

ทัศนคติต่อการฝึกสอนของครูฝึกสอนชาวไทย ที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ

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บทคัดย่อ

การฝึกการเป็นครูเป็นข้อบังคับในการศึกษาของครู ซึ่งครูฝึกสอนจะต้องปฏิบัติ การสอนในโรงเรียนจริง วิจัยเรื่องนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจทัศนคติของนักศึกษาใน การฝึกการเป็นครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษชาวไทยที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ และปัญหาที่เกิดจากการฝึกสอนนั้น ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเป็นแบบผสมผสานโดยมีการเก็บข้อมูล เชิงปริมาณด้วยวิธีการสุ่มแบบเจาะจงจากกลุ่มประชากรนักศึกษาที่ได้ออกฝึกสอน อย่างน้อยหนึ่งภาคการศึกษาจำนวน 104 คน และมีนักศึกษาอาสาสมัครจำนวน 70 คน ที่ตอบกลับแบบสอบถาม (ร้อยละ 72.8) และมีการเก็บข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพจากการ สัมภาษณ์ถึงโครงสร้างจากนักศึกษาอาสาสมัครจำนวน 16 คน (ร้อยละ 15.4) ผลการวิจัย พบว่านักศึกษาแสดงความคิดเห็นทั้งเชิงบวกและเชิงลบต่อการฝึกสอน โดยนักศึกษา ฝึกสอนมีทัศนคติเชิงบวกสูงสุดสองด้านคือ ด้านความสัมพันธ์กับผู้อื่น (ร้อยละ 87.45) และด้านโรงเรียนและหลักสูตร (ร้อยละ 85.10) อาทิเช่น ด้านความสัมพันธ์กับครูพี่เลี้ยง ด้านการจัดการของครูพี่เลี้ยง และด้านการนิเทศโรงเรียน นักศึกษาฝึกสอนรับรู้ ด้านเหล่านี้สูงอาจเนื่องมาจากการถูกบ่มเพาะทักษะระหว่างบุคคลและทักษะการปรับตัว ก่อนการออกฝึกสอน และยังพบว่านักศึกษาฝึกสอนมีทัศนคติต่ำสุดในสองแง่มุม คือด้านต่อตนเอง (ร้อยละ 76.31) และด้านประสิทธิภาพในการสอนของตนเอง (ร้อยละ 72.20) อาทิเช่น ความพร้อม ความมั่นใจ และประเด็นเกี่ยวกับการสอนอื่น นักศึกษาฝึกสอนรับรู้ด้านเหล่านี้ค่อนข้างต่ำอาจเนื่องมาจากความสามารถทางภาษาอังกฤษ ไม่เพียงพอ ความรู้วิชาภาษาอังกฤษและการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษจริงตามที่กำหนดไว้ใน

หลักสูตรไม่เพียงพอ รวมถึงการขาดความพร้อมในการรับมือภาระงานเกินพิกัดของครู และการเกิดโรคระบาดที่ไม่คาดคิดทำให้การฝึกสอนเปลี่ยนไปอย่างสิ้นเชิง

คำสำคัญ ; ครูฝึกสอน, ทักษะคตินักศึกษา, การฝึกการเป็นครู, การสอนภาษาอังกฤษ, การศึกษาของครู

Thai EFL Trainee Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Training

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Abstract

Teacher training is a compulsory requirement in teacher education, in which trainee teachers are obliged to perform teaching in actual schools. The current study aims to investigate the Thai EFL trainee teachers' perceptions of teacher training as well as any problems that may have occurred. A mixed-methods approach and purposive sampling were used to collect quantitative data from participants who had completed at least one semester of teacher training. The questionnaire was completed by 70 people out of a total of 104, accounting for 72.8 percent of the total. In addition, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 16 individuals, accounting for 15.4% of the total. The results showed that participants expressed both positive and negative perceptions of teacher training. The participants highly perceived positive attitudes in two main areas: the aspect of their relationships with others (87.45%) and the aspect of the school and program (85.10%), such as their relationship with mentor teachers, mentor teachers' administration, and school supervision. It is highly perceived due to interpersonal skills and adaptability being nurtured before teacher training took place. It is also found that participants show low perception towards two main aspects: the aspect of trainee teachers themselves (76.31%) and the aspect of their teaching performance (72.20%), such as their readiness, confidence, and teaching matters. It is poorly perceived due to the inadequate English language

proficiency, insufficient knowledge of English subjects and exposure provided in the curriculum, the unreadiness of the overloading tasks of teachers, and the unexpected pandemic affecting teacher training entirely.

