Jordanian Teachers' Language Proficiency, and Experiential Knowledge and Their Relationship to Teachers' Classroom Practices

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Abstract

This study aimed at exploring Jordanian public school teachers' language proficiency and their experiential knowledge and the relationship between these two variables and their classroom practices. The participants of the study were twenty female teachers of the English language. They were purposefully chosen from the schools in Ajloun Directorate of Education in the second semester of the academic year 2011/2012. To answer the questions of the study, the researchers designed an interview form that has structured questions, and adopted the paper version of the TOEFL and an observation checklist. Proper statistical analyses were used to analyze the results. The results of the study showed that the teachers' level of language proficiency was low. Majority of the teachers did not progress to transfer the received knowledge (acquired through the training programs) into their classrooms. The most important reasons behind the teachers' participation in the training programs related to teachers' attitudes toward professional development, the content and the process factors in the training programs, the clarity and possibility of achieving the curriculum outcomes (the influence of training programs on the teaching process), teachers' and students' benefits from the training programs, and teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs. The results also showed that the teachers' actual pedagogical competence was moderate with a mean of 2.736. The correlation coefficient between the teachers' linguistic competence and their classroom practices was positive and high with a mean of 0.71,and there was a negative significant correlation between the teachers' experiential knowledge and their pedagogical competence at α=0.05 with a very low coefficient correlation of - 0.51. This indicated that the teachers were not aware of the significance of the professional development and so they had a negative orientation towards the training programs they participated in.

Key Words: Foreign language Proficiency, Experiential knowledge, Jordanian teachers' classroom practices.

Introduction

In recent years, researches started to focus on the effectiveness of the teaching competence and language proficiency of the teachers in their classroom practices**.** It is well known that effective classroom teaching practices are related to the classroom culture . This culture is related to the class level and progress, teacher's preparation, organization of the course, and teacher's stimulation of interest in the course (Feldman ,1988).
Teachers play an essential role in the educational achievement of their students. They are the most significant agents of change in educational reform. Teachers' main aim is to make students learn effectively and efficiently. In order to do that, teachers must have a full mastery of the skills of language they teach as well as a knowledge of the target culture. The teacher is the key figure and determinant of students' success (Goldberg, 2001) and it is the effective and responsible teaching that is the key to educational success. Teachers' language proficiency is a major factor that determines their classroom teaching practices (Kamhi-Stein & Mahboob, 2005 and 2006).

Applied linguists have recently suggested that all language processing may be governed by global language proficiency factors. Ommagio (2001) defined the term 'proficiency' as the development of language competence through the language use. Proficiency refers to the knowledge of the appropriateness of an utterance to a particular situation or content and of its socio cultural significance.

It also refers to the function in a truly communicative setting . Proficiency means the actual performance of a learner in a given language, and it involves the mastery of the linguistic competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistics competence, and strategic competence. According to Ommagio(2001) there are four levels of proficiency: novice, intermediate, advanced, and superior. The concept of proficiency is a construct which is accessible only through inference from the use of speaking, reading, or writing skills. Many attempts have been made to capture the essentials of second- foreign language proficiency in a variety of ways. Stern (1983,) maintained that first or second language competence or proficiency can be summarized as:

- the intuitive mastery of the form of the language;
- the intuitive mastery of the linguistic, cognitive, affective, and sociocultural meaning expressed by the language forms;
- the capacity to use the language with maximum attention to communication and minimum attention to form; and
- the creativity of language use (p.364)

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (cited in Vecchio and Guerrero, 1995) defined the English language proficiency as the ability to use the English to ask questions, read materials ,test ideas and challenge what is being asked in the classroom. The Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR) describes language proficiency in terms of four discrete macro-skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). By contrast, Bachman and Palmer (1996), identify six interrelated areas of language knowledge.

These encompass organizational knowledge pertaining to the way in which texts are structured; grammatical knowledge including knowledge of vocabulary, syntax and phonology/graphology; textual knowledge, which includes knowledge of cohesion and knowledge of rhetorical or conversational organization; pragmatic knowledge, related to the communicative goals of the language user and the context in which the language is being used; functional knowledge including an understanding of ideational, manipulative, heuristic and imaginative functions, as well as socio-linguistic knowledge(p. 68). Canales's (1994, p.60) definition of language usage (proficiency) is based on a socio-theoretical foundation. Canales stated that language usage

- "is dynamic and contextually-based (varies depending upon the situation, status of speakers, and the topic);
- is discursive (requires connected speech); and
- requires the use of integrative skills to achieve communicative competence".

It is clear that language proficiency was defined differently by language specialists. However, they all agree that language proficiency is the individuals' ability to express himself/ herself freely and in accordance with the conventions of grammar and meaning of the foreign language. Many studies (Brinton, 2004; Lee, 2004; Mahboob, 2004) indicate that there are several factors underlying language proficiency tests. These factors could be identified as different skills such as listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking ability, writing competence, vocabulary and structure. The teachers' English proficiency has been recognized as an important qualification for successful English teaching. (Butler, 2004; Lee, 2004; Nunan, 2003). For example, Nunan (2003,p.601) stated, "… a major problem is that many English teachers simply do not have the proficiency". It would be possible that a teacher with high-enough language proficiency may feel confident in teaching English, while having low level of proficiency, teachers may feel less confident in teaching school or college students. Mustafa (2001) found that the some of the EFL teachers' language proficiency is low.

The researchers believe that there is a strong relationship between teachers' language proficiency and their own practice of teaching in the classroom. The communicative value of language has made it necessary to emphasize the integration of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to communicate successfully.

Communication can only be achieved by building up a competence and proficiency that permits the foreign language learner to communicate successfully with other speakers of that language .Thus building up such a competence is a priority that should receive much attention in the process of teaching English as a foreign language. To measure the teachers' level of proficiency in the language, they should be assessed regularly to overcome any teaching difficulties they may face and to suggest proper solution, and then enhance their performance in teaching the English language. To reach the ultimate goal of developing the individuals' ability in all language skills and to achieve optimal goal to each skill, assessment emerges as a vital technique.

In the field of teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation are a big necessity and attract the researchers' attention in terms of their significant role in the improvement of educational inputs and outcomes. Festuse and Brown (1982, P.199) defined assessment as "a process used to obtain information from testing, from direct observation of behavior, from essay and from other devices to assess the students' overall progress toward some predetermined goals and objectives". Brown (2000) defined assessment as a process and a method of measuring a person's ability or knowledge in a given domain. These abilities can be captured from direct observation of behavior, from essays and from other devices to assess the overall progress toward some goals and objectives. In classroom, assessment or test is used to determine what a student knows or can do. It helps determine how well student performance matches the teaching -learning outcomes. Valete (1976) pointed out three purposes for language testing: firstly, to diagnose the individuals' specific strengths and weaknesses.

 Secondly to measure the extent of individuals' achievements of the instructional goals, and thirdly is to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Many studies have been made to capture the essential role of assessing and evaluating the learners and teachers language proficiency e.g.(Oller and Khan 1981; Abdelhak 1986; Bla 1993; Thomson 1996; Barnes 1996; and Mustafa 2001).Based on the studies presented above, language proficiency seems to be a factor related to EFL teachers practices and performance in the classroom. Therefore, one aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the teachers' language proficiency and their classroom practices. Abdelhak (1986) analyzed the four language skills of a sample of fourth –year college Egyptian students learning English as a foreign language. She used the TOEFL with its five sub parts(listening comprehension, structure, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing comprehension)to test whether language proficiency was a global factor that couldn't be broken down into separate skills or it was devisable into separate components skill that could be tested in isolation.

The result showed that the correlation coefficient among the TOEFL subtest was positive and high .So the test indicates that language proficiency is a global factor. Flewing and Cagen (1994) developed a communicative proficiency test to determine the competency levels of test takers in all language skills areas. They concerned themselves with the lack of proficiency of some students of French as a Second Language (FSL). The test also used to assist faculties of education, broad of education administrators to establish the level of proficiency in any language possessed by applicants to courses, for teaching positions or in other areas where language proficiency is important.

