EFL Undergraduate Students" Perspective about the Characteristics of the Effective Instructor at Hashemite University in Jordan

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Abstract

Researchers in different educational fields regard the instructor as an important factor which influences students" progress. Since students have a direct relationship with the instructor, the researcher has found it necessary to explore their perspectives about the instructors" characteristics in the teaching-learning context. To achieve this, 190 students responded to a five-point Likert scale questionnaire and 25 responded to an open-end interview question. The researcher used Descriptive statistics, such as the t-test and ANOVA. He also categorized the data obtained from the open-end interview. Results of the study indicated that students attributed the most effective quality in the instructor to knowledge. Results also revealed significant differences in male and female students" responses to the evaluation attribute category and to the five categories as a whole. With regard to the open-ended interview, results showed that the students" views differed with their attitudes in terms of focus and agreed in general with students" views in other research studies.

Keywords: EFL undergraduates, perspectives, instructor characteristics, effective, Jordan

1. Introduction

1.1 The Instructor versus Teaching and Learning

There are many factors which influence the effectiveness of teaching and learning. These factors have long attracted the attention of researchers. One of these factors is the instructor who normally contributes a great deal to his or her students" progress. Researchers in different fields in general and in English language teaching (ELT) in particular argue that there is a direct relationship between the effectiveness of an instructor and the amount of learning that goes on in the classroom. Having an effective instructor is an essential factor in any field which provides grounds for improving learning. Even if all other circumstances are met, a low performance can minimize greatly the amount of learning. However, the qualitative nature of being an effective instructor has made it difficult to reach a clear and stable list concerning the characteristics of an effective instructor (Hajizadeh & Salahshour, 2014). Despite that, researchers have made attempts to come up with detailed definitions for the term „effective" related to university or college instructors (Ozsevik, 2010; & Salahshour & Hajizadeh, 2013).

Being an effective instructor has been investigated intensively over the course of decades in Western teaching-learning contexts. The need to identify the characteristics of an instructor stems from the belief that the awareness of them can help determine his or her students" needs and hence works on meeting them appropriately. Being acquainted with these characteristics can also help improve teaching practices by allowing him or her to find ways to overcome those seen by the students that s/he lacks in the teaching-learning context (Zhang & Wilkins, 2007).

The characteristics of an effective English as a foreign language (EFL) instructor share many similarities and students often agree upon them although they live in different contexts. Since these characteristics are many, some are prioritized and others are de-emphasized. The matter comes to the student who lives in a particular teaching-learning context, or who is affected by certain cultural aspects.

1.2 Effective Instructor Characteristics: Definitions versus Categories

The characteristics of an effective instructor have been approached differently by many researchers. For some researchers, personal characteristics have been highlighted including "charisma" that instructors possess, their compassion, humor, and honesty (Zhang & Wilkins, 2007) and pedagogic ones have been focused upon including

knowledge about clear and specific objectives, the use of appropriate teaching procedures, and the ability to motivate students (Centra cited in Raymond, 2008). Centra states, "effective teaching is demonstrated when the instructor can write objectives to the course content, specify classroom procedures…and student behaviors needed to teach and learn such objectives and show that students have achieved the objectives after exposure to the instructor" (p. 43). For others, good instructors" characteristics are represented in the awareness and adherence to certain essential aspects, the crucial factors such as classroom atmosphere, classroom management, tolerance, patience, flexibility, good design of plans, positive attitude, appropriate evaluation, and other aspects (Al-Seghayer, 2008).

Students, over the years, described their favorite and most memorable instructors with different statements. They are: „She was always prepared", „He was very positive", „She had light expectations for me!", „She was the most creative teacher I have ever had", „He was so fair", „I liked her personal touch", „I felt I was part of the class", and „He was funny" (Walker, 2008, pp. 63-64).

In terms of EFL, many researchers and educators identified characteristics for a good or an effective instructor. For example, Miller (1987) identified 10 characteristics for a good EFL instructor, which are: (1) enthusiasm for teaching. (2) creativity. (3) having   sense of humor. (4) having a spirit of challenge. (5) encouraging and patient. (6) interest in student as a person. (7) knowledge of grammar well. (8) taking a minute or two to answer a question after class. (9) treating students on an equal basis. And (10) having emotional baggage outside the classroom. Research also identified the qualities of a good EFL instructor, which are: (1) a love for the teaching and language, (2) communicative competence, (3) an organizer and planner, (4) a learner for life, (5) language knowledge, (6) creative thinker, (7) humanistic, (8) an interest in culture, (9) know how to motivate, and (10) be reflective (Sketchley, 2018).

