

INVESTIGATING KURDISH EFL STUDENT TEACHERS' CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPERIENCES AND PROBLEMS DURING TEACHING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Teaching practice (TP), also known as teaching practicum, is a compulsory component of every teacher education program. In recent years, multiple studies have attempted to understand student teachers' school-based teaching practice challenges. However, there has been insufficient investigation into the classroom experiences and challenges of the student teachers. This study aims to investigate the English language student teachers' classroom teaching experiences and problems they face during teaching practice at four public colleges of education and basic education in Duhok, Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI). A 31-item questionnaire (paper and online) categorized into four domains - problems related to: student teachers (STs), classroom students, textbooks, and classroom environment-was administered to 132 participants at the end of their TP. The study revealed that student teachers encountered a wide range of challenges most of which were caused by the classroom students and classroom environment while less frequently by textbooks and STs themselves. These results allow us to understand the nature of the problems that handicap a productive and impactful TP course that aims to develop the skills of student teachers. These findings should provide a promising data framework for future plans of teaching practice.

KEYWORDS: Student teachers; Teaching practice; Classroom teaching, Problems, EFL

1. INTRODUCTION

The school-based teaching practice is part of a student teacher's path to becoming a teacher. The objective is to provide the pre-service teacher with meaningful classroom experiences. A student teacher must meet academic requirements in order to be accredited as a certified teacher qualified to teach English at public or private schools. Although the regulations and processes of this course differ depending on the teacher education institution, it is usually built around two main hypotheses and goals which are providing STs with hands-on experience in the classroom and applying the theoretical knowledge gained during university courses to practice (Tuli and File, 2009; Hamaidi, et al., 2014 & Pawan et al., 2017). These goals are mostly tested and achieved within classroom instruction.

In KRI, the aim of this practical course is to allow STs to gain real-world classroom teaching experience and improve their future career skills (Haji, 2018). However, this course has not been given the requisite consideration by people and

education partners in the region. It is seen as a task that must be completed and passed without giving the due attention. On the other hand, both university and school partners usually place a great deal of attention on STs' classroom experiences and performance ignoring other dimensions of TP such as supervision, mentoring, collaboration, relationships and reflection mechanisms. Given the underlying significance of these features for STs and the potential impact they may have on their performance in the classroom, much more focus ought to be given to them. It should be mentioned, however, that these are not within the scope of the current research. In a similar vein, this topic is still underrepresented in ELT research literature particularly in the area where the author lives, meaning the lack of adequate and appropriate awareness of the topic is widespread which may have affected how to go about establishing an effective teaching practice course. For example, as far as the author's knowledge is concerned, few research projects have recently looked into this topic mostly in areas other than the one under scrutiny

(Abdulrahman, 2019; Hamasaid and Saheb, 2020 & Brime & Amin 2020). The other investigations have been parts of larger studies (Haji, 2018, Vernez et al., 2014, Sofi-Karim, 2015). This study intends to research classroom experiences and challenges that student teachers faced throughout their school-based teaching practice in Duhok province.

In the context of KRI, all fourth-year student teachers of teacher education programs are required to undergo a 40-day teaching practice at schools. The student teachers from colleges of basic education are usually assigned to practice teaching in basic schools while those from colleges of education can choose to practice teaching in either secondary schools or basic ones. Notably, this research does not address TP and STs at high schools. During this period a supervisor from the university (US) and a cooperating teacher (CT) are assigned to supervise the student teacher. The US is supposed to visit the ST at the school twice during the 40-day period in order to track and evaluate his or her performance while practicing teaching in the classroom. This paper starts by giving some background information about the research context. It then goes on by referring to the previous relevant literature. The paper then presents the results followed by the discussion of the key findings. Finally, the researcher draws the research conclusions by presenting some main findings, recommendations and limitations of the study in light of the gained results.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is generally accepted that novice teachers, including student teachers, face several challenges when they begin teaching in real classroom settings. The importance of the TP course is unquestionable because of its huge contribution to the professional knowledge and development for STs. Because it permits him or her to acquire competencies that are best honed and enhanced through actual classroom teaching (Tuli, 2009). However, things do not seem to be as straightforward for them when confronted with reality of classroom teaching. This section provides an overview of the relevant literature on EFL classroom teaching and challenges associated with it. It specifically provides an account of the problems related to student teachers themselves, classroom students, textbooks and the classroom environment.

