

Narratives of Experiences in International Teaching Practicum: Lessons from an EFL Pre-Service Teacher

Fika Megawati

English Education Study Program, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Sidoarjo, Indonesia

fikamegawati@umsida.ac.id

Shanina Sharatol Ahmad Shah

Department of Language and Literacy Education, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

shanina@um.edu.my

Mirjam Anugerahwati

Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia

mirjam.anugerahwati.fs@um.ac.id

M. Faruq Ubaidillah

Department of English Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Malang, Indonesia

mfubaidillah@unisma.ac.id

Mutmainnah Mustofa

Department of English Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Malang, Indonesia

Inamustofa@unisma.ac.id

Sheila Agustina

Public Administration Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Sidoarjo, Indonesia

sheilaagustina@umsida.ac.id

Corresponding email: fikamegawati@umsida.ac.id

Abstract

Contrary to popular belief that field experience should be held in local settings, teacher education programs currently initiate networking with other countries through the international teaching practicum (ITP) program. Considering the platform's magnitude, this paper aims to explore the pre-service English teacher's experiences during ITP to build professional development of EFL potential teachers from various activities abroad. In this study, a narrative inquiry was implemented and supplemented with data obtained from Tina (pseudonym), an EFL pre-service teacher in one of the Indonesian universities who joined a four-month ITP program abroad, particularly in Thailand. In collecting the data, semi-structured in-depth interviews that emphasized five eligibility aspects were used. The findings reveal that the pre-service teacher reaped plenty of meaningful experience from ITP in terms of the classroom situation, the implementation of basic teaching skills, the period of success or failure in teaching, values for EFL teacher candidates in ITP, critical incidents, and students' general English competence after ITP. This study provides evidence and feedback for the institution for better planning and organization in implementing practicum. Further, it implies equipping student-teachers with sufficient skill and competence related to adaptability, cultural identity, fear, and emotions in facing challenging English

instruction in the future through multiple exposures to teaching instruments and supporting situated environment facilities.

Keywords: EFL pre-service teacher, International Teaching Practicum, professional development

Introduction

The teacher education program involves several stakeholders from the institution and school partners to run a practicum program set at a separate period in the teacher preparation program. In other words, not only teacher candidates, mentors, students, and teacher educators also have crucial contributions (Lawson et al., 2015). Each has different roles and responsibilities (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). To maintain the relationship among those subjects and nurture collaboration with the school partners, the stakeholders must build good communication and cooperation. Similar to the significance of stakeholders during teaching practicum, numerous research on each role (i.e., pre-service teacher, mentor, institutional advisor) have also been investigated, with Pre-service Teachers (PsT) as the subject of the research, such as studies by Caires et al. (2012); Nilssen (2010); Yilmaz and Şahin (2011). The rest of the studies explore teaching practicum from the view of mentors, teacher educators, pupils, and a combination (Koc, 2012; Levine, 2011; Tillema et al., 2011).

There has been a growing interest in enacting the International Teaching Practicum (ITP) in Southeast Asia. The Ministers of Education Organization established ITP through an international exchange project in 2014. Participants in this program are countries in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, Lao PDR, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore. The program is designed for teacher candidates to attain real teaching experiences in Southeast Asian countries (SEAMEO, 2023; Sulistiyo et al., 2023). Regarding its implementation, Kabilan (2013) previously examined six teacher candidates' teaching experiences of ITP in Maldives and revealed multifaceted factors aligned with the participants' teaching. The study showcased both the challenges and limitations of the program and further implicated TESOL education for professional development. In an attempt to create global citizens, Larsen and Searle (2017) explored student teachers' international experiences in teacher education programs in Canada. The analysis indicates an ambivalent issue

surrounding the participants' trajectories, such as being culturally aware of global citizenship but uncritically aware as global citizens.

Empirically speaking, teaching in an internationally anchored circumstance provides positive nuances for professional and personal development (Aksit & Sands, 2006; Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Mahon & Cushner, 2002). It also improves student teachers' pedagogical skills as they share with more qualified associate teachers in the class. Cushner (2007) contends that:

In addition to exposure to new pedagogical approaches and educational philosophies, overseas pre-service teachers gain significant self-knowledge, develop personal confidence and professional competence, and a greater understanding of global and domestic diversity.

