

Comparative Perspectives of Effective TEFL Lecturers' Attributes in Cambodian Universities: A Survey of TEFL Lecturers and Students

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Abstract

The English language has gained significant prominence in Cambodia as both a medium of instruction and a major of study at universities. However, teaching English can be difficult due to limited English proficiency among students and inexperienced lecturers. The study adopted a five-point Likert scale questionnaire using five categories: lecturers' qualifications, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal and interpersonal characteristics. The study surveyed 30 TEFL lecturers and 265 year-4 students from three-selected private universities regarding their perceptions of effective TEFL university lecturers. The study used Stata 14.0 to analyze survey data to achieve the descriptive statistics as research findings. The results revealed higher mean scores for most items and for each domain for both lecturers and students. These findings corroborate previous research and highlight the significance of these attributes as TEFL university lecturer selection criteria in higher education. The findings can help universities cultivate human capital with these qualities and characteristics when they select or train English lecturers. Higher education institutions can adopt these criteria to ensure the development or recruitment of effective TEFL university lecturers, whereas TEFL university instructors must develop or enhance these necessary

qualities and attributes for effective teaching and learning at universities.

Keywords: TEFL Qualifications Content Knowledge Pedagogical Knowledge Personal Characteristics

1. Introduction

English has become a widely used medium of instruction in higher education [1], especially in Cambodia, where its prominence has grown significantly since the early 1990s [2], [3]. Most Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) now incorporate English as a key subject, driven by the rising demand for English proficiency in the market need [2], [3], [4].

Although English is widely adopted in Cambodian schools and universities, learners still face problems in learning English [2], [5]. According to Em [2], these challenges can encompass various factors, including but not limited to the quality of lecturers, the design of study programs, the availability of materials, classroom activities, class sizes, and learners' learning attitudes. In the same vein, Petraki and Khat [6, p. 260] found challenges faced by university lecturers and students, such as insufficient training in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), low levels of instructor motivation, limited proficiency in English, and difficulties in creating suitable learning materials. These obstacles hinder successful teaching and learning for both lecturers and students [6].

The qualities of lecturers are crucial for effective instruction as they significantly

influence learners' learning achievements [7], [8], [9]. They play a central role in classrooms [8] and must possess specific qualities, personal characteristics, and responsibilities in their teaching role [7]. Subject-matter expertise, pedagogical knowledge, and personal characteristics are all essential for a successful teaching and learning process [10]. Lecturers should possess appropriate education qualifications and degrees in their subject [11], possess pedagogical knowledge and skills through proper training, and demonstrate job satisfaction and academic achievements [12], [13]. Overall, lecturers play a vital role in fostering effective learning environments [8], [10]. To have effective English instruction, instructors should possess multilingual and multicultural competencies, have a solid understanding of the language's history and evolution, be mindful of the local context, and remain attuned to the communicative needs of their students [5, p. 124]. These qualities contribute to students' learning success and ensure they achieve their ultimate learning goals. These qualities are essential for effective English instruction [9].

Scholars have extensively studied the quality of education and teachers [7], [7], [14], [15], obstacle and challenges in English instruction in education of Cambodia (e.g., Em, 2022; Moore, 2017; Moore & Bounchan, 2010), and other English-related issues (e.g., Doeur, 2022; Hashim et al., 2014; Petraki & Khat, 2022). However, these studies have not shown much information on comparative perceptions of being effective lecturers, and especially those who are in the field of teaching English a foreign language (TEFL). Against this backdrop, this study examines the qualities and characteristics of TEFL university lecturers in Cambodia. The findings of the study offer valuable guidance for improving the recruitment and professional development of effective TEFL lecturers in Cambodia. This study enhances the understanding of English language instruction within the context of Cambodian higher education.

The paper employs data from a survey with 265 fourth-year TEFL university students and 30 TEFL university lecturers from three-selected private universities in Phnom Penh. The paper focuses on five domains of effective TEFL university lecturers' qualities including lecturers' qualification [10], [18], [19], content knowledge [7], [10], [20], [21], pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical skills [21], [22], personal and personalities and characteristics [23], [24], [25].

