An Investigation of the Problems Faced by Iraqi EFL Teachers in Primary Public Schools in Najaf

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Abstract

The main aim of the current study is to display the problems encountered by Iraqi English Foreign Language primary school teachers in Najaf / Iraq. The study attempts to reveal the factors that occur beyond the weakness in the process of teaching English as a foreign language and to detect appropriate proposed solutions to overcome such weakness. For achieve the aim of the research, a questionnaire of 20 items has been conducted to a sample of 150 teachers that represents (25%) from the total number in the city center from various ages, gender, teaching experience and training courses presented. On the basis of the statistical findings, Iraqi English language teachers in Najaf/ Iraq seem to face a variety of challenges in teaching English as a second language in public primary school ; the problem that has got higher percentage of (92%) indicates that "There are not enough training courses on language teaching". Teachers face difficulty in focusing on the four English skills simultaneously at the same time because of insufficient time for the lesson, lack of planning or because of the huge number of the students which makes things get messy. Yet learning how to behave in communicative classroom is important for achieving the learning goals. The problems which also get high percentage is about; (a) students use their native language all of the time instead of English as a foreign language in class and (b) the lack of basic components such as ventilation, lighting, and teaching supported materials for achieving successful learning atmosphere. The percentage of these items is (87%). The Iraqi English language teachers in Najaf have agreed on most of the problems and only four of them got percentages under 50%. These problems refer to: (a) inadequate experience in teaching English, (b) lack of care about feedback from students, (c) teaching due to the traditional way neglecting the communicative language teaching, (d) disliking the teaching career.

Keywords: Teaching and Learning Language, EFL Teaching Methods, Teachers' Role in Teaching FL, Primary School Teachers, Challenges in TEFL

1. Introduction

It is widespread that English represents an international and universal language because it is articulated through various people all over the world so that various countries in the world introduced it into their educational system English is taught inArab countries as far as Iraq is concerned, as it is the language of the colonizers who ruled distinct Ara b nations for long periods of time.. Iraqi educational system had introduced Teaching English as a Foreign Language (hereafter TEFL) since 1921 as a result of the British Mandate. Teaching English became important in Iraq when the colonizer usually attempts to impose its language and culture over the colonize. Hence, English is regarded as a mandatory subject in Iraqi schools as well as teaching English is considered as an essential necessity. During the last century, TEFL has become very common and the bases have been designed for this discipline.

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In Iraq, the tensions that have penetrated over the past two decades have adversely affected societies in general and the educational system in particular. As a result, for any beginner or experienced instructor, TEFL in Iraq represents a challenge. Teachers often experience different types of environmental and educational problems that weaken the educational process. Such challenges create difficulties in teaching learning for the sake of their future. Teachers must also learn how to find solutions to these challenges in order to achieve efficient communicative language teaching(Saeed, 2015: 1-2).

Because of the outcomes and results of teaching English in Iraq, it is concluded that teaching young learners at primary school level in particular may have many limitations faced by teachers. The problems need to be focused on and interpreted in order to be familiar with the main reasons stand behind such problems and suggest some applicable solutions. Thus, the current research is done to investigate the problems faced by teachers of English as a Foreign Language (hereafter EFL) in primary public schools that make the teaching process so hard for them to fulfill their goals in Najaf. Consequently, the results of this study will be beneficial for English teachers to know the problems they might encounter at primary stage. It also can be a complementary reference and fills the gaps that might occur in previous studies.

2. Teaching and Learning Language

People utilize language to reflect their attitudes and thoughts by language since communication among people happens principally by means of language. Due to Kumar (2010: 43) language is defined as the significant instrument in our social communication because it is utilized in our daily life including home, work place, streets so as to perform exactly. Besides, Holmes (1992: 16) indicates that second language refers to the knowledge and the language which is acquired by learners who already understand at least one other language (i.e. native language). Furthermore, the process of learning is controlled via the psychological behavior since we learn through "imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habit formation".
To be able to mimic and understand like every other form of learning, acquiring a second language needs the attention of the learner.

Generally, scientists and philosophers have made a basic distinction between competence and performance over centuries. For Chomsky (1965), competence is "one's primary knowledge of a system or event". Performance represents "the clearly observable and concrete manifestation, or realization, of competence". Taking language into account points out
to one's internalized knowledge of a language's system, including its grammatical laws, vocabulary, all the "pieces" of a language, and how these pieces work together to create larger units, while output points to the actual development (speaking, writing) or understanding (listening, reading) of linguistic proceedings. The average speaker of a specific language has an internalized understanding of that language, while output points to the actual use of language in a specific case(Brown, 2014: 21-22).