These characteristics have been divided by Witcher, Onwuegbuzie, Collins, Filer, Wiedmaier, and Moore (2003) into three main categories: personality, teacher-student relationship and instructional competence. Personality relates to the individual traits that the instructors bring to the classroom, including their levels of patience and understanding, the warmth they display, their desire to get to know their learners, and so on. It is personality that is often offered as an important determinant of the teacher-student relationship - the second category – and may be especially important in these societies where interpersonal relationships in the classroom are considered more important than the nature of instruction itself. Instructional competence, on the other hand, relates to the pedagogic aspect in the teaching-learning context, including the teacher"s ability to create student-centered classroom, provide sufficient content knowledge, and maintain a professional demeanor. The EFL instructors" effective characteristics have also been divided by Celik, Arikan, and Caner (2013) into three categories, which are somehow similar to those identifies by (Witcher, et al., 2003) and other researchers. These categories are associated with personal qualities, content and pedagogy specific knowledge, professional skills and classroom behavior. In addition, the instructors" characteristics have been classified by Barnes and Lock (2013) into five categories: delivery, knowledge, rapport, organization and preparation, and fairness. Delivery attributes include aspects related to enthusiasm about teaching, use of good examples, clear explanations, correcting errors, use of group- and pair-work, encouragement of student participation, the speed of talk, asking questions, and giving sufficient time to answer questions. Knowledge attributes include issues associated with qualification for EFL teaching, knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and competence in the four language skills. Rapport attributes encompass aspects related to personal traits such as friendliness, nature of relationship with students, patience, attitudes, charisma, humor, understanding different students" level. In respect of organization and preparation attributes, they are related to provision of syllabuses, explanation of instructional methods, telling student lesson objectives and supplement materials. In terms of fairness attributes, they are associated with treatment, preparation of students for examinations, clear grading guidelines, encouraging students to work hard and requirement of students to do homework.

Most of the characteristics of a good instructor included in these categories revolve around aspects related to "knowledge, skills and attitudes towards learner". Within these aspects, the researcher suggests a number of characteristics of a good teacher, such as creating interesting classes, offering clear explanations, speaking good English and good pronunciation (Borg, 2006, p.7).

We see from the literature above that students, over the years, described their favorite instructors with different statements. Some of these statements were categorized as personal and pedagogical attributes, some were categorized as humanistic and skill attributes and others were classified as personal, behavioral, and methodological ones. All depends on the student"s viewpoints about the ideal instructor.

1.3 Problem of the Study

Many studies were conducted on the characteristics of the EFL instructor in higher education and the majority aimed to determine which of these characteristics are the most effective in the instructor. A few of these studies were

carried out in the Jordanian universities or in higher education institutions in the Middle East. Therefore, the current study has come to the scene to make up for the drawbacks of the related studies so that it can shed light on the characteristics of the EFL instructor in the view of EFL freshmen students at the Hashemite University.

1.4 Aims and Questions of the Study

The present study aims at investigating EFL undergraduate students" attitudes toward some of the characteristics of the effective instructor at the Hashemite University in Jordan. It also aims at exploring their views about the characteristics of their effective instructors in the classroom. Overall, the study attempts to answer six research questions:

1. What attribute category that distinguishes EFL instructors and makes them effective by students at the Hashemite University?

2. What items have the most priority by students in each attribute category?

3. What are the characteristics of an effective EFL instructor in the students" view in general?

4. Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the means of students" responses according to gender?

5. Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the means of students" responses according to study-year?

6. Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the means of students" responses according to grade point average (GPA)?

2. Review of Related Studies

Many studies were conducted on students" perspectives about their instructors" characteristics or attributes while teaching. Saafin (2005) conducted a study on a sample of university students with regard to the teaching attributes and behaviors that contribute to effective teaching and learning. Findings indicated that effective EFL teaching had two main dimensions: instructional skills and human characteristics. Similar significant information were found by Hajizadeh and Salahshour (2013) regarding the characteristics of a successful instructor in an EFL course. These findings could be included in these two dimensions. However, the findings obtained indicated that the majority of students who participated in the study (42 male and female students) regarded the teacher"s command of the foreign language (FL) and his encouragement to students to use the second language (L2) in the classroom as crucial. They also revealed that the students marked both written and oral forms of evaluation as either important or very important. Finally, findings showed that the teachers were kind and friendly and they used the class time wisely.

