

English Instruction Difficulties Perceived by Teachers in EFL Classrooms  
at the University Level in Thailand

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**Abstract**

Although ELT development has been in progress for decades, a very low level of Thai English language competency in the previous year reflects the quality of ELT in Thailand and several problems with teaching have been constantly reported. This study inductively investigates instructional difficulties relating to teaching materials, classroom management, teachers, and students experienced by Thai EFL teachers in classroom practice. The samples obtained from purposive sampling included 112 teachers in the top 50 universities in Thailand. A set of questionnaires validated by three experts ( $\alpha$  0.94) were used to collect quantitative data followed by conducting interviews provided by six volunteer teachers to obtain qualitative data. Descriptive statistics, along with qualitative data, were used for data analysis. The quantitative results found that the most considerable difficulties perceived by Thai EFL teachers were the students with low English proficiency ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ); classroom management, using L1 in class, organizing language activities ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ); teachers, dealing with difficulties stimulating students to learn, structuring suitable lessons, and monitoring student performances ( $\bar{x} = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ); and teaching materials ( $\bar{x} = 2.14$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), respectively. Additionally, the qualitative results were consistent with the quantitative results. As for development for classroom practice, the professional development and teacher training regarding instructional techniques, strategies, and classroom management were highlighted.

**Keywords:** instructional difficulties, professional development, classroom practice, EFL teachers

## Introduction

English is considered one of the most important languages that play a significant role in the world economy, but also education since it is used as a major medium for communication for various purposes (Methitham & Chamcharatsri, 2011). It is, therefore, one of the most popular subjects added to the curriculum in worldwide educational institutions, especially in non-native English-speaking countries learning and teaching as a foreign language (EFL). People with good English skills could gain more opportunities not only in education, career advantages, cultural and social exchanges, but also in receiving and handling information about world situations (Intarapanich, 2012; Suwannatrai, 2018). As a result, the English language teaching (ELT) has been continuously developed for decades (e.g., the traditional methods such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA), and the Eclectic Method, which combines multiple methods adopted for teaching in classrooms depending on the course objectives) (Iskan, 2017). However, several EFL countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, still encounter undesirable ELT outcomes, as expected (Akbari, 2015; Hasanah & Tri Utami, 2019; Songbatumis, 2017; Tabatabaei & Pourakbari, 2012). Thailand is no exception.

English language teaching in Thailand is claimed that the English courses are designed with the emphasis on the learner-centered classroom of CLT based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), focusing on communication, culture, relationships with multiple areas, and the world (Ministry of Education, 2012). Therefore, a variety of teaching approaches have been found in classrooms in the Thailand context. However, teachers have been confronted with considerable difficulties of ELT in implementing English language policy and methods of teaching English in EFL classrooms. Additionally, perceived problems would include English policy in educational institutions, teacher qualifications, learners or environments that are not conducive to learning English, classroom management, and learning materials, which could cause undesirable outcomes for English education in Thailand, primary and secondary education (Noom-ura, 2013). The results of several studies revealed that Thai learners were incapable of using all four English language skills to communicate effectively (Aumpimai, 2018; Noom-ura, 2013). Furthermore, the Education First English Proficiency Index (2021) reported that Thai English language competency is ranked 100th in the world, 22nd in Asia, and eighth in the ASEAN community after Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Cambodia, with an average score of 419, indicating “very low proficiency”.

As far as English is concerned, English teaching and learning are still moving forward. Regardless of the implementation of English language policy and educational institutional policy, the teacher is considered one of the most important factors that play a significant role in classrooms. Therefore, it is a challenge for teachers to build and use their classroom practice, based on previous teaching experiences, perceptions, and skills to handle difficulties they have encountered, including choosing appropriate teaching methods, creating a classroom environment conducive to learning and teaching, dealing with students, and selecting appropriate teaching materials (Freeman & Richards, 1993). Although previous studies have explored the broad problems of teaching and learning in Thailand to my knowledge and little research on the difficulties faced by teachers in EFL classrooms has been conducted. This study, therefore, makes an attempt to understand the difficulties perceived by EFL teachers at the university level in Thailand. Furthermore, the reflections of how to deal with difficulties in classrooms proposed by teachers are examined. The results of this study could be useful to raise the awareness of teachers and providing some helpful guidelines to cope with potential difficulties that may occur in EFL classrooms in Thailand more effectively.