Keywords ; Trainee Teacher, Students' Perceptions, Teacher Training, English Language Teaching, Teacher Education

Introduction

In Thailand, there are critical steps to becoming a licensed teacher, which is the Faculty of Education's main mission. Originally, the program required the undergraduate students to complete all coursework and perform teacher training in an actual school. Then they will be eligible to obtain the official teacher's license. According to the curriculum B.E. 2560 of the Faculty of Education (Chaiyaphum Rajabhat University, 2019), the students were required to complete coursework for four years and to perform the teacher training for one more year. During the teacher training in the school, the trainee teachers' advisors will provide school supervision for each student from time to time in order to ensure their efficiency, effectiveness, performance, and behavior while in the training.

During teacher training, trainee teachers may face unexpected problems and obstacles, leading to difficulties in performing the teaching job. One research study investigated the English language teaching professional experience of the trainee teacher in three aspects, namely an aspect of trainee teachers, an aspect of students of the trainee teachers, and an aspect of the target school (Mahawiro, 2018). Another research study explores pre-service teachers' teaching of Chinese in three aspects, such as aspects of performance, teaching and learning preparation, and relationships with school administrators (Jaturanon et al., 2019). Apart from teacher training in the field of language teaching, teacher training is also part of the Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession program as well. The problems of teaching profession training are also observed. Khakhai et al. (2019) studied the problems of the students in the teaching profession program in four aspects which are an aspect of teaching and lesson plan preparation, an aspect of mentor teachers, an aspect of school supervision by the advisor, and an aspect of the target school. Moreover, there are other aspects such as teaching and learning materials, advisors, trainee teachers, teaching performance, and school welfare (Hinin & Tansriwong, 2015; Khlayphan, 2014).

In this regard, there are some similar and distinct aspects of problems being studied. The similar problems include an aspect of trainee teachers, advisors, and target schools; however, the differences can be seen through the settings, school cultures, students' individual perceptions. Most studies solely gave an emphasis on the problem without mentioning the advantages of teacher training or students' perceptions, in which it can reflect back to the students both positive and negative feedbacks as a whole. In addition, the previous studies weighed more heavily on quantitative data, showing the statistics with little qualitative information provided. Differently, this current study tries to fill out the gap from the previous studies by focusing the students' perceptions; both positive and negative, and the negative ones are perceived as problems. The current study weighs more on qualitative information; therefore, it provides insight regarding those perceptions.

Literature Reviews

1. An origin of teachers in Thailand

In the past, a teachers' college is known as an institution producing teachers all over Thailand. Later, King Rama IX uplifted the status of every teacher's college to the university as well as changed their name to "Rajabhat". Since it exists in almost every province and is named according to its location, there are currently over 38 Rajabhat universities all over the nation (Post Reporters, 2018), with the main purpose of producing quality teachers and distributing them to the country.

The focus of this study is based on the teaching programs in Rajabhat University, in which the undergraduate students are required to perform teacher training for a specified period of time in order to obtain the teacher's license. Therefore, they will be able to teach in Thai schools legally. In year 2021, the Teacher's Council of Thailand (TCT or Khurusapha) provides different tracks and educational levels of obtaining the teacher's license: bachelor's degree programs, master's degree programs,

doctor's degree programs, and graduate diploma in teacher profession (Teacher's Council of Thailand, 2021). Each program provides various years of studying and teacher training. This current study emphasizes teacher training at the bachelor's degree level, especially in English language teaching programs.

