

Vol. 12, No. 3
pp. 121-149
August &
September
2021

Received: 25 June 2020
Received in revised form: 10 August 2020
Accepted: 22 August 2020

Identifying and Informing Novice Iranian English Language Teachers' Classroom Decision Making and Pedagogical Reasoning Regarding Managerial Mode

Mohammad Khatib¹*  & Abdulbaset Saeedian² 

Abstract

Decision making and pedagogical reasoning are regarded as two of the important concepts underlying teaching skills. This study aimed to first identify the novice Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' initial decision making and pedagogical reasoning in terms of managerial mode. More importantly, it sought to inform the teachers' decisions and reasoning through some one-to-one feedback sessions, which were interactively held between every novice teacher and an experienced teacher. The participants were one experienced (male) and five novice (four females and one male) teachers. To collect the data, a number of teaching scenarios, classroom observations, stimulated recalls, and the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework were used. The analysis of the data using conversation analysis showed that the novice teachers benefited from their negotiated interactions with the experienced teacher and applied the points regarding all five pedagogic goals of managerial mode in the framework. After the feedback sessions, the teachers could confidently defend their decisions pedagogically when enquired for reasons. The findings showed that modifying the teachers' decision would not be successfully ensured until they reached the "aha" of the moment or a new understanding, which is the last stage in reforming one's pedagogical reasoning. One way to achieve this moment is through raising the teachers' awareness of the essential metalanguage. It is thus suggested that officials in charge and institute managers provide such learning opportunities for teachers so that they take more serious steps toward their own professional development through such frameworks as SETT.

Keywords: SETT framework, decision making, pedagogical reasoning, managerial mode, novice teachers

1. Corresponding author, Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran;

Email: mkhatib27@yahoo.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9079-4534>

2. PhD Candidate, Department of English Literature, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5305-0349>

1. Introduction

Decision making and pedagogical reasoning are two of the central concepts of teaching skills (Richards et al., 2001). Developing these concepts is of high importance for teachers because they always have to make online decisions, and this demands sound and appropriate reasoning. By online decisions, the researchers mean all abrupt or pre-planned decisions made by teachers whilst teaching due to the dynamic nature of classroom contexts. In this regard, Johnson (2006) stated that teachers have been “conceptualized as decision makers” for a long time and are thus “expected to benefit from making their tacit knowledge and decisions explicit.” (p. 236) Needless to say, each decision made by teachers is better strengthened if it is followed by pedagogical reasoning. These days more attention is being granted to the reasoning teachers utilize to inform their decisions, but it must be far-reaching (Johnson & Golombek, 2020). Reasoning would be even better if teachers are made autonomous in this regard. The shift in professional development “from external expertise to empowerment” would empower teachers to continually seek opportunities to adapt themselves with varying educational contexts, take the lead in recognizing and meeting their own individual needs, and continuously develop professionally (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009, p. 375).

In the same vein, according to Borg and Edmett (2019, p. 656), “research on teacher evaluation is not widespread.” Although this area has recently attracted the attention of researchers (e.g., Close et al., 2020), there is still a long way to uncover its hidden potentials and see how teachers can gain benefit from it. Familiarizing novice teachers with how to evaluate their own teaching practice would empower them to be permanent evaluators of what happens in their classrooms without needing an outsider, say a peer or an experienced teacher. In an attempt to address the explored gap and shed more light on the role of teacher evaluation in the unexplored area of decision making and pedagogical reasoning of novice teachers in the context of Iran, Walsh’s (2006) Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework was employed in this study.

Teachers can be initiators of maintaining their own development by following such frameworks as SETT. Walsh (2006) designed SETT with its four modes and fourteen interactional features (henceforth, interactivities) to acquaint teachers with their interactions with students. This descriptive model encompasses four micro-contexts or modes: managerial, materials, skills and systems, and classroom

context. While there might be some overlaps among the interactures of the modes, each mode enjoys its own specific pedagogic goals. This makes the modes distinctive from one another.

These unique features motivated the researchers to meticulously focus on merely one of the modes so that they could provide a richer understanding of the mode. Because of the certainty of its occurrence in the initial and concluding stage of any lesson and even when moving from one activity to another, managerial mode was selected to be analyzed. As the name suggests, managerial mode copes with the management of learning, locating learning at the opening of a lesson, and demarcating the borders between modes at the end (Walsh, 2006, 2011). Two of the main phases of Seedhouse's (2004) classroom architecture, namely classroom initiation and classroom termination, are the building blocks of managerial mode as well where teachers are always required to make decisions about how to start and end a class.

Decision making and pedagogical reasoning are among the areas that have been explored less in Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE). Siuty et al. (2018), for instance, called for the demand for more detailed investigations on teacher decision making, and there is a paucity of studies focusing specifically on teacher decision making backed up with pedagogical reasoning. The novelty of investigating these two concepts becomes more evident when a search of the existing literature proves no such specific studies have been carried out in the new English as a foreign language (EFL) context, namely Iran. To the best knowledge of the authors, no published studies have either explored managerial mode of the SETT framework or examined it in relation to the fundamental skill of teaching, that is decision making (Shavelson, 1973), and the teacher knowledge base platform, or pedagogical reasoning, to use Shulman's (1987) term.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teachers' Pedagogical Reasoning and Decision Making

Because teachers' decisions can have a substantial impact on students' academic achievement (Südkamp et al., 2014), and student achievement is the ultimate goal of all educational initiatives (Evans, 2019; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Tirosh et al., 2015), it is important for teachers to participate in situations where they can

reconsider and restructure their teaching practices, which in itself leads to more cogent decisions. Teachers' decisions can directly have a constructive or detrimental influence on the path a student undergoes (Südkamp et al., 2014). This high significance of teachers' decisions places decision-making as the fundamental skill of teaching that every single teacher should be equipped with.

