ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN IRAQ FACE CHALLENGES AND HAVE OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND JUST GIVING KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT
Recently, there have been some significant shifts in teacher education, which has resulted in a reorientation of attention away from transmitting designs and toward alternative models and techniques. These alternative methods and speculations surfaced in the post-transmission period and addressed socially constructed, diplomatic, philosophical, and essential careers. Even though teacher training programs have changed across the board, alternate theories and viewpoints seem to have little to no impact on Iraq's English language teaching (ELT) education agendas. This research examined the issues and difficulties experienced by instructors and educators working in Iraqi academic settings and the relevance of post-transmission viewpoints and theories to that situation. The data were gathered from the opinions and convictions of 8 knowledgeable English instructors, and three teachers were interviewed. The following data collection methods were used: collaborative discussion, reflective narration, and interviews. The data were captured so that new topics relevant to the current educational development in Iraq might be discovered. These topics included barriers, restrictions, and worries in the event of any reform. According to the study's findings, participants believed that educators, instructors, and decision-makers must accept many ideas and techniques to improve what was before and also in English as a foreign language in the Iraqi curriculum for teachers.

INTRODUCTION
Advocates support that teacher educators should take on the role of transformative agents while considering societal change, teachers' power, objectivity, self-identity, values, and beliefs to argue for this concept (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Their objective is to shape teachers into empathetic professionals who are up to the challenge of navigating challenging situations in language classes. Teachers aim to assist their students in becoming better communicators and users of the language, but they also want to provide their pupils with the opportunities and the social space to question, criticize, and investigate the system already in place (Safari & Pourhashemi, 2012). Because English has become the language of choice for participating in worldwide global intellectual debate, difficulties in ELT teacher preparation might provide particularly significant educational concerns that must be addressed. This paper's ideas regarding transformative change and the advancement of that reform result from involvement with and participation in this global intellectual dialogue. It must be emphasized that without such involvement and engagement, change may not occur or may only occur at a speed that is too sluggish to meet the demands of students and society. More study is required to provide decision-makers in policy, education, and teaching with crucial knowledge supporting this method. This post aims to determine the difficulties and problems that English as a Foreign Language educators and teachers face when...
transitioning from transmission- or instructive-based to constructivist- or social constructivist-based learning and teaching methods. In other words, teachers are valued for inspiring a passion for learning in their students. The beloved teacher loves themselves first and foremost as joyous, authentic human beings. Teachers' ability to connect with and understand their students will improve. The qualities of a well-liked teacher include approachability, understanding of individuals, respect for work, discipline in attitude and conduct, and the ability to take the initiative and be innovative. Positively inclined instructors work with positively inclined learners. The classroom serves as a starting point for educational initiatives and a venue for preparing pupils to live in a constantly changing society. Students get specific direct support in the classroom to develop socially and personally and to fulfill the demands of a growing, balanced, healthy community (Khalkhali, 2010).

On the other hand, students with great personalities might magically transform out to be terrible ones. Students with negative personalities often succeed and do well. The instructor's personality affects whether or not pupils are excellent or bad. As a result, it is crucial to develop exceptional character in the teacher before expecting students to do the same, according to Smith and Lastleth (2002). Managing a classroom involves adhering to four rules. Get them in is the first term, which refers to how instructors introduce a group or class. This guideline applies to commencing, sitting down, and introducing oneself. The second guideline outlines how educators should conclude a conference or class by saying, "Get them out." This rule calls for summarising the exchange before going on. The third rule is to "get on with it," which refers to the lesson's main points, such as the content it covers and how it is presented. The fourth principle, getting along with them, tells teachers to develop healthy, lifelong connections with their students.

Several different language views have influenced teachers' education during the previous century. Both were instructing and being instructed. Since the beginning of teacher education programs, the goal has been to provide student teachers with teaching materials, educational methodologies, and specific approaches that build confidence and stability for new teachers (Mann, 2005). Johnson (2009) asserts that adopting an interpretative posture requires a shift from observational research to ethnographic accounts. These ethnographic accounts are based on teacher interviews, observations, and descriptions of their practices to understanding why things are done the way they are. However, many individuals thought this viewpoint paid little attention to the student's learning and instead put an inordinate amount of stress on the instructors' views, past knowledge, and abilities. Even though it has been recognized that teachers' mental lives play a significant role in their development as thoughtful and skillful practitioners, this is still the case (Izadinia, 2012). As a result, it would be impossible to create a tangible link between the past knowledge of the instructors and the new information acquired by the pupils (Cochran-Smith, 2004). While there is consensus on the advantages of reserve learning, disagreement still exists regarding specific vital points. The caliber of these programs is a crucial point of contention. Some of the quality issues in distance learning programs, according to Hope et al. (2006), are (1) restricted use of innovation and a greater reliance on traditional teaching methods, (2) staff members' lack of awareness of the quality characteristics of propulsion systems, (3) a general lack...
of efficiency in administrative systems, and (4) the absence of standardized criteria to evaluate the level of services. Another possible outcome of cognitive stress is attrition.