It is debatable whether a four-year or five-year program is run more efficiently and effectively than the other. In the past, the new graduated teacher's quality was questionable due to the four-year program, in which the graduates from any major could become a teacher in the school without performing any teacher training. Then the reformation era created a five-year program in order to compulsorily add a one-year teaching experience into the curriculum. However, there are some reasons why a five-year program could not meet the expectations of the nation's policy. First, the lack of quality, in which the curriculum did not meet the standard specified by the Teacher's Council of Thailand (Khurusapha) as evidenced that some programs of universities are accredited only, meaning that not all curriculums are accredited due to its standard (Teacher's Council of Thailand, 2021). Second, it takes too many years to complete the degree while the needs of teachers are urgent. The lack of teachers in many parts of the country affects the quality of education, since one teacher may need to handle many students in one class, or to teach other subjects, or to perform tasks apart from their expertise. Thus, with a lot of workloads, the waiting period for fulfilling the teacher position cannot be that long. Third, compared with the old curriculums, the students who completed the program would receive the teacher's license immediately after their graduation. If anyone could get a teacher's license after a five-year program, the quality would be doubtful. Plus, new regulations indicate that graduates are required to take an exam in order to obtain a teacher's license, despite the five-year program's study. Thus, the five-year program may not necessarily secure the success of their career path anymore. For the reasons mentioned, the curriculum has been developed and brought back to a four-year program once again, with more opportunities for teacher training in schools.

2. Trainee teachers in Thai education

Trainee teachers can be defined as individuals who are on trial and responsible for pedagogical implementation in the classroom (Mtika, 2011), and trainee teachers can also be called pre-service teachers, which is defined as students studying teacher education programs, who are on the job training, in which they have not obtained a degree nor been certified as teachers yet (Lewis, 2014). Once the training is successfully operated, pre-service teachers become in-service teachers, the certified ones.

To become a teacher in Thailand, individuals need permission to teach in Thai government schools (including some private schools). The permission can come either as a teacher's license or a temporary teaching permit. The teacher's license can be attained upon the completion of the teacher education programs, teacher training, and teacher's license exam. However, it is valid for only five years and requires a renewal. The other one is the temporary teaching permit, which is given to individuals who perform teaching in the schools without having a degree in teacher education. The attainment of the teacher's license is various from different levels of teacher education programs: bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctor's degree, and graduate diploma in teacher profession. After the trainee teacher completes the mentioned teacher education programs, they are eligible to take an exam and obtain the teacher's license directly.

The temporary teaching permit is valid for only two years. In the meantime, the individuals who hold the temporary permit must attain the teacher's license within two years according to systematically approaches and professional standards and ethics. Currently, there are five professional standards for teachers: 1) Thai language communication, 2) English language for communication, 3) digital technology for education, 4) teaching profession, and 5) the knowledge of the major subject (Teacher's Council of Thailand, 2021). Though the receipt of a temporary teaching permit, individuals still require a teacher's license, and teacher training is one of the important parts.

3. The importance of teacher training

Teacher training is defined as an activity that the university co-organizes with an outside educational institute; therefore, the undergraduate students can perform their activity, one of the criteria of graduation. Teacher training can also mean learning and training to be a teacher (Reungpan, 2012). In this context, teacher training means on-the-job training that a trainee teacher performs in an actual setting. With no prior teaching experience, trainee teachers may consider teacher training as an initially vital part of their professional establishment. The trainee teachers must perform their teacher training for at least one year and have a chance to work as an in-service teacher.

There are several benefits of teacher training. First, it helps increase the quality of education since the teacher training program opens an opportunity for the trainee teachers to perform their tasks before becoming in-service teachers. The trainee teachers practice their observation skills in the class, assist an in-service teacher, do a trial on teaching, and perform actual teaching. The entire process takes place before graduating from the program. Graduates who completed teacher training can immediately apply their knowledge and skills in their teaching jobs after graduation. Consequently, it increases the quality of novice teachers from the quality teaching process they have practiced before graduation. Thus, teacher training is very important for the current educational situation, as a novice teacher with little experience can fail the educational system due to a lack of professional training, experience, and development, which can affect the quality of education. With experience and know-how, the teacher who has completed the teacher training will be able to handle the teaching jobs professionally (Boudersa, 2016).