Barnes and Lock (2013) carried out a study which sought to establish what value students from a Korean university place on the effective foreign language (FL) instructor attributes. Findings revealed that respondents placed high importance on rapport attributes such as friendliness, care, patience, and delivery attributes which included the provision of clear explanations, error correction and a participatory mode of instruction. Impartiality, target language knowledge and good preparation were attributes also highly rated by the participants. Some characteristics and teaching behaviors that described an effective EFL university instructor in the view of Cypriot students were also identified by Kourieos and Evripidou (2013). The findings obtained showed that an effective EFL instructor is no longer considered one who has a directive and authoritarian role in the learning process, but one who takes into consideration his or her students" individual differences, language anxiety, abilities and interests, and designing learning environment accordingly. They also revealed that language teachers" skills in using technology and engaging students in meaningful classroom interactions had also been emphasized. Participants" views called for EFL teachers in university settings to move beyond the traditional focus-on-form approach to language teaching which views language learning as an individual activity, to the adoption of the communicative approach to language teaching.

In a study done by Baytur and Razi (2015) which investigated 100 students" perceptions about the characteristics of effective English language teachers, findings indicated that an effective instructor was expected to be friendly, to have accurate pronunciation and to have effective classroom management skills. These characteristics came within the boundary of the three domains identified by the researchers, which are personal, professional, and pedagogical.

Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, Al-Siyabi, and Al-Maamari (2015) conducted a study which compared Omani students" and teachers" perceptions of the characteristics of good EFL teachers. Findings indicated that Omani students and teachers generally agreed about the importance of all characteristic categories, with those related to English language

proficiency and treating students equally being of special importance. Participants also agreed that knowledge of Western culture/s and the use of technology were relatively unimportant.

It is apparent to the reader that the majority of studies reviewed above were conducted in Western contexts or in contexts which differ culturally from the Arab context. In addition, the majority of studies conducted in Jordan and in the Arab World focused on students" perspectives about the effective teacher and teaching at the school level and a few were done at the university level. This encouraged the researcher to conduct the present study to fill a gap in the literature related to undergraduate EFL students" perspectives of the characteristics of an effective EFL instructor in the country and in the Middle East as a whole.

3. Methods

The present study used a quantitative and qualitative research design. That is, It used both a questionnaire and an interview as research instruments. According to Dornyei and Taguchi (2010), questionnaire is regarded as one of the common methods of data collection in L2 research since it is easy to construct and capable to gathering a large amount of information quickly. Madziwa (2016) states that there are various methodologies, quantitative and qualitative, which are available for data collection, of which interviewing is part of them. Madziwa adds that interviewing is a key qualitative data cases where there are opportunities for probing to get underlying factors.

3.1 Participants and Data Collection

The sample of the study consisted of one hundred and ninety students, which represented 33% of the total number of the students (N= 587) who were in their first-, second-, third-, and fourth-years of study. Only 24% of the sample were males. This sample was chosen randomly from the two lists of courses provided by the Department of English and Literature. The first list included the courses which could be given to first- and second-year students and the second comprised those which could be taught to the third- and fourth-year levels. Then, the questionnaire was distributed by the researcher himself, after requesting the instructors to leave while the students answering it. It is noteworthy that 25 students, other than those who took part in answering the closed items of the questionnaire, were asked to answer the open-ended question in a separate sheet of paper.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the closed items of the questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, the t-test and Analysis of Variance (One-way ANOVA). On the other hand, the data obtained from the open-ended question were analyzed by categorizing them according the categories included in the questionnaire. The aim was for students" attitudes ti be supported by their views.

4. Results

4.1 Results Related to the First Research Question

The results associated with the first question "What attribute category that distinguishes EFL instructors and makes them effective in the view of EFL students?" indicate that the category which received the highest response mean was *Knowledge* (*M*= 3.11), followed by *Preparation* (*M*= 2.85), *Rapport* (*M*= 2.82), and *Delivery* attributes (*M*= 2.80). The participants agreed or strongly agreed that these attributes were effective in their instructors. Results also reveal that the attribute category which received the lowest mean was related to *Evaluation* (M= 2.73). As shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of each attribute category

Attribute categories	M	SD
Knowledge attributes	3.11	.771
Preparation attributes	2.85	.483
Rapport attributes	2.82	.431
Delivery attributes	2.80	.401
Evaluation attributes	2.73	.483
All items	2.85	.368