### **Purposes of the study**

This study was conducted to investigate English instructional difficulties perceived by the teachers and examines the feasible guidelines proposed by EFL teachers to handle difficulties in EFL classrooms at the university level in Thailand.

### **Literature Review**

English language teaching has been continuously developed from traditional methods to modern methods and approaches that emphasize students to develop effective communication skills in language, culture, and the global community. However, it is undeniable that the countries where English is taught as a foreign language, still have problems in teaching English which vary according to the contexts.

### ***Perceived Difficulties in EFL classrooms***

**Teaching and Learning Materials.** Materials for learning a foreign language are essential since they allow students to learn and develop language skills in a very limited condition in classrooms at the university. The authentic materials and media should be provided by the teacher to facilitate the language learning process of the students. The more effective students could learn the language from

authentic materials, the more effective the language learning ( Son, 2001; Suwannatrai & Thumawongsa, 2019). However, in EFL contexts, the teacher often has difficulties preparing appropriate materials for all students with different backgrounds and language proficiency. Although teachers realize the importance of authentic materials, some teachers encountered the problem of the limited availability of learning resources, which is a barrier to language learning (Songbatumis, 2017).

**Classroom Management in EFL contexts.** Classroom management is considered one of the essential keys of success in learning a foreign language, in which desirable outcomes depends on how teachers are able to apply and integrate knowledge and skills to create a learning environment conducive to effective teaching in EFL classrooms (Irawati & Listyani, 2020; Macias & Sanchez, 2015). Difficulties in classroom management included common factors, such as large classroom size, low student motivation and language proficiency, or even traditional methods of teaching and examination used in the classroom. Hasanah and Tri Utami (2019) noted that EFL contexts often faced problems with classrooms that are too large to effectively manage classroom practice or learning activities. In fact, an appropriate classroom size for teaching four English skills should approximately consist of 20 students (Hayes, 1997). It is quite difficult to manage a large classroom effectively. The teacher needs to be strategically trained and have the patience to handle student behaviors, such as a lack of motivation, a low level of English language proficiency, or negative attitudes in the classroom (Hayes, 1997; Irawati & Listyani, 2020). Therefore, it is a challenge for teachers to decide on an appropriate strategy to effectively organize a variety of teaching activities, because each teacher's decision affects effective teaching (Macias & Sanchez, 2015).

**Difficulties Relating to Teachers.** One of the most considerable problems is teacher quality. The teacher is regarded as one of the most important keys to success in teaching English, which plays a significant role in decision-making about what to do in the classroom. A qualified and well-trained teacher who fully understands the nature of teaching methods and strategies for transferring knowledge and skills could be able to optimize teaching and learning in the EFL context. Several studies revealed that the teachers who lacked effective training were unable to apply appropriate teaching methods and strategies in the classroom (Akbari, 2015; Fareh, 2010; Tabatabaei & Pourakbari, 2012). As a result, most EFL classrooms were teacher-centered where teachers taught all information in the lessons to students while students are listeners and followers (Akbari, 2015; Fareh, 2010; Noom-ura, 2013). Additionally, the learning lessons and activities put emphasis on grammar, reading, memorizing words

or sentence patterns rather than communicative skills. For example, English classrooms in India were found to use old-fashioned Grammar Translation, where teachers with insufficient training limited the opportunities for students for four skills practice and allowed students to follow instructions by using L1 (Tabatabaei & Pourakbari, 2012). Consequently, EFL classrooms taught by unqualified teachers who did not understand how to transfer English knowledge and language skills became unmotivated, resulting in unpreferable results and one major point was relevant to the low English proficiency of teachers. Previous research found that the teachers with inadequate English proficiency encountered difficulties in teaching speaking and listening. (Aumpimai, 2018; Songbatumis, 2017; Sulistiyo, 2016). Furthermore, they mostly use their mother language in classrooms. It is essential that the teacher should be a role model for effective teaching and learning. The teacher, therefore, needs to receive professional development to gain new knowledge and skills of modern teaching methods in accordance with teaching objectives to facilitate teaching processes, and learn teaching strategies to transfer all four language skills to students, including the ability to manage classrooms, teaching technology, and teaching activities (Aumpimai, 2018; Debyasuvarn, 2011).

