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المجلة التربوية

Challenges Facing EFL Pre-service Teachers in King Khalid University During their Practicum

By

Dr. Doaa Samir Hassan Ibrahim

Assistant Professor of TEFL

Dept. of Curricula & Instruction, Faculty of Education, King Khalid
University, Saudi Arabia

Dr. Suda Nasser Shaman

Assistant Professor of TEFL

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المستخلص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى التعرف على التحديات التي تواجه الطالبات الملمات (تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية) في جامعة الملك خالد أثناء فترة التدريب الميداني. اعتمدت الباحثتان المنهج الوصفي، طبقت الدراسة على مجموعتين: ٣٨ طالبة معلمة و١٣ معلمة مشرفة عليهن في مدارس مختلفة وعددها ١٦ مدرسة بخميس مشيط ، ٥ مدارس بأبها في منطقة عسير بالمملكة العربية السعودية في أثناء فترة التدريب. تم إعداد وإجراء استبيانين، أحدهما للطالبات الملمات والثاني لملمات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس. أشارت النتائج إلى أن هناك الكثير من التحديات التي تواجهها الطالبات الملمات أثناء فترة تدريبهن في المدارس من وجهة نظر الطالبات الملمات أنفسهن والملمات المشرفات عليهن. تتمثل التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجه الطالبات الملمات من وجهة نظرهن في القضايا المتعلقة بالكتاب الدراسي، في حين أن القضايا المتعلقة بالمدارس هي أهم التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجه الطالبات الملمات أثناء فترة تدريبهن من وجهة نظر المشرفات عليهن. واتفقت الطالبات الملمات على أنهن بحاجة إلى تحسين مهارات إدارة الفصل الدراسي مثل إدارة الوقت، وجذب انتباه الطلاب، والترتيب للأنشطة الجماعية. كما أظهرن استعدادهن لتحسين مهاراتهن في التدريس.

Abstract

The present study investigated the challenges facing EFL pre-service teachers at King Khalid University during their practicum. The researchers adopted the descriptive design. The participants were two groups: 38 pre-service teachers and 13 EFL teachers at different schools: 15 in Khamees Mushait and 5 in Abha, Aseer region. Two questionnaires, one for the pre-service teachers and the latter for EFL teachers at schools, were prepared and administered. The findings suggested that there are a lot of challenges that pre-service teachers face during their practicum in schools from both the perspectives of pre-service teachers and those of the EFL teachers. The main challenges facing pre-service teachers from their own perspectives are the course book, while school-related issues are the main challenges facing pre-service teachers from the EFL teachers' points of view. The pre-service teachers agree that they need to improve their classroom management skills such as time management, attracting students' attention, and arranging students for group activities. They show the willingness to improve their teaching skills.

Keywords: challenges-pre-service teachers – practicum.

-Introduction

English is currently the language of worldwide communication. Therefore, the work of EFL teachers has become brilliant and the education of EFL learners has got a high status. English as a foreign language (EFL) education has prompted calls for reform to EFL pre-service teachers' practices in order to raise the standard of teaching and learning (Aiken & Day, 1999; Cook, 1996; Vélez-Rendón, 2006). This requires pre-service teachers in countries where English is a foreign language to be prepared to meet the challenges and standards for EFL teaching (Lu, 2002; Wertheimer & Honigsfeld, 2000). However, EFL pre-service teachers have additional challenges as they attempt to teach English while using this language as the mode of instruction. Field experiences or practicum have long been a central part of EFL pre-service teacher development in many countries and is crucial for implementing EFL education reform (Anderson, 2004; Stewart, 2004). These field experiences allow pre-service teachers to make the connection between current theoretical knowledge and school practices; Pre-service teachers are challenged by the “conceptual struggle about teaching and learning” (Wang & Odell, 2002, p. 515). What they believe about effective teaching and learning may conflict with the real position of teaching in schools. Liu's (2005) research indicates that EFL pre-service teachers tend to follow their school-based mentors' examination-oriented English teaching methods, which focuses on vocabulary and grammar. It is evident that learning to teach within the school context does not match the pre-service teachers' university education. Undoubtedly, pre-service teachers in their formative stages of development require assistance from more experienced colleagues. Effective mentoring programs provide support to enhance the attainment of effective teaching skills (Arnold, 2006; Chow, Tang, & So, 2004; Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Woullard & Coats, 2004).