Connecting teachers' decision making with their pedagogical reasoning skills, one of the "central aspect(s) of teacher cognition" (Richards, 2011, p. 19), can empower them to act more confidently and see themselves as agents of change (Mendenhall et al., 2020). Richards (2011) defined teacher pedagogical reasoning as a special type of thinking that teachers own and use in their lesson plans and their real teaching practices. Through exemplifying, he justified how teachers could use pedagogical reasoning to pave their own way in fulfilling such tasks as evaluating the content of a lesson, setting special goals to be achieved upon completion of that lesson, predicting potential problems that may occur during teaching the lesson, and making context-sensitive cogent decisions to conduct the lesson and overcome those problems.

Shulman (1987), however, in line with Nyamupangedengu and Lelliott (2016), who consider pedagogical reasoning as one of the three comprising aspects of teacher education, does not conceive of pedagogical reasoning as a plain ability that teachers possess. For him, instead, it encompasses a six-aspect process involving comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation, reflection, and new comprehension. As it is clear, the process is initiated and terminated with comprehension, but "Comprehension alone is not sufficient" (p. 14). Other aspects need to be enriched with judgment and action to expect the best out of the model. Shaping new understandings, based on Walsh (2006), can be reached through analyzing classroom interactions, with which teachers' way of teaching can be developed as well. In this study, the classroom interactions were analyzed using the SETT framework.

2.2. The SETT Framework: Managerial Mode

Suggested by Walsh (2006), the SETT framework intends to make teachers aware of the significance of interactions occurring in their classrooms and the important role played by interactions in their professional development. The framework consists of four modes: Managerial, Materials, Skills and Systems, and Classroom

Context. According to Walsh (2006, p. 62), a mode is “an L2 classroom microcontext which has a clearly defined pedagogic goal and distinctive interactional features determined largely by a teacher’s use of language.” These modes enjoy their own unique fingerprint, consisting of linguistic and pedagogic interactivities. There is a clear demarcation between the fingerprint of managerial mode and that of materials mode, and so are the fingerprints of skills and systems mode and classroom context mode. In addition to having specific pedagogic goals, each mode constitutes its own particular interactional features or interactivities as well.

Because of the idiosyncratic pedagogic goals of each mode, failing to find a single study on the mode in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context of Iran, and aiming to provide an elaborated exploration of the mode, the researchers gave specific consideration to managerial mode. Learning management and locating the material points are the main focus of the mode. While being thoroughly controlled by the teacher, managerial mode makes use of discourse or transition markers, such as *so, ok, all right, now, then*, to gain two aims: (a) by locating the material, the teacher initially ensures the stage is prepared for learners to learn, and (b) it acts as a support to the other three modes, without which the other phases of the classroom would not be successfully implemented (Walsh, 2011). It is through this mode that the teacher takes control of the class at the beginning and end of the class as well as when moving from one activity to another.

Based on Table 1, managerial mode aims to achieve five characteristic pedagogic goals, which are distinctive from the other modes. Transmitting management rather than pedagogic information, which facilitates learning management, is the first goal. Building the physical learning context is also a fundamental concern due to the demand for constructing the context locally. Directing learners to the specific part of a lesson or material and refraining them from asking such questions as ‘where are we?’ is another pursued goal. Setting up and ending a lesson or activity within a space and time limit is considered as “its prime pedagogic goal” (Walsh, 2011, p. 113). Managerial mode is not just used for classroom initiation and termination, but it can account for defining the borders of other modes; hence, it acts as a support to them.

Table 1*Adopted Managerial Mode of the SETT Framework (Walsh, 2011, p. 113)*

Mode	Pedagogic goals	Interactures
Managerial	To transmit information To organise the physical learning environment To refer learners to materials To introduce or conclude an activity To change from one mode of learning to another	A single, extended teacher turn that uses explanations and/or instructions The use of transitional markers The use of confirmation checks An absence of learner contributions

Motivated by the call for more detailed studies on the area of decision making and pedagogical reasoning by Siuty et al. (2018) and not having a record of studies focusing specifically on managerial mode of the SETT framework, the researchers sought to gain two aims. They first aimed to identify the novice Iranian EFL teachers' initial decision making and pedagogical reasoning in terms of managerial mode and then inform their decisions and reasoning through holding some interactive feedback sessions between each one of the participating teachers and an experienced teacher. To address the issue, the following questions guided the study.

(1) What are novice Iranian English language teachers' classroom decision making and pedagogical reasoning regarding managerial mode?

(2) In what ways does the experienced teacher's presence and assistance affect the novice Iranian English language teachers' classroom decision making and pedagogical reasoning regarding managerial mode?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The initial sample of the participants comprised of seven novice Iranian EFL teachers, who were employed at three English language institutes in Marivan, Kudristan, Iran. Some uncontrollable cases, such as workplace closure and quitting jobs left the researchers with two institutes and five teachers. As depicted in Table 2, none of these teachers, with an age range of 19 to 25, had taught for over two years at the start of the program. From among the novice teachers, the most experienced one had teaching experience of one year and nine months and the least experienced ones had taught English for only three months, leaving the others in

between. This means they were all novice based on Farrell's (2012) definition of novice teachers. One of the researchers, aged 30, who had taught for ten years and a half by the start of the program was the only experienced teacher of the study. In addition to running the program, the researcher assisted the novice teachers in informing their decisions and reasoning; thus, playing an active role in the research based on the nature of qualitative studies (Nassaji, 2020). This researcher is sometimes referred to as researcher-as-a-participant in the study. All the participants were asked to sign a consent form prior to initiating the data collection procedure. The teachers are all referred to as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and the like to protect their identity.