Thompson (1996) assessed the speaking, reading, listening and writing proficiency of students of Russian using tests based on the ACTFL proficiency scale. Results indicated that each additional year of study resulted in a decrease in the proportion of learners at higher levels, but the picture of proficiency that emerged from this study was one of overlapping ranges of performances with no correspondence between levels of proficiency in the four skills of language. As mentioned above, teachers' language proficiency is one of the major factors that determine their classroom teaching practices .Another factor, which is considered as one of the major factors affecting their performance is teachers' experiential knowledge. Goldberg (2001) pointed out that the teacher is the key figure and determinant of students' success and it is the effective and responsible teaching that is the key to educational success. Barth(1990, p.49) believes that "probably nothing in a school has more impact on students in terms of skills development, self-confidence or classroom behavior, than the personal and professional growth of their teachers".

One way of preparing teachers with some of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to implement work experience programs in school is to give them the opportunity to taste 'work experience' for themselves and then to reflect on their own learning.

In order to improve students' learning process, it should be focused on measuring the effect of teacher training programs in term of changes in the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs on their classroom practice. For many researchers (e.g. Guesky and Sparks 1997; ; and Borko 2004) the emphasis is on that the outcomes of teachers training programs can be reasonably linked to the outcomes in the learning and teaching process. Sparks (2002, p. 16) notes that there is" a very close link between teacher professional development and student outcomes". Teachers' training programs are recognized as a key component of building teachers' competencies. They are very necessary preparation for teaching.

Teachers must be opened to the training programs which provide models of good practice that keep teachers up to date about the changing demands of their profession(Head and Taylor,1997) since they provide them with opportunities to develop new skills and attitudes, , new theories and ways of thinking, resulting in deep understanding and affective change. Marchant (1992) added the role of experience to the factors influencing teachers' attitudes for their profession. Teachers' experiential knowledge is concerned with teachers' professional development in general and the training courses or programs they participated in. Professional development refers to the development of a person in his /her professional role. Teacher development is the process of becoming "the best kind of teachers that I personally can be" (Underhill, 1986 p. 1). To what extent those teachers are asking themselves 'How can I become a better teacher?' 'How can I enjoy my teaching more?' "How can I feel when I am helping learning'. Teacher development draws on the teachers' own inner resource for change.

It is centered on personal awareness of the possibilities for change (Head and Taylor, 1997, p. 1). Glatthorn (1995, p.41) defines professional development as "the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically." The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) (2005) summarized international best practices in their publication, Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers. The conclusion was Effective professional development is ongoing, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Successful programmes involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers' learning communities. A key strategy involves finding ways for teachers to share their expertise and experience more systematically.

There is growing interest in ways to build cumulative knowledge across the profession, for example by strengthening connections between research and practice and encouraging schools to develop as learning organizations.(p.3 According to Glatthorn (1995, p.41) the conception of professional development is, therefore, broader than career development which is "the growth that occurs as the teachers moves through the professional career cycle" and broader than staff development which it is also "the provision of organized in-service programs designed to foster the growth of groups of teachers; it is only one of the systematic interventions that can be used for teacher development". Maggiolio (2003) stated that the following professional development strategies are needed to address teacher needs, and knowledge: Peer coaching: It is based on the three-phase model of Planning, Observation and Feedback known as clinical supervision.

In this strategy, pairs of teachers visit each other's classes and provide each other with insights on their teaching. They can use standardized instruments to make the observation. These instruments help teachers look at their performances in the classroom such as, planning, the instructional strategies, and the methods they use for assessment.

- Study groups: Study groups are very suitable for teachers who need a better understanding of ways to analyze their students' work.
- Dialogue Journals, teachers who cannot meet with their colleagues for any reasons may choose to keep a written conversation with a mentor in order to share reflections on their instruction. These kinds of journals can provide opportunities to practice the writing skills in the target language. They also help interactions between teachers who have different levels of experiences.

- Professional Development Portfolios: A portfolio is a systematic collection of teaching facts and reflections. It may have main components such as a statement of the teacher's educational philosophy, a goal statement, teacher or student work. So it can be used to assess the teachers' developments and students' achievements. Mentoring: Mentors provide advice and encouragement. This kind of strategies are suited to beginning teachers, who need to understand the classroom cultures that are related to many issues such as planning, the instructional strategies, and the methods of assessment they should use. Mentors can be very crucial instrument in enhancing the novice teachers' linguistics proficiency as well as their pedagogical competence and cultural knowledge. And the last strategy is the
- participatory practitioner research: It is known as action research, action research involves groups of teachers in diagnosing a situation, Identifying the problem area, Collecting and organizing the data, interpreting the data, reflecting on that problem, planning and carrying out an intervention in order to improve current situation.

Many educators and researchers such as Borko, (2004), Guskey (1986) and Sparks, (1983) have made many attempts to improve the quality of the teaching profession with various professional teachers training programs and activities. According to Davis and Davis (1998), a teacher-training program is a process through which skills are developed, and information is provided, in order to help teachers to be more efficient in their work. Fullan (1991, p.3) defined training programs as "those that include the total of formal learning experiences through ones' career from pre-service teacher education to retirement". This indicates that training comes in as a solution to the lack of performance of the teachers in the classroom.

Ganser (2000) stated that teacher training includes formal experiences such as attending workshops, professional meeting, mentoring, etc. Many theoretical studies focus on the importance of teachers training programs and their impact on teachers' practices in the classroom .Bork and Putnam (1995) support the fact that professional training plays an important role in changing teachers' teaching methods, and then these changes have a strong and positive impact on students 'achievements. Data collected during the Cognitively Guided Instruction project (CGI) shows that the formal education of teachers was closely associated with the levels of students' achievements. O'Day and Smith (1993, p.233) considered that teacher training programs as "essential mechanism for deepening teachers' knowledge and their teaching practices". Cook and Fine (1996, p. 1) considered them as "a key tool that keeps teachers abreast of current issues in education, helps them implement innovations and refine their practice".
Barnes (1996) discussed the need to polish second language teachers' skills during their professional training.

This training should concentrate primarily on the improvement of confidence in target language use, grammatical accuracy and also emphasize pedagogical development. Guskey (1997) stressed that more research was needed on the specific aspects of teacher training that created significant effect on teacher practices, measured by a change in students learning. He proposed examining multiple cases where there was a noticeable improvement in the students' performance, and to identify which features of training teachers had experienced. Many researchers wrote also about the importance of teacher training programs that lead to better opportunities for developing their linguistic competence for example, Fillmore and Snow (2002) argue that teachers need a thorough understanding of the role that language plays in education and how they must receive intensive preparation in educational linguistics.

They described that preparation in educational linguistics could improve the teachers' language abilities. Bullough (2002) states that teacher development acts as a major role of growing up quality of education and preparing teachers in the future. Haruturian (2007) stresses that effective training programs target the linguistic need of the English language learners. These kinds of programs increase the teachers' knowledge about foreign language development, their educational linguistics, and oral and written language. Because of this emerging emphasis on the value of all these factors, this study tries to investigate teachers' language proficiency and their experiential knowledge and to what extent there is a relationship between them and their classroom practices.

Statement of the Problem

The teachers' English competence has been recognized as an important qualification for successful teaching and learning process. The quality of teaching has been associated with their language proficiency.

The researchers think that many Jordanian EFL teachers are not qualified or competent enough to teach English efficiently. Nunan (2003 p; 601) stated, "… a major problem is that many English teachers simply do not have the proficiency, and therefore the confidence, to teach in English". In the field of TEFL there has been some effort to measure the level of our teachers' language. It is noticed that the performance of our teachers is still not at the desired level. Improving teachers' English language proficiency should be a matter of concern.

Purpose of the Study

This study attempted to assess the language proficiency of the Jordanian EFL teachers in order to determine whether or not they possess the language proficiency necessary for their performing their classroom practices effectively and efficiently. It is also tried to find out the teachers' actual experiential knowledge, since this knowledge is a bridge that allows the teachers to enhance their professional knowledge and practices to meet their students' needs. Finally, the study measured the correlation between the teachers' language proficiency, and their experiential knowledge on one side and their classroom practices on the other side.

Questions of the study

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1) What is the overall language proficiency level of Jordanian EFL teachers as measured by the TOEFL?
2) What is the effect of EFL teachers ' experiential knowledge on their classroom practices?
3) What are the actual pedagogical competences of Jordanian EFL teachers?
4) Are there any statistically significant correlation at $\alpha = 0.05$ between the teachers' language level of Proficiency, and experiential knowledge and their classroom practices?

