

# Pre-service English Teachers' Perceptions Toward Effective English Teachers: A Study of English Student Teachers in a Faculty of Education at a Thai University

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## Abstract

This research article aimed to investigate the characteristics of an effective English teacher as perceived by first-year English student teachers. The purposeful selection was utilized to select 26 English student teachers in the first year of the English major at Rajabhat Rajanagarindra University, Chachoengsao Province, as samples. The instruments for collecting data were a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire consists of three main categories: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skill. After the process of data collection was completed, descriptive statistics, content analysis, and manifest content were used to illustrate the respondent's responses. The findings revealed that first-year English student teachers rated pedagogical knowledge as having the highest rank out of the three categories. English student teachers seemed to agree more strongly that an effective English teacher should provide students opportunities to use English through tasks and activities, provide activities that attract students to be interested, and use various teaching strategies to help students learn because one effective teaching strategy might not fit for every group of students. It is therefore important for English teachers to learn their students' behaviors and their learning style preferences. The findings of the study have practical implications for English student teachers themselves as future English teachers, as it can be a useful tool to help them develop and enhance their teaching techniques, English language proficiency, and behaviors in order to be successful within their intended field of teaching in future careers.

**Keywords:** Effective English Teachers; English Student Teachers; Subject Matter Knowledge; Pedagogical Knowledge; Socio-affective Skills

## Introduction

English is widely acknowledged as a crucial foreign language in Thailand, both in the academic and professional sectors (Foley, 2005). However, the English proficiency of Thai students is still not high enough to be considered satisfactory, based on several studies. Waluyo (2019) conducted a study with first-year students in a university in Thailand, and the result revealed that in accordance with the CEFR, 77.3% of the students were at the level of basic users (A1 and A2). In the Thai educational system, these levels correspond to the abilities of students in primary and junior high schools. Additionally, Thai test takers performed much lower than test takers from other Southeast Asian nations based on the results of two international standardized examinations, the TOEFL and the TOEIC (Khamkhien, 2010). There is also the most recent report that Education First (EF) revealed in 2022. Five competency levels are determined by the EF English competency Index: Very High, High, Moderate, Low, and Very Low. The English proficiency of Thai students was in the Very Low competency range. According to Education First (EF), examples of tasks that students who received a score on the Very Low Proficiency band can perform include presenting oneself briefly (name, age, and country of origin), comprehending straightforward signs, and providing basic instructions to a foreign visitor. However, such progress is still insufficient to accommodate the activities of a country that is well-known for its tourism and growing international trade. (Waluyo, 2019).

There are no doubt that good and qualified teachers are essential for an effective educational system to enhance the quality of learning. Teachers are essential in the classroom playing a vital role in enhancing students' learning as well as students' achievement (Markley, 2004). Although effective teachers in general may share some common characteristics, certain characteristics depend on the subjects they teach. Some researchers believe that it is the nature of the subject matter that makes language teachers different from teachers in other fields (Hammadou & Bernhar, 1987). There are several characteristics of an effective foreign teacher including subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. Also, teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and assumptions about teaching and teacher efficacy affect the way they understand and organize instruction (Chacon, 2005).

It is also essential to study the perceptions of English Student teachers about learning and teaching simply because their beliefs and perceptions about learning seem to be obviously relevant to the understanding of the course or instruction once they become new English teachers. Moreover, this provides English Student teachers as well as English teachers with the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of language acquisition. A clear image of what an effective English teacher is like can give English Student teachers access to their own perspectives in order to better understand the process of learning and acquiring the English language and to develop their personalities, qualifications, English language skills, and teaching skills in order to position themselves for success as future English teachers after receiving their degrees.

## **Research Objectives**

The objective of this study is as follows:

To investigate the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by first-year English student teachers at a Thai university in Thailand.

## **Literature Review**

### **The characteristics of an effective foreign language teacher**

Various previous studies on effective language teachers need to be discussed here for the fact that the goal of teacher education is to produce more quality teachers (Bernhardt & Hammadou, 1987; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Velez-Rendon, 2002). This discussion has been centered on a teacher's knowledge base in terms of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Velez-Rendon (2002) clearly defined subject matter knowledge as what teachers know fully about what to teach, and pedagogical knowledge is when teachers know exactly how to teach their subjects. In other words, subject matter knowledge in foreign language education basically refers to the target language proficiency, while pedagogical knowledge refers to the methodology of teaching, testing, and second/foreign language acquisition theories.

