



## SELF-EFFICACY IN ENGLISH AND IRANIAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MAJORING IN HUMANITIES

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**Abstract:** Observing the low English achievements of Iranian senior high school students majoring in humanities as compared with those of the other majors motivated the researcher to set out this study. The researcher investigated the humanities students' English self-efficacy beliefs, and examined the contributions they make to their EFL achievements. A total of 80 senior high school students and 20 high school English teachers participated in the study. The methodology underlying the study was both qualitative (teacher interviews, classroom observations, and student diaries) and quantitative (through the implementation of a structured questionnaire and a measure of EFL achievement). The approach was both exploratory and confirmatory in design for the qualitative data, while the quantitative data were analyzed using a chi-square test and a set of correlational analysis. The results revealed that the students majoring in humanities had a very weak English self-efficacy and held certain negative beliefs about their academic ability as foreign language learners. A strong positive correlation was found between their EFL achievements and self-efficacy. The qualitative data provided very rich and invaluable information regarding the sources of their low self-efficacy and its negative consequences. The implications suggested in the study seem to be helpful to teachers, who proved to have a great role in shaping the students' self-perceptions of their academic ability.

**Key words:** general self-efficacy, English self-efficacy, learner's beliefs, EFL achievement

**Özet:** Bu çalışmaya, İran'da sosyal bilimler alanında eğitim gören lise son sınıf öğrencilerinin başarı ortalamasının diğer alanlardaki öğrencilere kıyasla düşük olduğu gözlemlendiği için başlanılmıştır. Çalışmada, sosyal bilimler öğrencilerinin özyeterlik inancını ve bu inancın İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenme sürecine olan etkilerini araştırmak amaçlanmıştır. Katılımcılar, 80 son sınıf öğrencisi ve lisede görev yapan 20 İngilizce öğretmenidir. Araştırma yöntemi (öğretmen görüşmeleri, sınıf içi gözlemler ve öğrenci günlükleri ile) hem nitel, hem de (yapılandırılmış anket uygulaması ve yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreniminde başarı ölçümlemesi ile) nicel özelliklere sahiptir. Nicel veri analizinde açıklayıcı ve doğrulayıcı yaklaşım kullanılmış, nitel veri analizinde ise kıkare testi ve korelasyon analizi tercih edilmiştir. Sonuçlar göstermiştir ki, sosyal bilimler öğrencilerinin İngilizce öğrenmede özyeterlikleri düşüktür ve yabancı dil öğrencisi olarak sahip oldukları akademik yeterliğe dair inançları oldukça olumsuzdur. İngilizce öğrenmedeki başarı ile özyeterlik arasında güçlü bir olumlu korelasyon olduğu belirlenmiştir. Nitel veriler, öğrencilerin özyeterliklerinin neden düşük olduğunu ve bunun ne gibi olumsuz sonuçlar doğurduğunu açıklayan önemli bulgular sağlamıştır. Bu çalışmadaki bulguların, öğrencilerin akademik beceri konusunda algılarını şekillendirmede önemli bir rolü bulunan öğretmenlere faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** genel özyeterlik, İngilizce özyeterliği, öğrenci inancı, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce başarısı

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A simple glance at the present status of the English achievements of Iranian senior high school students from the three majors of mathematics, science, and humanities clearly indicates that most of the students majoring in humanities experience failure or have a very low achievement

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when compared to those studying math or science. While it may be difficult to measure objectively, it is also observed by many Iranian teachers that majors like math and science have better English skills than the humanities. Those who have the experience of teaching English to the three majors frequently complain how hard, tiring, and time-consuming it is to work with the humanities, and how disappointing the results of their teaching efforts seem to be.

It is believed by many teachers and school authorities believe that the low English achievements of the humanities students is basically related to their low aptitudes. That is, they think that these learners have much lower ability to learn English in comparison to the math or science students. Such claims seem to be made mainly because of the way Iranian students choose their major at senior high school level. The choice is primarily based on the overall averages they get when finishing their junior high school. That is, the students with higher averages tend and are even persuaded to choose either mathematics or science, whereas the pupils with lower general means select or, better to say, are made to choose humanities as the major to be studied in senior high school. This may explain why they are viewed as learners with lower academic abilities.

