about points and concepts they did not understand. Further evidence pointing to low priority given to teachers' critical reflection was obtained from the teacher educators' explanation about what they expected the teachers to (not) do. In the first session of all three courses, the teachers were clearly told not to take the class time for challenging the teacher educators' or experts' ideas. The teacher educator's explanation in course B is a representative example:



You should make the best use of the class time by listening carefully and learning all the points. So please don't waste the time to express your personal ideas about the methods and theories I teach here. They are all famous and standard approaches to language teaching and ideas against them are not acceptable.

Therefore, the teachers attending these courses did not reflect on the given techniques of teaching language skills while they were only asked to accept and master them. Interviews also suggested a similar approach to teacher development. Mahan, for example, said "the teachers in my class should listen carefully and perform the teaching steps one after another".

Both data sets showed that the teacher learners were not encouraged to be creative and develop their own views and styles of teaching. Observations showed that no reflective tasks, such as journaling, observation, class discussion, or teacher research, had been incorporated into the process of teacher education. The interviewees also believed that such activities are time consuming and do not suit the purpose of teacher preparation. Mahan, for example, said "There is no need to waste the class time on conducting research or even talking about it". This is at odds with the recent emphasis placed on teachers' conducting research on their own practice, sometimes referred to as 'empowering research' (Shor, 1992). Instead, the teacher learners were required to closely follow the teacher educators' guidelines through listening to and internalizing they were taught. Babak, for example said "I believe the method of teaching I use in my class is the best. It is preplanned, and my students are not allowed to ask for any changes in it". In the first session of course C also, the teacher educator was observed to have

adopted a very similar attitude toward teacher education as he told the teachers:

You are here to learn how to follow the method of teaching which has been developed at this center, so you'd better leave the course if you want to make any changes in the method or challenge that I teach in this class.

The course procedures further reinforced lack of interaction among the teachers. The teacher educators rarely encouraged sharing ideas. Group activities were limited to the time the teacher educators would teach techniques of teaching a particular skill and ask the teacher learners to practice them following the instructions in groups of three or four.

To sum up, the only opportunity for the teacher learners to work together was to help each other in groups of three or four to put into practice the instructions they had been given. Therefore, the researchers were not surprised to realize that the teacher learners' feedback was mainly supposed to help their classmates follow the educator's instructions more closely.

### **3.3 Lack of attention to teacher learners' critical consciousness and transformative potentials**

Some scholars have recently attached great importance to raising students' political and sociocultural awareness in second language education (e.g., Crookes, 2009, 2013; McKay, 2004; Pennycook, 2012). For this to happen, they believe, teacher education should go beyond concerns with how to teach language skills and improve learners' linguistic proficiency, take on sociopolitical and transformative roles, and strive toward improving learners', and other stake-holders', critical consciousness and transformative potential (Adamson, 2005; Bartolome, 2004).

The observations showed that the content of the three courses, including all class lectures, discussions, and questions, mostly focused on techniques of teaching language skills and components and classroom management. The teacher educators used their personal pamphlets and notes to teach techniques of teaching language skills and components, such as asking comprehension-check questions, providing synonyms and definitions, and conducting pair and group activities, and steps involved in teaching each skill, such as pre listening, while listening, and post listening. The examples came from the books taught in each language center.

A common scenario in each session which took most of the time was the teacher educators' telling the teachers how to teach each skill. In course B, for instance, while using a sample listening lesson, the teacher educator taught the teacher learners how to conduct warm up for listening tasks:

Please open your books to page 29. To do the warm up section of the listening lesson, first you should ask your students to look at the picture carefully and then ask them what this picture is about. Who are they? What are they doing? Are they happy? Why do you think they are happy? Give them enough time to think about the answers, then ask them to share their answers, and write their answers on the board. And after that you can do the listening task.

The teacher learners in all three courses were also given some general guidelines related to classroom management, such as how to deal with disobedient students, starting the class on time, and encouraging students to remain silent and listen carefully during lessons. Other important issues related to classroom management, such as learner engagement and autonomy, were discussed in none of the courses. Issues related to cultural and

sociopolitical aspects of language learning and use were not focused on either. Analysis of the interviews also showed that the teacher educators' primary concerns were teachers' own language proficiency and their ability to teach language skills to their students. Babak, for instance, said-"The main goal of this course is correcting teachers' pronunciation and grammar mistakes. The whole story is about correcting the language".