Table 2

The Demographic Information of the Participants

Participants (age)	Gender	Experience (years/months)
Researcher (30)	Male	10 years and 6 months
Teacher 1 (25)	Female	1 year and 9 months
Teacher 2 (22)	Female	1 year and 2 months
Teacher 3 (22)	Female	3 months
Teacher 4 (20)	Female	4 months
Teacher 5 (19)	Male	4 months

3.2. Instrumentation

The instruments used to fulfill the aims of the study were teaching scenarios, classroom observation, stimulated recalls, and the SETT framework. This study benefited from five teaching scenarios, which were a reflection of the five pedagogic goals declared by Walsh (2011) in managerial mode. With regard to the classroom observation, six sessions of each teacher's classrooms were video- and audio-recorded; twice prior to the private feedback sessions between each single novice teacher and the experienced one and four times after the feedback. During the feedback sessions, the researchers used "a particularly useful data-led reflective tool", namely stimulated recall (Walsh & Mann, 2015, p. 12), to enable the teachers to remember the scenarios, which were actualized in their classrooms. Video-stimulated recall was therefore used as the methodology, based on Martinelle (2020), to understand the teachers' reflections about real and naturally occurred situations. Finally, managerial mode of the SETT framework was made use of to make the analysis of the extracted scenarios from the teachers' real classrooms and

teacher and learners' interactions more systematic. Without this framework, setting the scenarios would not have been as research-oriented as it is now.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

To maintain the confidentiality of the participants, all the goals of the study were explained to them before commencing the study, and ethical clearance was obtained from them. A total of ten teaching scenarios were initially identified and set in line with the pedagogic goals of managerial mode in Walsh's (2011) known framework. After being given to an expert panel of three professors and applying their comments regarding combining the scenarios, only five scenarios were remained to be given to the participants. They were asked to peruse the scenarios and write their decision along with their reasoning for each specific situation in an imaginative way. Next, their classes were observed and recorded to be later analyzed in terms of the actual representation of the teaching scenarios. This classroom observation analysis was implemented by one of the researchers of the study utilizing the SETT framework.

After identifying each actually occurred scenario, the researcher-as-a-participant would write down the exact time (i.e., the minute and second) of its occurrence to be later cut using a special video cutter software program. The appointed scenarios were only cut provided that the other researcher, who is an expert in the field, also confirmed that the located scenario would be a perfect match for the declared pedagogic goal. These video extracted situations were used as stimulated recall in the private feedback sessions to assist the novice teachers in remembering their own actual decisions and disclosing the reasons through which they backed them. In this phase of the study, through an approximately two-hour feedback session with each individual teacher, the researchers initially asked the teachers to explain their reasons for each decision they made, then thoroughly analyzed each scenario, and finally gave fine-tuned feedback and SETT-based reasons for any alternatives or recommendations they offered. Finally, the teachers' classes were observed and recorded for four more sessions. The analysis of the after-feedback classroom observation using the SETT framework was repeated without any changes as it happened in the previous phase.

3.4. Data Analysis

The study used conversation analysis to analyze the collected data. The scenarios were extracted from among the interactions that occurred in the classrooms between the learners and teachers. After they had been prepared by the researcher-as-a-participant, the other researcher did the preliminary examination of the scenarios. Through these scenarios, the interactions between the experienced teacher and novice teachers were guided. The analysis of all the interactions was done using conversation analysis and using the SETT framework with its specific pedagogic goals and interferences. The dependability of the extracted interactions was ensured through giving them to three other coders. Their suggested comments were all applied to make sure about the intercoder agreement, which is “frequently recommended as good practice in qualitative analysis” (O’Connor & Joffe, 2020, p. 1). The agreed-upon interactions were transcribed utilizing the transcription conventions developed by Walsh (2011), which are listed in the appendix. To ensure the inclusiveness of the concluded interpretations, the researchers requested the participants to express their opinions about the findings. Thus, through what Nassaji (2020) referred to as member checking, the credibility of the study was enhanced. With regard to the transferability of the data, sufficient numbers of vignettes and extracts have been included in the results section.

4. Results

The data collected through giving the scenarios to the novice teachers were used to address the following research question.

1. What are novice Iranian English language teachers’ classroom decision making and pedagogical reasoning regarding managerial mode?

The experienced teacher had no interaction with the novice teachers. To report and contextualize the decision making and pedagogical reasoning of the teachers, vignettes (i.e., whatever the teachers have written to answer the scenarios before the feedback sessions) have been used throughout the study. While the main parts of the teachers’ decisions have been underlined, bold font has been utilized to identify their reasoning. This way of presenting the findings was recommended by Martin et al. (2017).

With regard to the first scenario (i.e., *Without giving a chance to students to take*

part in the activity, you take and keep the stage for a long time, especially at the beginning and end of the class. You may also do this when you go from one section or part to another.), the teachers declared they would refrain from taking and keeping the floor for a long time mainly because of not favoring teacher-centered classes. While rejecting the idea of teacher-oriented classes, one of the teachers even suggested some ways on how to reduce this to a minimum.

Vignette 1

Teacher 5: *I try to dedicate the remaining time to give the stage to the students; if its end of the class I will ask them questions about their school, what are they doing in their free rime and etc.by using what they just learned in the class. If it's at the beginning of the class I would tell them to pick a discussion topic so we could have a discussion a little while after; the discussion would be rather student-oriented. A class procedure **should be** based on engagement of all the participants, not just teacher or student oriented; in case such situations happen, **it is suggested** that one give students something to feel power with, or to feel that they have minor authorities in the class.*

Highlighting the second pedagogic goal of managerial mode, namely establishing the physical learning environment, the second scenario (i.e., *You enter the class before some of the students have arrived. You see the chairs in an unorganized order. Generally, how do you deal with such unexpected events and why?*) sought to check how and why the teachers would cope with organizing learning and events influencing that. The scenario, partially considering the way teachers would react to unexpected events, was responded by the teachers relatively differently with different reasoning. A teacher thoroughly denied arranging the seats herself as she thought that was the learners' duty.