Indeed, foreign language proficiency has been considered as a crucial variable important to foreign language teaching (Buchmann, 1984; Lafayette, 1993). Buchmann (1984) argued that teachers' command of a foreign language made it possible to use the target language in class, personalizes lesson according to students' backgrounds, and facilitate effective lesson planning.

Having proficiency in the target language is not efficient enough to transmit the knowledge to students. That being said, teaching pedagogical knowledge included ideas, concepts, analogies,

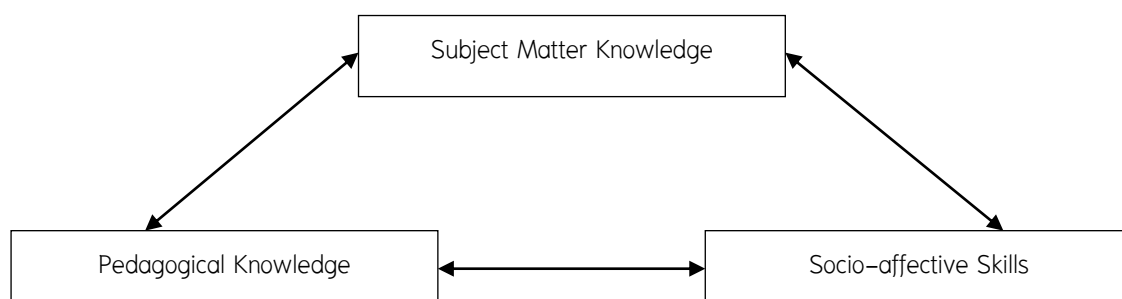
explanations, and demonstrations used to make the subject matter comprehensible to students (Shulman, 1986). Shulman's argument implies that foreign language learning theories and teaching methodology are also important in foreign language education.

As regards teacher effectiveness, Brosh (1996) and Molica and Nuessel (1997) consider socio-affective skills to be crucial as well in terms of defining the characteristics of effective teachers. These skills are related to the teacher-student relationship. Brosh (1996) found that an effective language teacher is someone who has knowledge and command of the target language, is able to organize, explain, and clarify the lessons, arouses and sustains interest and motivation among students, is fair to students by showing none of favoritism and prejudice and being available to students both inside and outside of the classroom. Obviously, the importance of these skills has been recognized in many areas of foreign language education, for instance, research in foreign language acquisition theories (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1996), motivation (Dornyei, 1998), and learning strategies.

Even the concept of socio-affective skills is somehow overlapped with pedagogical knowledge in a wide sense. However, these skills are worth being discussed independently rather than under the pedagogical knowledge category.

To conclude, the characteristics of an effective foreign language teacher consist of three main categories: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. These findings imply that the English teacher in Thailand who is able to demonstrate these dimensions of knowledge will be more effective than those who do not (Park & Lee, 2006).

Figure 1 illustrates the interdependent nature of the characteristics of an effective foreign language teacher, which is suggested by Park & Lee (2006).



**Figure 1:** The Characteristics of an Effective English Teacher Teachers' Perception

When talking about the perceptions of an effective foreign language teacher, it is also worth mentioning both teachers' and students' perceptions. They may have a different perception of what an effective foreign teacher is. This section mainly focuses on teacher perception and in the next section, the focus is mainly on students' perception in order to examine if there are any similarities and differences among them.

Brosh (1996), suggested that teachers rated more weight to items related to developing motivation and research orientation. According to Park and Lee (2006), who conducted their study with teachers and students in high school level in Korea, the finding shows that teachers tend to consider having good English proficiency as the highest rank. Similar to Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) the study conducted in Iran, the finding reveals that teachers perceive features like mastery of the target language, good knowledge of teaching pedagogical, and the use of particular strategies and methods as well as having a good personality for being an effective foreign language teacher.