4.2 Results Related to the Second and Third Research Questions

To answer the second and third research questions concerning the items which had the most priority in each attribute category in the questionnaire and with regard to students‟ views about the effective instructor, the means, standard deviations, and extracts of students‟ views were used successively. However, The results associated with to the second question revealed that the students saw their instructors knowledge in English to a very large extent. That is, they have good knowledge of vocabulary (*M*= 3.18); they are qualified for teaching English as a foreign language (*M*= 3.13); they have good knowledge of grammar (*M*= 3.11); and they are knowledgeable in the English language culture (*M*= 3.05). In this respect, Students‟ views indicate that five cases focused on the Knowledge attribute category, which are related to knowledge in all aspects of specialization such as vocabulary and grammar, ideas and competence. As they state:

My viewpoint is that the effective instructor is knowledgeable in all the aspects related to specialization such as literature, grammar and linguistics…

…and (the instructor) should be knowledgeable in grammar and vocabulary…

…communicatively competent in the language through knowing its secrets…

…When I ask them a general question, they can answer me…

…and should be an able person in the subject…

The results relevant to students‟ attitudes towards preparation attributes show that the most effective in the instructor were *the preparation for every lesson* (*M*= 2.92), *telling the students the lesson objectives each session* (*M*= 2.91), followed by *the explanation of the instructional method(s) that will be used during the Semester* (*M*= 2.83), and *the distribution of the syllabus from the first session* (*M*= 2.81). Only one case was stated by a student in terms of these attributes in the open-end question. It was associated with not focusing too much on telling personal stories, but with emphasizing academic preparation, as he states:

(The instructor) is prepared well for the lecture and does not focus on telling personal stories….

The results associated with students‟ attitudes towards rapport attributes showed that the most effective in the instructor were *patience* (M= 3.03) and *friendliness or kindness* (M= 2.99). They also reveal that *having a positive attitude in general* (M= 2.88), *care* (M= 2.86*), listening to students* (M= 2.85) and *sharing personal expectations* (M= 2.84) are effective attributes to these instructors. Twenty two cases were stated by the students with respect to these attributes, which are: kindness, politeness, attractiveness, flexibility, positivity of attitude, listening to students, having positive attitudes toward teaching and the subject, and understanding students‟ problems. Below are illustrative examples of students‟ views:

I think that the effective instructor is the one who listens to students' problems with the subject, and who takes their viewpoints seriously.

The effective instructor is not moody, polite, attractive, not boring, respectful, and responsive.

The effective instructor is: (1) kind with students and respectful………….

I think the effective instructor is friendly, flexible, should have positive attitudes toward the subject and teaching……………..

(The instructor should) Understands students' problems……………..

The results related to students‟ attitudes towards delivery attributes indicated that *using real-life examples* (M= 3.08) was seen as the most effective attribute to the instructor. They also reveal that *giving clear explanations* (M= 2.93), *using Arabic when necessary* (M= 2.93), *giving sufficient time to answer questions* (M= 2.89), *encouraging students to participate in class* (M= 2.85), and *providing clear error correction* (M= 2.83) are effective attributes to the instructor. Thirteen cases of students‟ views were stated regarding these attributes. They are related to using a variety of methods, appropriate direction or explanation to the subject or to the new points, using computers, differentiating between students‟ levels, and participation. The students refer to these attributes by stating:

The effective instructor varies his methods and allows students to participate.

…directs students to the subject appropriately…

…explains the new linguistic points clearly…

…and who caters for individual differences between students…

...He must also use up-to-date methods of teaching using computers and power point to explain the subject well...

The results relevant to evaluation attributes revealed that *asking questions in the middle of each session* (M= 2.90) was considered by the participants as the most effective method used by their instructors. They also showed that *varying questions* (M= 2.82), *asking questions at the beginning of each session* (M= 2.78), and (*asking questions by the end of each session* (M= 2.75) are effective attributes to the instructor. Four cases of students" views were stated with regard to these attributes, which are related to tests and testing, punctuality in giving exams, and explanation of difficult questions during exams. As they state:

The effective instructor is the one who develops tests appropriately and who does not provide students with complex questions...

...and...punctual in giving exams...

...explains some of the difficult questions during exams...

The effective instructor explains what is wanted from the exam questions and provides example on them in advance.

