



**University of Zabol**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Literature**  
**Department of English**

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching  
English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Subject:

**Developing Constructive Teacher - Student  
Relationship: An Action Research Study**

**Supervisors:**

Dr. Mohammad Doosti

Dr. Behruz Lotfi Gaskaree

**By:**

Fatemeh Poodineh darvishi

September 2021

## **Abstract**

Teacher-student relationship (TSR) is defined by Wubbels et al. (2014) as the generalized perceptions teacher and students have about their moment-to-moment interactions. Teacher\_student relationship plays an important role in both students' educational outcomes and teachers' satisfaction with their jobs. Despite the importance of this issue, studies on teacher\_student relationships are surprisingly rare, especially in Iran. The purpose of this research was to investigate the process of developing constructive TSR in an EFL class and explore the influences of such a relationship on students and their learning acts in the classroom and its challenges. To achieve this purpose, the first researcher as a teacher\_researcher carried out an action research investigation of an EFL class in a high school in Sistan, Iran. Ten students were selected through a purposeful sampling method to collect rich data. Data included video recordings of the class, field notes, journals, and interviews that were analyzed qualitatively employing thematic analysis (Robson, 2011). The analysis of the data collected in the current study has led to the emergence of four major themes associated with constructive TSR: First, academic achievements: The results showed that constructive TSR had beneficial effects on students' educational outcomes. Second, affect: It minimized the students' anxiety and enhanced security and confidence in them. Third, behavior: Constructive relationship resulted in engaging the students in the learning activities in the class and increased their active class participation and mutual respect with their teacher. And finally, motivation: In this relationship students were more motivated to learn and engage in learning activities and were more eager to do their homework. It is obvious that training teachers for developing constructive TSR is essential for educational systems and can highly improve the students' learning outcomes, their attitudes toward learning, their learning behaviors, and motivation for learning. Most of Iranian teachers have difficulty in developing positive relationships with their students because they haven't been informed and trained about the importance of such a relationship and its influences on students. The findings promised some significant pedagogical implications for different groups of educational stakeholders. Policymakers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, and materials developers should take into account the centrality of constructive TSR in their professional activities pertaining on teachers' education programs. Constructive TSR should become an essential part of educational programs.

**Keywords:** Action research, teacher-student relationship.