Other research also pinpoints the benefits of the International Teaching Practicum, including intercultural understanding (Tambyah, 2019), professional development (Kabilan, 2013), and identity development (Parr & Chan, 2015). Despite these, participating students in ITP encounter challenges and tensions regarding different educational concepts, environment, level of competitiveness across countries, and assessment methods (Jin et al., 2019).

In response to the current issue dealing with international teaching practicum (ITP), previous studies have shown positive results of the platform. Azizah (2016) has explored special education pre-service teachers from Malaysia who conducted a teaching practicum in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The results show that the program successfully improves the teaching competence of the participants as well as strengthens the participants' independence. Another evidence in the ELT context is derived from Kabilan (2013). Their findings suggest that teachers gain enriched experiences in professional development from ITP participation, especially in terms of confidence, teaching performance, perception of education and cultural issues, and interpersonal skills. Unlike the two earlier circumstances in which the overseas practicum was conducted in a non-native speaker's country, Macalister (2017) also states that students' teaching experience during their internship program in US school and culture gives big contribution to the participants' cultural awareness in addition to professional and personal development. Regardless of the potential problems hindering the program, the three studies similarly propose that ITP could empower teacher candidates by boosting teaching competence.

Moreover, what is highlighted from the reflection in ITP is the specific concern on the pre-service teacher preparation. Ozmantar (2019) pays attention to pre-

departure orientation, such as providing tips for anticipating fear by including mentor-teacher and institutional supervisor collaboration. Considering the more experienced teachers, graduate students can participate in an international practicum program as researchers and teachers. Gilliland (2018) has found that teacher research during supervised teaching practicum supports novice teachers by training them to recognize personal, cultural, and institutional challenges and formulate effective teaching strategies. Concerning challenges, the stakeholders, especially pre-service teachers, are trained to face and solve problems such as language barriers, relationships with mentors, time constraints, and cultural diversity during the ITP program (Spooner-Lane et al., 2009). Therefore, reflection or evaluation is expected to improve the future program.

Considering the appropriateness of narrative inquiry to this study's exploration, Tina (pseudonym) examined how she constructed her teacher professional development when she undertook an international teaching practicum in Thailand. Highlighting the principles of narrative inquiry, namely living and telling, reliving and retelling, the told experiences can change people's lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). Focusing on Tina's stories, which were exposed to the teaching process and interaction during the program, this study shed light on the pre-service teacher's reflective practice during the practicum, completing our comprehension of the factors that interrupt the success of teaching as studied previously by Rushton (2004); Widya et al. (2020); Yuan and Lee (2016). Moreover, Tina's stories give implications for improving pre-service teacher education programs to enrich the substance of cross-cultural understanding for practicum preparation as a pivotal aspect of pre-service teacher preparation.

Although the previous research has given a clear explanation that ITP is considered an alternative solution for building professional development that involves multicultural experience (Kim & Choi, 2019) and that it promotes intercultural understanding (Tambyah, 2019), it seems that the aspects of the practicum have not been touched completely in pedagogical competence issues. A reflection of the pre-service teachers' core teaching skill performance developed during the involvement in ITP has not been discussed deeply. Such a reflection is assumed to provide sufficient information regarding the platform's benefits. Since a practicum is a transition period from teaching peers to teaching real learners, it is crucial to observe how the pre-service teachers improve the basic skills obtained from various aspects, such as the

Micro Teaching course and the overseas practicum. Moreover, institutions with English departments can benefit from facilitating international practicum programs. Piloting such a program can be a big challenge for the institution and the participants since it has to be considered whether the program is typically similar to what is implemented in the home country. Is it always successful or vice versa? Limited research discussed this. To bridge this gap, this article aims to investigate, from the reflection of an international teaching practicum participant, how the program assists in shaping professional development in the EFL context, including how core teaching skills are implemented. The research question is formulated as follow: "How did the participant develop teacher professionalism in pedagogical aspects she experienced in the international teaching practicum program?"

Research Methodology

Design and Participant Profiling

This study was carried out in an odd semester, academic year 2019. A focus group interview was initially done with the two ITP participants from the English Language Education Study Program to determine the subject. Finally, it was found that only one of them fit the criteria. She was selected as the subject due to some considerations. First, based on the result of the ITP selection held by one of the developing private universities in Indonesia, she passed the overall requirements, which consist of these criteria: being a third-year student, having a GPA of more than 3.0, passing the interview test, and passing the micro-teaching course.