**Difficulties Relating to Students.** One of the common problems that affect effective teaching and learning in EFL contexts are students with low English proficiency. For example, Hussein and Elttayef (2017) experienced those students with insufficient vocabularies in Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia were unable to use English for communication effectively while studying at the university level. Similarly, several studies (Noom-ura, 2013; Panich, 2016) found that Thai students enrolling in English fundamental courses at the university level, but could not communicate with native teachers in classrooms. Therefore, teachers had difficulty preparing the lessons appropriate for students. In addition to low English proficiency, it was found that EFL students lacked motivation in learning English since they learned English without a clear goal. Students spent time reading, writing, or even memorizing language structures and grammar rules that were assigned by a non-native teacher in the classroom and only needed to pass examinations (Noom-ura, 2013). Furthermore, one of the major reasons why students are discouraged from learning English is the limitations of environments conducive to learning. The EFL students primarily study in the classroom without exposure to the language practice in real-life communication with native speakers or people who speak English (Akbari, 2015; Khan, 2011; Noom-ura, 2013). As a result, when they come to using English, they are worried and lack confidence in communication. Therefore, this could bring students to be under stress and anxiety leading to negative

attitudes towards English that make students less aware of the importance of learning English (Hasanah & Tri Utami, 2019).

## **Research Methodology**

This present study collects quantitative data supported by qualitative data to provide comprehensive information and rigorous data analysis.

**Participants.** This research employed purposive sampling for data gathering based on the heterogeneity of the sample under the research objectives. The samples included 112 Thai EFL teachers in the top 50 universities ranked by [webometrics.info](http://webometrics.info) (2021), receiving at least a master's degree in English, English Teaching (ELT), English Studies, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), Linguistics/Applied Linguistics, or other relevant fields.

### ***Instrumentation***

**Questionnaire.** A set of questionnaires relevant to the inquiry of difficulties encountered by the teachers in EFL classrooms including teaching materials, classroom management, the teacher, and the students, were developed from reviewing documents and related research, and designed in the questions designed in five-point Likert-type scales ranging from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree. A draft version was validated by three experts to check whether or not the questions were consistent with the research objectives. There were 35 questions with IOC scoring 0.60 – 1.00 and were considered congruent with the research requirements. Finally, a pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted to test their reliability with 30 samples having homogenous characteristics and a value of the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of this research was .94.

**Semi-structured interview.** The interview questions were approved by three experts was used to gather qualitative data related to the difficulties they encountered and how the teacher handled those difficulties. The validity and reliability of the present study employed four principles, creditability, transferability, dependability, and conformability proposed by (Cohen et al., 2018) to confirm data trustworthiness. There were six Thai EFL teachers from public autonomous universities and non-public autonomous universities voluntarily participated in in-depth interview.

**Data Analysis.** The quantitative data obtained were analyzed by using descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The interpretation of means that was used to

summarize the results was adopted from Srisa-ard (2002) as follows: 4.51–5.00 = Strongly agree, 3.51–4.50 = Agree, 2.51–3.50 = Uncertain, 1.51–2.50 = Disagree, and 1.00–1.50 = Strongly disagree. As for qualitative analysis, data obtained from the interviews were transcribed and analyzed by using the typological, synthetic, summary, and descriptive analysis. The data were descriptively reported according to perceived difficulties relevant to four areas including teaching materials, classroom management, teachers, and students proposed by Richards and Lockhart (1996).

## Results

This section presents the results of the study including general information of the respondents, difficulties perceived by teachers, and guidelines for handling instructional difficulties in EFL classroom.

### 1. General Information of Respondents (N = 112).

Most of the respondents held a Master's degree (93.8 %) and a doctoral degree (6.3%), with an average of 13 years of teaching experience at university, majoring in English (37.5 %), ELT (25.0%), TESOL/TEFL (12.5%), English and Communication (6.3%), Linguistics (6.3%), Language and Communication (6.3%), and English Language and Literature (6.3%), respectively. A majority of respondents viewed that their English proficiency was at an intermediate level (93.8%) and basic level (6.3%).