The following sections briefly describe different qualities and characteristics of effective TEFL university lecturers, including lecturers' qualifications, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal and interpersonal characteristics. These can be used as main criteria for recruitment and development of TEFL lecturers at universities.

Instructors' qualifications

A qualification refers to the level of education and training that a lecturer acquires from post-secondary institutions. This may include a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree in a major field of study that lecturers must have in their teaching profession. Lecturers often need a Bachelor's degree to be qualified for university teaching. An advanced academic degree equips lecturers with in-depth knowledge and enhanced skills, which can contribute to improved student outcomes [18], [19], suggesting that universities better hire lecturers with higher qualifications for teaching. While teachers' formal education plays a vital role, it is not the sole determinant of students' learning success according to Kola and Sunday's [26] review on lecturers' qualifications and learners' academic achievement in Nigerian schools. Similarly, according to Dodeen et al. [27], the results of the effects of lecturers' qualifications on student achievement are mixed, so empirical evidence seems to imply that instructors' qualifications alone do not guarantee effective teaching [28].

Overall, lecturers' qualifications may impact student achievement, but other factors may contribute to student learning success. Researchers have called for instructor effectiveness studies to move their focus from qualifications to how lecturers behave within the classroom, in order to better understand student learning and achievement [29].

Content knowledge

Effective teaching of English or other subjects requires a clear understanding of the subject matter, known as subject content knowledge [30]. According to Carnine and Engelmann [20], this knowledge includes the foundational structure of a discipline, encompassing its theories, principles, and core concepts. It is crucial for lecturers to effectively represent and communicate content and learn specific concepts and topics [31]. Lecturers' deep understanding of subject matter helps students create cognitive maps, relate ideas, and address misconceptions [21]. Schmidt et al [10] suggest that subject-matter expertise is closely linked to students' learning outcomes, indicating that lecturers should have specialized knowledge in their field, supported by relevant educational qualifications or degrees, to teach effectively.

English lecturers need pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which goes beyond mere content knowledge. PCK integrates content and teaching methods, enabling lecturers to effectively organize, present, and tailor topics, issues, or problems to suit the diverse interests and abilities of their students [21]. PCK refers to the way lecturers interpret and adapt subject-matter knowledge to enhance student learning and improve teaching effectiveness [22].

Pedagogical knowledge

Lecturers must combine pedagogical knowledge with subject-matter expertise to teach subjects effectively such as English or other languages [32]. As pedagogical knowledge refers to knowledge about teaching a subject, it allows them to select

appropriate teaching methods and strategies [33]. According to Bell (2005), instructing a foreign language like English is a multi-dimensional process that demands clear, engaging, and passionate instruction to provide students with grammatical, lexical, phonological, pragmatic, and sociocultural knowledge. Proper pedagogical training or teacher education is essential for lecturers to gain these skills [11], [34].

Lecturers need to know what and when teaching methods should be applied. For instance, Sajjad's (2010) study has shown that lecture-based methods are often considered the most effective approach for teaching large classes as they provide all relevant knowledge and students attentively listen to lectures. In the same study, group discussions are the second-best method, promoting more student participation, making learning more effective, reducing teacher dependency, and developing creativity. Professional development is seen as a tool for improving pedagogical knowledge and influencing lecturers' attitudes, beliefs, and classroom practices [29]. Proper training is essential for acquiring good pedagogical knowledge and skills.

Pedagogical skills

Teaching requires lecturers to possess a range of pedagogical skills to achieve objectives [35]. According to Benson et al. [35], these skills involve a range of techniques and strategies that enhance the effectiveness of classroom teaching, allowing students to stay engaged, actively participate in their learning, improve their skills, remain focused, and interact in the classroom. Similarly, Clark and Walsh (2002) define pedagogical skills as "consisting primarily of knowledge about classroom, assessment, method for the motivation of students, personal knowledge about particular students and their families, socio-interactional skills" [as cited in 36, p. 43]. Pedagogical skills enable lecturers to develop diverse methods for adapting and presenting subject matter to students. [37]. Therefore, effective teaching relies on strong pedagogical skills to ensure

smooth delivery and maximize the achievement of desired learning outcomes [38].