In the twentieth century, the teaching method emerged and it was marked by constant change and innovation, allowing its philosophies to evolve. Linguists aim to develop teaching concepts and steps for the implementation of new approaches and items, building on the development of linguistic psychology fields to encourage a set of ideas for what were considered to be widely productive and technically sound teaching methods(Richards and Rodgers, 2001:1). Teaching, on the one hand, is described as offering or helping someone to learn how to perform something, providing guidance, directing something to research, providing knowledge, leading to understanding. Apart from learning, teaching should not be considered as teaching is driven and promotes the learning process by preparing conditions for learning. On the other hand, learning is referred to as improving knowledge of a specific skill throughout "study, experience, or instruction". According to the psychologists, learning is defined "a change in an individual caused by experience". Thus, teaching is denoted by the first definition in terms of helping, directing, and giving knowledge to the scholar which enables the scholar to understand and learn. The learning process can be explained mentally as the following phases: acquisition, process, interpretation, memory (storage) method, short-and-long-term memory, recall, motivation, conscious and subconscious, styles of learning, forgetting, compliance and the role of practice. Accordingly, it is concluded that learning a second language is associated with more changes and complexities.

Consequently, the style of conveying information, lesson plan and classroom facilities depend upon the learner's needs since teaching process is highly related to learning process and how the scholars learn (Brown, 2014: 18-19).

3. FL Teaching Methods

Teaching a foreign language represents an oldest occupations in history and is part of general education. Throughout this l ong history, numerous modes of language teaching have been introduced and new methods have been invented. Many i mprovements in language teaching techniques have resulted from changes in teaching methods. Some of these techniques used in foreign and second language teaching are described as follows:

3.1. The Grammar-Translation Method

The GrammarTranslation Method focuses primarily on the teaching of second-language grammar, and translation from and into the target language is its key technique. This technique is an old techniqu e which has been used for many years by language teachers. There are numerous names for the grammar translation proces s.

It was named the Classical method because it was implied for the first time in the teaching of classical languages, including Latin and Greek. The main aim of this approach in the first part of th is century was to assist students to read and understand literature in foreign languages. In addition, it allows students by studying the grammar of the target language to be more familiar with the grammar of their native language. Such familiari ty will assist them to properly speak and write their native language. Finally, studying a foreign language would help stude nts improve mentally, i.e. learners would never utilize the target language, though learning mental practice is still beneficia l (Freeman, 1986: 4).

3.2. The Direct Method

Like the GrammarTranslation process, the direct method is not new. The useage of the target language as a means of instru ction and communication in the language classroom, by preventing the usage of the first language and translation as a tech nique, has emerged as a radical shift from the grammar-translation process. In other words, the Direct Method aims at using another language to communicate since the Grammar-Translation Method was not so active helping learners to utilize the target language for communication. The fundamental rule of the Direct Method is "No translation is allowed". Hence, the name of this method is derived from the fact that "the meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids with no resource to the students' native language" (Freeman and Anderson, 2011: 46).

3.3. The Audio-Lingual Method

The audio-lingual method represents also an oral-based technique, like the Direct Method. There are, however, varying variations between the two approaches. Instead o f stressing vocabulary development through exposure to its use in contexts, the Audio-Lingual Approach teaches students to use grammatical sentence patterns. Additionally, it derived its strong theoretical bases from linguistics and psychology. Considering the linguistic basis, Audio- Lingual Method reflects "the descriptive, structural, and contrastive linguistics of the fifties and sixties". Its psychological basis is " behaviorism which interprets language learning in terms of stimulus and response, operant conditioning, and reinforcement with an emphasis on successful error-free learning".
The main objective of this approach is for learners to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language by conditioning and helping to correctly respond to stimuli by shaping and strengthening. Therefore, students will transcend the habits of their native language to form the new habits necessary to target language speakers.(Freeman and Anderson, 2011: 59).

3.4. Communicative Teaching Method

Communicative Teaching Method has appeared at a time when the Audio-lingualism has been no longer meant to be more suitable methodology and the process of language teaching has needed ideal shift in many parts of the world.The main objective of his approach is to make communicative competence the objective of language teaching and to establish methods for teaching the four skills that improve language and communication interdependence. Moreover, this approach encourages the learners to use "holistic practice" Instead of learning individual skills one piece at a time, the simultaneous use of a number of sub-skills. It focuses on activities that leads to real communication and carry out meaningful tasks. In this respect, the meaningful use of language by learners support the learning process. Therefore, negotiators are supposed to be language learners, and teachers are known as organizers, manuals, researchers, counselors, or community process managers (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:172-173).