It is established that school mentors play important roles in effectively mentoring pre-service teachers during their teaching practice (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Ewell, 2004). Mentors need to show personal attributes that make a collaborative working

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relationship easier (Ganser,1991; Rippon & Martin, 2006; Sinclair, 2003).

Conducting a pilot study provided the opportunity to explore various data collection methods to refine the actual research design. The pilot study provided opportunities to explore how the pre-service teachers experienced the school-based interaction with EFL teachers. It was conducted first through giving pre-service students an open-ended question to answer. Participants were asked to tell if they faced any challenges during training in schools, and were given enough time to answer. The open-ended questionnaire was designed to gather data from the EFL pre-service teachers at King Khalid university at the beginning of their last field experience (practicum, professional experience). This aimed to investigate EFL pre-service teachers' thoughts and expectations before entering their practicum, and as a means of understanding respondents' views. These questions also focused on their perceptions of potential difficulties related to learning about teaching EFL in their practicum.

- Statement of the problem:

On the bases of the results of the pilot study and the researchers' observations of the pre- service teachers' performance, it could be inferred that they face many difficulties while being trained in the practicum. Therefore, the problem under investigation in this study could be represented in the following two major questions:

- What are the challenges facing EFL pre-service teachers while being trained in the practicum from the EFL teachers' as well as the pre- service teachers' points of view?
- Do the challenges facing pre-service teachers in the practicum differ referring to both the pre-service teachers' and the EFL teachers' points of view?

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- Significance of the study:

The results of the study are hopefully expected to be beneficial to:

- pre-service teachers in determining the challenges facing them in the practicum experience and the ways to overcome them.
- EFL teachers in schools to help pre-service teachers overcome the challenges in the practicum.
- the faculty of Education to understand difficulties facing pre-service teachers to be able to develop teaching practicum programs.

-Delimitations of the study:

- The study was limited to the pre-service EFL teachers in King Khalid University while being trained in the schools in Aseer region during the second term in the academic year 2018.

- Aims of the study:

This study aimed at determining the pre-service teachers' challenges in the practicum from their point of view as well as the EFL teachers'.

- Procedures of the study:

This study could be conducted according to the following order:

- Surveying the relevant literature and previous studies to determine the challenges facing pre-service teachers.
- Designing two questionnaires to identify the pre-service teachers' challenges in the practicum: one for them and the latter for the EFL teachers to identify the pre-service teachers' challenges in the practicum.
- Surveying the views of the experts and the jury members regarding the designed instruments.

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- **Drawing a random sample of the pre-service teachers at King Khalid University and EFL teachers at many schools in Abha and Khamees Musheit, Aseer region.**
- **Administering the questionnaires to the samples of the study.**
- **Performing pertinent statistical analysis of the data using SPSS, version 20, to test the hypotheses.**
- **Presenting results and discussions.**
- **Presenting conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research.**

- Definition of Terms:

- Pre-service teachers:

This term is used to describe student teachers who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program and working toward teacher certification. They complete supervised field-based teaching experiences with the mentorship of university faculty and teachers (Mudra, 2018).

The researches also define it as student teachers who are under the complete supervision and mentorship of the university and schools in order to improve their performance as novice teachers in many fields. They can be provided with new skills and strategies of teaching.

-Practicum:

A practicum can be defined as " a graduate level course, often in a specialized field of study, that is designed to give students supervised practical application of a previously or concurrently studied theory. Practicums are common for education and social work majors." (Wikipedia, 2018). The researchers would adopt this definition as it describes the nature of the period of training after the diploma degree of education.

-Literature review:

To theorize for the present study, the variables have been reviewed as follows:

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- Pre-service EFL teachers and their experience in the practicum:

The role of the pre-service teacher is to undertake professional experience with commitment to participate in the process of teaching as a professional. When undertaking professional experience, pre-service teachers learn about being a member of the teaching profession through the example set by supervising teachers as well as through the organized modelling and assessment that occurs through each placement.

EFL teachers are not only expected to be professional in term of teaching abilities, characteristics, and skills (Guskey, 2003), but also in classroom management which is an indicator for better teaching and learning (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Such characteristics need to be clarified by every pre-service EFL teacher who wishes to create interesting classroom experiences.

Teacher training institutions usually do not mention about complexity and content of the school and cannot give a lot of importance to teaching activities. These institutions have the duty to be aware of the concerns of prospective teachers and the problems they may face and help them overcome these problems before going to the schools which are the actual environment of application. The aim is to highlight individuals' awareness education, determine the missing points in their development and contribute to their improvement accordingly (Hart, 2002; Wilkins & Brand, 2004). As a result, prospective teachers will gain self-confidence against difficulties during course presentation (Yılmaz- Tüzün, 2008).