### **Students' perception**

Students' perception towards the characteristics of effective foreign language teachers is also crucial simply because their perception can obviously help foreign language teachers to reflect their teaching pedagogical, and be able to improve their teaching pedagogical and enhance their teaching materials.

Several studies such as Brosh (1996) show that students tend to rate the items related to treating each student fairly and making lessons interesting and more important as compared with teachers' perception of these very issues. Similarly to the finding of Park and Lee's work (2006), the students rated the items on pedagogical knowledge as the highest rank. Also, Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), in Iran, suggested that students gave more weight to characteristics relating to a teacher's personality and the way he or she behaves towards his or her students.

These studies suggested that teachers and students have different perceptions on the characteristics of effective foreign language teachers. Teachers tend to perceive an effective foreign language teacher to be one who can develop students' motivation, have a decent target language that they teach, and use various strategies to engage the activities in the classroom. On the other hand, students are more likely to prefer an effective foreign language teacher who treats each student fairly and uses teaching pedagogical strategies to create an interesting environment for learning. Both teachers and students, however, share the same perception that an effective foreign teacher is someone who has a good personality.

### Research in the Thai Context

There have been a few studies conducted at the university level in the Thai context. Chen (2012) investigated the positive and negative traits of EFL teachers and found that the sixty respondents, who were undergraduate students were genuinely interested in the personalities and behaviors of the teachers. They perceived that a good teacher should be considerate, approachable, and understanding of the students. In addition, students wanted their teachers to be knowledgeable in the English language and be able to convey the content of the English language in an effective way.

Meksophawannagul (2015) found that having a positive attitude toward the students and being helpful, generous, and caring about them are the characteristics of an effective English teacher. Also, being well-prepared for lessons and providing fun activities were mostly required for effective English teachers as perceived by engineering students at a university in Thailand.

### Research Methodology

This study aimed to investigate the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by first-year English Student teachers. Its research methodology was replicated from Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009). Mainly, data were collected quantitatively; however, the qualitative technique of semi-structured interviews was also utilized for data collection.

It is important to state that the questionnaire in this study was adopted and adapted from Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009). The original questionnaire of Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) included two main parts; 46 statements in the first part of the questionnaire about the characteristics of effective English teachers and the participants were asked to rate the statements based on a five-point Likert Scale (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, no idea = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5). The second part of the original questionnaire consisted of 8 open-ended questions to be answered by the participants.

The questionnaire in this study was adopted from Shishvan and Sadeghi (2009) and adapted to make it relevant to the context of this study and to obtain the data for first-year English student teachers. The statements of the questionnaire about the characteristics of effective English teachers were dropped to 24 statements simply because some of the statements in the original questionnaire were not relevant and meant for the context of this study. Also, the participants were asked to express their agreement and disagreement on each statement based on a four-point Likert Scale. The range of the scales is as follows:

Strongly disagree = 1

Disagree = 2

Agree = 3

Strongly Agree = 4

A four-point Likert Scale is used to represent a certain degree of agreement and disagreement in part 2 of the questionnaire to allow the participants to choose one response among a set of given responses. The scale ranges from Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, and Strongly Agree = 4, unlike the original questionnaire, in which the 'No Idea' scale was deleted simply because the 'No Idea' can lead to ambiguousness in the process of data analysis and the research result. Also, a four-point Likert scale can facilitate the research study to get more specific responses from the participants (Brown, 2010). Moreover, a four-point Likert scale is used to produce an ipsative measure where no indifferent option is available. In other words, it is used to force the participants to give their preferences on each statement whether they agree or disagree which is appropriate for this research study where it aims to investigate the participants' agreement or disagreement on the characteristics of effective English teachers. Behnke and Kelly (2011), Robinson & Shepard (2011), and Zamani & Ahangari (2016) also used a four-point Likert scale in their research studies.

### Interview

The purpose of the interview in this study was to gain a deeper perception and opinions of both English Student teachers about the characteristics of an effective English teacher simply because the open-ended and closed-ended questions in the questionnaire might have been difficult for some participants to follow, which could lead to the loss of important information. Also, the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to clarify any unclear statements or information received from the questionnaire.