To sum up, new methods appear from time to time supporting the idea that language should be used for communication purposes since the process of language learning achieves perfect outcomes when learners are participating while proceeding a task or learning content or solving real life challenges. These methods should be followed through language teaching since learners should learn to communicate proficiency in the foreign language. As a result, the main determinant of the approach to be used in the implementation of any program is teachers, so teachers can choose unique teaching designs and techniques. The application of effective strategies by teachers in class promotes the achievement of goals and provides a basis for the presentation of instructional activities.

4.Teachers' Role in Teaching FL

Teaching is an important career in all societies since teachers are nation builders. They represent typical models for their pupils or students. Teacher as lamps spread their light everywhere so that all teachers have to take into consideration various responsibilities. Successful teachers must be ambitious as well as positive thinkers by respecting others points of views . Their personality should be flexible in order to be capable in changing their minds according to the needs of society. They have to convey their knowledge, attitudes and concepts in the way that they may recognize a glimpse in the minds of the students otherwise their knowledge will become a stagnant pool. Therefore, there should be vibration in the teachers' knowledge pool continuously in order to have a successful teaching process (Behraam et al, 2015: 676).

Language teaching process is a hard task as well as a language teacher is a person who performs a necessary and difficult job. Simultaneously, teaching could be very rewarding when the teacher observes his students progress since learning a foreign language is difficult and stressful (Harmer, 2007 a: 23). There are many roles that teachers have to do in order to be active in the classroom. In other words, a lot of attention has been given to the varying roles that a language teacher has. Generally, "Role" is defined As a part of people's success in social life. Concerning the role of teacher in the classroom, it refers to the position that the teacher takes in the language class (Woddowson, 1990: 181).

Teachers occupy a significant role in the process of teaching FL. Teaching a foreign language has many different characteristics in comparison to any other subject. Teachers are not traditionally the gatekeeper of information. Not only can they access the data needed by students and pay attention to the language skills of students (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), but they also direct, assist, and inspire students to be enthusiastic and inspired towards English.Besides, FL teachers should help students to develop both their academic and personal abilities and create the suitable learning environment (Songbatumis, 2017: 55). According to Edge (1999), teachers represent the most effective factor in the leaning process for students in a classroom. The teacher role in the classroom is enhanced through various ways that are summarized as follows:

-Organization: The influential teachers must create a purposeful environment in which the learners must feel that they are achieving their goal and their efforts are put into a framework they can trust.

-Security: The teachers have to organize a safe classroom environment where the

learners are capable to take part in the lesson, and they may risk committing errors from which they are able to learn.

-Motivation:
To inspire the learner to overcome all the obstacles they face in the learning process, encouragement is an important activity for the instructor. Some students already have an interest in learning for different reasons, but all students need to be inspired to work in class.

-Instruction: There should be a purposeful direction of the learning process and the learners need to be tell new things and practice new activities.

-Feedback: Providing information is one of the most influential means of teachers to enhance students learning. The learners need to know whether they are learning the target language or not.

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Evaluation:The teacher is also an evaluator who assesses the work of the learner to see how well they do and there is a standard that must be reached at each stage of the educational system and the students must pass the test to be eligible and to reach that standard (As cited in Saeed, 2015: 24-25).

Furthermore, good teachers should have ample experience, as experience helps teachers to gain the interest of students, which in turn allows them to effectively manage the classroom. Experienced teachers vary in their experience, abilities , and values from inexperienced teachers, so they can judge the various learning processes and direct the learners according to their levels and results. In addition, it can be concluded that they often vary in their professional development criteria from inexperienced teachers. Nevertheless, much of the study focuses on teacher preparation at the level of preserved (Scott, 2005: 11). Consequently, teacher will be more responsible towards their students and the learning process because it supports the teachers' knowledge, beliefs and skills.

5.Primary School Teachers

A primary school teacher refers to the person who can provide adequate information to students in primary schools using professional skills and entering the wider spectrum of knowledge for young people. Teachers should live and mold young people in such a way that their power is paramount as they decide society's destiny.. In addition, an instructor is often regarded as an expert who is able to develop the identities of learners by imparting knowledge that will direct them to recognize and gain skills that will be used to face life's challenges. The teacher therefore have a significant role in improving the progress of learners because trained people can use the opportunities available in both the private and public sectors and can easily secure jobs and have life skills that enable them to communicate well with people at different levels in society (Mayaru, 2015: 13-14).