The practicum has emerged as an increasingly common feature of EFL teacher preparation programs (Farrell, 2007). Practicum teaching helps student teachers confirm that they have chosen the right career (Phairee et al., 2008). Phairee et al. (2008) further clarified that the most commonly expressed problems during the practicum concerned ESL student teachers' anxiety over their non-sufficient English skills and the large class sizes they encounter. Stoyhoff (1999) considers the academic and field experiences as interrelated and complementary parts of a whole that ESL students engage in simultaneously, with the goal of developing teachers who have the skills associated with effective classroom practice. Stoyhoff

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outlines five principal characteristics of a TESOL practicum: 1) The practicum is integrated into the academic programme; 2) The delivery of the practicum emphasizes a team approach. 3) The practicum provides intensive training course; 4) The practicum incorporates extensive, systematic observation; 5) The practicum experience is assessed by means of a portfolio.

As the leading position of English language for international communication has evidently been continuing for several decades, English language teacher education is getting more and more important. One of the most major components of teacher education programs is the practicum course that requires senior English pre-service teachers to observe classes and do practice teaching before actual teaching profession. Recently, there has been increasing research focusing on identifying stress and coping with this stress at practicum in order to maximize the efficiency of practicum. Mahmoudia and Ozkanb (2016) investigated the sources of 16 pre-service language teachers' stress. The data of the study was obtained via classroom observation and face-to-face interviews. The qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis and the coping strategies were discussed under four categories: supervisors and mentors, classroom management, school-related issues, and affective factors. The highest source of stress was referred to supervisors and mentors. It is suggested that stress generating factors and the strategies that pre-service language teachers employ should be discussed.

Another study explores how pre-service teachers develop their understanding of student learning through action research project. Six Special Education programme pre-service teachers were selected through purposive sampling procedures. Data were collected via open-ended questionnaire. The findings discussed that pre-service teachers' understanding of student learning is not in depth. The findings also suggested that action research should be a supported part of a teacher education program providing excellent professional development for pre-service teachers to deal with many of the challenges (Mooi & Mohsen, 2014).

Melor, Hashima, Mohd, and Ishaka, (2010) designed a study to examine pre-service teachers' teaching experiences and challenges with the school administrators, mentor, supervisor, as well as

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teaching and learning process. A total of 38 students of TESL (Executive) programme at the Faculty of Education, National University of Malaysia who had completed their two months teaching practicum in various schools in Malaysia responded to open-ended questions. The results showed that the trainee teachers indicated positive comments on their relationship with school administrator referring to the administrators' attitude towards the trainee teachers. The findings indicated that the trainee teachers found that their supervisors were very helpful and they did not have problems with the school environment. However, challenges can be seen through the students' attitude towards the trainee teachers, students' motivation, students' discipline, and support system.

Cobana (2010) tries to scrutinize the potential problems student-teachers encounter during their practicum studies and suggests ways to cope with them. It is hypothesized that most of the problems occur due to the lack of mainly audio-visual materials, other supplementary materials needed, pronunciation, translation, and the activities that enhance reading, speaking and writing. Finally, it is agreed that overcrowded classrooms and sitting arrangement impede the effectiveness of foreign language instruction.

Therefore, from surveying the previous studies, it can be inferred that this study is different from them in many aspects; first of all, the previous studies tackled the challenges in the practicum from the pre-service students' point of views whereas this study investigated the problems by comparing the points of views of the pre-service teachers as well as the teachers themselves. Secondly, the present study dealt with the challenges facing Arab students in the environment of Education that seems to face many problems in many Arab countries.

-Hypotheses of the Study:

Based on the previous discussion, the study hypotheses have been formulated as follows:

- 1- The challenges facing pre-service teachers while being trained in the practicum are great from the two points of view: the pre-service teachers' and the EFL teachers'.
- 2- There are no statistically significant differences in the responses to the two questionnaires of the pre-service teachers

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and the EFL teachers regarding challenges facing pre-service teachers.

-Methodology:

-Participants:

The participants of the study were 38 pre-service teachers and 13 of EFL teachers in schools of Abha and Khamees Mushait. Pre-service teachers were students who have their bachelor degree in English language and enrolled in one-year diploma as a requirement certificate for teaching. Their supervisors were EFL teachers who supervised pre-service teachers during practicum at schools.

- Instruments of the study were prepared by the researchers as follows:

The pre-service teachers' questionnaire and the EFL teachers' questionnaire.