With the advancement of society, technology, and the economy, as well as the proliferation of knowledge, the traditional position of teachers as the exclusive providers of knowledge has been called into question (Liu, et al., 2015). To keep up with the constantly changing demands of today's classrooms, teachers must evolve into learning facilitators who are proficient in the use of a wide range of technologically advanced materials and resources (Darling-Hammond, 2006). For STs to get the most out of their TP course, it is important that they have a good pedagogical knowledge and preparation before starting classroom instruction. For example, Tuli and File (2009) theorize that the skills and knowledge that characterize teaching competence are formed through "knowing what to teach, how to teach it, and what methods to use with particular topics, particular kinds of students and in particular settings" (p.110). To this end, teacher preparation programs, they argue, should work towards improving student teachers' knowledge, skills, capabilities, and dispositions to equip them to teach successfully in 21st classrooms. In addition, they should be more practical-oriented in order to train language instructors on such matters as teaching methods, educational psychology, assessment, class management, and so on (Abdulrahman, 2019). In so doing, STs are likely to be more competent and capable of putting the theoretical knowledge acquired during university courses into practice while also assisting in creating a sense of the actual world of teaching (Canh, 2014; Farrell, 2001).

On the other hand, the TP course is distinguished by its supremacy in providing prospective teachers with abundant practical knowledge and many other teaching related advantages. Some of these advantages, for example, are practical knowledge, teaching methods, teaching skills, decision-making mechanisms (Hwang et al., 2004). Furthermore, it allows STs to "observe and work with real students, teachers, and curriculum in natural settings" and assist in discovering their ways of teaching and handling the pressures involved with teaching (Huling, 1998, p. 1 & Farrell, 2001). It also educates them in employing teaching aids, selecting and structuring learning activities, and applying remedial interventions to specified target learning goals (Murtaza, 2011).

The main aim of TP, according to Hobson et al. (2006), is to allow student teachers to gain experience in a classroom context and become

acquainted with how to handle a variety of issues that may arise. For many, TP is the time during which STs begin developing the values and capacities needed to thrive in the classroom (Darden et al. (2001), enhance their professional skills and subject knowledge as teachers (Smith and Lev-Ari, 2005). In a similar regard, Richard and Crookes (1988), cited a number of common and more detailed objectives that may guide teacher educators and student teachers during the course of TP. These include: 1) Allowing students to observe expert teachers teaching, 2) providing hands-on experience in the classroom, 3) putting theory courses into practice, 4) developing ST's lesson planning skills, 5) Providing feedback on classroom practices, 6) Gaining a better understanding of own teaching style, 7) Enhancing STs' capacity for material selection and adaptation, and 8) introducing STs to specific teaching techniques and strategies. Fulfilling these goals and objectives serves as the foundation for an effective and positive TP to which a successful transition into teaching is linked (Grudnoff, 2011). Accordingly, "The problem of low-quality teaching can be traced to inadequate and insufficient pre-employment training," (Ingersol et al., 2007, p. 1). Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2005) who are also in favour of this opinion, mentioned that inadequate field experience is one of the primary challenges in teacher preparation programs. This appears to represent the current educational situation, in general and the teaching of English as a second language in KRI in particular. In this regard, Sofi-Karim (2015) discovered that inadequate and unrealistic student teacher practice in actual classroom situations is a contributory factor to teachers' feelings of unpreparedness.

2. METHOD

3.1 Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the problems that student teachers face in English language classes during the school-based teaching practice. Specifically, the following classroom-related issues will be addressed: student teachers, classroom teachers, textbooks, and classroom environment.

3.2 The Participants

The participants of the study were fourth-year English language student teachers enrolled in English teacher education programs in four colleges of education and basic education in

Duhok province, Kurdistan region, Iraq. They attended a four-year undergraduate degree program leading to a bachelor degree in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). From the beginning of February to the end of March in the school year 2021-2022, they were all enrolled in a 40-day period of teaching practice. They were awarded a Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching (ELT) upon fulfillment of all program requirements and a passing grade of at least 50 percent on each individual module. The target population was divided over the four groups of participants depending on the type of college. The questionnaire was administered to the participants at the four colleges in the presence of the researcher and online. The sample was made up of more females who constituted (59%) and from younger age group (56%) and almost all of them were native speakers of the same first language (Kurdish).