Vignette 2

Teacher 3: *I don't arrange them. **Because** they must learn to take **responsibility** for the order of their class.*

To refrain from disarrangement and wasting the class time, one female teacher admitted she would arrange the chairs on her own or by requesting the learners to assist her in doing so.

Vignette 3

Teacher 2: *I organize it by myself or help the students to do it befor starting the class. I think **it takes the class time** and even **cause more disarrange**. For unexpected events, I generally try to not to pay attention them **because of** the discipline of my class.*

Almost all of the teachers set their replies to the third scenario (i.e., *You are teaching a grammar point. You remember (or maybe based on your lesson plan) that there is also a supplementary section (e.g., “GRAMMAR BOOSTER”) at the end of the book, not on the same page where the grammar is located, or you yourself might have prepared that supplementary section before the class started.*) subject to another factor from the level of the grammar at hand to the remaining time of the session. One teacher, who was supposedly bound to the institute syllabus, contended that she would supplement it to her lesson plan so that all the appointed materials could be covered.

Vignette 4

Teacher 3: *I will add it to what I have teached and will point out extra things. **Because I don’t** want to **miss** the things I was supposed to teach.*

In terms of the responses to the fourth scenario (i.e., *A lesson activity is finished and you are about to start a new activity. (How do you do it and why?)*), the participants mainly stated they would get a clarification check regarding the previous activity so that the learners could fully concentrate on the following one. From among their responses in terms of this argument, two are used here.

Vignette 5

Teacher 3: *After finishing an activity I tell them if they have a question, ask it or if not I’ll start to explain what is the new activity. **Because I don’t** want to **skip** the activity when **they still have problem with it**.*

Vignette 6

Teacher 1: *When I finish an activity, I ask the children: do you have a problem? Did you learn the lesson?. If they have a problem, I write it on the board. I even ask them some questions about the activity to make sure they learned it **because** when they haven’t learned it, **it is not good to continue the lesson**. After this, we go to next activity because if they don’t know the first part, **going to next activity is wrong**.*

In the fifth scenario (i.e., *Although you do your best to explain what the students should do in a specific exercise, it seems some of them have not understood it and are unclear about what they should do. Even after your explanation, they may not know which page you are studying.*), although most of the teachers thought of the situation as a dull one, there was an agreement among almost all of them to repeat the explanation again. One female teacher clearly realizes a certain degree of obligation in repeating the task instruction and continuing that until all students clearly know what to do.

Vignette 7

Teacher 2: *Despite it's kind of bothering and despite it's again on your nervous, but we HAVE TO; we have to repeat. Repetition is not something optional teachers HAVE TO do it. They have to do it again and again, but sometimes you can use it as a chance and ask the other students to explain it to him or her, but sometimes by yourself you can repeat it again **so that they learn something**.*

Upon realizing the teachers' decisions and reasoning about the imaginary situations, the researchers replayed the recorded videos of the real situations, which had occurred in the teachers' own classes, as stimulated recalls. Then, through the interactions between the novice teachers and the experienced one, the study aimed to help reshape the novice teachers' decisions and reasoning. The analysis of the novice-experienced interactions about the recordings of the novice teachers' real classes after feedback was made use of to respond to the second research question.

2. In what ways do the experienced teacher's presence and assistance affect the novice Iranian English language teachers' classroom decision making and pedagogical reasoning regarding managerial mode?

The after-feedback sessions between the experienced and novice teachers revealed that the novices benefited from the experienced teacher's presence and assistance. After the feedback sessions, they made cogent decisions regarding the actualized scenarios in their classrooms and were able to back them pedagogically utilizing the concepts they had mastered through their interactions with the experienced teacher. When asked about the applicability of the learned concepts in their classrooms, the novice teachers all pinpointed their practical aspects. To clearly explicate how the negotiated interactions assisted the novices in reshaping their teaching practice in managerial mode of the SETT framework, some extracts (i.e., whatever the teachers have stated in their interactions with the experienced

teacher) have been used for each scenario. Because similar developmental trends could be noticed in the after-feedback interactions with all teachers regarding different pedagogic goals, only one extract related to each pedagogic goal has been reported. It is worth noting that the concluded interpretations of the findings were shared with the participants to ensure participant validation, which is one of the ways to assure the credibility of the results (Nassaji, 2020).

Regarding the first scenario, all the teachers, in the pre-feedback phase, had denied taking the floor in the classroom. One of the male teachers, who imagined himself initiating the class with a discussion, in effect permitted silence to dominate his classroom for the initial five minutes owing to waiting for one latecomer and avoiding repeating his explanation. This happened before the teacher received any feedback from the experienced teacher; therefore, a contradiction in what he would do and what happened in reality demanded that the experienced teacher (henceforth, E in the extracts) give him an alternative.

To ensure the teacher applied the learned technique in his classes, the after-feedback recordings of his classes were analyzed. It was revealed that the teacher applied all the comments regarding the three phases of transmitting information in his classes and confidently defended his decisions when asked for any reasons undergirding his decisions. In extract 1, Teacher 5 is starting the class, and he seems confident about both his decision and his reasoning.

Extract 1. *Classroom initiation in managerial mode after the feedback session*

1. E: (after playing the stimulated recall video) you started your class the way we just watched. why did you do so?
2. T5: yeah. first well... till everyone arrives (**two were late**), I asked them their day... about they had done that day, or even what had done since last session, how are they feeling right now? are you tired? do you feel sleepy in that time of the night
3. E: ok! why did you decide so?=
4. T5: =actually I should thank you for this. I'm using it in all my classes and now I feel my students are... you know... like or even love to share with me their stories. I give them a chance to speak and use the grammar we had in a natural way (**enhancing learning opportunities**) because they are speaking about their real er... their

own happenings. after that they are ready for the... (**asking in his mother tongue for the word rest**) rest of the class.