Teaching English to young learners, especially at primary school level, differs from teaching the language at other levels of education in all its components, such as curriculum, learning environment, students, and teaching or content delivery. Much of the time, primary school teachers teach the basic elements of English so that they can meet different obstacles or constraints.Lynch (2008) points out that primary school teachers encounter three most crucial problems of English language teaching and learning such as: lack of learners' motivation, insufficient time, resources and materials, and over-crowded English classes. Accordingly, the study on teaching English at primary school level has often been a topic of several researches from several countries for the last several years. (As cited in Abrar, 2015: 95).
Furthermore, the main reason behind the difficulties faced by teachers in English teaching classrooms is that the learning environment does not fit English learning, especially in rural areas, and English is considered a difficult subject by students because it is not their mother tongue. As a second language, they bear in
mind that they have to master it. Therefore, they learn second-language complexity in
their minds to set their minds. Since their mental level is not enough to quickly understand or master it, they are unable to customize their mind with the complexities of the second language. English will therefore be viewed as a difficult subject and teachers will not teach the curriculum as required(Behraam et al, 2015: 676).

6.Challenges in TEFL

Scholars address the issues of teaching a foreign language in various ways. About levels and domains. Teaching EFL represents a hard task, especially when it is performed in places where English serves a very limited purpose. English teaching may usually seem equivalent to any other teaching, but it has its own specific challenges. In different ways, these problems occur. Certain difficulties faced in teaching English are checked as follows:

6.1. Lack of Training

Lack of training courses is regarded one of the main problems that English teachers suffer from. Therefore, teachers might "find themselves teaching English either without sufficient English training generally or in teaching English to learners particularly and such thing frequently occurs in poor or rural area" (Garton et al, 2011: 740). According to Emery (2012: 4), several issues take place as a result of severe shortage of training, such as: teachers' inabilities to deal with challenges that happen in teaching context, teachers' poor language ability, and teachers whose English is not their subject area are hired to teach it. Moreover, the process of teaching English tends to be challenging when it depends on "the teachers' qualification, language proficiency level, and training" because these items can cause teachers' confidence. Thus, proper and good training courses are quite necessary for EFL teachers since applying appropriate teaching methods and techniques is tough to some extent and teachers do not simply know how to pass four language skills and how to inspire learners to learn English as a foreign lan guage and practice it.

6.2. Overcrowded Classes

Crowded classes is another most often mentioned challenge encountered by English teachers since such condition can have bad effect on teaching and learning process (Emery, 2012: 4). Similarly, Baker and Westrup (2000: 2) illustrate that large classes itself lead to other problems, such as "desks and chairs are fixed or difficult to move; students sit close together in rows; little space for the teacher and students to move in the classroom; walls between classrooms are thin, and noise will disturb other classes". Then, an successful teaching and learning process requires a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, otherwise teachers will struggle to meet student needs and achieve learning objectives.

6.3. Lack of English Exposure

When English has inappropriate exposure, the process of teaching English will be a challenging duty. In turn, The absence of such a condition offers less chance for learners to use English. Owing to the lack of English background information of students, the absence of English purposes reduces the enthusias m of students to learn and understand English. Likewise, the lack of exposure to English makes it more difficult for teac hers to motivate students to be enthusiastic about using English (Songbatumis, 2017: 57).

6.4. Lack of Motivation

Motivation is a significant issue for the teacher to encourage the learners to overcome all the challenges they encounter through the process of leaning. Teaching and learning is an evolving process that occurs on an ongoing basis, and input should be given to measure the pr ogress made by learners. Freeman (2002) indicates that the key factor behind the departure of teachers from this profession to another job is the lack of motivation due to certain problems faced in their career, such as excess workload, burden and lack of administrator help and consideration, behavioral problems of students in regular and special education, disruptive a nd disrespectful parents, salaries and personal circumstances (Saeed, 2015: 23-24).

6.5. Limited Resource Accessibility

Another difficulty faced by English teachers is the issue of resources. Garton et al (2011: 740) indicates that "in some countries, such as South Korea and Malaysia, textbooks are set; in Singapore and China, teachers can select from government-approved books, yet, it is a matter that in many countries appropriate books are either not available or not used in the classroom". Additionally, Ajibola (2010: 97) discussed that "the inadequacy of resources also constitutes a trial to the English teaching and the larger number of students is the large number of sources is needed".

6.6. Lack of Teaching Aids and Facilities

The deficiency of teaching materials and facilities prevent teachers to embody an effective teaching process. It is argued that "language could only be understood by practicing all the four skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing". Consequently,There is a vital role in the provision of teaching equipment and it needs to be provided as soon as possible, o therwise it will not be possible for teachers to teach effectively. In other words, learners are more familiar with English as a foreign language and urgently need learning opportunities to be properly introduced to the target language(Pande: 2013: 417).