The table below illustrated the items prioritized in each attribute category:

Table 2. The items prioritized in each attribute category

Knowledge attribute items	M	SD
My instructors have a good knowledge of vocabulary (a good vocabulary repertoire).	3.18	.705
My instructors are well qualified in English language in general.	3.13	.612
My instructors have a good knowledge of grammar.	3.11	.741
My instructors are knowledgeable in the English language culture.	3.05	.734
My instructors are communicatively competent in English.	2.99	.629
My instructors have a good pronunciation skill.	2.98	.773
Preparation attribute items	**M**	**SD**
My instructors are well prepared for every session.	2.93	.692
My instructors tell the students the lesson objectives each session.	2.91	.652
My instructors explain the instructional method(s) that will be used during the semester.	2.83	.757
My instructors distribute the syllabus from the first session.	2.81	.746
My instructors make their own supplement material.	2.75	.673
Rapport attribute items	**M**	**SD**
My instructors are patient.	3.03	.634
My instructors are friendly and kind.	2.99	.625
My instructors have a positive attitude in general.	2.88	.696
My instructors are caring (i.e., care about students).	2.86	.686

My instructors listen to students.	2.85	.662
My instructors share personal expectations.	2.84	.754
My instructors are authoritarian.	2.75	.773
My instructors are open-minded.	2.69	.744
My instructors have a sense of humor.	2.65	.762
My instructors understand the different levels of students.	2.52	.809
Delivery attribute items	**M**	**SD**
My instructors use real-life examples.	3.08	659
My instructors give clear explanations.	2.93	.640
My instructors use Arabic when necessary.	2.93	.781
My instructors give students sufficient time to answer questions.	2.89	.700
My instructors encourage students to participate in class.	2.85	.771
My instructors provide clear error correction.	2.83	.711
My instructors use appropriate teaching techniques.	2.77	.684
My instructors use a variety of teaching methods.	2.72	.802
My instructors use group- or pair-work when necessary.	2.64	.748
My instructors talk slowly in the target language.	2.63	.806
My instructors use appropriate technical aids (e.g., power point, overhead projector, cassette recorder, lab)	2.56	.775
Evaluation attribute items	**M**	**SD**
My instructors ask questions in the middle of each session.	2.90	.693
My instructors vary their questions in each exam (e.g., Multiple choice questions, essay questions fill in the blank space questions).	2.83	.843
My instructors ask questions at the beginning of each session.	2.78	.766
My instructors ask question by the end of each session.	2.75	.727
My instructors give quizzes frequently.	2.41	.796

4.3 Results Related to the Fourth Research Question

Results of the fourth question about whether there were any statistically significant differences between the means of students" responses according to gender, showed statistical significant differences with regard to evaluation attributes and to all items in favor of females. However, the results showed no statistical significant differences in their responses to the rapport, delivery, knowledge, and preparation attributes. Table 3 shows the results of this analysis.

Table 3. Mean (M), standard deviation (SD), t-value, and the 2-tailed sig. of the five attributes for EFL instructors

Attributes	Gender	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2tailed)
Rapport attributes	Male	2.73	.375	-1.727	158	.086
	Female	2.86	.452			
Delivery attributes	Male	2.71	.365	-1.905	158	.059
	Female	2.84	.412			
Knowledge attributes	Male	2.98	.504	-1.499	158	.136
	Female	3.18	.864			
Preparation attributes	Male	2.82	.458	-.454	158	.650
	Female	2.86	.495			
Evaluation attributes	Male	2.59	.445	-2.584	158	.011
	Female	2.80	.487			
All items	Male	2.70	.324	-2.220	158	.028
	Female	2.90	.381			

*Significance Value at α= 0.05

4.4 Results Related to the Fifth Research Question

Results of the fifth question related to whether there were any statistically significant differences between the means of students" responses due to study-year, indicated a slight variance in the means of students" responses to each attribute category and to all items together. As shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of students" responses due study-year

Category	Study year	M	SD
Rapport attributes	First year	2.77	.385
	Second year	2.78	.418
	Third year	2.83	.484
	Fourth year	2.85	.404
	Total	2.82	.431
Delivery attributes	First year	2.76	.422
	Second year	2.71	.428
	Third year	2.83	.390
	Fourth year	2.86	.375
	Total	2.80	.401
Knowledge attributes	First year	2.94	.514
	Second year	3.14	.602
	Third year	3.15	1.082
	Fourth year	3.18	.447
	Total	3.11	.771
Preparation attributes	First year	2.87	.475
	Second year	2.86	.516
	Third year	2.80	.479