Personal and interpersonal characteristics

Personal characteristics of lecturers are crucial for job satisfaction and students' academic achievements [12], [13]. Specifically, Arikan's [39] study reveals that students prioritize personal qualities like enthusiasm, creativity, and fairness over pedagogical skills like error correction techniques, technology use, language skills, and classroom management. In the same vein, Taşkafa's [40] findings show that positive reinforcement and friendliness are also desirable attributes for effective TEFL lecturers.

Lecturers must possess diverse methods for flexible teaching, including content knowledge, teaching expertise, job satisfaction, pedagogical knowledge, motivation, lesson plans, classroom management, punctuality, and accountability, to effectively impart knowledge to students. According to Yilmaz [25], the majority of pre-service lecturers at a Turkish university expressed their preference for warm, kind, sincere, friendly, sociable and familiar lecturers who are enthusiastic, excited about teaching, dynamic, and motivating. Therefore, to create a positive learning environment, teachers need to ensure a comfortable learning environment and master the target language [41]. However, lecturers also require solid pedagogical knowledge and the capacity to utilize specific techniques and methods effectively [42].

Theoretical framework

Figure 1 below presents the study's theoretical framework, which highlights five key qualities of effective TEFL lecturers: qualifications, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal and interpersonal characteristics. These qualities, based on the review of literature, help explain students' learning outcomes.

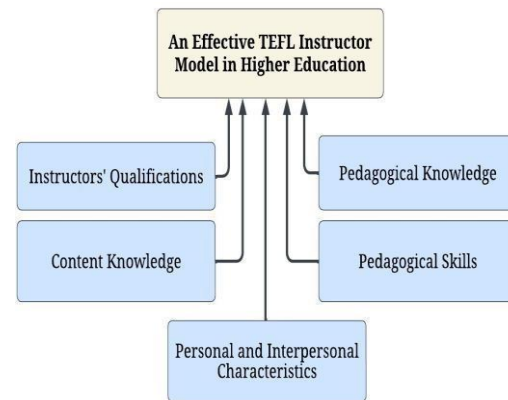


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

Source: Author's framework, developed based on previous studies.

2. Method

This study used a survey design to examine Cambodian university lecturers' and learners' perceptions regarding effective TEFL lecturers in Phnom Penh. Due to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which made in-person data collection unfeasible, the researcher developed a questionnaire using Google Forms to gather quantitative data. The link to the Google Form was distributed to TEFL program administrators at universities, who then shared it with English lecturers and students through chat groups.

The researcher conducted a survey with 30 TEFL lecturers and 265 TEFL students from three-selected private universities in Phnom Penh. These universities were chosen based on three key requirements: (1) participation in the mock institutional accreditation by the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC) in 2017, (2) a minimum of 10 years of operation, and (3) the presence of fourth-year TEFL students.

In this study, a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was employed, based on five key qualities. The scale ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire included 49 items across five sections: lecturers' qualifications (four items), content knowledge (eight items), pedagogical knowledge (ten items), pedagogical skills (14 items), and personal

and interpersonal characteristics (13 items). It took approximately 25 minutes to complete. Once data collection was completed, the researcher conducted a Cronbach's Alpha test to assess the reliability of the questionnaire items. The result of $\alpha=0.90$ indicates strong internal consistency, suggesting that the questionnaire is reliable. According to Howitt & Cramer [43], a reliability coefficient above 0.7 is acceptable, and a coefficient above 0.9 is considered highly satisfactory for the instrument.

Stata 14.0 was used for statistical analysis in this study. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were employed to present the research findings based on lecturers' and learners' perspectives of effective TEFL lecturers. The results were organized into five tables, each displaying the number of observations (Obs), the mean (average), and the standard deviation (SD).