3.3 The Instrument

Data of the present study were gathered by means of a structured questionnaire. The instrument was adapted from a pre-existing study conducted by Baudhan (2019) who provided a copy of the original questionnaire. A panel of jury members evaluated the instrument and approved it. The internal consistency was computed using Cronbach Alpha scoring (.70) The focus of the questionnaire was the problems student teachers face during teaching practice. For the purpose of this study, the four domains (student teachers, classroom students, textbooks, and classroom environment) relating to the STs' classroom teaching experiences and problems were considered. It featured both paper and online versions and consisted of 31 closed-ended items. From both the paper and the online questionnaires, a total of 132 completed responses were collected.

3.4 Data Analysis

The computation of the quantitative data was made by the means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. For each statement of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics were generated, and frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated. In order to mark the questionnaire's items, a 5-point Likert-scale was used from strongly disagree (1) - strongly agree (5). It was essential to utilize a 5-point Likert-scale to identify the respondents' points of view and to round up the numbers in order to determine the mean values. The following scheme shows how the groups' opinions are shown according to the

mean: from 0 - 1.81 = strongly disagree, 1.81 – 2.60 = disagree, 2.61 – 3.40 = neutral, 3.41 – 4.20 = agree, 4.21 – 5 = strongly agree.

3. FINDINGS

This section reports on the findings of the present study with reference to research questions regarding Kurdish EFL student teachers' classroom experiences and challenges associated with the STs themselves, the classroom students, textbooks, and the classroom

environment. All of the participants were student teachers in their last year of English language teacher education program at four colleges of education and basic education in Duhok province, Kurdistan region, Iraq.

4.1 Problems related to student teachers themselves

This subsection presents findings from the questionnaire. Table (1) below illustrates the statements and responses of the participants concerning problems related to themselves.

Table(1): frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation of the problems related to STs.

Item	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
4. I cannot control the class.	17	13%	22	17%	93	70%	3.87	1.03
7. I find difficulty in selecting suitable teaching techniques.	16	13%	22	17%	94	71%	3.73	0.90
10. I find difficulty in managing between lectures at the college and classroom teaching.	26	20%	17	13%	89	68%	3.45	0.89
6. I find difficulty in managing the time of the lesson.	45	34%	33	25%	54	41%	3.13	1.14
5. I feel that teaching is a very difficult task.	45	34%	42	32%	45	34%	2.98	1.13
12. I find difficulty in preparing my tests.	54	41%	31	23%	47	35%	2.85	1.09
11. I do not have time for preparing teaching aids.	74	56%	25	19%	33	25%	2.62	1.03
8. I find difficulty in following the lesson plan.	69	52%	32	24%	31	24%	2.61	1.16
2. I do not complete a detailed lesson plan for every class.	81	61%	17	13%	34	26%	2.44	1.28
1. I often teach without preparation.	94	71%	11	8%	27	20%	2.23	1.28
3. I do not clearly inform my students about the objectives at the beginning of the class.	102	77%	12	9%	18	14%	2.12	1.03
9. I find difficulty in helping students to understand the lesson.	101	76%	17	13%	14	11%	2.02	0.98

The table above illustrates STs' reflections on their own classroom-related teaching issues. It gives details about what and to what extent are individual classroom aspects problematic for the STs.

Most participants are confident of their classroom performance. The majority of the respondents (77%) are convinced that they clearly informed students of the lesson objectives at the beginning of the lesson and had no trouble helping the students understand the lesson (76%). Similarly, about two thirds of the participants argue that they did not teach without preparation (71%) while fewer, over half, were sure about completing a detailed lesson plan for every class, having no difficulty in following the lesson plan, and having time for preparing teaching aids (61%, 52%, 56% respectively). However, many participants acknowledge

having trouble with these aspects particularly those concerned with lesson planning and preparing teaching aids.

Conversely, the findings show that specific aspects of classroom teaching (items 4, 7, and 10) such as classroom management, selecting suitable teaching strategies, and balancing classroom instruction with college lectures were major concerns (M = 3.87, 3.73, and 3.45, respectively). Interestingly, the participants feel uncertain and do not agree about the difficulties of the teaching profession and writing tests (items: 5 and 12).

4.2 Problems related to the classroom students

The statements and responses of the participants regarding problems related to classroom students are shown in the table below (2).