While the researcher does not deny the role of intellectual abilities in learning foreign language, the notion that aptitude plays a predominant role seems to be controversial. In fact, the relevant literature (Bandura, 1986; Brown, 2000; Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner and Lambert, 1972; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997, and Pajares, 2002) supports that variation in foreign language learning can be explained by aptitude only to a certain extent. As Chastain (1988) posits, in addition to linguistic aptitude, there must be another equally important variable determining whether or not a student learns a foreign language.

Among the determining factors suggested by different theories, learners' self-efficacy has proved to be a much more consistent predictor of behavior than any of the other closely related variables (Bandura, 1986). To quote Bandura, "many students have difficulty in school not because they are incapable of performing successfully, but because they are incapable of believing that they can perform successfully, that they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic skills" (p. 390). This view is supported by Graham and Weiner (1996) who observed that the acquisition of new skills and the performance of previously learned skills have been related to efficacy beliefs at a level not found in any of the other expectancy constructs.

Chamot (1993) reports that one of the basic needs of language learners is having a high level of confidence in successfully completing a task. Students confident in their academic skills expect high marks on related exams and papers. Conversely, students who doubt their academic ability see a low grade on their paper even before they begin their exams. This would lead one to infer that research on achievement, on why students achieve or fail to achieve, or on why they do things they do in school naturally must focus, at least in great part, on students' self-efficacy beliefs.

This motivated the researcher to set out the present study in order to investigate the humanities' perspectives about their ability to learn English (their English self-efficacy beliefs) and to examine whether their low English achievements could be explained by their self-efficacy beliefs.

## 2. RELEVANT LITERATURE

Nearly two decades have passed since Bandura (1986) introduced self-efficacy as one of the components of Social Cognitive Theory. He defines it as “beliefs in one's capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (p. 392). His key point as regards the role of self-efficacy beliefs in human functioning is that “people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true” (ibid). To him, self-efficacy is a type of self-reflective thought that affects one's behavior. He states that people develop expectations about their own abilities and characteristics that subsequently regulate their behavior by determining what a person tries to achieve and how much effort they will put into their performance. He proposes that there must be some internal processes within the individual which acts heavily on perceiving and interpreting his behavior, on initiating or guiding behavior based on its perceived consequences. In other words, peoples' behavior is regulated in terms of the expectations they develop about themselves, their environment, and the result of their actions (Crozier, 1997).

Baron (2004) introduces three types of self efficacy: self-regulatory self-efficacy (ability to resist peer pressure, avoid high-risk activities); social self-efficacy (ability to form and maintain relationships, be assertive, engage in leisure time activities); and academic self-efficacy (ability to do course work, regulate learning activities, meet expectations). As Siegle (2000) indicates, self-efficacy is specific to the task being attempted. That is, it reflects how confident students are about performing specific tasks. For example, high self-efficacy in mathematics does not necessarily accompany high self efficacy in spelling.

Throughout her article, Barnhardt (1997) describes the features of self-efficacious learners as follows: Self-efficacious learners feel confident about solving a problem because they have developed an approach to problem solving that has worked in the past. They attribute their success mainly to their own efforts and strategies, believe that their own abilities will improve as they learn more, and recognize that errors are part of learning. Students with low self-efficacy, believing themselves to have inherent low ability, choose less demanding tasks and do not try hard because they believe that any effort will reveal their own lack of ability. (p.3)

To account for the variance of self-efficacy beliefs among learners, it is useful to examine their source. Bandura (1986) explores four sources from which efficacy beliefs are developed: Mastery experience (success raises self-efficacy and failure lowers it), vicarious experience ( “if he can do it, so can I” method of developing a self-belief ), persuasions (what other people tell us and what we read or see on TV), and physiological states (stress, arousal, fear reactions, fatigue, and pains while performing a behavior).

How self-beliefs affect behavior is described by Bandura (1986) as follows: First, they influence the choice of behavior: individuals are likely to engage in tasks in which they feel competent and confident and avoid those in which they do not. Second, self-beliefs help determine how much effort people will expend on an activity and how long they will persevere: low self-efficacy in a student, for example, creates a self-doubt that may keep him away from trying. The third way that self-beliefs influence human agency is by affecting an individual's thought patterns and emotional reactions: people with low efficacy may think that things are tougher than they really are; Such a feeling creates great stress and anxiety in them. Learners' self-efficacy is also associated with the

goals they set for learning the language. That is, learners with high self-efficacy set higher goals and higher personal standards, while the low self-efficacious students set easily achievable and short-term goals (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995, p.507).