Significance of the Study

Since there is a profound need to explore Jordanian public school teachers' language proficiency and their experiential knowledge and to what extent there is a relationship between these factors and their classroom practices, it is hoped that the findings of the study may provide teachers with insights into their performances and achievement in the classroom. The findings also may have an impact on improving the quality of teaching English as a foreign language by raising their confidence, improving their performance, and raising their level of proficiency. Since the results of the study may help educators to reconsider and design teacher instructional program that may help teachers to improve their language level of proficiency, teachers and supervisors may benefit from the programs and use them if they yield the desired outputs.

Definitions of Terms

- Foreign Language Proficiency: It is the development of language competence through language use. It involves the mastery of the linguistic competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (Omaggio, 2001).
  In this study, foreign language proficiency refers to the EFL teachers' ability to use the language modalities (structure, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and listening comprehension) in an appropriate way as measured by a paper version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

- Language Proficiency Test (TOEFL): The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to use and understand the English language as it is spoken, written and heard in college and university settings. The TOEFL evaluates the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English. In this study, the researcher used an international form of TOEFL to measure the English proficiency of teachers.

- Experiential knowledge: It refers to the ongoing learning processes in which teachers engage to learn how best to adjust their teaching to the learning needs of their students (Maggoili,2003).In this study it refers to the teachers' training courses and their teaching experiences that have strong effects on their classroom practices.

Limitations of the Study

The generalization of the results of the study is limited by these factors:

1. This study is conducted on female EFL Jordanian teachers in Ajloun Directorate of Education in the academic year 2011/2012. Therefore, the generalizability of the results of this study is applicable to similar populations only.
2. The number of the participants of the study (20 teachers) is relatively small because of using classroom observation checklist to collect the needed data.

Review of Related Literature

Studies That Dealt With Teachers Level of Language Proficiency

Mustafa (2001) assessed the language proficiency of EFL secondary stage teachers at Ramtha Directorate of Education. She assessed whether or not they possess the language proficiency necessary for performing their jobs efficiently and effectively by using an adapted version of TOEFL. The results showed that English secondary stage teachers' overall level of proficiency was low. Moreover, their level in structure was medium and low in reading comprehension, and vocabulary. Shukri (2002) studied the language proficiency of senior English Field-Teacher students at two Jordanian state universities (Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan). It also attempted to identify the potential causes for the weaknesses these students had.

The population of the study consisted of senior English Field-Teacher students at the faculties of Education at Yarmouk University and the University of Jordan and their instructors. The population included 41 students divided into 30 from Yarmouk University and 11 from University of Jordan. The researcher used TOEFL to test the students' language proficiency. He also developed a questionnaire to determine the potential causes of that weakness from the students' and their instructors' perspectives. The results of the study revealed that the students have scored low on the components and on the whole test. Moreover, it was revealed that there was a positive correlation between the students' respective proficiency levels and their performance on the individual components and on the whole test. Hacon (2005) investigated teachers' perceived efficacy among English as a foreign language teachers in middle schools in Venezuela and explored self efficacy beliefs among EFL teachers. The population of the study comprised 100 EFL middle school teachers.

The results of the study revealed that the participants judged their abilities to motivate students to learn English as low, while they perceived themselves more capable in designing instructional strategies, providing explanation, assessing students and managing their behaviors. Besides, the results indicated a positive relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and language proficiency and teachers' judgments about their teaching competences influence their classroom practices in terms of efforts, goal and challenges they set up for themselves and for their students. Aydogdu (2007) investigated the foreign language teachers' perceptions of their foreign language teaching proficiency. The data was collected by a 68 item likert type questionnaire. The population was 150 teachers of English who were teaching in K-12 schools in Edirne.

The results showed that the teachers perceived themselves competent enough in some teaching competence whereas they also stated that some action has to be taken in order to improve the quality of the current foreign language teaching practices. Mohseny and Raeisi (2009) investigated the relationship between language proficiency of Iranian EFL learners and their strategy use in listening comprehension. A general proficiency test (TOEFL), and a questionnaire were used for data collection. The participants of the study were 101 undergraduate sophomore Iranian students (63 females and 38 males) studying English Translation at Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch, Iran. The results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between proficiency level and listening comprehension strategy use of the participants. Moreover, it was revealed that cognitive strategies were used more than any other strategy type by the participants. The researchers concluded that both teachers and learners need to be informed of the significance of these strategies in the betterment of this receptive skill. Ball (2010) described the levels of oral proficiency of candidates for initial PreK-12 teacher licensure in Spanish and French as reported by faculty and students in the teacher education programs at Ohio colleges and universities.

The study was motivated by the adoption of the NCATE/ACTFL Program standards for the preparation of foreign language teachers.   Within the Program standards, a standard of Advanced-Low level oral proficiency, as measured by an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, is the expected level for teacher candidates to receive initial licensure in accredited languages. The results indicated that candidates' oral proficiency was rated predominantly at Intermediate-High. Implications of these findings for foreign language teacher education programs and for foreign teacher candidates are given, along with recommendations for further research. Zawahreh (2011) investigated the Jordanian secondary school English teachers perceptions of their linguistic and pedagogical competence and the congruence between their perceptions and their actual linguistic and pedagogical competences.

The participants of the study were 87 teachers of the English language of the secondary level in Ajloun Directorate of Education.42 of them are females and 45 are males. In this study, the researcher designed a questionnaire and an observation checklist and adopted paper version TOEFL. The results indicated that the perceptions of the secondary teachers of English about their linguistics competences and their pedagogical competences were high. Moreover, it was revealed that there was statistical correlation coefficient between the perceptions of the secondary school teachers about their pedagogical competences and its domains and the classroom practices and its domains. On the other hand, there were no statistical correlation coefficients between the perceptions of the secondary school teachers about their linguistics competences and its domains and the teachers' scores in the TOEFL due to teaching experience.

Studies That Dealt With Teachers' Experiential Knowledge

In this section, the researchers reviewed some of the studies that dealt with EFL teachers training courses or programs, studies that dealt with professional development, and their effects on their classroom practice.
Pacek (1996) examined Japanese teachers' perceptions of their one-year Japanese government in service teacher training program in the U.K. The study placed special emphasis on the effect of the training program on teachers' classroom practices in Japan. To evaluate the practicality of the program, the researcher found via a questionnaire that the 65 secondary school teachers who had previously participated in the program generally perceived the program to be beneficial.

Pacek concluded that trainers' understanding and consideration of the participants' culture and prior education in terms of teaching and learning are crucial for making the program more compatible with Japanese teachers' expectations and educational traditions. Naim (1999) investigated the characteristics of the effective secondary school teacher as perceived by students and principles in Palestine .In his study he tried to determine the personal and the professional characteristics of the effective teachers. One hundred and thirty subjects were randomly selected to represent two groups: secondary school principals and secondary school students who study at private teaching institution in Nablus area. Results showed that principals and students agreed on the importance of the professional characteristics of an effective teachers; mastery of the subject matter they teach, utilizing new teaching techniques, and analyzing the students' test.

Forte (1999) tried to determine the impact of a training program in the direct Instruction Reading at an urban elementary school on teacher performance and student achievement in reading as measured by the lowa Test of Basic Skills. The sample for this study consisted of six third, fourth, and fifth-grade teachers and their students. Teacher performance data were obtained through a professional development survey, training forms, and classroom observation forms. Student achievement data consisted of 1997 ITBS reading scores (pretest) and 1998 ITBS reading scores (post test).The results of the study showed that the training program did impact teacher performance and student achievement positively. Tawalbeh (2005) investigated the effect of an in-service training program on developing EFL teachers' competencies in the Jordanian lower basic stage at Amman Fourth Directorate of Education. The participants of the study were 20 EFL teachers. The findings of the study indicated that the competencies needed by teachers were divided into three categories: professional skills, personal qualities and language proficiency. The most common category was the professional skills.

The results of the needs analysis revealed that EFL teachers need the seven categories of competences which are: methods of teaching, evaluation, co-curricular activities, classroom management, and problem solving, planning and error correction.