On the whole, the researcher did not identify any serious attempt to raise teachers' critical consciousness about the context of education beyond classroom boundaries, their own social and transformative roles, and the political, cultural, and economic dimensions of ELT. The focus of the courses was too narrow and neutral for teachers to have any chance of dealing with and reflecting on the ways in which power relations are constructed and function in society and how historical, social, and political practices structure educational inequity, things that advocates of critical teacher education and postmethod believe should be treated as priorities (Hawkins & Norton, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2006). On rare occasions only were the teacher educators in courses A and B observed giving short answers to a few questions about how to deal with socially and culturally sensitive topics. In course B, the teacher educator also spent a few minutes every session teaching how to use the content of readings for discussions about moral issues, for example. This shift of focus would only happen during breaks when the teachers were tired; therefore, such reflections and discussions were at best an add-on and obviously not a major part of training, as the teacher educator also attested by telling the participants "This is not going to be part of the assessment".

### **3.4 Summative assessment**

It is believed that teacher evaluation as practiced in different areas over the world, including ELT, is not intended to help teachers improve

professionally; rather, it is conducted to see if certain predefined criteria are met (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In ELT, as observed by Ur (1996), "[f]ew institutions have systematic teacher-appraisal systems, and where these do exist, they are very often for hiring and firing purposes rather than to assist professional improvement and learning" (p. 322).

Analysis of the teacher educators' interviews and the observed teacher education courses suggested that teacher evaluation was found to be summative and devoid of meaningful feedback and teacher collaboration of any type. Additionally, a spirit of assistance and support, which would make evaluation an opportunity for teachers' professional development, (Danielson, 1996), was missing. Instead, an atmosphere of threat and anxiety pervaded the courses as a result of the way the teacher educators explained the process of assessment. In the first session of course C, for example, the teacher educator said "your performance in the demo you will give in the last session is determining. You will pass this course if you perform your teaching based on the teaching methods you will learn during the course".

In the last session of the courses, the teacher educators called on each teacher to perform their demos in front of the class. They were required to model the methods taught by the teacher educators and were explicitly discouraged from teaching innovatively. In courses A and B, at the beginning of the assessment session the teacher educators randomly assigned two language skills to each teacher, and they were called on to do their demos in alphabetical order. As also mentioned in "Lack of reflection and collaboration", no one was allowed to make comments or share ideas during or after the demos. In the assessment session in course A, for example, the teacher educator told the teacher learners "Please don't share ideas or give comments during or after the demo performances. The best way you can help your classmates is by remaining silent during the session". During the demos,

the teacher learners taught the assigned skills trying to follow the predefined set of steps they had been taught during the course, and the teacher educators took notes, obviously for evaluation purposes only as they did not share them with the teachers afterward. The results of the assessments were announced on the same day and those who passed the assessment could start to teach in those centers.

In course C assessment was conducted in two sessions. In the first session, a general language proficiency test consisting of four sections each gauging one of the four language skills was administered. The test lasted for 90 minutes, and the results were announced on the same day. Those who scored a minimum of 70 out of 100 passed this test and, therefore, could carry out their demos the day after, in a similar fashion to the assessment process in courses A and C.

A similar approach was reflected in the interviews, as the interviewees actively denied any space for sharing opinions and thoughts or any other types of collaborative reflection. Ali, for example, reasoned:

It is quite normal that teachers feel stressed in the assessment session because they should act independently without my help or their classmates'. I strongly recommend this method of assessment for teacher education courses because it shows if teachers have learned their lesson to be good teachers.

More emphatically discouraging collaboration in assessment sessions, Mahan said "during the assessment session nobody is allowed to talk, except the one who is teaching in front of the class".

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

The research question posed in this study was concerned with how teacher education is currently practiced in EFL centers in Iran from a post-method perspective. This question would be a reiteration of the themes revealed in section 4 which show that no negotiation with teacher learners happens in planning and implementation of the observed training courses; opportunities for teacher reflection and collaboration are highly limited; there is exclusive focus on the linguistic and technical dimensions of teaching EFL; and teacher evaluation happens in a summative manner.

The themes suggest that some of the myths associated with the concept of method tend to inform the principles and practices of the observed teacher education courses. One such myth is "[t]here is a best method out there ready and waiting to be discovered" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 163). The results suggest that this myth underlies training in the observed courses. The first theme shows that the teacher learners were not involved in making decisions about the content and procedures of the courses, which would have, otherwise, created space for them to become coowners of the teacher education process (Wallace & Woolger, 1991) and enjoy a more productive learning experience (Richards, 2008). It seems that diversity of teaching approaches and methods were not encouraged based on the assumption that there is a best method out there. It is worth mentioning that ignoring teacher learners in decision makings was admitted by these learners in a parallel study carried out by Naseri karimvand et al. (2014).