Learners' self-efficacy has been researched from a variety of positions. Testing the concept of self-efficacy in relation to academic performance (Bandura, 1997; Cotterall, 1999; Ergul, 2004; Mills, 2004; Wen & Johnson, 1997), academic motivation (Graham & Weiner, 1996), self-regulation (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), cognitive strategy use (Edmond, 2005; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990), and language anxiety (Cheng, 2001) has been at the center of many self-efficacy studies done so far.

While there are ample reasons to view the learners' English self-efficacy as powerful enough to predict EFL performance, it seems that the area has not received the due attention in Iran. This study was designed with the hope that its' results could sensitize Iranian teachers to their students' internal feelings and beliefs about themselves and the effect they may exert on their performance in EFL classes. To this end, the following research questions were designed:

1. What are the English self-efficacy beliefs of Iranian senior high school students majoring in humanities?
2. Is there any relationship between the humanities' English self-efficacy and their EFL achievements?

### **3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Participants**

A total of 80 senior high school students of 2 classes from the humanities major and 20 high school English teachers participated in the study. All the students were female who had studied English for 5 years as a part of their official school curriculums.

#### **3.2 Survey Instrumentation**

In this research, both qualitative (teachers interviews, student diaries, classroom observations) and quantitative data (student questionnaire and an English achievement test) were used in order to provide the necessary triangulation. The qualitative stage preceded the quantitative phase of the study.

#### **3.3 Procedures**

##### **3.3.1 Qualitative Stage**

A number of 20 English teachers were interviewed with the expectation to understand how they thought and felt about the topic of the study. The insights gained from the interview notes were used both to develop the student questionnaire and to interpret the findings of the study as a supplementary source of data. The interviews were based around a protocole (see Appendix A) and lasted between half an hour and forty-five minutes. Some of the protocole items were adapted from the BALLI (Horwitz, 1988), which has extensively been used to examine teachers'

beliefs and attitudes, while the others were developed by the researcher for the purpose of the study.

The students were asked to keep diaries in which they reflected on their feelings and perceptions towards their own abilities as EFL learners. Their analyses provided the researcher with invaluable data to complement the results of the research. Furthermore, the whole autumn semester constituted the period of observation during which the two classes were observed and notes were made by the researcher, who was the subjects' English teacher at the same time.

### **3.3.2 Quantitative Stage**

The Persian-language student questionnaire included 10 5-point Liker-type items targeting the English self-efficacy beliefs of the humanities, and one ranking item requiring the respondents to rank seven factors according to how important they judged them for their success in EFL learning (for the English-language version see the Appendix B). The same item was also used in the teacher interview protocol in order to see whether their views match with each other and with the results of the study.

To develop the instrument, a pool of 22 items were first generated from the existing instruments including BALLI (Horwitz, 1988), and the Persian Adaptation of the General Self-efficacy Scale developed by Nezami et al., (1996), as well as with the items which the researcher developed based on the research directions and the insights gained from the teachers' interviews. Since some of the items were in English, they were translated into Persian to make them more usable and understandable for the subjects.

Ensuring the accuracy of translations was a great concern. Accordingly, the translated items were evaluated and judged by three experts; the whole items (22) were then validated through panel analysis. It resulted in eliminating some overlapping items, revising the wording of some other items, dropping the items irrelevant to the context of Iran, and changing the item order. Consensus was then reached for selecting 10 items out of 22.

Following the validation panel, the instrument was piloted to 35 volunteer senior highschool students as a check for reliability. Cronbach Alpha Coefficient calculated for the scale (.82) was considered to be satisfactory. Thus, the instrument was ready to be administered. The students' final exam scores were used as the measure of their EFL achievements.

## **4. RESULTS**

To answer the first research question, the teachers' interviews, the students' diaries, and the researcher's observation notes were first analyzed. Due to their qualitative nature, a content analysis for recurring themes was conducted. The data were approached with some predetermined categories based on the research directions (confirmatory analysis), but new patterns and commonalities were looked for too (exploratory analysis). For the sake of validating the findings and increasing the reliability of final results, the emerged categories from one source of data, diaries for example, were sought in other sources too. In order to avoid possible subjectivity associated with data interpretation, the data was read and evaluated by two experts in

the field. A high degree of agreement was achieved between their analyses and those of the researcher on the categories.

