

A Triangulated Study on the Perceptual Mismatches between Iranian EFL Learners and Teachers with Respect to Learners' Needs

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The present study aimed at finding out the discrepancies and mismatches between the Iranian EFL learners and teachers' perceptions with respect to English learners' needs in order to shed light on the practice of language teaching in an EFL context. It is surely worthwhile to investigate the possible mismatches between learners and teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards learners' needs, as they can influence the effectiveness of classroom instruction. To this end, a 4/5-point Likert-scale questionnaire based on Atai and Shoja's (2011) questionnaire called "Needs Analysis and Self-assessment" questionnaire was developed, piloted with 15 EFL learners and 15 EFL teachers who were representative of the main group, validated, and administered to 60 Iranian EFL teachers and 120 Iranian EFL learners through mail and in person. To enrich the data, 15 Iranian EFL teachers and 30 Iranian EFL learners were interviewed, too. The teachers and learners' perceptions of learners' needs were compared using mean scores and standard deviations. In order to determine whether there was any statistically significant difference between teachers and learners' perceptions towards learners' needs, the non-parametric Mann Whitney U test was run. The results indicated that there are statistically significant differences between learners and teachers' perceptions for the whole scale. The results of the interviews confirmed these findings, too. Based on the findings of this study, it is proposed that teachers try to "minimize the perceptual mismatches" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) between the learners and themselves as much as possible. It is also proposed that teachers and policy makers consider giving learners more voice and autonomy in different stages of English language teaching and learning especially "needs analysis

Keywords : perceptual mismatches- needs analysis