Cognitive overload was shown to be a significant factor in early attrition among first-time e-learners, according to Tyler-(2006) Smith's research. According to Tyler-Smith, building mental models progressively over time is the key to understanding complex content (2004, p. 7). Learning new information or skills may soon overload working memory without a long-term schema. Studying new and unfamiliar information without mental models results in cognitive overload, commonly referred to as a "brain blackout." Cognitively overloaded adult students grow irritated because they cannot understand the content and may finally give up on their education. We believe that distant learners in Botswana often face cognitive stress. This may be due to their missing out on vast amounts of academic work while away from school, which they then encountered upon their return. They sometimes received little organizational help and had little time to get used to the new surroundings. It might cause mental overload in addition to their job and family responsibilities.

Its unique approach to knowledge representation is one aspect of the post-modern perspective that sets it apart. In opposition to modernity, which aims to unearth a single, post-colonialism embraces diversity, difference, and a multiplicity of narratives in addition to alternate ways of communicating and explaining. This contrasts with rationalism, which seeks to establish a coherent reality and merge various data types into a compelling narrative (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). A variety of voices and narratives portraying the many realities and experiences that marginalized people have had in educational settings can thus be expected from a post-modern perspective. The post-modern approach gives instructors a liberating autonomy that enables them to improve their critical thinking skills (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), promoting the emergence of various voices and viewpoints. The post-modern worldview has been linked to this occurrence.

According to the findings of research conducted in Nigeria in 2005 by Ukpo (which was quoted in Kamau, 2007), the following variables are primarily responsible for the high failure rates experienced by instructors who are enrolled in open and remote learning programs: the inability of trainees to obtain required learning materials promptly, student participation in extracurricular activities that contribute to the financial well-being of their families and insufficient learner support services, particularly in cases when study centers lack resources and are already operating at capacity.

According to another research on instruction carried out at various locations by Fast (1995), sixty percent of students attending classes at distant locations were unhappy that they were not allowed to speak with their professors directly (cited in Simonson et al., 2000). Like Kamau (2007), who asserts that school performance will undoubtedly be undermined, dropout rates will rise, and procrastination will rise in the absence of an efficient system of learner support services that offer on-site face-to-face tutorials, prompt feedback on student performance, and access to library services.
METHOD

This qualitative study examines the current condition of English language teacher education in Iraq via the perspectives and understandings of Iraqi teachers and instructors. The three data collection tools employed in the design of the study scheme required the collection of information from many various sources, such as reflective narration, group discussion, and interviews. In this research, the conclusions from each data source were independently examined and corroborated using three data sources. The reflexive narrative was first suggested as a strategy for data collection by Pinar (2004). Utilizing was done to emphasize the instructors' individuality, power, and the several voices in the narrative consist of four stages: the advancing, the critical, the retrograde, and the creative. The regressive step involves discussing and reflecting on the experiences of the teachers. The second data collection method, group discussion, was used to confirm the data. The groups of educators attended separate sessions with the academics. Iraqi teacher training. Included in this were details on their roles and duties within the existing teacher training system, how the dominant system disenfranchised them, and how the authority imbalance system impacted them are all aspects of the educational system. Interviews are among the most often used techniques for grounded theory qualitative data collection., which comprise the third data collection method in the current study. 10 English teachers, 3 males, 7 females, and 3 educators (2 males and 1 female participated in this qualitative study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After acquiring the data, the researchers used "participant observation" to guarantee its accuracy, reliability, or quality. Confirmability is a triangulation technique used after data collection that entails requesting participants to verify the correctness of the transcripts of their processes and providing them the chance to clarify or add to the content. Following is a list of the five most important themes that surfaced during the interpretation of the transcripts:

1) The superiority of the learning and teaching paradigm is known as "transmission;"
2) The closed-off and exclusive character of the educational system;
3) The unwillingness to update knowledge;
4) Prerequisites for the development of analytical and deductive reasoning; and
5) The disconnect between educators' most recent information and the system's requirements.

These topics reflected the opinions and experiences of educators and teachers about the situation of teacher development in Iraq and the contribution of different approaches, philosophies, and points of view in the current ELT teacher education programs in the nation. The following discussion of each subject begins with a participant's reply that responds to the problem(s) brought up.

The Superiority of the Learning and Teaching Paradigm is Known as "Transmission"

Teachers are expected to participate in a yearly professional development event that the Education System hosts. Because the lecturer keeps coming around and giving lectures, I do not
believe these seminars are helpful. As listeners, we are responsible for taking notice of everything spoken in class. We should utilize the materials covered in the course and refresh our expertise. These in-service sessions lack interaction and participation activities. (P1).