5. E: but you can start the class yourself. why didn't you do it?

6. T5: yeah, that's right too. you told me that I can take the floor and I am!

aware of that, but you know, I like them to be engaged because it gives me a better feelings. I really know I can start the class and why, but you know...

In this extract, despite being cognizant of his right to take the floor to commence the class (in 6 emphatically), the teacher passes the stage to the learners so that learning opportunities are provided for them from the initiation of the class (in 4). He was also able to protect his actual decision, even after being questioned by the experienced teacher about not commencing the class himself and offering the stage to the learners (in 6).

The second scenario delved into setting the physical aspect of the learning environment and dealing with unexpected events that might affect the teachers' lesson plan. Teacher 2, for example, argued she would ignore the unexpected events due to disciplinary issues. Although her decision was, to some extent, reflected in practice as well, there was one situation with which she dealt differently. She lost her temper, and furiously started scolding the learners for what was happening. After receiving feedback on her teaching practice and becoming familiar with other ways of coping with such situations, the teacher applied the comments in her after-feedback classroom sessions. In a class of hers, similar to the previous extract, one learner abruptly started complaining about not having a book and accordingly not understanding anything.

Extract 2. *setting the physical learning environment and dealing with unexpected events in managerial mode after the feedback sessions*

10. E: (**after playing the stimulated recall video**) here... as you saw, you ignored her. I suppose it also happened to you before (**laughing**) I think you're not lucky=

11. T2: =no no I think I am! lucky because I knew what to do this time exactly! you know we already talked about this so I knew I shouldn't helped the so sorry... mess... to go on. I knew if I paid attention to

her, then she made a habit of the and always nagged about... everything.

12. E: right.

13. T2: I ignored her because I didn't want to repeat that again. this way as we said what was the name? (**searching for the term in her notebook**) (5) aha! behaviorism! she will not do it again.

14. E: all right.... but what else could you do?

15. T2: you know when I think now I think I think... I could make that student... you know she always uses Kurdish (**her mother tongue**)... what was I saying? aha? stop her and ask her some questions.

16. E: like what?

17. T2: for example, I told all of you to buy the book. ok now who who has the book? and then some might say we have it... ok? so where did you buy it? and how did you buy it? look in this way I am engaging the questions (**thinking about what she said**) (6) (**laughing at her mistake**) sorry engaging the students to answer the questions.

18. E: then what?

19. T2: this way I would prepared the stage for Ayzhin (**the student's name**). so Ayzhin? these students bought this book from I don't know Rozh (**a bookstore's name**). they bought is online and right now all of them know it. so why didn't you buy the book? (**emphatically pronouncing all the words**)

20. E: so do you think this is useful or effective at all?

21. T2: why not? if she answers me, it means I've given a chance to her to speak and this is! all I want. but if she again, you know out of habit gives me a response in Kurdish, I will not accept it and force her to say it in English.

In extract 2, the teacher neglected the student (in 10), and despite the experienced teacher's belief, she found herself lucky as that scenario had happened

another time at her class and she had already learned how to tackle it (in 11). She reasoned that negligence would result in the negative reinforcement of a misconduct in the classroom, based on behaviorism (in 13 and end of line 11). This was clearly the effect of her negotiated talk with the experienced teacher during the feedback sessions. The teacher proved that was not the only solution she was equipped with because provided another way of coping with that scenario and demonstrated her way of implementing that in practice (lines 15, 17, 19) and provided a cogent and pedagogical reason why she would do so (in 21).

Referring the learners to the materials is the pedagogic goal the third scenario is seeking for. The findings of the teachers' real classes indicated that although the teachers mainly failed to cover the grammar booster parts in the pre-feedback sessions, they favored supplementing any extra materials afterward. Previously the teachers reasoned that there would not even be sufficient amount of class time to cover the units supposedly assigned by the institute, but the significance of using such materials underscored in the feedback sessions turned them into frequent users of supplementary materials. One female teacher referred the learners to the supplemented materials she had prepared beforehand. She was the only teacher, who found covering all the materials assigned by the institute doable in the pre-feedback phase, but she did so because of following the rules.

Extract 3. *referring to the materials after the feedback sessions*

19. E: **(after playing the stimulated recall video)** look what you did here
was playing the PowerPoint (3) you also did it in the middle of
explanation... hmmm I mean you didn't finish your explanation and
then start using this file. do you think what you did was good and
effective?
20. T3: **(smiling)** I think! I can say it was really good... I'm just joking, but
seriously I really knew what was I doing. I thought before that about
it... you know I spent too much time too much on this and... I...
know knew! the PowerPoint file could help me a lot. the book
doesn't say this part very well, so I designed it based on my taste and
before that I was thinking of the goal or objective I had.
21. E: right, good, I think=
22. T3: =we talked about this. we called it pedagogic goal. you remember I

said I hate the word pedagogic?

21. E: yeah

22. T3: now I know it completely. believe me when I was making the PowerPoint, you know... I was just thinking about my students. I said they learn better in this way and I can achieve what do I want.

23. E: but you didn't answer my question! why did you shift to the file in the middle of explaining something else?

24. T3: (2) because I thought I was just wasting the time and the students did not get anything... I could see it in their face I thought they could learn the part better by that way because I had worked on it a lot.

In extract 3, the teacher backed her decision regarding supplementing the materials by claiming that she was thoroughly cognizant of her practice and had a reason why such a material was added (in 20). She relied on the term 'pedagogic goal' to explain she undoubtedly had an instructional goal for supplementing the material (in 22). When questioned about her seemingly abrupt transition to the prepared material, she contended that her transition was both refraining from what seemed not to be useful for the learners and paving the way for them to master the points at hand (in 24).