The significant point revealed from the qualitative analyses was that the humanities had a very low English self-efficacy. A few samples of the emerged categories indicating the weak efficacy of the humanities are presented in the discussion section of the paper. The same finding was clearly supported when the scores obtained from the student questionnaires were quantitatively analyzed using a chi-square test. The test was employed to compare the frequency of positive and negative efficacy beliefs realised as strongly agree/agree and strongly disagree/disagree in responses to the questionnaire items. Comparing the chi-square value obtained ( $X^2 = 112.90$ ) with the critical value of  $X^2 (9.48)$  with 4 df for the .05 level showed that the subjects had a very low perception of their ability to learn English.

In order to probe the second research question dealing with the relationship between the English self-efficacy of the humanities and their EFL achievements, Pearson-product correlation coefficient was calculated. The correlation coefficient (.84) was significant at the level 0.01 (2-tailed), so the hypothesis was strongly repudiated. That is, there was a significant positive relationship between the subjects' self-efficacy and their English achievement.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Many features of low self-efficacious learners described by Bandura (1986), Barnhardt (1997), and Pajares (2002) emerged while sifting through the qualitative data. However, due to the limited scope of this paper, only the more relevant and illuminating points made by the participants are summarized in this section. It is worthy mentioning that their views originally expressed in Persian language are presented in English to make them usable and understandable for the readers.

The finding that many humanities students start off with a low perception of their ability to learn English successfully was clearly evident in their diaries. Negative self-talks like *"I'll never get this, it can't be done, I always make mistakes, I don't know what to do, I'm not made to learn English, English words do not stick in my mind, and I have no talent for learning English"* were frequently repeated in their writings. Not having confidence in their ability had apparently caused them to attribute their failure mainly to their lack of innate talent. For instance, a student wrote: *"I know that I'm not good at learning English so why should I spend so much energy and time to learn something for which I do not have any talent"* Another student claimed: *"I think that one must be very intelligent for being successful in learning English. Unfortunately, I am not so talented; and this is why I usually get a low mark in English exams."*

In addition to the ability variable, luck and methodology were two other factors to which a majority of humanities students attributed their low English achievements: *"Last year, I could not get a high mark in English because of my teacher's methodology. If she had not spoken English in class all the time, I could have got a better mark."* Another subject stated: *"I'm not lucky at all. Last year, most of the questions in our final English exam were exactly from those sections of the book which I had not studied."*

Not expending the least amount of effort and perseverance on learning English came out to be a negative consequence of not having a feeling of control over learning outcomes and attributing failure to factors not within the control. A student confessed: *“I spend less than one hour a week studying English. I think it would be useless even if I spent the whole semester practicing English. I'm not made to learn the language”*.

The content analysis of the teachers' responses to the item 8 of their interviews resulted in the same finding. A majority of the teachers (84%) emphasized that the students did not put forth much effort and energy for achieving well. This view is reflected in Bandura's (1986) notion that "a belief in one's ability to do a task could be the key to maintaining effort in the learning process. Thus, the higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort, with greater likelihood of success" (p. 394).

A whole semester of the researcher's observations also indicated that the humanities students did not expend enough effort and persistence for achieving well on learning English. A tendency to retreat from doing their homework, no active participation in the class, no interest to do the extra activities suggested by the teachers, no motivation to do group work, and giving up trying immediately when facing a problem were the most common behaviours observed in the two classes.

A plausible explanation for the lack of effort on the humanities' part might be that they viewed learning English tougher than it really was (a feature of low self-efficacious students). Consequently, they approached English learning task as a threat to be avoided rather than as challenges to be mastered so they did not sustain their efforts in the face of failure: *“Learning English is a very difficult task. How can I learn a language that is completely different from my own language?”* Another student wrote: *“I wish English was easier than it is. For me, acquiring the grammar rules and the new words takes too much time and energy.”* Their diaries also revealed that the perceived difficulty of English learning had made many of them decide to discontinue their English studies upon completing the school requirement.

Another consequence of the humanities' low English self-efficacy reflected in their diaries and the teachers' opinions was the emotional tension or anxiety that they experienced in the process of the language learning: *“I am always nervous when doing English homework because I am usually unable to do it properly. Some of the exercises are too difficult, so I have to leave them undone.”* Another student expressed her fear of sitting in the English class by calling it a terrible nightmare. This finding is reflected in Pajaras' (2002) view that “efficacy influences the amount of stress, depression, and anxiety individuals experience as they engage in a task.”