Bigpond (2006) examined the effectiveness of three training   programs (Differentiation, Tribes Training, and Dr. Lee Jenkins Model) in a suburban /metropolitan school district and the impact of these three training programs on student's academic achievement in this school district.

Data were collected from 47 classroom teachers though surveys and interviews. The results showed that the training was sufficient in all three programs. The participants felt that the programs were beneficial in the classroom since they increased student academic achievement and improved student learning. The researcher recommended conducting further research, particularly in response to the new expectations for student learning since research studies examining the link between training programs, teacher classroom practice and student learning are rare. Howlett (2005) investigated the impact of an intensive twelve –day ESL training program, the ESL Graduate Academy, on teacher practices. The researcher try to address the national need for trained ESL professional and to explore how a specific training program impacted teachers' practices and classroom application. The participants of the study were 75 Arkansas teachers.

The results of the study revealed four central findings. Firstly, teachers had a greater understanding of second language acquisition theory. Secondly, participants demonstrated the methodology of increasing comprehensible input through the use of visuals, and graphic organizers. Thirdly, the ESL project was a key dimension to the learning process. Finally, self reflection was an important element to understand classroom practices. A majority of the participants stated that the training was overwhelmingly intense and they would have preferred to have taken the courses over a period of time with follow – up session related to their content and grade levels. Al Khatib (2007) evaluated the effect of a training program on Jordanian classroom teachers' knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with learning disabilities. The study also investigated whether such training influenced teachers' acceptance of including these students into their classroom.60 teachers were divided into two equal groups with 30 teachers in each.

The researcher constructed a training program based on increasing teachers' knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with learning disabilities. The experimental group was enrolled into the training program for 6-weeks. The results revealed that the training program had significant effects on both teachers' knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with learning disabilities and their acceptance of including these students into their classroom. Eun and Boyton (2007) investigated the impact of professional development programs for English as second language teachers on their classroom practices and on the way that teachers efficacy and organizational support at the school level relate by interacting with years of teaching experience.

The researcher collected data by using questionnaires administered to ninety teachers participating in ESL training programs in elementary and secondary schools. Results showed that the teachers' efficacy and organizational support significantly predicts level of professional development impact without interacting with years of teaching experiences. Thompson (2008) tried to determine if the Dallas Reading Academy (DRA), a professional development model for training teacher in reading instruction, had an impact on student reading achievement scores of third grade students. The study was based on a causal comparative research design and focused on 20 elementary schools in the Dallas Independent school District. The results of the study revealed that the DRA did not have a statistically significant effect on third grade student's reading achievement scores. Hijazi (2010) investigated the impact of the Jordanian Ministry of Education EFL teachers training programs on teachers' classroom practices and the development of their students' English linguistic competence.

The participants of the study were 40 females and males of different teaching experience years and 200 tenth – grade students. The results indicated that there were no statistically differences among the teachers of the experimental group classroom practices due to their gender and years of teaching experience. Moreover, the study showed that the training programs affected teachers' classroom practices positively and improve their students' linguistic competences. Abdulhaleem (2011) investigated the secondary stage EFL teachers' pedagogical beliefs and attitudes toward their professional development and their effects on their classroom performance. The participants consisted of the entire English language teachers of the 11th and 12th grades who teach in the secondary schools that belong to Irdid First, Second and Third Directorate of Education. Two samples were selected to participate in his study. The first sample consisted of all the participants who responded to the questionnaires, while the second one consisted of 15 male teachers and 15 female teachers with various levels of experience.

The sample was selected purposefully. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used these instruments.

Firstly, the attitudinal and beliefs questionnaires to investigate the teachers attitudes' and beliefs toward professional development. Secondly, the observation checklist was used to observe the actual implementation of the teachers' classroom practices. Finally, the researcher developed a number of interview questions to get more information about teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward their professional development. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences at α=0.05 between the means of the teachers pedagogical beliefs, attitudes and classroom practices concerning their professional development due to the independent variables of the study.

Al-Zoubi and Sultan (2011) constructed a training program based on instructional competencies and measured its effects in improving these competencies for special education resource room teachers in Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of 50 teachers. The participants were distributed into two equal groups, with 25 teachers in each group. The teachers in the experimental group have the training program, whereas the teachers in the control group were exposed to the conventional training program. The results of ANOVA revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the two groups' performance on the post- achievement test and the post-observation scale, favoring to the experimental group. The results of qualitative data analysis, that utilized interview methods showed significantly better performances of the experimental group teachers than of the control group in improving the personal and professional competencies.

Concluding Remarks

The researcher concludes from reviewing the previous related literature the following points:

1. The literature is very rich in studies that studied teachers' level of proficiency, their experiences and the impact of these factors on their practices.
2. The literature showed that teachers have to be proficient enough to be able to teach effectively and efficiently. So the preparation and development of EFL teachers' language proficiency should be given proper considerations.
3. The findings from the literature provide evidence that teacher training programs have an impact on the students learning and teaching process.
4. The use of training programs to improve teachers' practices and learners ' achievements is a good move that educators, supervisors and teachers support and value.
5. Training programs provide models of good practice that keep teachers up to date about the changing demands of their profession.
6. 9- Many researchers recommended conducting further research to examine the link between teachers' level of   proficiency, and experiential knowledge and classroom practices.
7. 10- No study was conducted to investigate, at the same time, the relationship between EFL Jordanian teachers' language proficiency, their experiential knowledge, and their classroom practices.

Accordingly, this study may yield significant results because it will not only investigate Jordanian teachers' language proficiency, and their experiential knowledge, but it will also investigate to what extent there is a relationship between these important factors and their classroom practices.

Method and Procedures

This section presents the methodology which the researcher followed in this study. It includes the design of the study, the participants of the study, the instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, procedures of the study and the appropriate statistical analysis.

Design of the Study

Miles and Huberman (1994) believed that a combined qualitative and quantitative approach (numbers and words) are needed if we want to understand the world. This study is both a qualitative and a quantitative one. Quantitative methods were required because the following instruments were used,

　　　-A linguistic test (TOEFL).
　　　-An observation checklist.

Qualitative methods were also required because the researchers sought to gain a better understanding of teachers' practices in the context in which they work. In this study an interview was used as one of the primary methods of data collection. The teachers' responses to the interview questions will be described. Accordingly, mixing two methods will provide the researchers with opportunity to address the study questions from a variety of perspectives.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study are 20 EFL female teachers. They were purposefully chosen from the schools in Ajloun Directorate of Education for the academic year 2011/2012.

Instruments of the study

For the purpose of obtaining information needed to achieve the   objectives of the study, the researchers used the following instruments:

- A linguistic test (TOEFL).
- An observation checklist.
- Structured interview

1- The TOEFL

The researcher chose the TOEFL (ITP) as a measure of language proficiency. This test is used to evaluate the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English for the purpose of gaining admission into foreign institutions of higher education. So the researcher adopted a full paper version of the TOEFL (Phillips,2003) . It consists of four major sections: listening comprehension, structure and written expression, vocabulary and reading comprehension, and writing. Table 1 presents the number of items in the original forms of the test.

Table 1: the Outline of the Probable Format of the paper Test.

Sections	Items	Times
Listening comprehension	50 multiple choice questions	30 minutes
Structure and written expression	40 multiple choice questions	25 minutes
Vocabulary and reading comprehension	50 multiple choice questions	55 minutes
Writing	1 essay question	30 minutes

When the paper version TOEFL is scored, the examinee receives a score between 20 and 68 in each of the three sections listening comprehension, structure and written expression, vocabulary and reading comprehension. The examinee also will receive an overall score between 217 and 677 and that is done using a chart to determine the converted score for each section. Suppose that the examinee got 30 correct in the first section, 28 in the second section and 43correct in the third section. The 30 correct in the first section means a converted score of 51.The 28 correct in the second section means a converted score of 52. The 43 correct in the third section means a converted score of 58 .Table 2 presents the raw and converted scores in the three sections.

Table 2: The correct and converted scores in the three sections.