	Fourth year	2.89	.479
	Total	2.85	.483
Evaluation attributes	First year	2.70	.429
	Second year	2.64	.560
	Third year	2.78	.413
	Fourth year	2.76	.552
	Total	2.73	.483
All items	First year	2.80	.373
	Second year	2.81	.367
	Third year	2.87	.390
	Fourth year	2.90	.335
	Total	2.85	.368

To find out whether there are any statistical significant differences in students" responses according to study-year, the analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used. However, the results showed no statistical significant differences in their responses to each attribute category and to all together. Table 5 illustrates the results of this analysis.

Table 5. Mean (M), standard deviation (SD), F-value, and the Sig. value of the four study-year students on the five attribute categories

Category		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Rapport attributes	Between groups	179	3	.060	.316	.81
	Within groups	29.425	156	.189		
	Total	29.604	159			
Delivery attributes	Between groups	535	3	.178	1.111	.34
	Within groups	25.027	156	.160		
	Total	25.562	159			
Knowledge attributes	Between groups	1.181	3	.394	.657	.58
	Within groups	93.451	156	.599		
	Total	94.632	159			
Preparation attributes	Between groups	230	3	.077	.326	.80
	Within groups	36.806	156	.236		
	Total	37.036	159			
Evaluation attributes	Between groups	501	3	.167	.713	.54
	Within groups	36.517	156	.234		
	Total	37.018	159			
All items	Between groups	.269	3	.090	.657	.45
	Within groups	21.275	156	.136		
	Total	21.544	159			

***Significance Value at α= 0.05**

4.5 Results Related to the Sixth Research Question

Results of the sixth question about whether there were any statistically significant differences between the means of students'' *responses due to GPA*, indicated a slight variance in the means of students'' responses to each attribute category and to all items according to GPA. As shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of students'' responses due to GPA

Category	GPA	M	SD
Rapport attributes	2-2.49	2.74	.445
	2.5-2.99	2.79	.383
	3-3.49	2.84	.509
	3.5-4	2.93	.317
	Total	2.82	.431
Delivery attributes	2-2.49	2.80	.417
	2.5-2.99	2.83	.406
	3-3.49	2.81	.389
	3.5-4	2.73	.400
	Total	2.80	.401
Knowledge attributes	2-2.49	3.19	1.245
	2.5-2.99	3.12	.530
	3-3.49	3.00	.476
	3.5-4	3.16	.495
	Total	3.11	.771
Preparation attributes	2-2.49	2.89	.444
	2.5-2.99	2.84	.593
	3-3.49	2.83	.449
	3.5-4	2.81	.406
	Total	2.85	.483
Evaluation attributes	2-2.49	2.73	.543
	2.5-2.99	2.87	.409
	3-3.49	2.69	.485
	3.5-4	2.59	.459
	Total	2.73	.483
All items	2-2.49	2.85	.441
	2.5-2.99	2.87	.353
	3-3.49	2.84	.360
	3.5-4	2.85	.290
	Total	2.85	.368

To find out whether there are any statistical significant differences between students'' responses according to GPA, the analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used. However, the results, as shown in Table 7, show no statistical significant differences in their responses to each attribute category and to all categories together according to GPA.

Table 7. Mean (M), standard deviation (SD), F-value, and the Sig. value of the four GPA groups on the five attribute categories

Category		Sum Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Rapport attributes	Between Groups	.669	3	.223	1.203	.311
	Within Groups	28.935	156	.185		
	Total	29.604	159			
Delivery attributes	Between Groups	.176	3	.059	.361	.781
	Within Groups	25.386	156	.163		
	Total	25.562	159			
Knowledge attributes	Between Groups	.857	3	.286	.475	.700
	Within Groups	93.775	156	.601		
	Total	94.632	159			
Preparation attributes	Between Groups	.129	3	.043	.182	.909
	Within Groups	36.907	156	.237		
	Total	37.036	159			
Evaluation attributes	Between Groups	1.409	3	.470	2.085	.108
	Within Groups	35.608	156	.228		
	Total	37.018	159			
All items	Between Groups	.029	3	.010	.071	.97
	Within Groups	21.515	156	.138		
	Total	21.544	159			