**Table 1** The Research Methodology

Research Objectives	Participants	Research Tools	Data Analysis
To investigate the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by first-year English Student teachers.	26 first-year English Student teachers	– The questionnaire – 4 Open-ended questions – Interview	– Descriptive Statistic – Content Analysis – Manifest Content

## Research Results

### Quantitative Data

Objective 1. The results showed that the frequency and percentage of first-year English Student teachers' perception of subject matter knowledge were calculated by hand to investigate the relative importance of the items perceived by first-year English Student teachers. As seen in Table 2, it has shown first-year English Student teachers agreed with every statement that effective English teachers should understand how to speak English well, know English culture well, write English well, pronounce English correctly, speak English well, read English well, have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary, and be fully familiar with English grammar. As one student-teacher said *"An effective English teacher should have a proficiency in English language. Otherwise, they will not be able to transmit the knowledge to students."* Another student-teacher stated *"Learners must use English enough to be good at it, if the teacher does not speak English with students in class. Learning English then is like a waste of time."* Another student-teacher wrote, *"Having proficiency in English is the most important skill in order to be an effective English teacher."*

Interestingly, only two English Student teachers out of all first-year English Student teachers (7.69 percent) did not agree that knowing English culture well is necessary to be an effective English teacher.

**Table 2:** First-year English Student teachers' perception towards Subject matter knowledge

Statements	Agree (%)		Disagree (%)	
	SA	A	D	SD
An effective English teacher is someone who should:				
Understand how to speak English very well	80.77	19.23		
Know English culture well	38.46	53.85	7.69	
Write English well	80.77	19.23		
Pronounce English correctly	76.92	23.08		
Speak English well	69.23	30.77		
Read English well	73.08	26.92		
Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary	34.62	65.38		
Be fully familiar with English grammar	76.92	23.08		
n (first-year English Student teachers) = 26				



Table 3 shows the findings of eight characteristics of effective English teachers in the category of pedagogical knowledge as reported by first-year English Student teachers. Based on the findings, first-year English Student teachers agreed with every statement that effective English teachers should prepare the lesson well, manage the class time well, assign homework to students, teach language learning strategies to learn outside the classroom, use lesson plans, teach English in English, provide opportunities to use English through tasks and activities and provide activities that attracted students to be interested in learning. One student-teacher wrote, *“Knowing how to teach English in an interesting way is the most important skill because if the lesson is not interesting enough, students will not have the motivation to learn.”* Another student-teacher also wrote *“English subject is not for everyone, that means not every student will be interested in learning. Therefore, an effective English teacher should understand that fact and find a way to captivate students’ attention.”* One student also supported similarly *“Even though English teacher is very good at English, that does not make them an effective English teacher if they lack pedagogical knowledge.”*

However, nine English student teachers out of all English student teachers (34.62 percent) did not agree that assigning homework is important. One student teacher mentioned, *“Students do not learn how to speak English well by doing a lot of homework.”*

Three English student teachers out of all English student teachers (11.54 percent) disagreed that using lesson plans is a necessity in the category of pedagogical knowledge. One of them said *“I do not think that being very strict to the lesson plans is a good idea. Sometimes you cannot follow the lesson plans because unexpected incidents can occur anytime. An effective English teacher should know how to adjust and solve the unexpected problem right away. The lesson plans cannot tell you how to solve such a problem.”*

Four English student teachers out of all English teachers (15.38 percent) did not agree with the statement that an effective English teacher should teach English in English. One of them mentioned, *“My high school English teachers used Thai language to teach English in class. That is why I think teaching English in English is not important because I never experienced learning English in English. I would like to explore more in the field.”*

**Table 3** First-year English student teachers' perception towards pedagogical knowledge

Statements	Agree (%)		Disagree (%)	
	SA	A	D	SD
<b>An effective English teacher is someone who should:</b>				
Prepare the lesson well.	88.46	11.54	–	–
Manage the class time well.	92.31	7.69	–	–
Assign homework to students.	11.54	53.85	34.62	–
Teach language learning strategies to learn outside the classroom.	61.54	38.46	–	–
Use lesson plans.	23.08	65.38	11.54	–
Teach English in English.	26.92	57.69	15.38	–
Provide opportunities to use English through tasks and activities.	88.46	11.54	–	–
Provide activities that attracted students to be interested in learning.	88.46	11.54	–	–
n (first-year English student teachers) = 26				