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
Number Correct	30	28	43
Converted scores	51	52	58

Then the overall score is determined in the following way:

- The three converted scores are added together: 51+52+58=161
- The sum is divided by three: 161/3=53.5
- Then multiply by 10: 53.5x 10=537

Scoring the Test of Written English (TWE)

The score of the test of written English (TWE) is a separate one on a scale of the six criteria, where one is the worst score and six is the best score. The examinees must write an essay on a given topic in thirty minutes. Table 3 presents the six criteria used in scoring the original TOEFL essay. These criteria are:

Table 3: The criteria used in scoring the original TOEFL essay

1-The writer is not capable of conveying ideas in written English.
2- The writer shows a minimal ability to convey ideas in written English.
3- The writer shows evidence of organizational, structural and grammatical skills that still need to be improved.
4-The writer has adequate organizational, structural and grammatical skills. The essay contains a number of errors.
5- The writer has a good organizational, structural and grammatical skills. The essay contains some errors.
6- The writer has very strong organizational, structural and grammatical skills.

2-The observation Checklist

The researchers adopted the observation checklist (see Appendix A,p.27) from Zawahreh (2011) to observe and follow the actual implementation of the teachers' classroom practices. The observation checklist included six major domains: 1- professional ethics 2-planning   3-lesson implementation 4 -classroom management 5-assessment and evaluation 6-reflection and self -evaluation. The scoring system followed in the observation   system includes five scales showing the degree of performance under investigation. These include very high (5),high (4) ,not sure (3),low (2) and very low (1).

Validity of the Observation Checklist

For the purpose of validating the observation checklist, the EFL jury was asked to judge whether the items are enough, appropriate and comprehensive. The jury suggested adopting the observation checklist as it is without making any modifications.

3- The Interview questions

The researcher developed a number of interview questions (see Appendix B,P.31) to be answered by the teachers. The purpose of these questions was to get more information about teachers' experiential knowledge regarding their training programs they are participated in. The interviews were conducted face to face; each interview lasted for approximately 30 minutes. The interview questions concentrated upon the following five dimensions : Teachers' attitudes toward professional development, the content and the process factors in the training programs, the clarity and possibility of achieving the curriculum outcome, training programs' benefits to the teachers and students, and teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs.

Validity of the Interview Question

To ensure the validity of the interview questions, the jury of EFL was   asked to judge whether the structured questions were appropriate, enough and comprehensive. The jury suggested editing some of the questions, and the researcher did so.

Reliability of the Interview Card

Inter-rater reliability

The inter-rater reliability of the interview card was tested by administrating it by one of the researchers and a well qualified teacher of English to a pilot sample that consisted of 5 female teachers who were chosen from similar participants other than the participants of the study. The researchers computed the correlation between the two analyses using Pearson correlation. Table 4 presents the degree of the analysis agreement between them.

Table 4: Degree of the analysis agreement between the two analyses

	Degree of the agreement
Interview card Categories	inter-rater
The content and the process factors in the training programs	.97
Teachers' attitudes toward professional development	.95
Possibility of achieving the curriculum outcomes	.95
Training program' benefits to the teachers and students	.98
Teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs	.96
Over whole	.96

From Table 4, it is clear that the total coefficient of agreement between the researcher and the raters was high (.96) which is acceptable for the purpose of this study.

Intra-rater Reliability

The intra-rater reliability of the interview card was measured by one of the researchers who used the interview card on a pilot sample that consisted of 5 female teachers who were chosen from similar participants other than the participants of the study. Then the researchers analyzed their responses to the questions to get more information about teachers' experiential knowledge and its effects on their classroom practices. The researchers computed the correlation between the first analysis and the second one using Pearson Correlation. Table 5 presents the degree of agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis.

Table 5: Degree of agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis.

Categories	**Degree of the agreement**
Interview card	**intra-rater**
The content and the process factors in the training programs	.100
Teachers' attitudes toward professional development	.99
Possibility of achieving the curriculum outcomes	.99
Training program' benefits to the teachers and students	.99
Teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs	.98
Over whole	.99

From Table 5, it is clear that the total coefficient of agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis was high (.99) which is acceptable for the purpose of this study.

Statistical Procedures

To answer the first, and the second questions, the researchers used percentages, means and standard deviations for the teachers' linguistic competences and for the factors of the teachers' experiential knowledge included in the interview form .To answer the third question concerning the teachers' pedagogical competences, the researchers calculated percentages, means and standard deviations for the observation form . To answer the first part, and the second part of the fourth question, the researchers used Pearson Correlation.

The Results aand Their Discussion
Results of the First Question

The first question asks about the overall language proficiency level of the Jordanian EFL teachers as measured by the TOEFL. Table 6 presents the means and the standard deviations of the four components of the test and the whole test it self

Table 6: Means and standard deviations of the teachers' scores on the four components of the whole test.

TOEFL	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Listening Comprehension	41	65	52.000	7.47
Structure/Written expression	43	61	52.850	5.45
Reading Comprehension	31	54	46.100	7.21
Writing	1	6	2.800	1.24
Over Whole	396.67	583.33	503.167	59.96

The results show that the teachers have scored low on all components. Since the total mean of all components was 503.167. This means that their English language proficiency is not acceptable since the score 550 opens the graduate studies for them in the Jordanian universities. Means and standard deviations of the teachers' scores on the four components and the whole test showed that the teachers had scored low with a total mean of 503.167 taking into consideration that the maximum score on the test is 660. The researchers believe that the teachers should have high proficiency to teach English language. The researchers also consider the teachers' proficiency in English important similar to their understanding of their students' characteristics, classroom management skills, and English teaching methods. Beside, teachers need to possess the necessary skills that enable them to teach and communicate effectively and efficiently and to identify the potential causes for the difficulties they face .

Many researchers such as Kamhi-Stein & Mahboob (2005 and 2006) asserted that in order to communicate and teach effectively and efficiently, teachers must have a full mastery of the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as knowledge of the target culture. In this sense, Butler's (2004) suggested that the types and levels of English proficiency necessary for teaching English should be identified in order to provide the teachers with appropriate guidelines for English proficiency development in the specific context of the teaching English as a foreign language. Locally, the results of this question agree with the results arrived at by Mustafa (2001) who assessed the language proficiency of EFL secondary stage teachers at Ramtha Directorate of Education. She found that English secondary stage teachers' overall level of proficiency was low. Their level in structure was medium and low in reading comprehension, and vocabulary.

Results of the second question

The second question asks about the effect of the EFL teachers' experiential knowledge on their classroom practices from the teachers' perspectives. In order to answer this question, twenty female teachers were asked specific questions to investigate the impact of the Jordanian Ministry of education EFL teachers training on their classroom performances and the development of their pedagogical competences. The teachers' answers were analyzed, classified and the results were presented according to the dimensions of the interview as a unit of analysis. The researchers calculated the percentages, the means and the standard deviations of the dimensions which are included in the interview card. Table 7 presents the results.

Table 7: Percentages, means and standard deviations of teachers' perspectives of their experiential knowledge according to the dimensions of the interview card

Teachers' Experiential Knowledge	Percentages in Categories:		Mean	Std. Dev.
	No	Yes		
Teachers' general attitudes toward professional development	0.0	100.0	1.000	0.00
The content and the process factors in the training programs	75.0	25.0	0.250	0.44
The influence of training programs on the teaching process	70.0	30.0	0.300	0.47
Training programs' benefits to the teachers and students	70.0	30.0	0.300	0.47
Teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs	100.0	0.0	0.000	0.00
Over Whole	**70.0**	**30.0**	**0.370**	**0.27**

Table 7 shows that the overall degree for the teachers' perspectives of their experiential knowledge is low since the mean is **.37**.

In order to investigate the relationship between teachers' experiential knowledge and their classroom practices, the researcher interviewed individually the twenty female EFL teachers who effectively implement/did not implement the experiential knowledge to their classroom practices. As was mentioned before, the interview questions concentrated upon the following five dimensions : Teachers' attitudes toward professional development, the content and the process factors in the training programs, the clarity and possibility of achieving the curriculum outcome (the influence of training programs on the teaching process), training programs' benefits to the teachers and students, and teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs. The results that are related to these five dimensions in the interview card shows that the overall degree for the teachers' experiential knowledge is low with the mean of .37 as it was shown in Table 7. It is evident that the majority of teachers did not progress to implement the experiential knowledge into their classrooms. The discussion of the results of this question is presented according to the dimensions of the interview card.