Significance value at 0.05

5. Discussion

This study investigated undergraduate EFL students" perspective about characteristics or attributes their instructors may have in the classroom. The first point to note in response to the first two research questions is that the category which distinguished EFL instructors and made them the most effective in the view of participant students is related to knowledge attribute category, followed by preparation, rapport, and delivery attributes. The items which were regarded as significant knowledge attributes are related to good knowledge of vocabulary, skill of English language, having good knowledge of grammar, having good knowledge of the English language culture, and to communicative competence. Only five cases of students" responses focused on this attribute category. They emphasized the same attributes, which are: knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, ideas, and competence in the target language. However, knowledge attributes were highlighted by many researchers such as Miller (1987), Celick, et al. (2013), and Sketchley (2018). With regard to the preparation attribute category, the items which had the highest means are associated with good preparation for every lesson, telling students the lesson objective each lecture, the explanation of instructional method that will be used during the Semester, and with the distribution of syllabus from the first lecture. This category was not focused upon by the students who responded to the open-end question. That is, only one case stated by a student emphasizing that the effective instructor is the one who is well prepared for the lecture. However, this attribute was categorized clearly by Barnes and Lock (2013). It includes provision of syllabuses, explanation of instructional methods, and telling the students lesson objectives.

In terms of the rapport attribute category, the items which had the most priority by students are associated with patience, friendliness and kindness, having positive attitudes, care, and listening to students. This category was also emphasized by the students in the questionnaire interview. In other words, twenty-two cases were stated, focusing upon kindness, politeness, attractiveness, positivity of attitude, and understanding of students" problems. With respect to the delivery attribute category, the items regarded as significant attributes to the instructor are related to

using real-life examples, giving clear explanations, using Arabic when necessary, giving students sufficient time to answer questions, and encouraging to participate. This category was also emphasized by the students who responded to the open-end question. Thirteen cases were stated by them, highlighting the use of a variety of methods, the appropriateness of direction and explanation to the subjects and the use of computers. The two categories above (i.e., Rapport and Delivery) were also emphasized by the students participated in the studies done by Barnes and Lock (2013), and Baytur and Razi (2015). In addition, they were partially focused upon by the students participated in the study conducted by Al-Mahrooqi, et al. (2015).

In terms of the evaluation attribute category, the items regarded as important attributes to the instructor are related to asking questions in the middle of each session, varying questions in each exam, and asking questions by the end of each session. Only four students" views were stated concerning this category. They are associated with tests and testing, punctuality of giving exams and explanation of difficult questions during exams. However, the students" orientation in the present study differs from that shown by the students who participated in the study done by Hajizadeh and Salahshour (2013). That is, the participants in this study inclined to both written and oral forms of evaluation and marked them as either important or very important.

The results related to the fourth research question about whether there were any statistical significant differences (α= 0.05) in the means of students" responses according to gender, showed significant differences with respect to evaluation attributes and to all items in favor of females. However, they showed no significant differences with regard to rapport, delivery, knowledge, and preparation attributes. The first part of these results could be attributed to the fact that female students in Jordan are more serious in achieving well during their study both at the school and at the university levels, and so they are better satisfied with or are more interested in the instructor"s procedures adopted for evaluation. In terms of learning foreign languages, research shows that girls are more motivated to learn languages (Mori & Gobel, 2006) and they are better at learning in general (Heinzmann, 2009). This might be one of the reasons which caused female students to be more interested in achieving better and made them favor the teaching procedures executed by their instructors during evaluation.

The results associated with the fifth research question about whether there were any statistical significant differences (α= 0.05) in the means of students" responses according to study-year, revealed no significant differences in their responses to each attribute category and to all items together. It was expected that the older students or the third- and fourth-year ones would have different attitudes toward instructors. The reason lies in the fact that they are normally more experienced with the instructors and their personal and pedagogic attributes. However, it seems that age and study level might not have an impact on students" attitudes since all of them are in the puberty stage.

The results related to the sixth research question about whether there were any statistical significant differences (α= 0.05) in the means of students" responses according to GPA, indicated no significant differences in their responses to each attribute category and to all items together. It was thought that high achievers would have different or deeper attitudes toward the instructors and their attributes. However, the similarity of attitude might be due to their satisfaction with the instructors since 65% of the means of their responses were over 2.80.