Seeking the pedagogic goal of how to conclude an activity and how to introduce a new one, the fourth scenario was asked from the teachers to check their actual decisions and reasoning. Although almost all of the teachers had pinpointed the value of getting a confirmation check after ending one activity in the imaginary scenarios, very few of them actualized this in their teaching practice. Not knowing how to transit from one activity to another not only negatively affected their performance but also made the learners confused about what they were supposed to do. As an example, before the feedback sessions, the experienced teacher demanded that the teacher provide a reason for each decision she made after replaying each one of the seven extracted related scenarios. Her decisions varied each time, and she was just unable to back them pedagogically.

The analysis of the participants' after-feedback classes indicated that they followed the steps they were taught and confidently supported them pedagogically

when they were challenged by the experienced teacher. In one example, Teacher 1, who changed her decisions from time to time, was teaching a section about 'family', under which there were a number of pictures. Based on the exercise instruction, the learners were guided to "listen to the words and repeat".

Extract 4. *moving from one activity to another after the feedback session*

15. E: **(after playing the stimulated recall video)** as you can see, the book simply says listen and repeat, but you didn't do that. why?
16. T1: you know previously you told me something which I use it in almost everything I do. you said we are not teaching the book... we should teach English! so here for example, the book says read [listen] and repeat.
17. E: but what you did was completely different
18. T1: I didn't do what the book said because I am! the teacher **(with a lot of emphatic stress on each word)** I am the controller of the class! I decide the students should do this exercise in this way! if it is the book, the book just says listen and repeat... this is what the book says! I exactly explained to students what were they supposed to do.
19. E: right... you said think of the name of a grandmother and a grandmother... one said Masa and one said Maji. these are not written in the book. you said these things to the students. why?
20. T1: because as I said, what the book says is good, but I know if students personalize it, they learn it well.
21. E: ok thanks. by the way how do you evaluate your moving from the previous activity to this one?
22. T1: well, I really think of you **(laughing)** whenever I move from one activity to another.
23. E: **(laughing)** oh really? why?
24. T1: well, I just tell them the three golden points to locate the exercise [material]... I tell them the page number, read the section heading,

and explain what do I! want to achieve for the students. I get confirmation checks too after each one... it takes like one minute but I don't care because my students know where are they and what should they do... and! this is the best (**emphatically**) thing for me.

25. E: yeah! I checked it throughout the observation time! you're doing great bravo

Extract 4 is clearly indicative of the teacher's decisive plans for the time when an activity is concluded and another should be introduced. When the experienced teacher challenged her by highlighting a discrepancy between what she actually did and what the book instructed (in 15), she confidently relied on her power of agency (in 18) and contended that she could direct the activities in a way that would be more fruitful for the class. The teacher could provide more reasoning (in 20) requested by the experienced teacher (in 19). Her meticulous explanation of how she moved from one activity to another, which was also observed in the recordings of her classes, obviously indicated that she performed more assertively than the pre-feedback sessions because she was pleased with her new feeling that the learners knew where they were and what they were expected to do (in 24). Her other reason underlying this was that she was cognizant of the time she would save on re-explaining the conclusion and introduction of the activity.

Going from one learning mode or type to another is the last pedagogic goal of managerial mode, which is represented in the fifth scenario. The teachers' actual reactions to the situations, which had supposedly been clarified but were still confusing for the learners, were exactly in line with their responses in imaginary ones, namely repeating their explanation. However, in many of the classes, the clarification requests from the learners regarding what they were supposed to do were so frequent that they made the teachers repeat the instruction for one activity over ten times in some instances. This in itself was sometimes annoying for them as it could be interpreted from their voice while reiterating the confusing point in the guidelines of the activity.

After the negotiated interaction, the teachers could support their decisions regarding moving from one learning mode to another pedagogically and used the terms they had taken up to justify why they made such a decision. The number of cases in which the learners sought for clarification reduced to a great extent as well. In one real instance after the feedback sessions, when the experienced teacher

enquired about the teacher's reasoning for extended teacher time, she defended herself in a reasonable way.

Extract 5. *moving from learning mode to another after the feedback session*

11. E: **(after playing the stimulated recall video)** you spent exactly 3 minutes and 32 seconds on explaining what the students should have done here... of course you also engaged them... why? what's your idea about your too much TTT?
12. T2: I really think what I did was not wrong! our institute observer once said this to me and **(speaking in her mother tongue)** I had nothing to say, but now I know it has no **(emphatically)** problem... I am comfortable with it you know it is justified for me
13. E: how? what do you mean?
14. T2: you know it is true that I spoke and explained to them for three or five or any time, but just look what happened in the class! you saw it... there were only six pictures and the guys were speaking for almost 25 minutes **(emphatically)**. I think five minutes for me in compared with 25 minutes for them is nothing=
15. E: =right=
16. T2: =you know I think it [explaining in details] is very better than when I say quickly tell me about the pictures, but in the middle, the students just say and ask ok teacher, what should we do?=
=so=
17. E: =so=
18. T2: =so once I locate the materials and use the posts=
19. E: =signposts you mean?
20. T2: =yeah! signposts **(echoing the word)** to tell the students where are we and what should we do.

In extract 5, her long and extended turn was questioned (11). Although her explanation in this regard was not persuasive enough for the experienced teacher (12), she directed him toward making a comparison between the time allocated on her explaining the instruction and the time the learners had to express themselves

(14) unambiguously (16). She also reflected the use of the concepts such as locating the materials (18) and signposts to provide a convincing reason for her decision.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to chronicle what novice teachers decided to do and why they decided to do so at the beginning of this teacher education program in five teaching scenarios designed based on the pedagogic goals of the SETT framework to be later compared with the development they made at the end. The obtained findings indicated that the teachers, who seemed to view their decisions unchanged in imaginary situations, performed differently in their real classrooms prior to the feedback sessions. More importantly, they were malleable to change upon introduction of newer ways of managing the class by the experienced teacher. This adaptability was also underscored by Martin et al. (2017) regarding the teachers' reasoning.