Table 4 shows the frequency of the individual statements in the category of socio-affective skills perceived by first-year English student teachers. It is interesting to note that all students agreed that effective English teachers should listen to students' opinions and let them express themselves, help students to develop their self-confidence to use English, not discriminate between students and treat them fairly, show interest in students by remembering their names, be polite and respect each student's personality, be able to handle criticism, control their temper, and be flexible. One student teacher stated, "*An effective English teacher should be friendly simply because students will not feel reluctant to talk to the teachers.*" Another student teacher said, "*Students will not likely respect teachers who do not treat students well.*"

It is also worth mentioning that two English student teachers out of all English student teachers did not agree that an effective English teacher is someone who should show interest in students by remembering their names. One said "*Teachers cannot remember all the students' names due to the large number of students. However, it does not mean that teachers do not care about students. A lot of times teachers can recognize their students' faces, but not their names.*"

Interestingly, one English student teacher out of all English student teachers did not agree that controlling temper is an important characteristic of being an effective English teacher. One supported that "*Since students and teachers have to work together, without one another, no one can reach their objectives and goals.*"

**Table 4:** English student teachers' perception towards socio-affective skill

Statements	Agree (%)		Disagree (%)	
	SA	A	D	SD
<b>An effective English teacher is someone who should:</b>				
Listen to students' opinion and let them express themselves.	92.31	7.69	–	–
Help students to develop their self-confidence to use English.	80.77	19.23	–	–
Not discriminate between students and treat them fairly.	88.46	11.54	–	–
Show interest in students by remembering their names.	69.23	23.08	7.69	–
Be polite and respect each student's personality.	53.85	38.46	3.85	3.85
Be able to handle criticism.	57.69	42.31	–	–
Control their temper.	84.62	11.54	3.85	–
Be flexible	69.23	26.92	3.85	–
n (first-year English student teachers) = 26				

### Qualitative Data

Three open-ended questions in the questionnaire for English student teachers to state their explanation on each question freely. They aimed to investigate a deeper and more intensive answer to the characteristics of effective English teachers.

The First open-ended question is:

**Are there any other qualities or characteristics that you believe effective English teachers should have besides the ones included above?**

The findings are as follows:

Table 5 illustrates other characteristics of effective English teachers that should be added to the ones that are already included in the quantitative data as mentioned by first-year English student teachers.

### Subject Matter Knowledge

*Have good up-to-date knowledge of the subject.*

Based on the student-teacher respondents, the characteristics of an effective English teacher should have been included was having good up-to-date knowledge of the subject. As an answer to this question, one of the English student teachers wrote, *"It is important for English teachers to update their knowledge since there are always new words or phrases in English."*

### **Pedagogical Knowledge**

*Use technology in classrooms.*

According to the English student teachers' respondents, the characteristic of an effective English teacher that has been mentioned is the ability to use technology in classrooms. As an answer to this question, one of the English student teachers wrote, *"English teachers should be able to use technology in the classroom such as songs, movies, or games to help students learn the language because they are fun, and students can learn the language from other sources other than teachers."*

*Use various teaching strategies to help students learn.*

Moreover, being able to use various teaching strategies to help students learn the language is the characteristic that has been mentioned the most frequently. One of the English student teachers stated, *"It is important for English teachers to notice and learn their students in order to find the right teaching strategy for them. Because one good strategy does not fit all."* Another English student teacher wrote, *"English teachers must understand their students' learning styles so that they can adjust and apply the appropriate teaching method for the students."*

### **Socio-affective Skill**

*Praise students when they use English.*

The next characteristic that appeared was an effective English teacher is someone who should praise students when they use English. One of the English student teachers mentioned, *"An effective English teacher always praises students when they speak English, as well as gives students courage to get through the hardship."* Another English student teacher also wrote, *"English Teachers must not give students bad comments when they speak English incorrectly."*  
*Have a passion towards their career.*

Also, another characteristic that was presented was an effective English teacher is someone who should have a passion for their teaching career. As an answer to this question, one student teacher wrote, *"Having a passion for their teaching and being happy is one of the characteristics of an effective English teacher that cannot be ignored due to the fact that students can have a bad effect if teachers are not happy with what they are doing."*

To conclude, the characteristics of effective English teachers besides the characteristics once included in the quantitative data are having good up to date of the subject, using technology in teaching, using various teaching strategies to help students learn, praising students when they

use English, and having a passion for their career. However, the most frequent characteristic that has been mentioned is the ability to use various teaching strategies to help students learn.