Second, teacher training makes use of the theoretical knowledge in a practical way. In other words, we can say that teacher training gives trainee teachers a chance to practice long-term objectives through practical knowledge rather than the immediate objectives found in the theoretical content. Third, teacher training

supplies an opportunity for potential teachers to have teacher networks. Within the teacher networks, a new piece of knowledge is created. According to Pallai (2012), workshops and conferences help teachers bring about new approaches and pedagogical styles in implementing teaching and learning such as classroom and time management, communication and motivation techniques, how to provide counselling, work-life balance, soft skills, etc. Therefore, they can apply the knowledge from the conference into classrooms for the upcoming semester creatively (Piske et al., 2017). Fourth, teacher education gives new teachers opportunities to practice their soft skills. The sample of soft skills is interpersonal skills, in which they can be practiced through collaborative work with others. Previous studies have suggested that collaborative work helps promote five main skills; 1) open-mindedness, 2) goal setting and planning, 3) cooperation with positive attitudes, 4) adaption, and 5) sustainable development (Yaila-o et al., 2017). In brief, teacher training helps trainee teachers learn how to accept other people's ideas, set possible goals, make plans, help one another, adapt themselves to new situations, and promote self-development. These soft skills may vary due to the different organizational cultures.

Fifth, teacher training helps increase trainee teachers' discipline. Teachers are highly expected to be role models for the students. Therefore, trainee teachers are expected to be disciplined, well-behaved, and well-mannered. Discipline may include being punctual, being responsible, being well-spoken, being in good manners, being polite, being virtuous, and displaying ethical behaviour. During the teacher training, the trainee teachers must comply with the school's rules and regulations, in which it makes them practice their self-control, determination, endeavour, and effort in performing their teacher training in the school. Sixth, the teacher training promotes the trainee teachers' self-development. Indeed, teacher training is the starting point of teacher development because they are required not only to teach, but also to attend academic events, operate educational projects and

activities, and perform other assigned tasks given by the schools. It is likely to assist trainee teachers in promoting their own self-development, thereby supporting their academic discipline.

The last benefit of teacher training is that the trainee teacher has a chance to be evaluated on their teaching performance by the students' feedback, and they can improve their teaching performance for the following class. Students' feedback is a great tool for teacher evaluation (Husain & Khan, 2016). Since the trainee teachers are required to prepare their lesson plans before teaching, they may believe that their lesson plan is already perfect. However, its implementation in the classroom can bring different perspectives on students' beliefs. With the teacher training, the trainee teachers will receive both the advantages and disadvantages of their prepared lesson plan. Disadvantages can be revised and redesigned for better outcomes.

4. Problems found in teacher training

The problems of teacher training are extensively found in several aspects, such as trainee teachers, students of the trainee teachers, target schools, performance, teaching and learning preparation, relationships with school administrators, lesson plan preparation, mentor teachers, school supervision, teaching and learning materials, and school welfare (Jaturanon et al., 2019; Hinon & Tansriwong, 2015, Khakhai et al., 2019, Khlayphan, 2014, and Mahawiro, 2018). As mentioned, previous research focused on the difficulties (disadvantages) of teacher education and the statistical findings *per se*. However, Thai EFL trainee teachers' perceptions of teacher training should include both the benefits and drawbacks, and the qualitative outcomes should be more prominently highlighted.

Even though the experienced in-service teachers successfully passed the teacher training, there are still unexpected issues to be discovered. Take the coronavirus pandemic in education as an example. The deployment of online teaching and learning causes a new paradigm shift in online teacher training as well. One of the

researchers suggests re-training ICT skills to alleviate stress and cope with in-service teacher burnout (Pozo-Rico et al., 2020). Another scholar views it as an opportunity to re-skill their professional development by promoting all aspects involved, such as: collative training of the heterogeneous teachers, levitating teachers' motivations, and revising the pedagogical approaches, especially in terms of ICT tools (Llerena-Izquierdo & Ayala-Carabajo, 2021). As a result, technology literacy gets weighed during this period of time.

5. Conceptual framework

All aspects collected from the previous studies were deliberately included. The information will be systematically analysed in order to reflect the results back to the trainee teachers comprehensibly. The framework of the current study is as in the following figure.