The second theme suggests that this myth was further reinforced through discouraging teacher learners from reflecting on the content delivered to them and problematizing or challenging expert's knowledge. Instead, they were required to listen to monologues given by the teacher educators, which is a distinctive feature of teacher education with a mere training, rather than

development and orientation (Imig & Imig, 2006; Richards, 2008; Richards & Farrell, 2005). As mentioned before, teacher learners were not supposed to ask questions except for when they did not understand what was presented to them. In other words, the assumption was that whatever is presented to them has already been approved by experts. This leads to another myth related to the concept of method "[t]heorists conceive knowledge, and teachers consume knowledge" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 166). Discouraging teachers from making sense of course content in their own ways and reflecting on the delivered methods and techniques of teaching in light of their personal experiences and knowledge of the local contexts where they had taught and were teaching implies that they were expected to merely consume the specialist knowledge produced by theoreticians. This theory/practice discourse "creates strata of expertise, in which, paradoxically, teachers are seen to be less expert than theorists" (Clarke, 1994, p. 13). Kumaravadivelu resembled this discourse in terms of the kind of relationship existing between producers and consumers in the market. In this study, there existed a kind of mutual lack of attention and respect between the teacher educators and teachers in the observed courses. For example, in the demo sessions the teacher learners spent most of their time playing with their cell phones or reading different things instead of paying attention to the demos. This was probably a reaction to their not being allowed to share ideas about their peers' performance.

Another myth that this study showed to have pervaded the observed teacher education courses is "[m]ethod is neutral, and has no ideological motivation" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 167). Despite numerous accounts and arguments highlighting the ideological nature of ELT which necessitates teachers' taking on sociopolitical and transformative roles (Crookes, 2013; Pennycook, 1998; Phillipson, 1992), the third theme clearly reflects the



narrow focus of the education courses on linguistic and technical aspects of second language teaching at the expense of proper treatment of the sociopolitical nature of this profession. In other words, there was an exclusive focus on how to teach each language skill and component, manage disruptive behavior, and avoid controversial topics. The researchers could not spot any treatment of political and ideological dimensions of education (Bartolome, 2004). Nor did they observe any focus on teachers' roles and responsibilities which go beyond classroom boundaries and working toward goals handed down by experts, such as making decisions in an autonomous manner (Cochran-Smith, 2004), improving students' critical thinking skills and transformative potential (Freire, 2005), and impacting on society at large (Freire, 2007).

Discussion of the themes mentioned above led the authors to conclude that the transmission based, language bound, and technically oriented nature of teacher education courses work against developing such capabilities in teachers as teaching in a socioculturally informed manner, redefining teaching in terms of commitment to world making, striving toward supporting equality and spreading democracy, and improving learners' critical consciousness. Incorporating teacher learners' perceptions and opinions into decisions about teacher education courses fosters their participation in and contribution to designing and implementing these courses (Wallace & Woolger, 1991). By the same token, the more the decisions are made for teacher learners by others, the less ownership they will have over their own professional development and the less desirable the results will be (Maggioli, 2003). Knowing this, lack of decision making on the part of the teachers pushes them toward internalizing and implementing "a pedagogy that does not directly call upon students' capacities to make decisions" and "conveys to them that either they are not allowed to or that they are incapable

of doing so" (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p. 21). Therefore, they at best help learners become autonomous in terms of learning to learn while they may not be capable of helping them enhance their 'libratory autonomy' (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 177) which entails empowering them to think critically (Freire, 1973) and strive for individual and social emancipation (Freire, 1972, 1998).

In light of the picture portrayed of how teacher education happens in some EFL instruction contexts in Iran and based on the existing literature, we would like to propose a number of solutions corresponding to the themes discussed above which will hopefully help with adoption and promotion of a critically oriented and sociopolitically situated approach to teacher education in ELT in Iran.

To start with, there needs to be more direct engagement of teacher learners in the design and implementation of teacher education courses. Negotiation can be made feasible if teacher educators ask teachers to contribute to content of teacher education programs when they are planned and/or to give feedback on the content and procedures during and at the end of the programs. To be more specific, policies should be redefined such that teachers' engagement in decision making, critical reflection, and creative action is appreciated and encouraged rather than discouraged and disapproved of, the latter being unfortunately the story of the courses observed in this study. Furthermore, the ideological and sociopolitical side of ELT should be acknowledged and worked into programs of teacher education by incorporating more practically oriented materials and avoiding focusing only on language skills and technical points. Another way is through incorporating tasks which encourage critical reflection on the part of teachers. A simple example would be assigning critical tasks to teachers, such as conducting critical needs analysis in their own classes and

incorporating critical thinking tasks into their teaching, and reporting results to the teacher educator and peers. Finally, given the considerable effects teacher evaluation has on the process of teacher professional development (Danielson & McGreal, 2000), teachers should be encouraged and given credit for demonstrating critical reflection skills and creativity in the assessment which does not have to be reduced to a demo performance.