In addition, the findings showed that modifying the teachers' decision would not be successfully ensured until they reached the "aha" of the moment, which is the indicator of the new comprehension, based on Shulman (1987, p. 19). This was easily noticeable when the novice teachers were enquired about their reasons for their extended turns. They all failed to back their decisions but did not practically change their practice until the decisive reasoning was provided regarding when they were permitted to extend their turns. Therefore, in line with the seminal work of Shulman (1987), the teachers' pedagogical reasoning and accordingly decision making were reformed when they could digest or comprehend the new solutions themselves.

Another valuable finding of the study was proving the role of teachers as permanent decision makers. Because the classroom context can negatively or positively be affected by the teachers' decisions, informing them with research-based reasoning, here taking advantage of the SETT framework, can empower the teachers to arrive at a decision for which they have already set a pedagogic goal. This is consistent with Johnson's (2006) findings as there are a number of factors influencing the decisions made by teachers, and it is the teachers' decision that makes profitable or futile. The online decisions about different scenarios (i.e., mainly abrupt and unexpected ones), which a teacher is permanently confronting, can lead to a chaotic situation or open a window of opportunities (Bailey, 1996; Walsh, 2011). This was evidently observed throughout the study where the teachers' decisions seriously influenced how an event was dealt with. Before the

feedback sessions, the teachers mainly stuck with their own prepared lesson plan and did not create any learning opportunities out of it; a point that is known to be typical of novices (Bailey, 1996).

In accordance with the existing literature on the purview of concept development and metalanguage (Walsh, 2006, 2011), this study depicted that the teachers could protect their actual decisions using the SETT-oriented concepts they had mastered in the feedback sessions. For instance, one of the novice teachers, who was asked why he did not start the class himself and offered the stage to the learners, relied on the concepts of ‘take the floor’ and ‘engaging the learners’ in his reasoning. The same was true about the female teacher who made use of ‘signposts’ and ‘locating the materials’ to provide a cogent response to the experienced teacher’s query. The teachers seemed more confident about their decisions when they utilized the learned concepts in backing them. This supports the claim made by Walsh (2006, 2011) that using key concepts or metalanguage in teachers’ discourse is representative of the increase in their awareness, which paves the way for their long-term change (Matruglio, 2020). This awareness-raising in metalanguage is hoped to serve as a springboard to enable teachers to take the lead in the convoluted path of professional development (Borg & Edmett, 2019; Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009). In addition, providing teachers with such an opportunity to internalize the concepts they are exposed to, according to Johnson and Golombek (2020), is one of the main points that needs to be covered in any language teacher education program. By doing so, the focal consideration of the SETT framework, namely making teachers evaluators of their own practice and classroom discourse, would be achieved.

The findings also confirm the idea of applying the guidelines of the pedagogic goals of managerial mode to the concepts of decision making and pedagogical reasoning in the EFL context of Iran. This is in accord with the findings obtained by Saeedian (in press), who elaborated on skills and systems mode of the SETT framework in Iran. Although he used all the pedagogic goals and interactivities of the mode under investigation, he added one more interactivity, namely codeswitching. The same was observed in this study as well, but it was not dealt with because of no specific reason. Not having this interactivity could be one of the caveats of Walsh’s framework in general.

The effect of teachers’ decisions on encouraging or discouraging learners from partaking in a learning activity was manifest in this study. Such an effect has previously been investigated and proven by a number of scholars, including

Südkamp et al. (2014). In the last scenario, although the teacher had taken the floor for a few minutes, the result of his clear, albeit extended, turn was leaving the stage to the learners and allowing them to verbalize their ideas for around eight times more than her turn. The teacher was pleased with her performance and even reasoned it pedagogically because she had encouraged the learners' involvement. Involving learners in the activities is one of the main principles making decisions interactive (Bailey, 1996).

6. Conclusion

The primary purpose behind the analysis of the classroom observation and comparing it with the teachers' responses to the imaginary scenarios lied in both checking the possible matches and mismatches between what and why the teachers imagined to do and what and why they actually did in their own classes. More importantly, informing the novice teachers' decisions and reasoning under the supervision of the experienced teacher was the second aim of the study. The findings evidently showed that there were a number incongruities in almost all the covered scenarios in the teachers' actual teaching practice and imagined one. These inconsistencies were addressed through the negotiated and interactive feedback sessions held privately between the experienced teacher and the novices.

The teachers' decisions were then reassured through analyzing their actual after-feedback recorded classes using stimulated recall videos. Their confidence in reasoning and supporting their decisions after the feedback sessions indicated that acquainting novice teachers with technical metalanguage and helping them develop the technical concepts could be a fundamental yet essential way to make them professional. It could be observed that when the teachers verbalized their reasoning through the covered metalanguage, they insisted on the effectiveness of their decision even if they were challenged by the experienced teacher. It is thus suggested that officials in charge and institute managers provide such learning opportunities for novice teachers, who can later take more serious steps toward their own professional development through such self-regulated frameworks as SETT.

The study also showed the applicability of managerial mode as well as the other modes in an EFL context would not be plausible without considering codeswitching, but it was not a major concern in this study. This inconsistency with the original framework might open up new avenues that need to be addressed by

further work. It would be interesting if a joint work is implemented between a scholar in an English as a Second Language (ESL) setting and one in an EFL context. In addition to this limitation, the study did not provide any separate treatment, except within the feedback session. The findings might have been different if the teachers had been instructed in groups and could see each other's analyzed stimulated recall sessions.