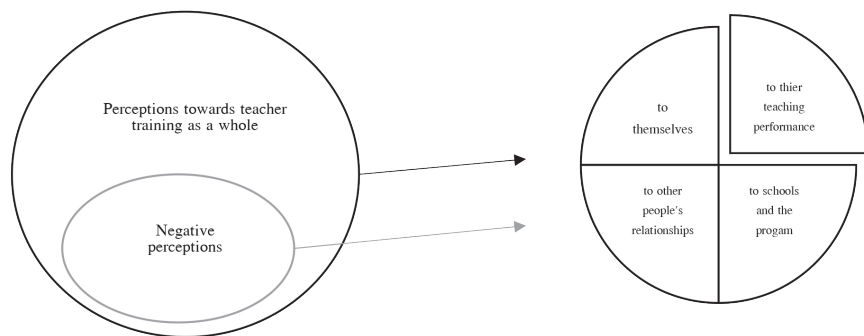


Figure 1 The conceptual framework

Figure 1 illustrates the students' perceptions and problems found in teacher training. On the left-hand side, the big bold circle represents the students' perception as a whole, which explains that students may face positive and negative perceptions in teacher training. However, the inside circlet represents the students'

perception regarding the problems found in teacher training, meaning that the focus is paid to negative perceptions. On the left side of the figure, there are four aspects in investigating the students' perceptions (a big circle) as well as the problems found in teacher training (a circlet): 1) to themselves, 2) to their teaching performance, 3) to other people's relationships, and 4) to schools and the program. These four aspects are deliberately gathered with the aim of covering all aspects of perceptions and problems as much as possible. The two research questions were formulated.

- 1) How do Thai EFL trainee teachers perceive about teacher training?
- 2) What are Thai EFL trainee teachers' problems towards teacher training?

Methods

The mixed-methods research design was used to investigate the problems and issues after the participants completed at least a one-semester teacher training program at the target school. The quantitative and qualitative data were conducted through the questionnaire and semi-structured interview, respectively. Purposive sampling was used, in which 70 participants completed the questionnaire out of a total of 104 (72.8%). There are two sections of the questionnaire: 4 items of general information (gender, GPA, total duration of teacher training, and teaching level), and 23 rating scale items of content (to themselves, to their teaching performance, to other people's relationships, and to schools and the program). Qualitative data was also acquired through semi-structured interviews with 16 participants, accounting for 15.4% of the total. Both prepared and unprepared sets of questions were asked and contributed to the four aspects of perceptions mentioned earlier. Three experts double checked the validity of the questionnaire and prepared set of interview questions, with the IOC score at 0.81 and 0.96, respectively. The question items with an IOC score of less than 0.5 were removed. The research ethics have already been approved by the university

boards before collecting data. The consent forms as well as the explanation of research details were prepared prior to the data collection procedure. The questionnaire was used to conduct data first, followed by the semi-structured interview, which sought more details, in-depth information, and a better understanding of students’ perceptions.

Results and Discussion

1. Results

1.1 In response to research question 1) How do Thai EFL trainee teachers perceive about teacher training?, the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed. Students’ perceptions towards teacher training were divided into four main aspects: to themselves, their teaching performance, their relationship with others, and their school and program.

Table 1 illustrates the information regarding four aspects of students’ perceptions

Aspect of trainee teachers		Raw data	Percentage
1	Readiness	3.54	70.80
2	Confidence	3.54	70.80
3	Teaching and learning preparation	3.84	76.80
4	Technology literacy	4.00	80.00
5	Classroom management	3.84	76.80
6	After-class management	3.81	76.20
7	Ad-hoc assignments	4.14	82.80
		3.82	76.31

Aspect of their teaching performance			
8	Students' behaviours	3.73	74.60
9	Students' English language skill improvement	3.46	69.20
10	Attitudes towards the English language	3.64	72.80
		3.61	72.20
Aspect of their relationship			
11	With students	4.20	84.00
12	With mentor teachers	4.60	92.00
13	With other colleagues in the school	4.43	88.60
14	With administrators of the school	4.26	85.20
		4.37	87.45
Aspect of the school and program			
15	Workplace	4.36	87.20
16	Mentor teachers' administration	4.59	91.80
17	School supervision provided by the university	4.46	89.20
18	School welfares	4.21	84.20
19	Accommodation	4.07	81.40
20	Travelling	3.84	76.80
		4.26	85.10
Total		4.01	80.27

Table 1 shows that the aspect of their relations with others is found to be the highest among the four strands, accounting for 87.45%, followed by the aspect of the school and program at 85.10%. In contrast, the aspect of their teaching performance is the lowest at 72.20%, and the second lowest aspect is the trainee teachers themselves at 76.31%.