6. Conclusions

This study investigated EFL undergraduate students" perspectives of characteristics or attributes the instructors might have in the classroom. Results showed that the attribute category which distinguished the target instructors is related to knowledge, followed by the preparation, rapport, and delivery attributes. The only attribute category, regarded by the students as the least effective, was associated with evaluation. This indicates that the instructors ought to take this category into account. That is, they should do their best to intensify asking warm up and explanatory questions, particularly at the beginning of each session and by the end of it. They should also give quizzes frequently to assess students" achievement. Even the attribute categories which were considered as an indicator of instructors" effectiveness should be taken consideration. The reason lies in the fact that some of the humanistic and pedagogic behaviors included in each category were regarded as less effective (i.e., below 2.80). In other words, the instructors should make their own supplement material and they should be less authoritarian and more open-minded. They should also have a sense of humor and understand better students" level of achievement. In addition, they should use appropriate teaching techniques, a variety of teaching methods, group- or pair-work, and appropriate technical aids. However, students" responses to the open-end question support those obtained from the questionnaire with regard to evaluation since only 4 cases were referred to by the interview sample. Both also support each other with respect to rapport and delivery attributes as they were regarded as good attributes to the instructors.

The results also revealed significant differences in students" responses to the evaluation attribute category and to all items according to gender. Female students considered them more effective in their instructors than males. This

necessitates conducting research studies qualitatively to explore male and female students‟ views about their instructors and to examine why each sex group has these perspectives. The reason is to go in depth with the "whys". In addition, the results obtained may help university instructors to modify or even change some of their humanistic and pedagogic behaviors. In terms of study-year and GPA, the results revealed no significant differences in students‟ responses to each category and to all together. This requires researchers to examine these variables in their teaching-learning contexts, or to select other ones such as the type of school students graduated from (public & private), the educational status of students‟ families, or any other variable which can be considered as useful for research and higher education institutions.

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Appendix 1

Students' responses to the open-ended question

The open-ended question: Students" (SS) answers

S 1: I think that the effective instructor is the one who listens to students" problems with the subject and who takes their viewpoints seriously.

S 2: the effective instructor is the kind one and who treats students as a parent.

S 3: The effective instructor is not moody, polite, attractive, not boring, respectful, and responsive.

S 4: The effective instructor varies his methods and allows students to participate**.**

S 5: The effective instructor is a nice person and polite.

S 6: The good instructor is nice and gentleman.

S 7: I think the effective instructor is the one who understands students" problems, directs students to the subject appropriately, not boring, explains the new linguistic points clearly, and flexible.

S 8: He must respect the students, cater for individual differences, and use a variety of methods.

S 9: My viewpoint is that the effective instructor is knowledgeable in all the aspects related to specialization such as literature, grammar and linguistics. He must also use up-to-date methods of teaching using computers and power point to explain the subject well.

S 10: I think the instructor should be able to differentiate between different levels of students and should be knowledgeable in grammar and vocabulary.

S 11: The good instructor is the one who is smiley and attractive and who caters for individual differences between students.

S 12: The effective instructor must understand the different levels between students; he must be smiley and funny; and must listen to students.

S 13: In my point of view, the effective instructor is the one who encourages students to participate without pressure and to discuss without any constraints and treats students kindly without using street words.

S 14: The effective instructor is the one who develops tests appropriately and who does not provide students with complex questions, and who does not use taboo words which frustrate students.

S 15: The effective instructor is: (1) kind with students and respectful, (2) skillful in using up-to-date methods of teaching, (3) skillful and professional in English, (4) communicatively competent by knowing its secrets, and (5) punctual in giving exams.

S 16: Understands students" problems, teaching the subject satisfactorily, and listens to students" viewpoints.

S 17: I think my instructors should have good knowledge of everything round us. When I ask them a general question, they can answer me. They should also be good listeners.

S 18: The effective instructor is the one who explains the subject clearly and who uses different methods of teaching.

S 19: The effective instructor is the one who: (1) explains the material appropriately, (2) explains some of the difficult questions during exams, and (3) is prepared well for the lecture and does not focus on telling personal stories.

S 20: I think the effective instructor is friendly, flexible, should have positive attitudes toward the subject and teaching, and should be an able person in the subject.

S 21: I think the doctor should be kind. Also, he should listen to students when they want further explanation**.**

S 22: The instructor should be smiley and humble and should have a sense of humor**.**

S 23: The effective instructor explains what is wanted from the exam questions and provides example on them in advance**.**

S 24: He should cater for students‟ individual differences and should sometimes speaks Arabic.

S 25: The most important thing is for the instructor to listen to students.