1.Teachers' attitudes toward professional development

The results showed that this dimension had the high rank by a mean of 100.0. This means that all of the twenty female teachers believed that the Jordanian Ministry of Education EFL training programs, in general, were useful and they were recognized as a key component of building teachers' competences. They also pointed out that these kinds of programs are very necessary to prepare teachers to the teaching process. They report that training programs provide them with opportunities to develop new skills and attitudes, new teaching and assessment strategies, and new theories and ways of thinking. In addition they believe that training programs provide them with opportunities to examine the new standards, revise the curriculum, and develop deeper understanding of their students and their learning styles. They also believe that good programs enable them to perform their tasks effectively in their classrooms. These points agreed with the study of Abdulhaleem (2011) in which he showed that there were no statistically significant differences at α=0.05 between the means of the teachers pedagogical beliefs, attitudes and classroom practices concerning their professional development.

2. The content and the process factors in the training programs

The results showed that this dimension has low rank with a mean of .25.It is evident from the teachers' responses to the related questions in the interview card that there is lack of resources and opportunists needed for the implementation of the new skills in their classrooms such as data show, Xerox machines, visual aids, computers …etc. On other word, the training site lacks the basic needs of the trainees (suitable facilities). They point out that there are no promotion, no raise in their salaries and any encouragement. They also believe that the distribution of the activities in the programs is not suitable. Those teachers assert that the trainers (supervisors) were not properly qualified. They focus on the theoretical knowledge only. They are not familiar with their trainees' needs and they do not follow up the teachers in their classrooms. The supervisors always focus on the teachers' errors without paying attention to their performance. They always criticize teachers instead of trying to find solutions for their problems. The teachers also assert that the supervisors follow up some programs and ignore others. Besides, they believe that in order to enhance teachers' professional development, MOE should select professional trainers.

The level of teachers should be taken into account when designing such programs. On the other hand, some teachers point out that the discussion of the contents of the textbooks, the distribution of the activities, and the length of the training for session are suitable. They agree that the trainers' primary roles should be guides, facilitators, monitors, lectures and advisors. They should help teachers to improve their abilities. This point agrees with the study of Forte (1999) in which he found that the training programs did impact teacher performance and students' achievement positively.

3. The clarity and possibility of achieving the curriculum outcomes (the influence of training programs on the teaching process)

This dimension in the interview card has a low rank with a mean of .30. This indicates that the MOE training programs do not focus on the teachers' immediate professional and linguistic needs. Most of the teachers believe that these kinds of programs do not help in solving the teachers' problems they face in their classroom. They also think that the training programs they participated in do not prepare teachers to teach effectively, because there is a mismatch between the content of these programs and what they need in the classrooms.

Some of these teachers assert that the content of some training programs is not relevant to the curriculum and others point out that some of the new concepts introduced during the training are difficult to be learned especially when these concepts are not part of their schemata. Besides, they assert that these programs should include intensive activities and practical application on how to apply effectively the new ideas as well as the instructional and assessment strategies inside the classrooms. In addition, they point out that there is a repetition in the goals of these programs. On the other hand, some teachers point out that these programs motivate them to teach effectively and help them to understand the basic concepts in the educational process i.e. how to plan for a lesson, how to deal with students, how to use different strategies of teaching…etc.

4. Teachers' and students benefits from the training programs

The results show that this dimension has low rank with a mean of .30.It is evident from most of the teachers' response that the content of some training programs is overwhelming because the amount of information covered during the training is too much. They assert that there are no written materials given to them. Besides, they assert that there is a repetition in the goals of these training programs they participated in and their content focus on one or two sides of the teaching process. They also assert that some of the skills conveyed to the teachers are traditional. In addition, they believe that their colleagues do not benefit from these programs because they are overloaded and they do not have enough time to meet and discuss the new knowledge and ideas. Few of teacher's point that the content of these training programs is based on teachers and students needs. They include the intensive and effective activities and skills that benefit the students and the teachers. They add that the training programs they participated in enhanced their professional development (linguistic and pedagogical competence).

5. Teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs

All the teachers point out that they do not have any motivation toward attending any training programs. They think that these programs are useless because of many reasons related to the nature and to the condition of them. These reasons are: the heavy work load of the teachers that prevent them from participating in these programs such as numbers of the daily periods and the numbers of the students in each class, the lack of the basic needs of the trainees, the lack of the trainers adequate training competences and skills, these programs do not focus on the teachers' immediate linguistic needs, these programs do not help in solving the teachers' problems they face in their classroom, the training site lacks the basic facilities, and these programs focus on theoretical knowledge more than the practical one. In fact, the result of this question does not agree with the result arrived at by Al-Zoubi and Sultan(2011) who found that the performance of the experimental group teachers, those who have the training program, was significantly improved in their personal and professional competencies than of the control group. To have a more detailed look into the factors that affect the process of transferring the experiential knowledge, the researcher presents the teachers' actual responses in this respect. The first fifteen teachers do not look positively to the training programs.

Teacher 1 said: "The distribution of the activities in the programs was not suitable and the content of them was not relevant to the curriculum".

Teacher 2 said: "There was a mismatch between the content of the training programs and teachers' and students needs".

Teacher 3pointed out that "teachers' level of proficiency should be taking into account when designing such programs". She also said: "What is needed for novice teachers is not necessary needed for the experiential ones and vice versa."

Teacher 4 believed that" the training programs should include intensive activities and practical application on how to apply effectively the techniques of teaching inside the classroom."

Teacher 5 pointed that "some of the ideas conveyed to the teachers were traditional". She added that "my colleagues did not benefit from these programs because they are overloaded and because of their bad condition".

Teacher 6 would like that "MOE should provide appropriate and needed facilities and resources to let the teachers participate effectively in these programs". She added that teachers should be paid for attending these programs."

Teacher 7 said that" there is a repetition in the goals of the training programs and in the process followed to achieve these goals".

Teacher 8 pointed out that the trainers were not qualified "they focused on theoretical knowledge, most of the time they read and did not engage the trainees in the process of the training."

Teacher 9 asserted that "I do not have any motivation for attending training programs because some of the ideas and strategies conveyed to the teachers were traditional".

Teacher 10 said that "there was a lack of technological facilities to enhance better training such as internet, data show etc".

Teacher 11 asserted that "I do not have any motivation for attending training programs because of the heavy workload which prevents me from participating in these programs such as the number of daily periods, and the numbers of the students in our classes."

Teacher 12 pointed that "these programs do not help in solving teachers' problems ".

Teacher 13 said that "I would like to attend more English language training programs which help me to improve my language proficiency but outside Jordan."

Teacher14 said that "I had attended some in teaching strategies; I think that those courses did not benefit me a lot".

Teacher15 pointed out that" instead of following up the teachers in their classroom and trying to give solutions to their problems, the trainers (supervisors) criticize them".

While the other five female teachers pointed out that the training programs they participated in provided them with new teaching and assessment strategies. They asserted that these programs were recognized as a key component of building teachers' linguistic and pedagogical competences. They stated that they had a strong motivation for attending other new training programs since they help in developing their language competences. This may justify their desire to develop themselves professionally.

Teacher1 pointed out that "the training programs which I participated in, help me to understand the basic concepts such as how to plane for a lesson, how to deal with students, the importance to use different strategies of teaching and assessment."

Teacher2 commented that "I want to develop myself and to be a better teacher and I know that training programs are one of the ways that can help me to do that".

Teacher 3 said that" the distribution of the activities in the training programs is suitable, the content of the curriculum was analyzed; the general and the specific outcomes were discussed seriously.

Teacher 4 asserted that "these kinds of programs motivated me to teach effectively and vary my teaching strategies."

Teacher 5 pointed out that "I would like to attend other English language training programs which help me to improve my language proficiency." She also added that "any new programs will add something new.

Results of the Third Question

The third question asks about the actual pedagogical competences of Jordanian EFL teachers. In order to answer this question, the researchers calculated the percentages, the means and the standard deviations for teachers' pedagogical competences. Table 8 presents the results.

Table 8: Percentages, means and standard deviations of the pedagogical competences and its domains arranged in a descending order.