In details, the top three sub-aspects that are considerably high include 1) their relationship with mentor teachers (92%), 2) mentor teachers' administration (91.80%), and 3) school supervision provided by the university (89.20%), respectively. Whilst the lowest three sub-aspects include 1) students' English language skill improvement underlying their teaching performance (69.20%), 2) trainee teachers' readiness (70.80%), and 3) trainee teachers' confidence (70.80%).

1.2 In response to research question 2) What are Thai EFL trainee teachers' problems towards teacher training?, the semi-structure interview was interpreted. Students' negative perceptions towards teacher training were extensively found in two main aspects: trainee teachers, and their teaching performance.

The problems underlying the aspect of trainee teachers are shown in the following excerpts.

- Trainee teachers' readiness
 - "Sometimes, I do not feel ready when going to teach, especially when using English as a medium instruction, (Student 1)."
 - "I have problems with English grammar structure, (Students 7, 12, 11, 7, and 8)."
- Trainee teachers' confidence,
 - "I am not confident in speaking in English, (Students 4, 7, and 15)"
 - "I am not confident about my English knowledge, (Students 8 and 15)."
 - "I am not confident about my accent and vocabulary, (Student 14)."
- Teaching and learning preparation
 - "I cannot come up with a good lesson plan, (Students 6 and 7)"

- “I don’t understand the subject matters that I am going to teach, so it is difficult to prepare them, (Student 8).”
- “I don’t know what and how to teach students at a particular level, so I cannot prepare it well (Student 11).”
- Classroom management.
 - “I may not speak loud enough to control 30 students in the class, (Student 7).”
 - “Maybe, it is about my age and personality that makes students ignore my commands, (Student 13).”
 - “When students run around the classroom, I cannot control them at all, (Student 16).”
 - After class management
 - “I somehow forget to do the after-class management, so I cannot recall I, (Student 9).”
 - “I think I did not arrange the information well enough, (Student 7).”

The problems underlying this aspect of their teaching performance are also shown below.

- Behaviours of the trainee teachers’ students
 - “The students are quite stubborn, so I have to give them reasons for saying things, (Student 13).”
 - “The students did not pay attention to what I said since they know that I am just a trainee teacher, (Student 15).”
 - “Students lack concentration while studying, (Students 13, 16, and 10).”

- English language skill improvement of the trainee teachers' students
 - “The students did not understand the lesson, (Student 1).”
 - “The students don't have grammatical knowledge, (Students 6, 14, 12, and 13)”
 - “The students cannot read English words, (Students 16, 15, and 7)”
 - “The students don't have vocabulary knowledge, (Students 3 and 5)”
 - “The students paid no interest and were demotivated in studying the English subject, (Student 2)”
 - “The students are not confident in speaking or expressing themselves, (Student 9 and 7)”
- Attitudes towards the English language
 - “The students think that English is boring, (Students 10 and 6).”
 - “The students do not care because they think it is not their mother tongue, (Student 6).”
 - “The students think that English is the hard subject, (Students 10, 15, 9, 11, 16, 9, 15, and 1)”

In addition, the problems with travelling underlying the aspects of the school and program were also indicated.

- Travelling during the teacher training
 - “The distance to school is too far, (Students 6, 9, 13, 8, and 15).”
 - “Travelling by motorbike requires a special caution, especially when raining, (Students 15, 16, 5, and 7).”

2. Discussion

2.1 Relationship-oriented trainee teachers

The participants highly scored on two aspects: their relationship with others, and the school and program. The high score on an aspect of their relationship with others can be due to their interpersonal skills. Since interpersonal skills have been nurtured during studies in teacher education before the actual teacher training starts, previous studies have indicated that society places a high value on teachers with suitable personality patterns. Thus, interpersonal skills between individuals have been greatly emphasized during the preparatory stages (Indrawati 2021; Sundararasan, 2019). Moreover, an interpersonal skill has been embedded in the Thai Qualification Framework for Higher Education. It indicated that graduates must meet the five-strand of learning outcome standards: morality and ethics, knowledge and intellectual skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, numerical analysis skills, and communication and technology skills (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2014). Hence, the coursework underlying the TQF had already emphasized these matters even before the teacher training. When it comes to actual teacher training, it seems unproblematic to the trainee teachers at all. Also, adaptability may be another reason for the high relationship level, since Archanjo and colleagues (2019) explained that human beings perceive cognitively and simultaneously react towards the world or circumstances, leading to adaptability. As a result, the trainee teachers, stimulated by new circumstances and nurtured by the program, as well as educationally framed, show considerably high relationship scores.