6.7. Linguistic Problems

In general, using native language in the classroom represents another problem in having a successful teaching and learning process. Accordingly, The linguistic issues are categorized into two groups as English teaching challenges: first, most grammar, morphology, sy ntax, and spelling inaccuracies. Second, by using English, the majority of students have trouble expressing themselves.The first issue is also strengthened by Khan (2011) that "specific problem connected to pronunciation, stress, and intonation become problem for students" .Because of the first language or mother tongue intrusion, there is a linguistic issue. Teachers and students o ften speak their mother-tongue language, which unintentionally affects their success in English (Cited in. Songbatumis, 2017: 57). Additionally, When teachers and students speak in their mother tongue, they often use English words in the middle of phrases, ignori ng that stress, intonation, and pronunciation differ in every language (Pande, 2013: 416).

6.8.Psychological problems

The psychological issues contribute to the common misinterpretation among students that English is the most difficult of a ll subjects, i.e. English is regarded by most students as a difficult school subject that is difficult to pass. As with Fatiloro (2 015), TEFL's daunting challenge is meeting the terrible attitude of learners in learning English.
Students, for example, feel shy about talking in front of their peers, particularly
when it comes to the presence in the classroom of a competitive student. Another example applies to learners who enrol ou tside schools for English courses. . As with Khajloo (2013), these students have higher academic level than others and when they "listen to repetitive low-level content for them, they find it unattractive and boring" . These psychological challenges can influence students' motivation and learning attitude toward English language (Cited in. Songbatumis, 2017: 58).
Freeman (2002) discusses that missing of teaching motivation is the cause why teachers are earnesly considering giving this career to another one d ue to some problems such as (1) redundant work, (2) stress and missing assist and respect from administrators (3) behavior problems of constant and particular education students (4) divisive and unrespectful parents (5) salary and (6) personal pressure is also an underlying trend discovered and explored in the data in relation to all the motives. As a result, English is a very important language that is almost taught as a main topic throughout the world in schools as it becomes very essen tial for all professions. Students in Arab countries face multiple difficulties in learning English, which in turn affects the te aching process.The most common complaints among most students who study English are pronunciation and speech, beca

use most students do not have sufficient vocabulary to express their attitudes. They still don't have an idea of how to render the correct sentences using the grammar. Computers and different media have been shown to help people learn other languages so that students can rely on themselves, but this does not mean that the teacher's role in the teaching process has disappeared (Adas & Bakir, 2013: 260).

7. Procedures

This section deals with the methodological steps adopted to serve the intent of the current study. Information about the population and the study sample is given in the followings sections. The research method that includes the questionnaire and its validity and reliability is also recorded. Finally, the study's data gathering, data analysis and statistical analysis are illustrated.

7.1. Population of the Study

The study population included all primary public school Iraqi English language teachers in the center of Najaf/Iraq, counting (174) schools and (523) teachers according to the 20192020 general statistics. Table (1) below displays the numbers of teachers in the city center, depending on information collected from the Directorate of Education in Najaf.

Table (1)
Distribution of English teachers in primary schools as per gender in Najaf

Teachers in primary schools	Number	Percentage
Males	111	21%
Females	412	79%
Total	523	100%

7.2. Sample of the Study

The researcher selected a appropriate sample from the large number of teachers to perform this analysis basing on the population under investigation, and according to the limited time and conductivity. The total number of the sample of the present study, which is randomly chosen from primary schools, is (150) English language teachers which represents (25%) from the total numbers, covering different personal information as shown in Appendix (A). Thus, the teachers selected purposively from distinct public schools in Najaf center to participate in this study. The sample of the current study with several demographic variables are shown in Tables (2) (3) (4) and (5) below:

Table (2)
Distribution of English teachers' sample due to gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Males	57	38%
Females	93	62%
Total	150	100%

Table (3)
Distribution of English teachers' sample due to their teaching experience

Experience years	Number	Percentage
0-5	11	7%
6-10	68	45%
11-15	40	27%
More than 15	31	21%
Total	150	100%

Table (4)
Distribution of English teachers' sample due to the attended courses

Number of Training Courses Attended	Number	Percentage
None	13	9%
One	92	61%
Two or More	45	30%
Total	150	100%

Table (5)
Distribution of English teachers' sample as per their level of education

Education	Number	Percentage
Diploma	108	72%
BA	42	28%
Total	150	100%

7.3. Main Instrument of the Study

A questionnaire is designed as a main instrument to accomplish the purpose of the study. The questionnaire is a set of items on a particular topic designed to be answered by a group of participants. The questionnaire has been constructed and distributed to English language teachers of primary schools in Najaf / Iraq to investigate the major problems they might encounter in TEFL. The questionnaire was designed on the bases of similar former questionnaires done by certain

researches for investigating the challenges of TEFL in different areas of the world such as Saeed (2015). The questionnaire consisted of two parts; first, the personal information of participants including the teaching experience, number of training courses of the participants and their gender as well as their educational degree. The next section was designed to provide information needed to detect the main challenges related to the experties of the teachers. Twenty items were listed and the participants (teachers) must agree, partially agree or disagree on by giving their suggestions if they have any supported idea.