- Purposes of the questionnaires:

The pre-service teachers' questionnaire and that of the EFL teachers, prepared by the researchers, aimed at investigating the challenges facing pre-service teachers while being trained in schools in the practicum. In addition, it aimed at identifying the points of weakness and strengths of pre- service teachers' performance.

Many previous questionnaires of pre-service teachers in previous studies and the pre-service teachers' answers to the pilot study question were reviewed to form the present questionnaires' dimensions and items. The items and main dimensions of the questionnaires have been reviewed and elicited from the content of the following previous studies (Mahmoudia & Ozkanb, 2016; Mooi & Mohsen, 2014; Melor et al., 2010; Cobana, 2010; Liu, 2005; Wertheimer & Honigsfeld, 2000).

- Description of the questionnaires:

Pre-service teachers' questionnaire consisted of 55 closed-ended items, each item has a five point likert scale: 5 (strongly agree), 4(agree), 3(undecided), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree). Those items were categorized under 8 dimensions; teacher

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qualification and content knowledge, planning and implementing teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), challenges while teaching English, classroom management, problems related to the students in class, problems related to the course book, school related issues, and affective factors. In addition, the questionnaires included some open-ended questions about classroom management, things pre-service teachers need to improve in the future. The questionnaire was given to professors to be judged. Then, the questionnaire had been modified, some items were deleted and some were rephrased. Thus, the questionnaire included 48 items after being edited.

The EFL teachers' questionnaire included closed-ended items as that of the pre-service teachers, but it was written in a way to know the challenges facing pre-service teachers from the perspectives of their supervisors. It has seven dimensions. After taking the jury members' comments, the items were rephrased, so there were 43 items under the eight dimensions. In addition, the questionnaires included open-ended questions about the points of weakness and strengths of the pre-service teachers' performance. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software, version 20, was used to estimate the validity and reliability of the questionnaires.

-Procedures:

The researchers designed the questionnaires survey after reviewing the participants' answers and the relevant literature. Next, 57 pre-service questionnaires were distributed to the students in two ways: through the e-learning and in hard copies; so, each student could choose the convenient way to fill in. Only 38 students completed the questionnaire and submitted it.

Regarding the EFL teachers' questionnaire, the researchers designed an electronic survey using google form and sent the link to 40 schools where pre-service teachers had done their practicum. However, only 13 EFL teachers from 21 schools: 16 in Khamees Mushait and 5 in Abha chose to fill the questionnaire and submitted their answers. The participants

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submitted their answers to the questionnaires and the data was reviewed and analyzed.

- Validation:

For examining the validity of the questionnaires, they were submitted to a jury of professors of educational psychology and professors of EFL curriculum and instruction. The professors suggested some modifications to some of the items, and the changes were made.

- Reliability:

The questionnaires were administered to a group of pre-service teachers. Reliability of the questionnaires was sought through the use of the split-half technique. To do so, the researchers prepared a new form of the questionnaires on the design of a Likert-scale with five responses. The questionnaires were divided into two halves: odd and even numbers. Using Pearson formula, the correlation coefficient of the pre- service students 'questionnaire was (0.7254) and that of the EFL teachers was (0.7011). Then using Sperman-Brown Prophecy Formula, the reliability coefficient of the pre-service students 'questionnaire was (0.708) and (0.79) using Guttman Split- half formula which were both statistically significant at 0.01 level. Using Sperman- Brown Prophecy Formula, the reliability coefficient of the EFL teachers 'questionnaire was (0.707) and (0.78) using Guttman Split- half formula which were both statistically significant at 0.01 level. Alpha coefficient of the students ' questionnaire was calculated where it was 0.78 for odd number items, 0.75 for even number items and 0.85 for the whole questionnaire. Alpha coefficient of the teachers 'questionnaire was calculated where it was 0.77 for odd number items, 0.74 for even number items and 0.83 for the whole questionnaire. Hence, it can be concluded that the two questionnaires were reliable.

-Study Results and Discussion:

The close- ended questions of both pre-service teachers' questionnaire and the EFL teachers' questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS program and the open-ended questions were analyzed

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qualitatively through coding. Then, the results are discussed while explaining the tables to verify the hypotheses of the study as follows:

- Hypothesis 1:

It has been hypothesized that the challenges facing pre-service teachers while being trained in the practicum are great from the two points of view: the pre-service teachers' and the EFL teachers'.