As the questionnaire used five-point Likert scale questions, the researcher scored the respondents' responses as follows: 1 point = Strongly Disagree, 2 points = Disagree, 3 points = No Idea, 4 points = Agree, and 5 points = Strongly Agree. Also, the research adopted the class intervals of mean scores used in Sey and Em's [44, p. 8] study to interpret the mean score of comparative perspectives of the attributes of

effective TEFL lecturers: mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. These ranges describe the level, degree and extent of each questionnaire item and of the overall results of the five-point Likert scale survey.

3. Results and Discussion

The following sections present key findings of comparative perspectives of effective TEFL lecturers based on the five main domains as discussed above.

3.1 Comparative perspectives of TEFL lecturers' qualifications

Table 1 displays the results of both lecturers' and students' perspectives regarding lecturers' qualifications. The overall means of instructors' and students' perspectives are slightly different with similar overall standard deviations. For lecturers' perspectives, Item 1 has the highest score mean of 4.41, followed by Item 4 (4.00) and Item 3 (3.66), while Item 4 has the highest mean score of 4.24, followed by Item 2 (4.11) and Item 3 (3.27) for students. Both lecturers and students rated these items highly, indicating that the higher the qualifications of the lecturers, the more effectively they are able to teach English in the classroom.

Table 1: Comparative perspectives of lecturers' qualifications

Item	Description	Instructors			Difference in Mean	Students		
	Criterion 1: Lecturers' Qualifications	Obs	SD	Mean		Mean	SD	Obs
	An effective English language lecturer should:							
1	Graduate with a Bachelor's degree of English related major to teach Bachelor's degree.	29	1.35	2.55	-0.57	3.12	1.22	263
2	Graduate with a Master's degree of English related major to teach Bachelor's	29	0.63	4.41	0.30	4.11	0.78	262

	degree.							
3	Graduate with a Master's degree of English related major to teach Bachelor's and Master's degree.	29	1.01	3.66	0.38	3.27	1.09	264
4	Graduate with a Doctoral degree of English related major to teach Bachelor's and Master's degree.	29	1.31	4.00	-0.24	4.24	0.99	262
	Overall		1.07	3.66	-0.03	3.69	1.02	

Note: Mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. There are a few missing observations for both lecturers and students in each item.

3.2 Comparative perspectives of TEFL lecturers' content knowledge

Table 2 presents the comparison between lecturers' and students' perspectives of lecturers' content knowledge. The overall mean scores of both lecturers and students are slightly similar to each other with 4.16 and 4.22, respectively. Such high mean scores reflect convergence of agreement on the importance of content knowledge. For lecturers, Item 2 has the highest score (4.39), followed by Item 1 (4.24), Item 3 (4.21) and Item 6 (4.17). Item 4 has the lowest score among other items. For students, Item 5 has the highest mean score of 4.33, followed by Item 6 with the mean score of 4.32, Item 8

with the score of 4.30, and Item 2 with the score of 4.23, while Items 3 and 4 are the lowest mean score of 4.11 in the item group. Although with similar overall mean scores, based on the table, lecturers had a bit different view on each item within lecturers' content knowledge, while students also prioritized these items differently. However, both lecturers and students seemingly rated all items highly. All items for both groups received scores within the high to highest mean score ranges. These positive perspectives highlight the importance for lecturers to possess comprehensive content knowledge in the subjects they teach, as reflected in the eight quality attributes.

Table 2: Comparative perspectives of lecturers' content knowledge

Item	Description	Instructors			Difference in Mean	Students		
	Criterion 2: Content knowledge An effective English language lecturer should:	Obs	SD	Mean		Mean	SD	Obs
1	Have sound knowledge of English grammar.	29	0.83	4.24	0.04	4.20	0.82	262
2	Have broad vocabulary of English language.	28	0.69	4.39	0.16	4.23	0.78	261
3	Be familiar with language learning theories.	29	0.77	4.21	0.09	4.11	0.76	263
4	Have good knowledge of all English features.	28	0.72	4.07	-0.04	4.11	0.77	261
5	Be qualified in four macro-skills.	28	0.69	4.11	-0.22	4.33	0.77	261
6	Be fluent in English language.	29	0.80	4.17	-0.14	4.32	0.71	260
7	Be able to answer students' questions.	29	0.76	4.00	-0.20	4.20	0.78	259
8	Be able to identify the students' learning styles.	28	0.69	4.11	-0.19	4.30	0.67	261
	Overall		0.74	4.16	-0.06	4.22	0.76	

Note: Mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. There are a few missing observations for both instructors and students in each item.