This statement from a teacher trainee exemplifies the predominance of the transfer strategy used in Iraqi plans for teacher training. Teachers listen to instructors speak on the philosophy and practice of ELT as recipients of knowledge, skills, input, and instruction. This source and destination paradigm is built on the premise that communication is a predetermined pattern conveyed, decoded, and transferred from the theory of understanding to the learner, as stated by Harris (1996). The conduit metaphor emphasizes how passive teachers are since they only transfer knowledge to their brains, which act as independent input processors detached from their bodies.

As stated by one of the teacher participants: The educator is an authority in all facets of education, including pedagogy (with its many approaches, methods, ideas, and processes), as well as the language being taught. Our instructors are there to assist us with any problems that may arise and to give us knowledge. (P4)

This education centered on experts presupposes that instructors do not have the capacity or power to take responsibility for how they learn to teach and how to organize, evaluate, and assess their learning. Because It is taken as a given that the continuing education and professional development of teachers are in the capable hands of specialists, independence, self-control, and reflective thinking are overlooked. Teachers lose confidence in their behaviors, practices, and intercultural competence. Aspects of the context in which they are instructing their students. The authoritarian structure of the education system does not permit teachers to develop into critical and reflective practitioners who can act upon and question the instructional facts and information taken for granted within their classrooms. The system imposes this dearth of authority and voice.

The Closed-Off and Exclusive Character of the Educational System

The Ministry of Education is responsible for overseeing teacher training in Iraq. This autonomous ministry is responsible for selecting competent applicants from those interested in the education industry via university admission tests. Hiring and supporting teachers financially and defining the obligations of teachers. The Ministry of Education's learning curve associations with locations in Iraq's cities to enhance teachers' professional expertise. Decisions about in-service instructor training are decided by individuals holding significant roles within the education sector. This method has two serious shortcomings. The first is a complete absence of connections to other institutions engaged in education systems. The second is recruiting individuals without sufficient or relevant educational (including language courses) credentials for essential posts. Some individuals have chosen to specialize in a subject that has nothing to do with education or teaching. Depending on the situation, they may or might not have experience teaching a foreign language. Teachers and instructors suffer from isolation and a lack of connection with the larger scientific community since it makes them less aware of developments in the field of language education. This motivates Teachers and instructors to be even more passive since no one outside the system can hear what they say. Concerning this concern, a teacher said: We are a part of a system that is
English Language Teachers in Iraq Face Challenges and Have Opportunities Beyond Just Giving Knowledge

isolated from other organizations. The college professionals and informed individuals are not in contact with teachers and instructors. We are in a tightly constrained and confined universe. Universities and the educational system do not communicate to affect science. I believe that this system robs individuals of any freshness. (P 10).

If teacher education programs do not include a gathering place that will encourage improved interaction and collaboration with other intellectual universities and educational institutions, they will not be successful venues for renewing and updating language instructors' professional expertise. Teachers, the most crucial part of the system, need frequent chances to upgrade their knowledge and skills to function effectively. This can only be accomplished by allowing instructors to interact with competent professionals in the area by participating in events like language teaching conferences and seminars hosted by universities.

The Unwillingness to Update Knowledge

I consider that maximum Iraqi EFL instructors have neither the inclination nor the drive to refresh their expertise in their field. Instead, based on their prior experiences, individuals are pleased with their daily routines. Every action taken toward professional growth incurs costs, including time and effort, which the Ministry of Education does not compensate for. There is no differential in pay based on a teacher's level of expertise; the exact amount is given to every educator (P 5).

A notion that intrinsic and motivational factors impact teachers' dedication to professional development is suggested by the teacher's words. If teachers are personally content with their job and get external recognition and encouragement for their efforts from outside authorities, they are more likely to advance their knowledge and abilities professionally. Autonomy is "the ability to assume responsibility for one's learning," according to Holec (1981, page 3). Others have developed this idea by broadening its application to include the training and development of skills such as self-initiative, judgment, and accurate assessment (Little, 1991). This indicates that independent people must be accountable for their knowledge by developing objectives, keeping track of their accomplishments, and eventually achieving those goals. The foundational tenets of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, which stresses the transformative duties of teachers and students, are closely related to this kind of autonomy since it necessitates the inclusion of cultural and social elements. As a result, in our present teacher education system, educators must encourage both types of autonomy to convince their pupils to become educators. Cultivating emancipatory independence is of utmost significance for those studying to become teachers. They learn how to free themselves from the restrictive labels that the system and society have placed on them via liberator autonomy. By challenging commonly accepted facts and presumptions, student teachers take on the role of transformational thinkers, identifying the societal and cultural barriers preventing their advancement. By fostering a democratic environment, instructors may help student teachers become more conscious of their social positions and the sociopolitical concerns and ideas that impact them. This then creates space for the emergence of their speech and power.
Prerequisites for the Development of Analytical and Deductive Reasoning

One of the lecturers observed the function and significance of rational reflection within the context of Iraq's educational system: *I believe that the notion of critical thinking is culturally restricted and does not fit into current culture. I did not understand how to think appropriately growing up. Students in Iraqi classrooms are not allowed to criticize the instructors. Instructors detest being chastised by misbehaving pupils. I am not too fond of it when professors and students challenge my methods of instruction.* (P6).