**Table 5:** Main and Sub-themes for English student teachers' perception toward the characteristics besides the ones included in the quantitative data.

Themes	Sub-themes	Frequency
Subject Matter Knowledge	Have good up-to-date knowledge of the subject	1
Pedagogical Knowledge	Use technology in classrooms	3
	Use various teaching strategies to help students learn	6
Socio-affective Skill	Praise students when they use English	3
	Have a passion towards their career	1

The second open-ended question is:

**Are there any differences between English language teachers and other teachers in general? In what sense? Please specify.**

Table 6 illustrates the differences between English teachers and teachers in other subjects as stated by first-year English student teachers. The answers to this question are as follows:

***English teachers use English in classrooms rather than teachers in other subjects.***

According to the English student-teacher respondents, student-teachers perceived that English teachers were distinct from teachers in other subjects because of the language they use in classrooms. One of the English student teachers wrote, *"The difference between English teachers and teachers in other subjects is English teachers use the English language to teach, not students' mother tongue language."*

***Be energetic.***

Moreover, English teachers are energetic and lively since they must prepare a lot of activities to get students engaged and speak in English as much as possible. As an answer to this question, one of the English student teachers stated, *"I think most English teachers have high energy in their lives because students get to do a lot of activities in English classes as English teachers prepare for them."*

***Open to different cultures.***

Apart from using English in classrooms and being energetic, one English student teacher also stated *“I believe English teachers are open to different cultures rather than teachers in other subjects for the fact that they do not only teach the language itself as language is also a part of the culture. How can a person be closed to different cultures when they speak another language other than their own.”*

**Table 6** The differences between English teachers and teachers in other subjects as perceived by first-year English student teachers.

The differences between English teachers and teachers in other subjects	Frequency
Use English in classrooms	16
Be energetic	3
Open to different cultures	1

The third open-ended question is:

**What do you think is the most important characteristic that will make a good English teacher?**

The most important characteristics that will make a good English teacher as perceived by the first-year English student teachers are as follows: –

Table 7 illustrates the most important characteristics that can make a good language teacher as perceived by first-year English student teachers.

Regarding the most important characteristic that can make effective English teachers, first-year English student teachers rated the ability to teach and have various teaching strategies to make students comprehend the lessons and reach their goals (Pedagogical Knowledge) as the highest rank. Interestingly, five students believed that good English teachers possess all three categories—subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills.

**Table 7** Main and sub-themes for the most important characteristic that will make a good English teacher as perceived by first-year English student teachers.

Themes	Sub-themes	Frequency
Subject Matter Knowledge	Have high proficiency in English language.	6
Pedagogical Knowledge	The ability to teach and have various teaching strategies to make students comprehend the lessons.	10
Socio-affective Skill	Have good relationship with students.	5

## Discussions

Based on the findings, first-year English student teachers agreed with every statement on the quantitative data that effective English teachers should have three main qualities, which are English teachers should have well subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge as well as socio-affective skills. Moreover, first-year English student teachers also added more characteristics to effective English teachers, which are, having good up to date of the subject, using technology in classrooms, using various teaching strategies to help students acquire the language, praising students when they use English even when it is not correct, teachers should give courage, and having passion towards their career.

However, four English student teachers (15.38 percent) mentioned that teaching English in English is not necessary, unlike the rest of the English student teachers. This was due to the fact that English student teachers never experienced learning English in English in their prior education.