References

- Bailey, K. M. (1996). The best laid plans: Teachers' in-class decisions to depart from their lesson plans. In K. M. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative research in second language education* (pp. 15–40). Cambridge University Press.
- Borg, S., & Edmett, A. (2019). Developing a self-assessment tool for English language teachers. *Language Teaching Research*, 23(5), 655–679. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168817752543>
- Close, K., Amrein-Beardsley, A., & Collins, C. (2020). Putting teacher evaluation systems on the map: An overview of state's teacher evaluation systems post-every student succeeds act. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 28(58), 1–31.
- Evans, C. M. (2019). Effects of New Hampshire's innovative assessment and accountability system on student achievement outcomes after three years. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(10), 1–37. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.27.4014>
- Farrell, T. S. (2012). Novice in-service language teacher development: Bridging the gap between preservice and in-service education and development. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(3), 435–449. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.36>
- Johnson, K. E. (2006). The sociocultural turn and its challenges for second language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 235–257. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40264518>
- Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2011). *Research on second language teacher education: A sociocultural perspective on professional development*. Routledge.
- Johnson, K. E., & Golombek, P. R. (2020). Informing and transforming language teacher education pedagogy. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(1), 116–127. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168818777539>
- Martin, J., Keast, S., & Anders, L. (2017). Becoming professionally agentic: Researching pedagogical reasoning in initial teacher education. In J. Nuttall, A. Kostogriz, M. Jones, & J. Martin, (Eds.), *Teacher education policy and practice: evidence of impact, impact of evidence* (pp. 67–81). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4133-4_5

- Martinelle, R. (2020). Using video-stimulated recall to understand the reflections of ambitious social studies teachers. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2020.03.001>
- Matruglio, E. (2020). What two teachers took up: metalanguage, pedagogy and potentials for long-term change. *Language and Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2020.1825477>
- Mendenhall, M., Cha, J., Falk, D., Bergin, C., & Bowden, L. (2020). Teachers as agents of change: positive discipline for inclusive classrooms in Kakuma refugee camp. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1707300>
- Mushayikwa, E., & Lubben, F. (2009). Self-directed professional development—Hope for teachers working in deprived environments?. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(3), 375–382. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.12.003>
- Nassaji, H. (2020). Good qualitative research. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4) 427–431. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168820941288>
- Nyamupangedengu, E., & Lelliott, A. (2016). Using modelling as a method of teaching a content course to pre-service teachers. In D. Garbett & A. Ovens (Eds.), *Enacting self-study as methodology for professional inquiry* (pp. 85–92). S-STEP.
- O'Connor, C., & Joffe, H. (2020). Intercoder reliability in qualitative research: Debates and practical guidelines. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919899220>
- Richards, J. C. (2011). *Competence and performance in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0033688210372953>
- Richards, J. C., Li, B., & Tang, A. (2001). Exploring pedagogical reasoning skills. In J. C., Richards, (Ed.), *Beyond training* (pp. 86–102). Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Saeedian, A. (in press). Classroom discourse: skills and systems mode in the Persian reading and writing literacy development course. *Language Related Research*, 1–28.
- Seedhouse, P., (2004). *The interactional architecture of the language classroom: A conversation analysis perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell. <https://psycnet.apa.org>

[/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2004.00266.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2004.00266.x)

- Shavelson, R. J. (1973). *The basic teaching skill: Decision making* (Research and Development Memorandum No. 104). Stanford University, Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, School of Education.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.57.1.j463w79r56455411>
- Siuty, M. B., Leko, M. M., & Knackstedt, K. M. (2018). Unraveling the role of curriculum in teacher decision making. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 41(1), 39–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0888406416683230>
- Südkamp, A., Kaiser, J., & Möller, J. (2014). Teachers' judgments of students' academic achievement. In S. Krolak-Schwerdt, S. Glock, & M. Böhmer, (Eds.), *Teacher's professional development: assessment, training, and learning* (pp. 5–25). SensePublishers, Springer Science & Business Media. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-536-6>
- Tirosh, D., Tsamir, P., & Levenson, E. (2015). Fundamental issues concerning the sustainment and scaling up of professional development programs. *ZDM – Mathematics Education*, 47(1), 153–159. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-015-0665-8>
- Walsh, S. (2006). *Investigating classroom discourse*. Routledge.
- Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action*. Routledge.
- Walsh, S., & Mann, S. (2015). Doing reflective practice: a data-led way forward. *ELT Journal*, 69(4), 351–362. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccv018>

About the Authors

¹ **Mohammad Khatib** is Professor of TEFL at Allameh Tabataba'i University. His main areas of interest include SLA theories, language learning strategies, culture, and the integration of language and literature. He has published articles on TEFL in Iranian and international Journals, including *System*, *English Language Teaching*, *Journal of Language Teaching & Research*, *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, *Applied Research on English Language*, and many more. He has also translated a book of short stories.

² **Abdulbaset Saeedian** is a Ph.D. candidate of Applied Linguistics and a lecturer at Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. His main areas of interest are dynamic assessment, discourse analysis, classroom discourse, and teacher education. He has presented and published papers in international conferences and journals, including *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research (IJLTR)*, *Issues in Language Teaching*, *Teaching English with Technology*, *TEL Journal (TELLSI)*, *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, *Language Related Research*, and *English Language Teaching Journal*.

Appendix

Transcription conventions; adopted from Walsh's (2011, p. 216)

T:	- teacher
L:	- learner (not identified)
L1, L2, etc.:	- identified learner
LL:	- several learners at once or the whole class
/ok/ok/ok/	- overlapping or simultaneous utterances by more than one learner
[do you understand?]	
[I see]	- overlap between teacher and learner
=	- turn continues, or one turn follows another without any pause.
...	- pause of one second or less marked by three periods.
(4)	- silence; length given in seconds
?	- rising intonation – question or other
!	- emphatic speech: falling intonation
((4))	- unintelligible 4 seconds a stretch of unintelligible speech with the length given in seconds
Paul, Peter, Mary	- capitals are only used for proper nouns
T organises groups	- editor's comments (in bold type)