7.4. Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument refers to the way the test looks to a group of experts, examinees, test administrators, educators and the like. To achieve the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire is given to a jury consisted of experts in the field of EFL and linguistics (see Appendix B) whose involvement was required to assess the substance of the questionnaire's validity. From their point of view, they wer e asked to check the appropriateness and coherence of the questionnaire items.. The jurors give certain comments and recommendations regarding the sufficiency of the items of the questionnaire. The jury have accepted that the items are enough for the purpose of the study after taking into considerations slight modifications such as correcting some words and phrases.

7.5. Data Collection and Statistical Analysis

After attaining the validity of the questionnaire, the researcher administrated its final version to 50 Iraqi English language teachers of public primary schools from different areas of Najaf. Then, the raw data were collected from the respondents and analyzed . They were asked to select one out of three options showing their agreement, partially agreement or disagreement on the provided statements that indicate the problems they might face in TEFL. The results were displayed as follows:

1.The responses of each item were written down manually utilizing a sheet.

2.Utilizing comments and descriptions of higher and lower rates, the results were clarified in tables.

3. The statistical findings are prepared in terms of frequencies and percentages. So, with the following findings, the administration cames out:

Table (6)
The Weighted Mean of the Questionnaire Items
(Frequencies and percentages)

No	Evaluation Items	Availability of the Problem			Total
		Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	
1.	I do not have adequate experience in teaching English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).	33 22%	51 34%	66 44%	150 100%
2.	I am not familiar with the best teaching strategies.	90 60%	12 8%	48 32%	50 100%
3.	I do not know how to prepare a lesson plan.	84 56%	18 4%	60 40%	50 100%
4.	I am not aware of individual differences among students.	28 56%	7 14%	15 30%	50 100%

No.	Statement				
5.	I do not give remedial classes for weak students.	120 80%	3 2%	27 18%	50 100%
6.	I do not care about feedback from students.	33 22%	27 18%	90 60%	50 100%
7.	I used to teach in the traditional way neglecting the communicative language teaching.	33 22%	30 20%	87 58%	50 100%
8.	There are not enough training courses on language teaching.	138 92%	6 4%	6 4%	50 100%
9.	I have more classes than I can handle.	102 68%	39 26%	9 6%	50 100%
10.	My salary is not convenient.	84 56%	48 32%	18 12%	50 100%
11.	I do not like my career.	15 10%	24 16%	111 74%	50 100%
12.	Students do not have the motivation for learning English.	120 80%	12 8%	18 12%	50 100%
13.	Students are not cooperating with the teacher in directing the lesson.	108 72%	30 20%	12 8%	50 100%
14.	Students do not use English as a foreign language in class (classroom language)but they use their native language all of the time.	135 90%	12 8%	3 2%	50 100%
15.	The learning atmosphere is not suitable for language learning.	120 80%	12 8%	18 12%	50 100%
16.	The basic components such as ventilation, lighting, and teaching supported materials are not enough for achieving successful learning atmosphere.	135 90%	12 8%	3 2%	50 100%
17.	The number of students is large to the extent that the teacher cannot control the lesson easily to access the scientific material.	129 86%	15 10%	6 4%	50 100%
18.	The time specified for the lesson is not sufficient for performing a variety of activities.	84 56%	48 32%	18 12%	50 100%
19.	Textbooks are not provided in sufficient time.	84 56%	24 16%	42 28%	50 100%
20.	Textbooks are not suitable for the levels they are addressed to.	108 72%	24 16%	18 12%	50 100%

On the basis of results shown in Table (6) above, Iraqi EFL teachers seem to confront various challenges in teaching English in the primary public schools in Najaf. Results display that 44% of the respondents have adequate experience in teaching English as far as English skills(listening, reading, speaking and writing) are concerned but only 22% state that their experience is not enough, 34% of them are undecided since they are not sure whether they have enough experience in teaching English language successfully or not. As with the best teaching strategies, the results indicate that 32% of them are definitely familiar with best teaching strategies while 60% of participants are unfamiliar with best teaching strategies,

and   only   8%   of   them   are   neutral.
The above findings show that 40% of respondents know how to practice a lessonplan before they go to class, while 56% do not, and 4% are undecided. In addition, the findings indicate that 30% of teachers are conscious of individual differ ences between their students, while 56% of them do not pay attention to individual differences between students, and 14 % of them are indifferent. It is proposed that 18% disagree with the item saying that "they do not give remedial classes for weak students" while 80% of them agree, and only 2% partially agree.