The comment from the above teacher demonstrates a lack of knowledge of the notion of critical thinking. In Iraqi academic institutions, this concept has not been investigated significantly more significantly in teacher education, which might be one explanation. Regarding students' disruptive behavior and the sanctions employed to discourage it, Iraqi instructors and professors commonly mistakenly regard critical thought as disorderly behavior that must be managed and controlled. The dominance of the financial services paradigm of instruction, where the instructor is the sole power source and focuses on upholding silence in the classroom to facilitate knowledge transmission, may be a factor in the lack of critical thinking in Iraqi classrooms. Management and control must be prioritized to develop a thriving learning environment. Education professionals must provide a democratic climate that fosters critical thinking to produce reflective student teachers. Siddiqui (2007) claims the actions liberationists and justice-seekers take to assist them in dealing with problems in the actual world. Research focuses on understanding, which promotes individuals to think critically to change their and others' social lives by battling the injustices of a repressive society, which is connected to critical thinking. Critical thinking skills are necessary for student teachers to analyze factual information and accept change. We must include critical thinking in our educational system to give marginalized student teachers a voice. To successfully integrate, educators in Iraq first need to grasp critical thinking. Patry (1996) believes critical thinking literature must be accessible for free. The responsible authorities in charge of education should devote some of the time and resources available to the curriculum to encourage critical thinking.

The Disconnect between Educators' Most Recent Information and the System's Requirements

Action and the execution of efficient professional development are hampered by teachers' current knowledge not being in line with the requirements of educational environments. Teachers lose interest and passion in learning new ideas, facts, and understanding when they believe the technical expertise acquired via active involvement in career development is not helpful in classroom settings. In reality, instructors are often likely to enhance their classroom performance by expanding their expertise in subjects pertinent to language instruction. This was shown at a work-related training I once attended via an association dedicated to education. The subject of the course was innovative for grade two of a high school English course. In the first session, the instructor read passages from the textbook sentence by sentence while analyzing their morphological characteristics, which took up six hours of the first session. I was so astonished by...
this strategy that I opted out of continuing. However, I saw that every one of my coworkers was attentively listening and taking notes. I objected to the teacher that the course should have been on creative teaching techniques rather than grammar. The teacher remained silent. However, one of my coworkers who participated in this study reported the following intriguing comments:

Mr. Zanyar! All of these are items that may be used in our various teaching settings. Perhaps a student will run into an issue and approach us with questions. What action should we take? This instructor’s lesson has proven to be quite beneficial for us. Why should our teachers try to teach us ideas, concepts, and knowledge that is so challenging for all of us to comprehend? (P8)

Because of these remarks, we realize that instructors seek professional information connected to their classroom instruction requirements. The modern ELT strategy that the Iraqi government officially supports emphasizes information exchange. This emphasis extends to the transmission of information about grammar. As a result, instructors anticipate this will be the primary focus of in-service sessions. Without the education system embracing and implementing these ideas, it is unlikely that attempts to increase teachers' awareness of and proficiency in educational approaches that successfully incorporate post-modern worldviews into the classroom would be effective.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, the researcher provided the outcomes of a study that looked at post-transmission, post-modern, and post-method pedagogical characteristics. In addition, the researchers investigated the extent to which these various teaching strategies, ideas, concepts, and theories may be helpful in the education of Iraqi teachers of English to speakers of other languages. This study was carried out as part of our investigation into post-transmission, post-modern, and post-method pedagogical features. In addition, the researcher spoke about their perspectives on the challenges, fears, and problems they face, as well as the opportunities that these diverse points of view allowed teachers and educators to deviate from the method now supported by the educational system. According to the study's findings, participants believed that Iraq's legislators, educators, and instructors needed to embrace various beliefs, concepts, and practices to improve upon what had been done before and also in teacher training for English language teachers in Iraq. Nevertheless, because it is intertwined with sociopolitics, culture, and ideology, every step to achieve this transition must be thoroughly researched. In addition, more research has to be carried out to identify the most effective and suitable strategies for putting the concepts presented in this study into action and implementing them.

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English Language Teachers in Iraq Face Challenges and Have Opportunities Beyond Just Giving Knowledge


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