According to the Jury's responses, the relative weight of each item of the two questionnaires was assigned as indicated in the following formulas:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Supporters} \quad \times \quad 100}{\text{Number of Jury members}}$$

$$\text{Relative weight} = \frac{\text{The number of the items (one item)} \quad \times \quad \text{Percentage}}{\text{The Total number of Items}}$$

It was inferred that there are only few items which have low percentage and relative weight, and then they were omitted. These items are (It is confusing to introduce students to different English accents in class; It is challenging to be patient most of the time during the training course; There is an obstacle for students to be familiar with the culture and traditions of native speakers of English; To sound like native speakers of English is rather difficult for students; Having to do load of additional work while being in school makes training course unpleasant). Moreover, modifications of some items have been considered and applied, such as (Participating in school activities most of the time commands a lot of time, effort, and money; Preparatory procedures for a lesson demands long experience. Hence, it can be concluded that the questionnaires are suitable for the purpose of the study.

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Table (1) The Total Percentage of the Pre-service Teachers' Responses to the Questionnaire

Dimensions	Percentage of Agreement	General Direction
Teacher qualification and content knowledge	50	Agree
Planning and implementing Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)	68.4	Agree
Classroom management	47.4	undecided
Problems Related to the students in class	60.5	Agree
Problems related to the course book	78.9	Strongly agree
School related issues	63.3	Agree
Affective factors	60.5	Agree
The EFL teachers	52.6	Agree
The whole questionnaire	59.75	Agree

Table (2) The Total Percentage of the EFL Teachers' Responses to the Questionnaire

Dimensions	Total Percentage of agreement	General Direction
Teacher qualification and content knowledge	46.8	Undecided
Planning and implementing Teaching English as a Foreign	53.8	agree
Classroom management	62.5	agree
Problems Related to the students in class	46.2	Undecided
Problems related to the course book	62.9	agree
Affective factors	69.2	agree
School related issues	84.6	Strongly agree
The whole questionnaire	55.7	agree

As a result of the analyses of table 1 indicating the responses of the pre-service teachers, and table 2 indicating the responses of the EFL teachers, it can be indicated that the challenges that face pre-service teachers during their training are enormous. The main challenges, according to the responses of the EFL teachers, are those

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concerning *school related issues* with a percentage 84.6. *School related issues* consists of the lack of visual materials and audio materials in the classroom, unavailability of supplementary materials such as internet and projector, and having no private space for them in schools to prepare lessons. An EFL teacher stated that “pre-service teachers complained a lot about the lack of resources, and some decided to provide their own projectors and computers in the future”._However, the least percentage of agreement is concerned with *teacher qualification and content* with a percentage 46.8. It involves students' unawareness of intercultural differences between languages, motivating students to learn English, dealing with students' individual differences, and students' unawareness of the rules of pronunciation and transcription. In addition, the other least percentage of agreement is concerned with *problems related to the students* with a percentage 46.2. It deals with using Arabic in class which makes it difficult for students to develop effective negotiation strategies, the less background of students in English elements, and the lack of time for oral practice.

On the other hand, the greatest challenges according to the responses of the pre-service teachers are those concerning the *course book* with a percentage 78.9. Challenges concerned with this dimension includes the following: having inadequate number of grammar and vocabulary exercises within the text book, reading and speaking activities which are somewhat unauthentic, the lack of communicative tasks, brief explanation of grammatical structures in the teacher's guide, some of the course book exercises which are beyond the students' levels, some reading and listening texts which are incomprehensible, unclear instructions of writing activities, vocabulary items which are not frequently supported with examples, and loaded curriculum content. Pre-service teachers complained about some of the contents in the textbook are beyond students' levels and stated that “I will use different teaching materials and methods to make the content more useful, fun and easier.” However, the least percentage of agreement is concerned with *classroom management* with a percentage 47.4. Classroom management deals with problems concerning managing the class time especially for review and practice, handling behavior in class, dividing students

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into cooperative groups, and teaching a large number of students. Regarding the classroom management, a pre-service teacher complains about the time management saying “I think the time in the class is not enough, so I need more time.” The pre-service teachers lack the skills of managing the time, and they need to be trained during their studies at the universities.

-Hypothesis 2:

It has been hypothesized that there are no statistically significant differences in the responses to the two questionnaires of the pre-service teachers and the EFL teachers regarding challenges facing pre-service teachers. Independent T-test was used to verify the hypothesis, as shown in (table 3).

Table (3) T- test value and Mean Scores of the Responses of the Participants (EFL Teachers, Pre-service Teachers) Regarding the Challenges Facing Pre-service Teachers while being Trained in Schools in the Practicum.