Concerning the feedback from the students themselves, the results presented in Table (6) show that 60% of the participants disagree that they do not care about feedback from students while 22% of them assume that they agree, and only 18% still partially agree. Furthermore, the results explain that 58% of the participants do not use to teach in the traditional way but 22% agree that they used to follow the traditional ways neglecting the communicative language teaching in teaching language, and 20% use the both. As for the training courses, the statistical findings shown in Table (6) reflect that 92% of the respondents indicate that they need more training courses on teaching since there are not sufficient training courses while 4% assume that there are enough training courses when only 4% of them still undecided. Concerning the schedule of the teacher, only 6% are agree with the number of the classes they have while 68% of the respondents have more classes than they can have, and 26% of them neither agree nor disagree with this fact. Furthermore, 12% of respondents consider their salary to be convenient, while 56% are not happy with their salary and 3 2% are neutral. In addition, 74% of respondents like their   work, while 10% do not like them, and 16% are indifferent.

Due to students' motivation, the findings also display that 12% of the respondents state that their students have adequate motivation for learning English whereas 80% of them point out that their students do not have any motivation while 8% partially agree. The outcomes also show that only 8% of the respondents disagree that their students are not cooperating with them in directing the lesson while 72% of them show their agreement in facing this problem, and 20% still undecided. Moreover, it is shown that 2% of the participants disagree that the students do not use English as a foreign language anymore in the classroom which means that the majority of the participant which represent 90% agree in encountering such problem and only 8% of them are partially agree. Concerning whether the learning atmosphere is suitable   for   language   learning   or   not,
The majority of 80% of respondents agree with this fact, while 12% disagree with it and the rest are neutral, which is 8%.

Table (6) above reveals that the outcomes of respondents who disagree with it are 2%, meaning that the outcomes of those who approve are 90% and
the neutral percentage is just 8%, as to whether or not the basic components such as ventilation, lighting, and teaching sup ported materials are convenient in classrooms.
The findings mirror that 4% of the respondents disagree that the classes is overcrowded with students while 86% of them agree and 10% of the are in between. When it comes to deal with whether the time specified for the lesson is not sufficient, it is shown that 12% of the teachers disagree that the specified time is not sufficient for performing different activities while 56% of them agree and the rest percentage which is 32% choose to be undecided.
Table (6) above shows that 28% of respondents disagree with the fact that' textbooks are not given in sufficient time' with respect to whether or not textbooks are provided in sufficient time, although 56% of respondents agree and the remainder, which is 24%, are indifferent. Finally, it is suggested in the table above that 12% of respondents disagree that textbooks ar e not adequate for the levels at which they are submitted, whereas 72% agree and only 16% are undecided.

To   sum   up,
the challenges of teaching English in Iraqi public primary schools in Najaf have been identified by the statistical findin gs in Table (6). Due to the challenges that meet teaching English as a foregin language at the primary level, it is seen that there are important differences in teacher responses.

8. Conclusions

   It is indicated that there are several obstacles in the processes of teaching English in the primary public schools in Najaf /Iraq. Therefore, the following constraints impede teachers from achieving their career perfectly:

1.Item number (8) which reads "There are not enough training courses on language teaching" has got higher percentage which is (92%).

2.Two items have got the second order with a percentage of (90%), these items are:

 (14) Students do not use English as a foreign language in class (classroom language) whereas they use their native language all of the time.

 (16) The basic components such as ventilation, lighting, and teaching supported materials are not enough for achieving successful learning atmosphere.

3. Item number (17) which states" The number of students is large to the extent that the teacher cannot   control the lesson easily to access the scientific material " has got the second order with a percentage of (86%).

4. Three items have got a percentage of (80%), and these items are:

(5) I do not give remedial classes for weak students

(12) Students do not have the motivation for learning English.

(15) The learning atmosphere is not suitable for language learning.

5. The items (13, 20) have got a percentage of (72%), and they read:

(13) Students are not cooperating with the teacher in directing the lesson.

(20) Textbooks are not suitable for the levels they are addressed to.

6. The item number (9) stating "I have more classes than I can handle" has got a percentage of (68%).

7. The item number (2) stating " I am not familiar with the best teaching strategies " has got a percentage of (60%).

8. Five items have got a percentage of (72%), and these items are:

(3) I do not know how to prepare a lesson plan.

(4) I am not aware of individual differences among students.

(10) My salary is not convenient.

 (18) The time specified for the lesson is not sufficient for performing a variety of activities.

(19) Textbooks are not provided in sufficient time.

9. The items (1, 6, 7) have got a percentage under 50% which is (22%,) and these items read:

(1) I do not have adequate experience in teaching English.

(6) I do not care about feedback from students.