### 2. Difficulties Perceived by Teachers in EFL Classrooms at the University Level in Thailand

**Table 2.1. Teaching Materials.**

No	Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
1	I have difficulty choosing authentic materials.	1.94	0.90	Strongly disagree
2	The classroom lacks teaching aids (projector, computer, audio system).	2.25	0.97	Disagree
3	The contents of the textbooks are outdated by not covering the four essential skills.	2.25	1.15	Disagree
Total		2.14	1.00	Disagree

As shown in Table 2.1, a total mean score was at a level of disagree ( $\bar{x} = 2.14$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), indicating that teachers had no difficulty selecting the teaching authentic materials ( $\bar{x} = 1.94$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ), textbooks ( $\bar{x} = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), and using teaching aids ( $\bar{x} = 2.25$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ). All informants agreed that teaching materials included textbooks, authentic material, and new modern technologies for teaching were available in the classroom.

**Table 2.2. Classroom Management.**

No	Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
1	Students use their mother language in the classroom.	4.75	0.43	Strongly agree
2	There is a large number of students in my classroom.	4.19	1.01	Agree
3	I have difficulty increasing student participation in class.	3.63	1.37	Agree
4	I have difficulty organizing group activities.	3.50	1.28	Uncertain
5	The classroom environment is not conducive to language teaching and learning.	3.44	1.27	Uncertain
6	I have difficulty managing time for classroom activities.	3.13	1.27	Uncertain
7	I have difficulty increasing rapport with students.	2.50	1.17	Disagree
8	I have difficulty managing the classroom rules.	2.31	1.49	Disagree
Total		3.43	1.16	Uncertain

Table 2.2 showed that the difficulty with classroom management was uncertain ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ), indicating that teachers were likely to have difficulty managing the classroom. Considered separately, the three aspects with the highest mean that teachers showed agreement with were the use of mother language ( $\bar{x} = 4.75$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ), a large classroom size ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ), and difficulty motivating students' participation ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ). The teachers disagreed that they had difficulty with classroom rules ( $\bar{x} = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ) and creating rapport with students ( $\bar{x} = 2.50$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ). The in-depth interviews revealed that a large class caused difficulty in classroom management. It was difficult to organize classroom activities requiring language skills practice, student performances, and participation. For instance, an ELT teacher at a university in the north of Thailand said, "Well, I found it difficult to organize a language learning activity in a classroom with many students. Normally, a suitable classroom size for language teaching should be around 20 students... what's more, students' English proficiency varies, the classroom management is even tougher....many students cannot speak English; therefore, they use the Thai language instead of using English in classrooms."

**Table 2.3. Teachers.**

No	Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
1	I have difficulty encouraging students to learn English.	3.56	0.93	Agree
2	I have difficulty planning and structuring the learning environment so that students cooperate to obtain learning goals.	3.44	1.06	Uncertain
3	I have difficulty stimulating interactive language use through group work.	3.44	1.12	Uncertain



4	I have difficulty checking the students' understanding of the lesson.	3.31	1.36	Uncertain
5	I have difficulty coordinating group activities (providing clarification, feedback).	3.25	1.30	Uncertain
6	I have difficulty organizing suitable language learning activities for students.	3.00	1.23	Uncertain
7	I have difficulty providing feedback on students' language performance.	2.94	1.25	Uncertain
8	I have difficulty communicating with students in English.	2.69	1.31	Uncertain
9	I have difficulty modeling the English language and monitoring student performances.	2.56	1.41	Uncertain
10	I have difficulty using instructional techniques in the classroom.	2.38	0.93	Disagree
11	I have difficulty preparing appropriate lessons.	2.38	1.11	Disagree
12	I have difficulty applying instructional methods for lessons.	2.19	0.95	Disagree
13	I have difficulty presenting lessons.	1.94	0.90	Disagree
14	I have difficulty using teaching technology (projector, digital devices).	1.75	0.90	Disagree
Total		2.37	1.12	Disagree