Two main sources of the low self-efficacy beliefs of the humanities were emerged from the students' diaries and the teachers' perceptions: Fear of past failure was frequently expressed in their diaries as follows: *“I have always got poor grades on English tests; I don't remember any good grades in this bloody subject; thinking about English exam makes me disgusted; I hate experiencing failure again; or I do not want to be ridiculed or blamed by others any more”*. These feelings are congruent with Bandura's (1986) view that low test results and poor performances may make learners approach the area with apprehension. As a result, they are likely to develop a weak sense of confidence in their abilities.

Another source of their low self-efficacy revealed in their diaries was what nearly all the humanities complained about the negative attitudes that the society in general and teachers in particular had towards them. They felt that no one appreciated or valued them, and they were treated differently from the students of the other two majors due to their low academic ability: *“Math and science students are very lucky. Both the manager and the teachers like them very much. Teachers choose their classes out of their will. But I know they wouldn't come to our classes if they didn't have to”,* or *“my sister is studying mathematics and I can clearly see how differently she is treated from me both at home and at school. while the students of the other two majors are usually labled as polite, disciplined, talented, and active, we are usually called lazy, weak, and impolite pupils.”* Another humanities student seemed to get doubtful about her choice just because of the judgement of ‘significant others’: *I have decided to study in this major just because I like to become a lawyer in the future. But my teachers and my family are trying to convince me to choose science as my major. They believe that, considering my great talent and high average in junior high school, I could be more successful in the science major. What do you think, teacher? Have I made a wrong choice? Is there any chance for me to chane my major?*

Bandura (1986), calling this source of low self-beliefs verbal persuasion, views teachers as persuaders that can cultivate EFL learners’ beliefs in their capabilities. He then emphasizes that just as positive persuasion may work to encourage and empower, negative persuasion may work to defeat and weaken self-beliefs. Thus, teachers and parents should be reminded of the role that their behaviours play in shaping the students' self-confidence and attitudes.

The researcher was interested in finding out whether the feeling the humanities had about their teachers’ negtaive attitudes towards them was really right or not. With this purpose in mind, the relevant items 1 to 7 included in teachers' interviews were analyzed. Their responses supported the students’ interpretation to a great extent. About 88% of the teachers believed that teaching English to the humanities is boring (item 3), 83% of the teachers judged trying to improve the humanities’ English achievement as not worth exerting energy (item 2). Their explanation was that they were not as interested, talented, and polite as the math or science majors, so any effort on the part of the teacher would come to nothing. It is really disappointing to see that all of them (100%) preferred to teach in the math and the science classes (item 7), and none of them chose the humanities as their options. 78% of them believed their colleagues as well as themselves preferred working in math or science classes (item 6). 95% of teachers believed that humanities tend to show more preference for the teacher-centered methods, while communicative methods work much better for the other two majors, (items 1 and 4 ).

A very significant point emerged from analysing the dairies was that the students were not interested enough in learning English. The relationship between learners' self-beliefs and their attitudes towards learning English has been recognized by many scholars including Cotterall (1999), Pajares (1997), and Wenden (1999) who viewed learners' confidence in their ability to learn a language successfully as not only influencing actions but also as shaping attitudes. However, whether the humnaities’ low self-efficacy has resulted in their negative feelings about learning English or vice versa is a topic which requires further investigation.

While the study provided convincing evidences to believe the great part the humanities’ low self-efficacy plays in their low English achievements, the results of analyzing the teacher and students' responses to the ranking items revealed that they are not aware of the determining role

of the construct. That is, neither the teachers nor the students had given a high ranking to self-efficacy beliefs, implying their views that other factors play larger roles in learning English. For instance, the external factor of *teaching methodology* was in the first ranking of the humanities, where as self-efficacy had been given the sixth ranking. With respect to the teachers' rankings, they tended to give the two highest rankings to the *attitude* and *effort* variables, ignoring the point that these two factors are determined to a great extent by the self-efficacy beliefs. Accordingly, both teachers and students should be made aware of the significant role the learners' confidence in their ability can play in their success.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

By demonstrating low English self-efficacy of Iranian high school students majoring in humanities and the great contribution it makes to their EFL achievements, the survey provided further evidence to support the connection and justified the significant role of positive self-efficacy as one of the major contributors to second or foreign language success. Consequently, both teachers and students should be made aware of the notion of self-efficacy, its origins and consequences, as well as the strategies for developing high and positive self-beliefs.

Pajares (1997), emphasizing the necessity of reexamining the ordinary practices of schooling with a view to the contributions learners' self-efficacy makes to their academic achievements, views the teachers as significant persuaders who can improve learners' beliefs in their capabilities, while at the same time ensuring that success is attainable by exploring more efforts. His view is consistent with Littlewood's (1999) notion that learners should be encouraged to understand that innate ability does not determine how much success a person can achieve; with effort and self-discipline, everyone can achieve his or her goals, and failure can be retrieved by making more effort.