3.3 Comparative perspectives of TEFL lecturers' pedagogical knowledge

Table 3 shows the comparative results of lecturers' and learners' perspectives of lecturers' pedagogical knowledge. Literally, both lecturers and learners rated most items with at least a high range of mean scores, indicating positive perspectives of pedagogical knowledge that lecturers must have for English teaching. Aggregately, the overall mean scores of all items for both lecturers and students are slightly different. Disaggregated by items within each group, lecturers rated Item 3 with the highest mean score of 4.39, followed by Item 2 with the mean score of 4.36 and Item 9 with the score

of 4.24, while Item 1 was rated the least mean score among other items. For learners, it is a bit different from lecturers, Item 10 has the highest mean score of 4.32, followed Items 3 and 4 with the mean score of 4.28, and Item 2 with the score of 4.27, while Item 1 is the lowest mean score of 3.41. All items for both lecturers and learners received scores within the high to highest mean score ranges. As shown in the following table, it is crucial for lecturers to possess essential elements of pedagogical knowledge for effective English teaching. Without these elements, successful teaching may be hindered, leading to potential dissatisfaction from learners regarding their lecturers' teaching.

Table 3: Comparative perceptions of instructors' pedagogical knowledge

Item	Description	Instructors			Difference in Mean	Students		
		Obs	SD	Mean		Mean	SD	Obs
	Criterion 3: Pedagogical knowledge							
	An effective English language lecturer should:							
1	Be knowledgeable about modern technology in instruction.	29	0.90	3.21	-0.20	3.41	0.93	263
2	Be knowledgeable about the subject matter.	28	0.68	4.36	0.08	4.27	0.68	262
3	Be very flexible and easily adapts lesson as needed.	28	0.57	4.39	0.11	4.28	0.66	262
4	Be aware of classroom rules and apply those rules.	29	0.42	4.03	-0.25	4.28	0.66	262
5	Be able to describe key principles of the effective lesson plan.	29	0.71	4.00	-0.08	4.08	0.72	262
6	Be able to explain what a deductive / inductive teaching approach is.	29	0.59	4.07	-0.07	4.13	0.70	260
7	Be knowledgeable about strategies for evaluating students' understanding.	29	0.49	4.21	0.15	4.06	0.68	260
8	Be knowledgeable about the nature of the target audience.	29	1.14	3.31	-0.92	4.23	0.59	261
9	Be knowledgeable about teaching and learning techniques or methods used in the classroom.	29	0.83	4.24	0.27	3.97	0.76	213
10	Make content relevant to students.	29	0.72	4.10	-0.21	4.32	0.64	214
	Overall		0.71	3.99	-0.10	4.09	0.79	215

Note: Mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. There are a few missing observations for both instructors and students in each item.

3.4 Comparative perspectives of TEFL lecturers' pedagogical skills

Table 4 below shows the comparison between lecturers' and students' perspective of pedagogical skills. Almost all items within both groups were between high and highest mean score ranges. Both lecturers and students highly rated the same five items (1,

8, 12, 13, and 14) with the mean scores ranging from 4.21 to 4.50. For example,

within the instructor group, Item 14 had the mean score of 4.50, followed Item 13 with the mean score of 4.43 and SD=0.50), Item 13 with the score of 4.40, and Item 1 with the score of 4.33. For students, Items 12 and 14 were scored the highest (4.43), followed by

Item 13 (4.32), Item 1 (4.28), and Item 2 (4.24). Item 10 was scored the lowest for both groups of respondents. The overall mean scores for both lecturers and students are almost equal. As the results point out here, both lecturers and students usually rated most items highly except for Item 10.

Given the high mean scores for nearly all items, it is essential for instructors to develop or possess the key pedagogical skills outlined in the table below, while universities should consider these items as recruitment criteria for selecting TEFL lecturers.