Table (2): frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation of the problems related to classroom students

Item	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. The students study English for passing exams more than for learning the language.	12	9%	9	7%	111	84%	4.23	1.00
2. The students' English command is not good enough to enable them to understand the lessons.	13	10%	5	4%	114	87%	4.01	0.90
3. The students depend mostly on the teacher.	18	14%	5	4%	109	83%	3.91	1.04
4. The students have negative attitudes towards learning English.	28	37%	37	28%	58	44%	3.14	1.07
5. The students do not prepare at home.	60	46%	44	33%	28	21%	2.69	1.01

This table depicts the participants' perspectives on classroom challenges caused by classroom students. It can be seen that classroom students are viewed as major sources of difficulties for English language classrooms.

Three aspects are quite alarming. These include students' studying English for passing exams ($M = 4.23$), their low level of English proficiency ($M = 4.01$), and their overreliance on the teacher ($M = 3.91$). Holding negative attitudes by students is a less frequent ($M = 3.14$), but viable to be a significant issue for language classrooms. It could be concluded that the aforementioned findings reflect a significant aspect of the situation of the English

language education within the Kurdish milieu, despite the considerable attention and value attached to it by both the local community and government. These data show that there may be a causal link between the three elements. In other words, pupils' excessive dependence on teachers and placing more focus on passing exams than learning English may be seen as key indicators of their poor English command.

4.3 Problems related to textbooks

This subsection of the questionnaire includes statements and responses of the participants regarding problems related to textbooks as displayed in the table below (3).

Table (3): frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation of the problems related to textbooks

Item	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. It is difficult to finish the lesson contents within the specified time (40-45 minutes).	19	14%	16	12%	97	73%	3.90	1.13
2. They use out-of-date technology.	42	32%	45	34%	45	34%	3.06	.979
3. The content of the textbook is not related to the life of the students.	50	38%	37	28%	45	34%	2.91	1.09
4. They are in bad condition.	81	61%	22	17%	29	22%	2.55	1.11
5. The content of the textbook is above the students' language ability.	85	65%	25	19%	22	16%	2.42	0.97
6. The lessons include too many new words.	85	64%	20	15%	27	20%	2.42	1.06
7. Some students do not have textbooks due to a shortage of textbooks.	97	73%	20	15%	15	12%	2.05	1.00

Table 3 shows whether the English textbooks "Sunrise" were causing any problems for STs while teaching them in English language classrooms in KRI. It can be seen that most respondents did not see textbooks as a source of concern to their classes. For instance, the majority did not agree that textbooks were outdated, beyond the language proficiency of the students, had an excessive number of new

vocabularies, or were in shortage of supply (items: 4-7) despite the several supporting this position.

On the other hand, completing the lesson content (item: 1) with the specified time is the single prominent problem for STs with a mean of 3.90 while they remained undecided and divided on the using out of date technology and irrelevance of the textbooks' contents to the

students' life (items: 2 and 3) ($M= 3.06$; 2.91 respectively). What emerges from the results reported here is that there is inconsistency between the time allotted for each lesson and the quantity and variety of learning content of the lessons which usually leads to skipping important tasks and activities such as those associated with writing and speaking skills. The participants also seem to have been impressed by

the scarcity of technological resources and use in their classes because the only known technological tool included in English materials are CD-burned tapes of listening activities.

4.4 Problems related to the classroom environment

Table (4) below lists the findings of this subsection of the questionnaire regarding issues of the classroom environment.

Table (4): frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation of the problems related to classroom environment

Item	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1. The classroom is not suitable for doing different activities such as group work.	12	9%	6	5%	114	86%	4.09	0.90
2. The classroom environment is not comfortable.	9	7%	8	6%	115	87%	3.98	0.81
3. There is a shortage of teaching aids	11	8%	13	10%	108	82%	3.96	0.89
4. There are no clear classroom rules, expectations and consequences for managing students' behaviour.	15	11%	5	4%	112	85%	3.95	0.92
5. There is too much focus on grammar and vocabulary.	11	9%	19	14%	102	77%	3.95	0.99
6. The classroom is full of students.	29	22%	4	3%	99	75%	3.71	1.20
7. There is not enough lighting and the electricity switches off frequently.	44	33%	37	28%	51	38%	3.14	1.32

This table presents the results of the sources of classroom-related problems encountered by STs in English language classes. What stands out in the table is the overwhelming majority of the items listed in the table that participants were concerned about. The majority of those surveyed were in agreement that the classrooms were not suitable for group work ($M = 4.09$) and uncomfortable ($M = 3.98$), there was a shortage of teaching aids ($M = 3.96$), there were no explicit and concrete rules, expectations, and consequences for managing students' behaviour in the classroom ($M = 3.95$), grammar and vocabulary teaching is prioritized over other skills ($M = 3.95$), and the classrooms were very crowded ($M = 3.71$). A few participants sounded unconcerned with the first five statements, while more ($n=29$) said that their classes were not overcrowded.