To carry out this narrative inquiry, the researchers' roles were divided into two parts: a (cotemporaneous) interactant and a (post hoc) analyst (Slembrouck, 2015). To be more specific, the researchers tried to understand deeply various contexts that are embedded within the participant's experiences during the ITP program. The researchers build intensive collaboration within the process to collect information and negotiate meanings in each story. The first researcher was the main interviewer, while the second and the third ones were the translators of the statement (Bahasa Indonesia to English) in addition to checking the interpretation with the relevance of this study's focus.

Tina (pseudonym) was the subject of this research. She was 23 years old when she took the program. She was born in a small city in Sidoarjo, an East Java, Indonesia regency. Although she lived only with her mom since her dad passed away, she

successfully finished primary and secondary school in her hometown. In year three of her tertiary education, she got a good opportunity to join the international program to teach overseas in Thailand. The program was converted into an internship course where the students usually do their practicum around the city. In the host country, she was assigned to teach English intensively in a classroom and mentored by an English teacher in addition to running the program of English Club as the supplementary activity for students' English exposure. Tina taught as the school partner for about four months. Sellers and teachers dominate the host institution in Chana, Songkhla. The city's population is considerably larger than the other three provinces, such as Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Students in the school were Muslims, and the policy implemented in the school is an Islamic boarding school-based institution. Influenced by the Islamic culture in Thailand context, the school schedule was very tight. In her routine, Tina had to do many activities based on the boarding school time, emphasizing a strong comprehension of Islamic obligations and values.

In terms of Ethical Considerations, at the time of the study, the first researcher worked as a lecturer and an academic advisor in the English pre-service teacher education program, which accommodated her taking the international teaching practicum to the field school for data collection (though she was not directly assigned to be Tina's mentor). Ethical approval was obtained from the university and Tina before the study was initiated.

Data Collection

The first step was conducting five semi-structured in-depth interviews to get the data. These were conducted for about one hour each day for five days. There were five main questions to answer, which reflected the following points: the situations of teaching practicum in general, the time when the subject succeeded and failed in giving English instruction, critical incidents or unplanned situations, values for EFL teacher candidate, and the school students' general English competence after teaching practicum. Additionally, about twenty hours of informal discussions followed for richer information and clarification. In the second step, the memoing approach was used to obtain additional important information about what was reflected in the interview process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Document analysis was focused on lesson plans to provide printed evidence of the approved teaching scenario from the

partner school. Three aspects were identified from the five lesson plans: format, materials, and teaching and learning scenario.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the interview recordings were transcribed. In the process of transcribing the stories, the experiences were connected comprehensively. Hence, the cross-case analysis technique was used to accomplish the stories into convenient themes and sub-themes and to relate the findings to the existing literature of the related studies. To ensure the trustworthiness of the participants' information, the researchers conducted member checks during the interview process and after the research. To get the critical comments from the participants during the interview, the researchers explained the summary of the interpretation to decide the accuracy. Thus, the overall result was shared with the participant to affirm the appropriateness of the data for the member check given at the end of the study.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The following are the findings that correspond to the research questions. There are six main points: the situations of teaching practicum, the implementation of basic teaching skills, the time of success or failure in teaching, critical incidents, values for EFL teacher candidates in ITP, and students' general English competence after ITP.

The Situations of Teaching Practicum

The first important thing to know is how the class activities were run during the practicum. The situation could reflect the participants' strategic ways of delivering English materials in the classroom. The following paragraph describes the process of teaching practicum in the school.

"Let me tell you the situation when I did the program there. Every day, the school activities started at 7.30 a.m. and began with a ceremony until 8 a.m. The school ended at 4.30 p.m. Each class consisted of 30-40 students. Every meeting hour was 45 minutes. The English subject had two meeting hours a week. There was no digital media in the classroom except the whiteboard and marker. The learning process was focused on books only when the subject was supplemented with books. In the high-level class, however, students used a book created by the teacher. The curriculum followed no particular structure. The teacher employed their teaching style. The learning environment was reported to be crowded due to improper seat arrangement. The space between the seats was quite narrow."