Table 4: Comparative perceptions of instructors' pedagogical skills

Item	Description	Instructors			Difference in Mean	Students		
	Criterion 4: Pedagogical skills	Obs	SD	Mean		Mean	SD	Obs
	An effective English language lecturer should:							
1	Provide clear course orientation at the beginning of the course.	30	0.84	4.33	0.06	4.28	0.71	260
2	Prepare course syllabuses, assignment topics for the academic courses s/he teaches.	30	0.89	4.20	-0.04	4.24	0.59	261
3	Arrange the chairs in different styles according to the task provided.	30	0.67	3.97	0.13	3.83	0.89	260
4	Use a deductive teaching approach (forms to meanings) in teaching process.	30	1.14	3.43	-0.43	3.86	0.78	260
5	Use an inductive teaching approach (meanings to forms) in teaching process.	29	0.83	3.86	0.14	3.73	0.80	259
6	Use modern technology in instruction.	30	0.53	4.17	0.16	4.01	0.80	258
7	Use student-centered approach in teaching English	29	0.77	4.21	0.21	4.00	0.75	257
8	Make eye contact while talking to the students.	30	0.94	4.27	0.04	4.23	0.71	257
9	Use English as a medium of instruction.	30	0.68	4.13	0.12	4.02	0.76	260
10	Use an explicit correction when students make mistakes.	30	1.30	3.10	-0.26	3.36	1.21	259
11	Use a recast correction when students make mistakes.	30	0.90	3.53	-0.19	3.72	0.99	257
12	Give clear instructions for practice activities.	30	0.56	4.40	-0.03	4.43	0.61	259
13	Manage the class time well.	30	0.50	4.43	0.11	4.32	0.65	259
14	Create enjoyable learning environments.	30	0.57	4.50	0.07	4.43	0.60	260
	Overall		0.80	4.04	0.01	4.03	0.77	

Note: Mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. There are a few missing observations for lecturers in some items and students in each item.

3.5 Comparative perspectives of TEFL lecturers' personal and interpersonal characteristics

Table 5 below presents the comparative results of lecturers' and students' perspectives of lecturers' personal and interpersonal characteristics. Almost all items were scored ranging between high and highest mean scores with at least 4.03 for lecturers and 3.93 for students. Indeed, Item 7 was the lowest mean score for both groups. Within the instructor group, the top-six items with high mean scores include Item 1 with the highest score of 4.73, Items 4 and 10 with the same mean score of 4.67, and Items 3 and 8 with the score of 4.60. For students, the top-six items with high mean scores include Item 8 with the highest score of 4.59, Item 4 with the score of 4.55, Item 3 with the score

of 4.52, Item 10 with the score of 4.49, Item 11 with the score of 4.41, and Item 9 with the score of 4.40. The highest mean scores reflect the positive personalities and characteristics of effective TEFL lecturers, as perceived by both lecturers and students.

Since all items were rated highly, the overall mean scores for both lecturers' and students' perspectives are relatively high, with means of 4.53 and 4.34, respectively, surpassing the overall mean scores of other criteria discussed in the previous sections. These results strongly indicate that lecturers must possess these key characteristics. Such attributes would enhance the effectiveness of their teaching, making it more engaging, interactive, and productive, while fostering a positive learning environment where students can thrive.

Table 5: Comparative perspectives of lecturers' personal and interpersonal characteristics

Item	Description	Instructors			Difference in Mean	Students		
		Obs	SD	Mean		Mean	SD	Obs
	Criterion 5: Personal and interpersonal characteristics							
	An effective English language lecturer should:							
1	Be punctual.	30	0.45	4.73	0.41	4.32	0.63	260
2	Be patient.	30	0.57	4.57	0.22	4.35	0.67	255
3	Be open-minded.	30	0.49	4.63	0.12	4.52	0.59	261
4	Be fair.	30	0.48	4.67	0.11	4.55	0.56	259
5	Be approachable for students.	30	0.57	4.50	0.21	4.29	0.58	260
6	Be interested in his/her career.	30	0.56	4.60	0.41	4.19	0.74	259
7	Be humorous.	30	0.81	4.03	0.10	3.93	0.84	258
8	Be motivating.	30	0.56	4.63	0.04	4.59	0.54	259
9	Be friendly.	30	0.50	4.40	0.00	4.40	0.60	259
10	Be responsible for effective teaching and learning.	30	0.48	4.67	0.17	4.49	0.55	260
11	Be hard-working.	30	0.57	4.53	0.12	4.41	0.63	260
12	Be well-dressed.	30	0.56	4.37	0.22	4.15	0.71	258
13	Be experienced.	30	0.50	4.60	0.36	4.24	0.73	260
	Overall		0.55	4.53	0.19	4.34	0.64	