2.2 The lack of pedagogical practices of trainee teachers

On the contrary, the participants perceived two aspects of themselves and their teaching performance very lowly, especially in sub-aspects of readiness, confidence, and teaching matters. This may be explained by the lack of English language proficiency. Previous studies have shown that the English proficiency

of Thai teachers is considerably low due to the workloads, time, and opportunities to get exposed to the English language (Thadphoothon, 2017). Only IELTS 4.5 or TOEIC 600 is required for certified English teachers, and non-English teachers are required to present IELTS 4 or TOEIC 500 (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2021). Indeed, bands 4–6 are considered as students of English (Beyond Band 6 – IELTS Preparation, 2018), leading to an ambivalence about the appropriate basis of English requirements for Thai English teachers. Consequently, due to the minimum language proficiency requirement, an English-licensed teacher may need less effort and attempt to achieve such a high score of English language proficiency. Because the minimum-skilled teacher being recruited may express a lack of confidence and readiness for teacher training, it can be resolved at this point through 1) a high level of self-motivation, 2) extensive learning experience, 3) a variety of exposure, and 4) a variety of practices (Atmojo, 2022).

Another solution is the endorsement of professional development at the policy level (Obaidul Hamid, 2010). The curriculum B.E. 2560 of 38 Rajabhat universities did not allow much exposure to the English language, according to the programme specification of the Bachelor of Education in English (four years) which was used by 38 Rajabhat universities around the country, there are around 50 out of 148 credits which are considered as pure English subjects (Chaiyaphum Rajabhat University, 2019). The increase in English subjects offered by the program might be urgently required.

Finally, it may be due to workloads during training. Pre-service or novice teachers may feel overwhelmed in an actual class since there are lots of steps and tasks to do. The trainee teachers have to tailor their own lesson plans to be suitable for the students' needs and levels. The lack of experience might destroy the smoothness of teaching, as indicated by Safa and Karampour (2020). There are seven steps to prepare teaching: 1) physical layout of the content, 2) activities and practices, 3) content and

language skills, 4) supplementary materials and teacher's guide, 5) language types, 6) methodology, and 7) vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. During the coronavirus pandemic, trainee teachers must not only perform ad hoc school-required activities but also adapt newly digital platforms for online teaching and learning.

Conclusion

This study explored students' perceptions towards teacher training and what problems they experienced during the training. Indeed, out of four main aspects, the participants perceived both positive and negative aspects of teacher training. Positive perceptions are found in the aspects of their relationships with others (87.45%) and the aspects of the school and program (85.10%). Generally, the perceptions regarding their relationship with mentor teachers, mentor teachers' administration, and the school supervision provided by the university are high. This could be explained by the fact that interpersonal skills and adaptability are already developed prior to and during teacher education, respectively. However, the low level of perceptions towards two main aspects was found: the aspect of their teaching performance (72.20%), and the aspect of trainee teachers or themselves (76.31%). The participants show difficulties with their readiness, confidence, and teaching matters. This may be due to several reasons. First, the insufficiency of English proficiency waived out their readiness and confidence in teaching English. As mentioned, the threshold for English language requirements for certified English teachers is quite low. Thus, the criteria itself does not require high English proficiency teachers. Second, there were fewer than 50% of English courses taught in the English language teaching curriculum. There was too much emphasis on general education and teaching subjects rather than English subjects. Hence, trainee teachers had less time to expose themselves to the English language. Finally, actual teaching as well as other school assignments can be highly overburdened, which is exhausting and degrades the smoothness of teaching.

1. Limitations and Recommendations

1.1 Limitations

This current study merely conducted data from 70 samples from the convenient sampling method at one particular university. Thus, it cannot be generalized if similar problems or difficulties can be found in other universities' settings. The combination of the standard tests with the perceptions may also be needed to evidence the students' readiness, confidence, and English language proficiency.

1.2 Recommendations

Future research studies should place a greater emphasis on promoting readiness, confidence, and English language teaching pedagogies prior to teacher training. In addition, online teacher training as well as online supervision should be more considered, especially during these challenging times.

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