A total mean presented in Table 2.3 showed a level of disagreement ( $\bar{x} = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ), indicating the teachers perceived a low level of difficulty in teaching. Considering each aspect separately, the teachers agreed that they encountered difficulty motivating students to learn English ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 0.93$ ). The most statements showed a level of uncertainty (2–9). Considerably, the teachers disagreed with difficulties relevant to technological literacy ( $\bar{x} = 1.75$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ , the lesson presentation ( $\bar{x} = 1.94$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ), the instructional methods applied for the lessons ( $\bar{x} = 2.19$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ), the lesson preparation ( $\bar{x} = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 0.11$ , and the instructional techniques used in the classroom ( $\bar{x} = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 0.93$ ), indicating that the teachers had no difficulty with these five aspects.

The interview revealed that most teachers found it difficult to encourage students to focus on the English language because of the differences in students' knowledge background. Therefore, it was difficult to organize the group or individual works and activities, give feedback on their language performance. For example, a teacher specializing in linguistics informed, *“Personally, I don't think that I have difficulty teaching in a classroom. However, I teach English as usual, but there are many students with different backgrounds; it is difficult when I have students work in groups or pairs such as presenting in front of the class, doing role-plays, giving feedback, or monitoring their performance individually.”*

**Table 2.4. Students.**

No	Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation
1	Students have a problem with speaking.	4.19	1.07	Agree
2	Students have a problem with listening.	4.06	1.14	Agree
3	Students always depend on the teacher to explain everything in class.	3.94	1.20	Agree
4	Students have a problem with writing (sentences, paragraphs, essay).	3.88	0.93	Agree
5	Students have a problem with practicing English pronunciation.	3.88	1.05	Agree
6	Students have difficulty presenting the task in front of the class.	3.75	1.09	Agree
7	Students have a problem with grammatical structures.	3.63	0.99	Agree
8	Students lack the motivation to participate in classroom activities.	3.63	1.37	Agree
9	Students have a problem with reading comprehension.	3.56	1.00	Agree
10	Students have a problem with learning vocabulary.	3.50	1.37	Uncertain
Total		3.80	1.12	Agree

Table 2.4 showed a level of agreement on difficulties related to the students encountered by the teachers in the EFL classroom ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ). The teacher's perceptions revealed that the students had problems with speaking ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ) and listening ( $\bar{x} = 4.06$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ), and depending on teachers ( $\bar{x} = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ); whereas the three aspects with the lowest mean included the problems with learning vocabulary ( $\bar{x} = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 1.370$ ), reading comprehension ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), and learning grammar structures were less problematic. Similarly, the information from the in-depth interviews provided by teachers was consistent with the quantitative data. The differences in English knowledge background not only language skills but also motivation in learning, were considered an important problem for language teaching. Effective teaching should be co-operated with both teachers and students. For example, an ELT teacher said, *"Actually, I know how to teach, but as I have experienced, students are not very good at English. They cannot speak, are unable to understand English. Some students have difficulty reading aloud. Therefore, my teaching approach changes all the time according to the situations. I have to figure out how to teach as efficiently as possible, which is very difficult."*

In conclusion, the difficulties perceived by teachers in EFL classrooms at the university level, included difficulties related to students ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ), classroom management ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ), teachers ( $\bar{x} = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ), and teaching materials ( $\bar{x} = 2.14$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), respectively.

### ***3. Guidelines for handling instructional difficulties in EFL classroom proposed by teachers***

The data from the in-depth interviews provided by six informants that responded to the question of how to improve and develop classroom practice in learning and teaching English in the Thai EFL context were analyzed and summarized descriptively.

1. The teachers should provide more authentic teaching materials to supplement the lessons and make lessons more interesting by integrating web-assisted language teaching and learning or other supportive applications providing meaningful exercises for communicative language learning.

2. The more effective the classroom management, the more teachers are required to have self-development regularly. The relevant departments should encourage professional development for the teachers to be more innovative. Furthermore, it is essential to provide a more supportive environments in the classroom. The teachers should receive training not only on how to cope with a large classroom size but also on learning teaching strategies and language activities applicable for the Thai EFL classroom.