Note: Mean score of 1.00-1.80 = Lowest, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High, and 4.21-5.00 = Highest. There are a few missing observations for students in each item.

4. Discussion

Effective TEFL lecturers significantly impact students' learning outcomes. The findings of the study show that both university TEFL lecturers and students had positive perspectives of lecturers' qualities and characteristics, with most items highly rated positively. The role and interaction of lecturers with students had a significant impact on the teaching and learning process within and outside a classroom setting.

The findings show lecturers' and students' higher ratings on higher qualifications. These findings support previous research [10], [18], [19] indicating that lecturers with advanced degrees or higher levels of study tend to achieve better learning outcomes, suggesting higher qualifications for their teaching career. The results also confirm previous studies on lecturers' content knowledge, emphasizing the importance of subject matter knowledge. For instance, previous seminal studies by Shulman [21] and Phelps and Schilling [31] emphasize the importance of subject matter mastery in effective teaching. Overall, the findings of the study highlight higher qualifications and content knowledge as key elements of effective TEFL lecturers.

This study's findings point out similar patterns of higher ratings on most items of pedagogical knowledge for both lecturers and students. These findings strongly support previous research on lecturers' pedagogical knowledge [32], [33], [45], [46], indicating that those with good pedagogical knowledge can effectively teach subjects. The study's findings show that pedagogical skills enable lecturers to create suitable instructional tactics and strategies, transforming and interpreting subject matters for learners. The results are also consistent with those of Benson et al.'s [35] study which indicate that strong pedagogical skills motivate students to engage in learning with enthusiasm, participate actively, improve their skills, remain focused, and take part in classroom interactions.. In line with previous studies by

Shulman [21] and Van Driel et al. [22], the findings emphasize the importance of pedagogical knowledge and skills for effective teaching.

As both lecturers and students highly rated all items of lecturers' personal and interpersonal characteristics, the findings strongly support the results of previous research, showing that lecturers' personal characteristics are correlated with students' achievement [12], [13], [40], [47]. For example, the results of Taşkafa's [40] and Büyükkantarcioglu's [41] studies also show that lecturers' personal characteristics play a crucial role in enhancing student-lecturers relationships and interactions in classrooms. Based on the study's findings, instructors play a crucial role in influencing students' learning achievements in line with previous studies [7], [8], [9]. Therefore, lecturers must possess good personal characteristics and responsibilities to effectively educate students [7].

5. Conclusion

The study found that TEFL lecturers and students highly rated most questionnaire items, making higher mean scores for each criterion. Such results show that both lecturers and students highly valued most items of lecturers' qualifications, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, skills, and personal and interpersonal characteristics although there are slight differences in mean scores of some items in the study. These positive perceptions of effective TEFL lecturers' qualities and characteristics indicate it would be essential for all TEFL lecturers to possess these qualities and characteristics to effectively teach English programs at universities.

The study suggests that universities should establish a set of recruitment criteria for TEFL lecturers at a higher education level, focusing on the qualities and characteristics being highly rated by both instructors and students in the study. These results would help universities develop

human resources that align with these quality aspects for effective English language teaching while TEFL lecturers must continuously develop these qualities to ensure effective teaching and learning in Cambodian higher education.

The study has limitations due to a small sample size and questionnaire tool limitations. Future studies should explore other aspects of effective TEFL instructors, particularly at a secondary education level, to analyze qualities and characteristics of effective teaching.

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