There are different opinions about lighting and electricity. Although one-third of those responded to the survey said the situation of electricity and lighting was fine, more of them (38%) did not believe so, while others (28%) remained undecided.

These results demonstrate that English language teaching and learning is underdeveloped and turbulent, and that English

classrooms, regardless of the school type and grade level, may not be suitable venues indeed for offering and providing quality English language education.

4. DISCUSSION

The study's findings show that, despite their favourable perceptions on a number of classroom features, the STs reported encountering a multitude of challenges while practicing teaching in basic schools. The subsections that follow provide discussion of the results reported in the preceding section.

5.1 Problems resulting from the STs

The results suggested that the majority of participants thought they were competent to deal with many of the issues that pertained to them in the classroom. Lesson planning and preparation was one area where the participants felt they excelled. This outcome is contrary to that of Riesky (2013) and Johnson (2015) who found STs experiencing problems with preparing lessons. This is an expected result because lesson planning, regardless of its quality, is an obligatory thing a teacher must have before starting a class. Other findings showed what the STs had achieved during classroom teaching:

namely, informing students about the lesson objectives and helping them to understand the lesson. However, these results have not been previously described.

The results show that these participants do not deny experiencing difficulties in their classroom teaching despite the majority asserting that they were capable of properly handling the bulk of the classroom tasks assigned to them. The difficulty in balancing between college lectures and classroom teaching was a key and may be an anticipated finding. This finding corresponds with the findings of Liu, et al. (2015) who mentioned that the mismatch between university-based teaching and school-based learning creates additional obstacles, particularly for student teachers who come from cultures where teachers have historically served as masters, authorities, and superiors of knowledge, as is the situation in several Asian nations. The potential reason for this finding may include but not be limited to restrictions posed by bounded classroom teaching and learning environment at schools, insufficient guidance by their supervisors or mentors and lack of adequate knowledge on what techniques to select and how to use them.

The findings also revealed that selecting suitable teaching strategies was a widespread issue among STs during teaching practice. This finding is in line with that of Abdulrahman (2019) who noted that one of the issues STs faced in KRI classrooms was the lack of basic skills, methods, and strategies for teaching in the classroom. It is also in line with Moussaid and Zerhouni (2017) and Alamri's (2018) findings who concluded that insufficient knowledge of teaching methodology was arguably one of the most pressing issues encountering STs. Classroom control was also a prominent issue that STs were found to face during classroom instruction. This result match those observed in earlier studies (Al-Mahrooqi, 2011; Ababneh, 2012; Riesky, 2013; Gan, 2013; Ganal et al., 2016; Moussaid and Zerhouni, 2017 & Alamri, 2018). These results are a probable factor that left the STs powerless in selecting and using effective pedagogical strategies for the classroom instruction.

5.2 Problems resulting from classroom students

In this research, it was noticed that basic school students were a key source of problems for STs in the classroom. The most evident finding from the data is that in

English language classes passing exams is prioritized and favoured over learning the language. This result corroborates the ideas of Omer (2020), who suggested that some students study English to pass the exams. Another important finding is that the students' English proficiency is so low that they cannot understand the lessons when conducted in English. This finding is consistent with that of Sofi-Karim (2015) who attributed the low level of English education in the KRI context to the students' poor language level of the language and overcrowded classrooms. Several factors could explain this observation including the overemphasis on accuracy skills at the cost of proficiency abilities, the overuse of native language in lessons, the dearth of language labs and technology resources, and maybe the lack of student motivation in learning the language.

Students' undue reliance on their teachers was also widely seen as a negative factor in English classrooms posing an extra strain on teachers and reducing students' chances of becoming creative, critical thinkers, and independent learners in Kurdish classroom context. This finding was also reported by Omer & Jukil (2019) and Abdulrahman (2019) who argued that despite Sunrise program's communicative orientation, traditional teaching approaches are favored in English instruction in KRI. It also agrees with Sofi-Karim's (2015) findings who found that the students' overreliance on teachers is a longstanding issue particularly in language classrooms in KRI. Though recognized by fewer people to be a concern for classroom teaching, students' poor attitudes towards English learning may nevertheless still be a significant factor of many classroom difficulties. This result is in accord with recent studies indicating that students showed little enthusiasm for learning English (Yunus et al., 2010).