(7) I used to teach in the traditional way neglecting the communicative language teaching.

10. The item which have got the lowest percentage is (11) which reads" I do not like my career", and the percentage is (10%).

9. Recommendations

In the light of the results given above the researcher proposes such solutions as follows:

1.In order to be subject to high expectations, the Ministry of Education must concentrate on the employment system of teachers in primary schools.

2.Training courses and seminars should be held on a regular basis by the General Directorate of Education in Najaf for all t eachers who neglect their expertise to keep them up-to-
date with anything fresh that concerns the best teaching strategies. In addition, upgrading the teaching process with new te aching methods will strengthen the skills of experienced teachers and can also help develop the classroom learning atmosp here so that students are fluent speakers.

3.Teachers can concentrate simultaneously on the four main English skills and do not neglect any skill at the detriment of t he other. Accordingly, appropriate and newly adapted training courses allow teachers to get rid of old or traditional teachi ng strategies that have a detrimental impact on the teaching process and contribute to student weakness.

4.Teachers should avoid spending a long time talking as much as possible during their classes in the native language of the students   (Iraqi-
Arabic) because using the native language in the classroom could discourage students from using English to communic ate with their teachers and rely more on their native language, which makes them unable to speak English fluently.

 Although, it is natural for students, especially at primary level, translate whatever happens into their native language but it is necessary for an English classroom to have English language in it.

5. The General Directorate of Education have to encourage the English teachers in order to specify a particular room or laboratory at their schools that are equipped well and designed for English classes. The suitable facilities and authentic materials are essential in learning process. Such facilities can help the students to achieve high level of proficiency and create a learning environment that is safe and secure.

6.The number of students in classes should be reduced, so teachers should split them into groupsand sections for English s essions or use pairwork and group work to minimize the involvement of students. In this sense, teachers will maximize the   motivation of students by motivating and offering encouragement, guidance, and rewarding them by word and deed.

7.
In conjunction with the school administration, the General Directorate of Education should provide students with additio nal courses as remedial classes during the summer holidays in order to develop their skills and increase their desire to lear n English as a second language. Moreover, teachers have to utilize different materials and activities in which many groups can be shaped and excellent students can help weaker ones.

8. The Ministry of Education have to provide all schools in Najaf with suggested lessons' plans and teaching aids for all levels to facilitate teachers' career.

9. Experienced teachers should be chosen by the Ministry of Education to teach in primary schools since it is a significant prelude before arriving at the intermediate level.

10. The curriculum should be reviewed by specialists in order to include variety of interesting topics that would be sufficient for performing a variety of activities

and enrich the knowledge of t

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Appendix (A)
Teachers' Questionnaire

NOTE: *The information collected is going to be used only for academic purposes. Kindly,* answer the statements *by selecting the appropriate option.*

Personal Information

1. 3 . Gender: Female   Male

2. Years of Experience :

0-5 years   years   11 - 15   More than 15 years

3 .Training courses you have attended :

None	⬭ raining courses	Two trai ⬭ ses and more		⬭
4 . Educational Degree: Diploma		⬭	⬭	

No	Evaluation Items	Availability of the Problem			Suggestions
		Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	
1.	I have adequate experience in teaching English(listening, speaking, reading, and writing).				
2.	I am familiar with the best teaching strategies.				
3.	I always prepare a lesson plan.				
4.	I am aware of individual differences among students.				
5.	I give remedial classes for weak students.				
6.	I care about feedback from students.				
7.	I used to teach in the traditional way neglecting the communicative language teaching.				
7.	I need more training courses on language teaching.				
8.	I have more classes than I can handle.				
9.	My salary is convenient.				
10.	I like my career.				
11.	Students have the motivation for learning English				
12.	Students are cooperating with the teacher in directing the lesson.				
13	Students keep using English as a foreign language in the class.				
14.	The learning atmosphere is suitable for language learning.				
15.	The basic components such as ventilation and lighting are convenient in classrooms.				
16.	The teaching supported materials are enough for achieving successful learning atmosphere.				

17.	The number of students is appropriate to the extent that the teacher can control the lesson easily access the scientific material.				
18.	The time specified for the lesson is sufficient for performing a variety of activities.				
19.	Textbooks are provided in sufficient time.				
20.	Textbooks are suitable for the levels they are addressed to				

Appendix (B)
Panel of Specialists

Number	Name	Rank	Specialization	Place of Work
1.	Dr.Hussein D. Muzhir	Assistant Prof.	Linguistics	Unuversity of Kufa
2.	Dr.Musaab A. Raheem	Assistant Prof.	Linguistics	Unuversity of Kufa
3.	Dr. Falih M. Jabur	Lecturer	Literature	Unuversity of Kufa