3. The teacher is considered an important key for effective language learning. They must be qualified and well-trained and have desirable language proficiency and competency in all four language skills to be a good model for language learning and motivate students to be more eager to learn English.

### **Conclusion**

This study primarily examines difficulties perceived by the teachers in EFL classrooms at the university level in the Thailand context. The quantitative results found that the remarkable difficulties encountered by Thai EFL teachers at the university level included the aspects of students with low English language skills followed by classroom management, dealing with a large classroom size, increasing student participation, organizing learning activities, teachers, and teaching materials respectively, while the qualitative findings revealed that teacher preparation programs and intensive teacher training or professional developments were required to improve their teaching skills and competency to effectively handle difficulties in EFL classrooms.

## Discussion

1. Teaching materials. It was found that the teachers perceived that they did not encounter difficulties concerning teaching materials. However, teachers should provide additional and meaningful learning materials from up-to-date language learning resources, including language teaching applications, the internet, or web-assisted language learning, consisting of various types of multimedia, text, audio, and video clips. This can support student learning opportunities and also enhance their learning motivation significantly (Son, 2001; Suwannatrai & Thumawongsa, 2019).

2. Classroom management. The study revealed that the teachers were likely to encounter difficulties managing the EFL classroom. The common difficulties were found in data analysis, including the use of a mother language, large classroom sizes, and difficulty increasing and motivating student participation. The results agreed with the previous studies conducted by Hayes (1997) and Irawati and Listyani (2020), explaining that a classroom with students with low motivation caused difficulties in teaching in most EFL classrooms. Therefore, to maintain the classroom environment and teaching dynamics, it challenged the idea that teachers discovered suitable and applicable strategies to handle these difficulties. The feasible guidelines presented were professional development and teacher training (Macias & Sanchez, 2015; Noom-ura, 2013).

3. Teachers. According to the findings, it was found that teachers were likely to have difficulties dealing with students and how to stimulate and encourage students to learn English by structuring suitable lessons including monitoring student performances. As learning and teaching in EFL classrooms, teachers should be qualified with sufficient training and have special teaching strategies and techniques to handling with difficulties encountered in the classroom (Debyasuvarn, 2011; Songbatumis, 2017).

4. Students. The results showed that the considerable difficulty perceived by teachers in EFL classrooms involved students with low English language skills which could result in an undesirable outcome. Furthermore, the students learned English in an environment with opportunities limited to be exposed to the actual contexts. As a result, the students not only felt demotivated in learning English, but also lack confidence in using English. However, teachers should realize that students with low English proficiency might expect capable and skillful teachers with outstanding teaching techniques or strategies to help them improve their English language skills (Debyasuvarn, 2011; Noom-ura, 2013).

## **Suggestion for classroom practice**

As far as ELT and EFL is concerned, the responsibilities of teachers are to implement all essential knowledge and skills in classrooms. Before deciding what instructional methods and material to be utilized, it is a must for teachers to have a clear understanding of the course objectives and descriptions before lesson plan organization. A set of questionnaires inquiring about basic information should be conducted to spotlight their learning expectations, learning styles, and preferences which help teachers construct a more effective plan. The pretest and posttest should be administered to capture student background knowledge and highlight their learning progress. As for the teachers, it is necessary to observe teaching processes, write teaching journals concerning problems, difficulties and solutions, including self-evaluation, and allow students to evaluate teachers to detail strengths and weaknesses to be improved for better performance.

## **New knowledge**

Since English language teaching has been being tremendously and continuously developed, various problems and difficulties concerning classroom practice is inevitable, particularly in the EFL context. This study inductively presents the results. Therefore, teachers with a positive attitude towards language teaching, who play a very important role in implementing instructional methods in the classroom, are considered important. The results reflect the perceptions of teachers towards English instructional difficulties as a challenge and implies that professional development in terms of teacher training, is essential for language teaching. The training process allows teachers to gain more necessary and transferable skills in order to be capable of dealing with problems and difficulties systematically. A qualified teacher who is well trained learns strengths and weaknesses from previous experiences and conceptualizes the most suitable instructional method – knowledge transfer strategies and techniques – for individual classrooms.

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