5.3 Problems resulting from textbooks

One of the aims of this study was to find out if English textbooks (Sunrise) contributed negatively to the classroom instruction during TP. The only problem that the majority of the student teachers reported to have, was the difficulty of covering the lesson topic within the allotted time frame. This corresponds to the finding of Omer (2020) who suggested that the insufficient time allotted to teaching English at schools in Kurdistan is the source of the problem with English competency. This was also found by Hassan and Ghaphor (2014). Unfortunately, this does not only represent a widespread issue

but also a real dilemma in English language teaching in the Kurdish context because proficiency-related skills are usually marginalized and abandoned from teaching plans. This is likely related to how inadequate the school year and class time are in comparison to the amount of content, activities, and tasks that are contained within a textbook.

However, although there were few who were unhappy with the condition and appropriateness of the textbooks' contents, many of them seemed to be aware of the problems with the technology utilized in the textbooks and the relevance of its contents to students' life.

5.4 Problems resulting from classroom environment

The final question in this research sought to elicit STs' perspectives on the experiences and challenges posed by the classroom environment. The results show that the classroom environment is one of the primary sources of problems affecting STs English language classrooms. A comfortable learning environment, which is of great importance in promoting learners' level and interest, seemed to be missing in the majority of the classrooms. This result is related to and could be the result of any or all of the other findings of this study, the most notable of which are: failure to use teaching aids; failure to teach and balance between all language skills; failure to establish classroom rules and behavior expectations; overcrowded classes; unsuitable classrooms for a variety of activities; and, less frequently, failure to address lighting and electricity problems in many classrooms. These results are in line with those of previous studies. Several of these findings are in line with those of Kawthar et al. (2016), who found similar problems with the Kurdish English curriculum and teaching, such as overcrowded classrooms, a lack of audio equipment, inadequate cooling and heating systems, and overreliance on the grammar-translation method at the expense of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach and the inability to finish teaching plans due to time constraints. Previous research by Brime and Amin (2020) indicated that the emphasis of teaching was on grammar and forms while functions and meaning were avoided, and the predominance of conventional teaching methods which is consistent with the current findings. These results reflect those of Sariçoban (2010) who also found similar relevant challenges some of which are lack of teaching aids and resources,

pair and group work activities, overcrowding in classes, heating, and lighting. This suggests that classroom environment has been a highly problematic factor in the way of a successful classroom instruction.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of this paper was to investigate the STs' classroom teaching experiences and challenges during their school-based teaching practice. The study sought to investigate four potential areas of problems pertaining to student teachers, textbooks, classroom students, and classroom environment. Among the most important conclusions of this study are the following: first, problems that are pertained to student teachers including classroom management, selecting suitable teaching techniques and balancing between theory and practice; second, challenges that are brought up by school students such as studying the language for passing exams in the expense of learning, poor English proficiency and overreliance on teachers third, difficulties that are associated with textbooks namely the challenge of completing the course material in the time frame given and; finally, issues that are related to the classroom environment encompassing unsuitable classrooms for group work, uncomfortable classrooms, the lack of teaching aids and classroom rules and expectations, overemphasis on grammar and vocabulary and oversized classes.

The evidence from this study points to the possibility that in this situation, the teaching practice course is undervalued and overlooked by the education stakeholders in KRI. The study implies that college courses were not sufficiently useful and practical for classroom instruction. It is also implied that the classroom environment is a key issue for language classes hence it requires a great deal of attention. The study contributes to our understanding of STs' challenges in language classes. The insights gained from this study may be of assistance to TP leaders to base their mentoring and supervision plans accordingly.

The findings in this study are subject to certain limitations due to focusing only on student teachers and one data collection tool, which limits the generalizability of the findings. This study has highlighted several questions that need more exploration. Further research using classroom observations and/or in-depth

interviews is required to better understand the student teachers' classroom behavior and instructional practices. Further research into classroom experiences and problems of in-service teachers may be required to assess the generalizability and relevance of these findings to English classroom settings. Another possible area of future research is to investigate the perceptions of university supervisors and cooperating teachers about the teaching practice experiences and problems. Therefore, to ensure a high-quality TP and the production of trained future English language instructors, policymakers and education stakeholders should reconsider the course and pay it a greater attention. It is also advised that teacher training colleges include more teaching-related topics and practice into their curricula.

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