Rank	Dimension ID	Pedagogical Competence	Percentages in Categories:					Mean	Std. Dev.
			V.L.	L.	N.S.	H.	V.H.		
1	4	*Classroom Environment and management skills*	0.0	20.0	30.0	45.0	5.0	3.400	0.87
2	1	*Professional Ethics*	10.0	35.0	10.0	35.0	10.0	3.014	1.21
3	5	*Assessment and evaluation*	5.0	30.0	25.0	25.0	15.0	3.008	1.15
4	3	*Lesson Implementation*	0.0	35.0	30.0	35.0	0.0	2.975	0.99
5	2	*Planning*	25.0	35.0	35.0	5.0	0.0	2.113	0.81
6	6	*Reflection and self-evaluation*	30.0	40.0	20.0	10.0	0.0	2.050	0.98
		Over Whole	**0.0**	**45.0**	**25.0**	**30.0**	**0.0**	**2.736**	**0.85**

*V.L. = very low; L=low; N.S. = not sure; H. = high; V.H. = very high

Table 8 shows that the overall degree of the observation checklist concerning teachers' actual pedagogical competences is moderate since the mean is 2.736. For more information about percentages, means and standards deviations of the items of the observation checklist concerning the classroom practices, see (Appendix C, p. 33). The researchers made a number of classroom visits to record the teachers' practices using a prepared observation checklist. The results in Table 8 reveal that the teachers scored low in planning, reflection and self evaluation with very little differences in their means. This indicates that the teachers did not show progress because they did not prepare in advance. It was noticed that the teachers prepare during the few minutes between the periods of classes. In their planning, they did not take into consideration the following areas: the time duration of each of each specific outcome, the number of classes, the reflection on the plan regularly, the previous learning of the students, and the vertical and the horizontal integration.

This could be due to their beliefs that there is no need to design coherent instructional plans because they think that they are aware of what should be done in planning without writing everything. As for reflection and self-evaluation, the results showed that this area had a low rank with a mean of 2.50. It is noticed that the teachers did not show a desire to list the challenges they face and correct mistakes when found in the textbooks. They rarely ask help from other such as the supervisors, peer teachers and the EFL professors. Concerning the classroom environment and management skills, the results showed that this domain had the first rank with a mean of 3.40. While observing teachers in the classroom, the researchers noticed that the teachers behaved in an appropriate and acceptable manner and supported students to learn. As for professional ethics, the results showed a mid degree of this domain with a mean of 3.014. This is because the female teachers stick to the rules and regulations and have patience while presenting the lesson.

The researchers also noticed that the teachers communicate with their students positively and treat them with respect. This indicates that the teachers show commitment to keep jobs as teachers.

As for assessment and evaluation, the researchers found that the teachers still use traditional ways to evaluate their students such as daily and monthly exams. They neglected the modern evaluative strategies such as summative and formative strategies. It is known that the assessment is directly linked with the outcomes to be achieved which mean that the teachers have the responsibility to choose the suitable assessment strategy to measure every outcome and to measure their students' achievement. However, after observing the teachers, the researchers found that the teachers do not vary their assessment tools. Concerning the lesson implementation, the results showed a mid degree of practices with a mean of 2.975.

This is because, perhaps, the teachers did not use the proper teaching strategies to teach the materials lessons, or they did not accommodate learners' styles and learning strategies, or they did not emphasize learning how to learn, or due to their incompetence in such areas. For example, while observing teachers in their classroom, the teachers seldom used the discussion strategy. The researchers noticed that the teachers still used the direct instructional strategies such as question-answers strategy, presentation, exercises, and direct reading activities. To sum up, the results of this question showed that the EFL teachers' actual pedagogical competences are moderate. Locally, the results agreed with those found by Hijazi (2010) when she found that Jordanian teachers of English pay attention to their pedagogical competences because they know that they are evaluated depending on these competences.

Teachers' pedagogical competences are evaluated by the supervisors who use the English language classroom observation report that consists of these categories: planning, classroom management, implementation of teaching and writing and assessment. Internationally, the results of this question agree with the results of another recent study when Aydogue (2007) found that the EFL teachers perceived themselves competent enough in some teaching competence whereas they also stated that some action has to be taken into account in order to improve the quality of the current foreign language teaching practices. In his study, Chacon (2005) found that EFL middle school teachers in Venezuela perceived themselves more capable in designing instructional strategies, providing explanation, assessing students and managing their behaviors.

Results of the Fourth Question

The fourth question asks if there is a relationship between the teachers' level of proficiency, and their experiential knowledge on one side and their classroom practices on the other side. In order to answer this question, the researchers calculated the correlation coefficients between the TOEFL scores and the teachers' classroom practices based on the observation checklist and its domains using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Table 9 presents the results.

Table 9: Correlation coefficients between the teachers' pedagogical competences domains and the TOEFL scores.

Correlation	Statistic	Listening Comprehension	Structure/Written expression	Reading Comprehension	Writing	TOEFL
Professional Ethics	Pearson Correlation	0.65	0.68	0.81	0.07	0.80
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.001	0.000	0.763	0.000
Planning	Pearson Correlation	0.45	0.56	0.61	-0.02	0.60
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.046	0.010	0.005	0.933	0.005
Lesson Implementation	Pearson Correlation	0.54	0.52	0.67	0.17	0.65
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015	0.019	0.001	0.472	0.002
Classroom Environment and management skills	Pearson Correlation	0.58	0.57	0.58	-0.26	0.65
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0.009	0.008	0.276	0.002
Assessment and evaluation	Pearson Correlation	0.32	0.35	0.48	0.05	0.43
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.174	0.135	0.034	0.833	0.060
Reflection and self-evaluation	Pearson Correlation	0.32	0.55	0.42	0.01	0.47
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.167	0.012	0.069	0.971	0.038
Total	Pearson Correlation	0.56	0.62	0.71	0.04	0.71
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010	0.003	0.000	0.879	0.000

Table 9 shows that there is statistically significant correlation at $\alpha=0.05$ between the teachers' linguistic competences, as they are scored by TOEFL, and their classroom practices which was 0.71. This correlation is classified as positive and high according to Hinkle et al. (1988). This relationship is not surprising since English teachers should have a full mastery of the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as knowledge of the target culture. The result of this question did not agree with the results arrived at by Mustafa (2001) who found that the English teachers' language proficiency is low. The researcher found that there is a strong positive relationship between teachers' language proficiency and their own practice of teaching in the classroom.

The researchers believe that in order to communicate and teach effectively and efficiently in the daily classrooms, teachers should have the knowledge and the abilities to correctly use listening, structure and written expressions, reading and writing skills. The results also did not agree with the results of another recent study when Zawahreh (2011) found that the correlation coefficients between the perceptions of the secondary teachers of English about their linguistic competences and the teachers' scores in the TOEFL was 0.03 without statistical significant differences at $\alpha=0.05$. In fact, the results of this question agree with the results of a recent international study when Chacon (2005) found that there is a positive relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and language proficiency and teachers' judgments about their teaching competences influence their classroom practices in terms of efforts, goal and challenges they set up for themselves and for students. The researchers also calculated the correlation coefficient between the results of the dimensions of the interview card and their classroom practices based on the observation checklist and its domains using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Table 10 presents the results.

Table 10: Correlation coefficients between the teachers' responses to the dimensions of their experiential knowledge and the domains of their pedagogical competences.

Idea	statistic	Profes sional Ethics	Planni ng	Lesson Imple mentat ion	Classr oom Enviro nment and manag ement skills	Asses sment and evalua tion	Reflecti on and self-evaluati on	True Pedag ogical Comp etence
Teachers' attitudes toward professional development	Pearson Correlation	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
the content and the process factors in the training programs	Pearson Correlation	-0.43	-0.40	-0.31	-0.50	-0.18	-0.35	-0.41
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.061	0.083	0.183	0.023	0.460	0.126	0.072
The influence of training programs on the teaching process	Pearson Correlation	-0.55	-0.49	-0.44	-0.64	-0.22	-0.45	-0.53
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.012	0.027	0.055	0.002	0.363	0.044	0.016
Training programs' benefits to the teachers and students	Pearson Correlation	-0.55	-0.49	-0.44	-0.64	-0.22	-0.45	-0.53
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.012	0.027	0.055	0.002	0.363	0.044	0.016
Teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs	Pearson Correlation	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)	.(a)
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
Total	Pearson Correlation	-0.52	-0.47	-0.41	-0.61	-0.21	-0.43	-0.51
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.018	0.034	0.076	0.004	0.380	0.056	0.023
a	Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.							