Given the qualitative nature of the study, generalizations cannot be made based on the findings to the whole context of EFL teacher education in Iran. Therefore, similar studies in different contexts should be conducted so that a proper understanding of the status quo is obtained. Additionally, challenges involved in critical education of teachers in light of the dominant values and cultural climate need to be explored to see what changes should be made in programs of teacher education. Studies should also be conducted focusing on other stakeholders, such as teacher educators and managers of language centers, because teacher educators' and managers' awareness of the nature of critical teaching and teacher education and their appreciation of their value is a prerequisite for incorporating critical language pedagogy into practice of teacher education and classroom instruction. Finally, to bridge the gap between the involving parties and to serve the transformative agenda of research in the area of critical teacher education, participatory research involving all the stakeholders including teachers, teacher educators, researchers, and authorities is required so that no party is considered as mere informant and excluded from the rest of the research process.

**Appendix A: Observation Checklist**

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**Early in the course**

- 1 How preplanned and fixed the number of sessions is.
- 2 How predetermined and fixed the topics of discussion and materials (for each session) are.
- 3 Whether the teacher educator asks for teacher learners' opinions about the way (s) they would like to be assessed and how this happens.
- 4 Whether the teacher educator asks for teacher learners' opinions about how to run the course and the ways in which this happens.
- 5 Whether the teacher educator involves teacher learners in the selection of the course materials through negotiation.
- 6 Seating arrangement.

**In the middle of the course**

- 7 Whether teacher learners are encouraged to challenge the teacher educator's, experts' and their classmates' ideas and how.
- 8 Whether the teacher educator mainly transfers information to teacher learners and how this happens (e.g., in a lecture based manner).
- 9 Whether the teacher educator encourages teacher learners to share ideas in group or class discussions.
- 10 Whether the teacher educator encourages the teacher learners to develop their own understanding and style of teaching based on forming and reforming their own teaching approaches and styles.
- 11 Whether the teacher educator encourages teacher learners to do reflective tasks, such as journaling, observation, action research, and group discussions during the course.
- 12 Whether the teacher educator puts the major focus on teaching the language skills and components.
- 13 Whether social, cultural, political, and psychological aspects of teaching EFL are focused on.

**Teacher evaluation at the end of the course**

- 14 Whether the teacher educator assesses teachers in a formative or summative manner or uses both approaches.
  - 15 Whether teacher learners are required to follow the techniques and methods taught during the course in the assessment, e.g. in microteaching.
  - 16 Whether teacher learners are encouraged to teach in a creative manner, i.e., go beyond the techniques and approaches they were exposed to during the course.
  - 17 Whether teacher learners are encouraged to observe their classmates' teaching practice.
  - 18 Whether teacher learners are encouraged to give feedback on their classmates' teaching practice.
  - 19 Whether the assessment is conducted merely based on teacher learners' performance, their theoretical knowledge, or both and how this happens.
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**Appendix B: Teacher educators' Interview Questions**

1. How long (how many days and how many hours per day) are the courses? Do you consider this length reasonable?
2. What are the main topics and issues focused on in the course? How are they selected? Do you agree with them? Give examples please.
3. What are the main activities and procedures followed in the course? Do you agree? Give examples please.
4. What are your expectations from teacher learners? What do you ask them to do in the training courses?
5. How are teacher learners assessed? Do you agree with this method?
6. Do teacher learners share their personal opinions and experiences with other teachers? How? Do you agree with this method? If yes, why? How do you encourage them to do it?
7. Is it among the purposes of a teacher education program to support teacher learners to develop their own understanding and style of teaching based on forming and reforming their own ways of teaching? If yes, how?
8. Do you assign teacher learners any group activities or assignments? Please explain.
9. How are course materials selected? Please give example. How do you like this way of materials selection?
10. Do you ask for teacher learners' ideas in this regard?
11. How are decisions made about how to run the course? Please give examples. Are you happy with this decision-making process?
12. Do you ask for teacher learners' ideas in this regard?
13. Do you ask for teacher learners' ideas about the way of assessment? If yes, how?
14. What do you generally like about the training programs you conduct?
15. What don't you like about them?
16. If you were in a position to make decisions about how to run teacher education courses, what major changes would you make in them?

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