Interestingly, first-year English student teachers rated the ability to teach or having pedagogical knowledge as the most important characteristic that will make an effective English teacher. As one student teacher wrote, “Teachers must transmit the knowledge to students and make sure they understand the lessons. If teachers do not know the way to do so, they may be not yet successful in their teaching career.” In other words, having pedagogical knowledge is a crucial characteristic of being an effective English teacher. The findings of this study were consistent with those of Chen (2012) and Meksophawannagul (2015) where being able to convey knowledge in an effective way is rated as the highest rank. Interestingly, this finding also confirms the findings of Arnon and Reichel (2007) who found that student teachers who had not begun their teaching career attributed less importance to the subject matter knowledge.

In summary, first-year English student teachers perceive themselves as future English teachers are someone who understand how to get students engaged and help students learn

effectively since the category of having good knowledge of pedagogical was rated as having the highest rank. This is due to having proficiency in the target language is not efficient in transmitting knowledge to students (Shulman, 1986). In other words, successful teaching cannot be achieved with just one strong English language skill. It is also interesting to note that, five English student teachers out of all English student teachers believed that effective English teachers are knowledgeable in all three domains—subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills.

### Knowledge from Research

Being an effective teacher in the context of teaching and learning is being able to maximize the potential of your learners by measuring their progress in terms of academic, psychological, and social outcomes. To put this in simple terms, you are doing your work properly if your instruction and interactive manner lead to improvement fronts (Stevens and Crawley, 1994).

Simply because English student teachers' perceptions can reflect English teachers' teaching effectiveness, it is valuable to investigate them. The future English teachers are, crucially, student teachers. We cannot disregard their voices or their perspectives on how they see themselves in the future. Since they have no prior teaching experience, they have limited experience in voicing their opinions in the context of education. It is, therefore, crucial to pay attention and give their perceptions and voices the respect they deserve.

Since one effective teaching method might not work for every student, first-year English student teachers perceive themselves as having a thorough understanding of how to impart knowledge to their students. It is also important for English teachers to become familiar with the various student types and learning preferences.

### Conclusion

The findings lead us to the conclusion that first-year English student teachers have perceptions of their future selves as having the desirable qualities of a good English teacher. To be effective English teachers, English teachers must be knowledgeable in all three areas (Subject Matter Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Socio-affective Skill).

In terms of the English student teachers' emphasis on English language proficiency, teacher education programs should improve English student teachers' English proficiency as the priority if they want to develop effective teachers. Students wanted their teachers to be



knowledgeable in the English language and be able to convey the content of the English language in an effective way (Chen, 2012). Since teachers are students' primary language resources, having a high proficiency in the English language will be able to help students overcome difficulties in the communicative context.

Additionally, understanding student types and their learning preferences will assist teachers in selecting the most effective teaching method for students at the appropriate proficiency level.

When teachers decide on the most effective way to teach their students, they should not disregard the next step of praising them. Students must be acknowledged for their efforts and encouraged to improve. Teachers must foster in their students the courage they need to work through difficulties and comprehend the process of language acquisition.

As a result of first-year English student teachers' prior educational experiences and the teacher education program, aspiring first-year English student teachers have an idea of what makes an effective English teacher. It will be very interesting to see if their perspectives on what makes an effective English teacher change throughout their teaching education program and after receiving a certain amount of teaching experience. If there is no improvement or change during the teacher's education program, future English teachers will present their students with the same ideas they have now. It is hoped that understanding the characteristics of effective English teachers could help in their professional development.

## **Suggestions**

This study was based on the results of a questionnaire and interview conducted with first-year English student teachers in an educational faculty at Rajabhat Rajanagarindra University, in Thailand. The suggestions are as follows:

An educational department's course syllabus should be designed in a way that can help aspiring English student teachers become effective English teachers. The course syllabus should place a strong emphasis on subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. No skills should be excluded.

The English student teachers are considered with more than 12 years of exposure to the English language. However, they still have no teaching experience since they are in the first year of the education program. To strengthen and increase the reliability of the results and to compare them with the present study, it is recommended that the same study be replicated and conducted with English student teachers who have more experience in teaching English.

Exploration of English student teachers in different universities is also recommended, to further help identify the characteristics of effective English teachers and strengthen the results of how English student teachers perceive themselves as future English teachers.

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