It is clear that there is a negative correlation between the teachers' responses to the domains of their experiential knowledge and the domains of their pedagogical competences at α=0.05 which was ⁻0.51.This correlation is classified low according to Hinkle et al. (1988). This indicates that the teachers are not aware of the significance of the professional development and so they had a negative orientation towards the training programs they participated in. The researcher can conclude the reasons behind this negative relationship. Although, the participants of the study think that the training programs play a role in improving their classroom practices, there are many obstacles that hinder the effective transfer of the received knowledge (acquired through the training programs) to classroom practices.

These factors were related to teachers' attitudes toward professional development, the content and the process factors in the training programs**,** the clarity and possibility of achieving the curriculum outcomes (the influence of training programs on the teaching process), training programs' benefits to the teachers and students, and teachers' motivation toward attending the training programs. The result of this question did not agree with the results arrived at by Hijazi (2010) who found that the training programs affected teachers' classroom practices positively and improved their students' linguistic competences.

Conclusions

The teachers under study showed that they do not possess the necessary skills that enable them to teach and communicate effectively and efficiently. Teachers' level of proficiency is of great importance because they directly affect their classroom practices (teaching and learning process). Most EFL teachers are aware of the importance of developing their professions, but since there is a negative relationship between their experiential knowledge and their actual pedagogical competences means that there are many obstacles that hinder the effective transfer of the experiential knowledge (acquired through the training programs) to classroom practices.

Recommendations

In light of the results of the study and to gain a deeper fruitful understanding of the impact of the teachers' attitudes toward teaching the English language, their level of proficiency and their experiential knowledge on their classroom practices, the researcher presents the following recommendations:

Recommendations for further research

1. Similar comprehensive studies with a large sample, including male and female teachers and from the various public and private schools, is needed to get more reliable results.
2. More comprehensive studies must be conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the teachers' experiential
3. Other comprehensive studies must be conducted to identify the factors or obstacles that may hinder the effective transfer of the received knowledge (acquired through EFL training programs) to classroom practices.

Pedagogical recommendations

1. The Ministry of Education should give teachers the chance to participate in the planning process of the various types of training programs to meet their needs in order to guarantee their effectiveness, successes and continuity.
2. An evaluation of the linguistic competence of the new EFL teachers is needed, since their linguistic proficiency is a major factor that determines their classroom teaching practices.
3. It is necessary that the supervisors should care for developing teachers professionally through conducting proper training courses, and they should establish a friendly and respectable relationship with teachers.
4. Supervision should focus on teachers' practices rather than on figuring out their deficiencies to motivate them to do their best in teaching.
5. Pre-service training programs should be a requirement for newly hired teachers whether employed at public or private schools.
6. EFL teachers should attend workshops for teaching English as a foreign language.
7. Training centers should be provided with necessary facilities such as comfortable chairs, labs, cafeterias, and so on.

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Appendix A

The Observation checklist

Pedagogical Competences Observation Checklist

Observation checklist respondent number (   )
Name: ....
School: ....

No.	Pedagogical Competence	Level of Pedagogical Competence				
		Very Low	Low	Not Sure	High	Very High
1- Professional Ethics: The teacher						
1-	treats students with respects, fairness and justice.					
2-	communicates with students positively.					
3-	.uses information resources with morality					
4-	directs students to use information resources morally.					
5-	.follows the professional dress code					
6-	shows wisdom and patience while presenting the .instruction					
7-	shows commitment to professional duties and .perform them honestly					
2 – Planning: The teacher						
8-	designs coherent instructional plans in the light of the intended learning outcomes and curriculum standards of English.					
9-	demonstrates knowledge of instructional strategies and chooses those that match the needs .and learning styles of students					
10 -	plans clearly by stating precise measurable, .observable and relevant outcomes					
11-	prepares materials, resources and aids in advance					

No.	Pedagogical Competence	Level of Pedagogical Competence				
		Very Low	Low	Not Sure	High	Very High
	and check them on time.					
12-	plans taking into consideration individual differences among students.					
13-	plans taking into consideration the vertical integration.					
14-	plans taking into consideration horizontal integration.					
15-	plans taking into consideration the previous learning of the students.					
16-	reflects on the plans regularly.					
17-	takes into consideration the number of the classes.					
18-	takes into consideration the time duration of each specific outcome.					
19-	fills a follow-up table regularly.					
3- Lesson Implementation: The teacher						
20-	connects the previous learning with the new topic.					
21-	checks and reviews previous work.					
22-	focuses on classroom outcomes through explanations.					
23-	uses a wide range of learning strategies to facilitate teaching.					
24-	contextualizes learning.					
25-	uses appropriate activities to facilitate students' learning.					
26-	"emphasizes" learning how to learn					
27-	presents and explains topics in an easy, understandable and interesting way.					
28-	motivates students orally.					
29-	gives instruction in English.					
30-	guides students towards independent learning.					

No.	Pedagogical Competence	Level of Pedagogical Competence				
		Very Low	Low	Not Sure	High	Very High
31-	accommodates learners' learning styles /learning strategies.					
32-	varies techniques according to students' level and the teaching /learning situations					
33-	makes use of the end of the lesson in good effect.					
4-Classroom Environment and management skills: The teacher						
34-	encourages and support students to learn by providing positive expectations of success.					
35-	establishes purposeful, task-oriented and relaxed classroom climate by using meaningful language.					
36-	fosters students' confidence and self-esteem.					
37-	monitors, controls and directs students' behaviors carefully and positively.					
38-	cares about the appearance and the layout of the class.					
39-	behaves in an appropriate and acceptable manner to prevent misbehaviors.					
40-	deals with students with self-confidence					
5-Assessment and evaluation: The teacher						
41-	marks students' assignments thoroughly and return them regularly.					
42-	uses assessment as a tool to identify the areas of difficulties of instruction.					
43-	reinforces correct responses immediately.					
44-	gives enough wait time after the question to give the students a chance to think about it.					
45-	varies and use different types of questions.					
46-	distributes questions randomly.					
6-Reflection and self evaluation: The teacher						
47-	asks for help from the others e.g. the supervisors, peer teachers and the EFL professors.					
48-	keeps records of students' progress.					

No.	Pedagogical Competence	Level of Pedagogical Competence				
		Very Low	Low	Not Sure	High	Very High
49-	encourages self-assessment use.					
50-	encourages peer assessment use.					
51-	corrects mistakes when found in the textbooks.					
52-	lists the challenges I face.					

Appendix B

Interview card

Teachers' questions guide for the follow up interview
****

1-What are the training programs that you participated in for teaching Action Pack textbooks?

....
....

2- For which classes were those training programs?

a-………………………………….

b-…………………………………

c-…………………………….

d-………………………………….

3- Depending on your experience as a teacher, do you think that:

a- teacher professional development is useful?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

b- teacher   professional development helps in managing teaching/ learning process?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

c- teacher professional development helps in enhancing your competence?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

d- teacher professional development helps in achieving students' goals?

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

4- What are the objectives of the program/programs which you participated in ?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………

5- What is/are the content(s) at the/these program/programs?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………….

6- Please place a (/) under the column that best describes your answer:

* How suitable did you find the following?

		Not suitable at all	Not suitable	Fairly suitable	suit able	Very suitable
1	The discussion of the contents of the textbooks.					
2	The analysis of the goals of the textbooks.					
3	The analysis of the sequence of the activities of the textbook.					
4	The clarity of the general and specific outcomes.					
5	The possibility of achieving the outcomes.					
6	The distribution of the activities in the program.					
7	The length of the training for session.					

7-How do the training programs you participated in influence your teaching?

……
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………

8-In your opinion, how are the training programs you participated related to the outcomes stated in the teachers' book?

………

……

9-How do you ensure that the knowledge and skills you acquire from the training program benefit/benefits:

    a) your students?

    ……

    …………………………………

    b) your colleagues?

    ……

    ………………………………..

    c) the school ?

    ……

    ………………………………...……………………………………………..

10-What sort of improvement would you like to see done to enhance teacher professional development programs in your school?

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………..

11-Would you like to attend more English language training programs which will help you to improve your language proficiency?

……

………

Thank you