Since the literature has shown that learner's self-efficacy and goal-setting are interrelated, teachers should guide the unmotivated students to identify challenging, yet manageable goals related to their interests, and encourage them to work towards their goals. Feeling that they can achieve these goals will likely result in reducing their anxiety, increasing self-confidence, and giving them a sense of success and achievement. Learners, who due to their past failures, have learnt not to try should be taught to formulate realistic goals which are within their grasp so that success in achieving them will bring the greater self-confidence (Kondo, 1999).

Furthermore, Iranian high school teachers should be reminded of the role their negative attitudes might play in shaping their students' low self-perception. They should be encouraged to strive for changing the negative attitudes the humanities hold about themselves, their major, or EFL learning. The value and the significance of the humanities major and the great relevance of learning English to their future life should be clarified for them. Teachers should provide conditions which aid the humanities, enhance their positive self-image and achieve their potentials. Using humanistic activities, as those Moskowitz (1981, p.155) suggested, can help students to accept and understand themselves, to enhance their attitudes towards learning the target language, and to enhance the self-perceptions of students by combining the subjects matter to be learned with the feelings, interests, experiences, and values of learners. Positive self-talk as an affective strategy for increasing self-efficacy was also suggested by Barnhardt (1997), who defined the term as making positive statements like ' I can do this ' to help oneself get through

challenging tasks. This strategy may increase students' motivation to continue working at a difficult task rather than giving up.

Finally, an important methodological implication arose in relation to the research methods used in this study. The researcher found qualitative approaches very helpful in getting a much deeper understanding of various aspects of the variable under the study. In fact, the qualitative approach allowed the subjects to express freely their real needs and feelings, which were not addressed in the questionnaire.

Reflecting on the value of self-efficacy as supported in this paper creates the need to direct the researchers' attention to this construct which has apparently received the least attention, especially from EFL programs. Investigating the interaction of learners' English self-efficacy with variables like cognitive styles, learning strategies, and motivational constructs, examining gender and sex differences regarding the variable, and determining the extent to which using humanistic and learner-centered curriculums may lead to a change in learners' self-efficacy are the areas on which the further research might focus.

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## Appendix I:

### Interview Protocol For Teachers

Date: .....

#### Background Information

Name: .....

Years of experience: .....

Contact phone: .....

#### Teacher views

1. Is your teaching methodology the same for the students of the three majors? (explain)
2. Are you satisfied with the results of your work with the three majors?
3. How different is your feeling while teaching to the three majors?
4. For which of the majors, Grammar – Translation method works better? Why?
5. What was your own major when you were a high school student? Could you please tell me about your own experiences as a student?

6. How do you evaluate the attitudes of most English teachers towards teaching English to the students of the three fields of study?
7. Having a choice, which major would you prefer to teach to?
8. Based on your teaching experiences, what do you think the reasons for the low achievement of humanities learners in English are? What do you suggest for improving their English achievement?
9. Please rank the following factors based on their relative contribution to the success or failure of humanities student in learning English?
  - Effort and perseverance
  - Special talent for learning English
  - Teaching methodology
  - Interest and attitude
  - Materials
  - Self-efficacy
  - Feeling need to learn it

**Thank you very much!**

## **Appendix II:**

**Dear student,**

Below are beliefs and feelings that some people have about learning foreign languages. Read the statement and then decide if you:

(5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree. There are no right or wrong answers. Mark your ideas in the answer sheet.

1. I have got a special ability for learning English.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. I believe I have the power to get my desired grade in English final exam.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. I think that some day I will speak English very well.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. I am sure I can solve any problems I face in learning English because I've got the power to do it.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Personally, I'm satisfied with my current level of English proficiency.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. I'm definitely sure that I can improve my English by trying more.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. If I do not do well in this lesson, it is only because I do not exert enough effort.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8. Generally speaking, my self –confidence in English classes is high.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

9. Learning English is a very easy task.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

10. I try to study English to reach the highest level of ability in it.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

11. Please rank the following factors based on their relative contribution to your success or failure in learning English?

- Effort and perseverance
- Special talent for learning English
- Teaching methodology
- Interest and attitude
- Materials
- Self-efficacy
- Feeling need to learn it

**Thank you very much!**