Total score	Mean \pm SD	Independent T-test	P value
EFL Teachers	1.64 \pm 19.67	0.736	0.465
pre-service teachers	1.578 \pm 27.77		

*significant ($p < 0.05$)

Table (3) shows that there are no statistically significant differences in the challenges facing pre-service teachers as p-value $\geq .05$. Regarding the open-ended questions, some pre-service teachers agreed that they need to improve some skills that are necessary for them as future teachers such as time management. A pre-service teacher said, “I think the time in the class is not enough, so I need more time.” Pre-service teachers identified that one of the problems that they face and need to solve is time management just as in Pop’s study (2015). However, they need to be provided with training courses and workshops to learn how to manage their time.

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Pre-service teachers complained of not having essential teaching aids such as computers, projectors, video and audio aids for teaching in schools, which were identified as a challenge in Cobana's (2010) study. Some of them decided to bring their own materials while teaching in classes. A pre-service teacher stated that "I will bring my projector, computer with me; I will have more information technology."

Some pre-service teachers agreed that they need to know more about how to motivate students, and make the learning fun for them, which was one of the challenges that face pre-service teachers as stated in previous studies (Cobana, 2010; Mahmoudia & Ozkanb, 2016).

It can be inferred that the reason for the agreement of the responses of the pre-service teachers and those of the EFL teachers is that the challenges are highly evident in the English syllabus as well as classroom management, and teaching materials. Moreover, the enormous challenges are found to be due to the deficiency of the teaching materials at schools as well as the training workshops provided for the pre-service teachers, just as identified in Cobana's study (2010). The unavailability of activities and exercises to the students' age, skills, and time assigned to the syllabus is another great cause of having these challenges (Cobana, 2010).

On discussing the results, the researchers were quite aware that the responses of the pre-service teachers to the questionnaire could be attributed to their awareness as they are somehow a part of a scientific experiment. It could also be attributed to the experience of dealing with people who are somehow different from their regular teachers in the university.

A more realistic and even deeper thinking to deal with the results is to investigate the interrelationships underlying the responses of the questionnaires and the practices carried out in the classroom while administering the research instruments. A well-conducted statistical analysis of the obtained results helped the researchers better understand and interpret the agreement of the two points of views concerning identifying the challenges facing pre-service teachers.

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-Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research:

- Conclusion:

This study aimed at explaining the major challenges facing the pre-service teachers during their practicum at schools from their perspectives of as well as the EFL teachers'. It also examined whether there will be any statistically significant differences between the pre-service teachers' perspectives and those of EFL teachers regarding the challenges facing pre-service teachers during practicum.

To determine the difficulties facing the pre-service teachers in schools, two questionnaires were designed by the researchers and judged by the jury members. After that, both questionnaires were distributed to the random samples and then were collected and analyzed. It has been found that the challenges facing pre-service teachers are great and there is an agreement between the responses of pre-service teachers and the EFL teachers regarding challenges.

The pre-service teachers agree that they need to improve their classroom management skills such as time management, attracting students' attention, and arranging students for group activities. The pre-service teachers show willingness to improve their teaching skills. Some are planning to use new activities to make learning fun and effective; others want to use new strategies and implement active learning. Most of the problems occur due to the lack of audio-visual materials, other supplementary materials, the secondary students' poor pronunciation of English, shortage of translation exercises, and the activities enhancing the English skills. Finally, it is agreed that sometimes overcrowded classrooms hinder, to a great extent, the effectiveness of EFL instruction.

- Recommendations:

In the light of the present study results, the following could be recommended:

- 1- Supporting the development of the teacher education programs to give pre-service teachers the chance to practice teaching before enrolling in the practicum.**

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2-The course books of English should be improved with more explanation techniques and strategies as well as various exercises.

3-School problems should be discussed with the responsible staff in the ministry of education to be solved.

4- The university policy makers should suggest some recommendations for improving the course books of English in order to overcome difficulties facing the students in various stages of education as well as EFL teachers.

5- More training programs should be performed to improve and develop the pre- service teachers' skills.

6- The university administration should be in contact with ministry of education to give solutions to many school problems.

- Suggestions for Further Research:

According to the findings of the present study, the following points would be suggested for further research:

- It would be beneficial to explore the impact of the teacher education program on pre-service teachers during practicum.**
- It would be valuable to examine the impact of some workshops and training courses on the pre- service students' performance and their ways of dealing with expected challenges.**

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