Furthermore, based on the classroom experience, she found that sometimes the students felt bored and tired. Because of their hectic regular schedule, the night before the class in their boarding school community, they tended to be tired in class and felt sleepy during the English lesson. Consequently, instead of paying attention to the learning process or materials given by the teacher, students seemed to only care about attendance.

“Most of the students ignored the learning process or materials the teacher gave. They only came for attendance. The students hardly focused on the learning process and considered English a ghost in the classroom. Students believed that English is difficult to learn and they do not need it too much....”

The Implementation of Basic Teaching Skills

Although the participant experienced a hard time during practicum in the first month, she tried to develop her eight basic teaching skills based on the theory she learned from the Micro Teaching course in her institution before the ITP program. She felt lucky because she was entrusted with fully controlling the class. The summary of activities to enhance the basic skills in teaching is presented in **Table 1**. The summary in Table 1 shows that the core skills have been exercised. After confirming with the participant, there was an improvement in these aspects, measured from the beginning until the end of the program. What is written in the table are the commonly applied activities when teaching. The following part discusses the details of the activities.

To get meaningful lessons, induction and closure are pivotal aspects in teaching and preparing students since they cover four components—perceptual set, cognitive set, motivational set, and social set (Dallat, 2013). To set induction, giving exposure to vocabulary items at the beginning of the lesson is the participant's obligation. The induction is designed to serve as a speaking practice for the students. It is a valuable opportunity for the students to express themselves in English in a relaxed setting.

Related to teacher talk, giving questions is a crucial activity to stimulate the students' participation. Quoted from the participant's statement, the students would not speak up without the teacher's prompt questions. Encouraging their confidence as well as engagement was not an easy task. In this case, students could be encouraged to talk or at least give a response with their body language. Because talking in English was difficult, the participant shifted to Malay because the students could not grasp Bahasa Indonesia.

“Verbal and non-verbal reinforcements were meaningful to appreciate the students’ work. Verbal reinforcement was given by complimenting, while non-verbal reinforcement involved applauding the students who could answer or perform in front of the class. This activity was important to raise their motivation and build their self-confidence. Within the first week, the students hardly responded, and the class fell silent. However, students became more relaxed in the following weeks since the participant convinced them they could speak English if they practiced a lot.”

Stimulus variation deals with the skill used by the teacher to make their lesson leave a deep impression. It is related to the method used, improvisation, and the length of teaching experience. According to Wyckoff (1971), teacher behaviors such as movement, gesturing and pausing contribute to students’ engagement in the class. To realize the variation, in this study, games were applied. Before it was implemented, the participant would confidently give an example of how to play the game. She was expected to approach the students and monitor their work when teaching. Furthermore, the participant was required to bring her media, which she had to demonstrate during the lesson actively. The media was supposed to aid her interaction with students to answer or give opinions during the practice.

Nurturing students’ respect towards the teacher is a part of classroom management. One of the issues in this study was maintaining homework completion. The participant believed that homework would make the students learn better. The participant implemented classroom management or organizing the situation during the learning activities. An interesting statement from the interview deals with students’ behavior in finishing assignments or homework. In the first week, the students were reluctant to receive homework as homework was considered a burden. This negative impression was attributed to the low proficiency and interest in English. In this case, the participant claimed that she learned about the culture built in the school and consulted the matter with the school mentor to find a solution. Eventually, the most effective way to improve the student’s sense of responsibility was through quoting Islamic words emphasizing the importance of fulfilling promises to God. In this case, the students believed that one must keep their promise to God since the consequence of breaking it comes directly from God.

“Students were terrified of sinning. The participant said an Islamic holy word, *Ashadualla ilaha illallah wa ashaduanna Muhammadar Rasulullah*, to strengthen the students’ character. Using this strategy, the pre-service teacher successfully educated the students to be disciplined in assignment submission and homework. Furthermore, it was shown that the students learned the importance of reflecting on their mistakes. They discovered that mistake on their assignment is not terrible since their teacher would assist them.”

The participant deemed it necessary to vary class activities to accommodate student cooperation. For instance, small group activities were alternated with individual work. Some English tasks needed discussion with pairs or small groups. The advantage the participant got from this technique was that it did not take a very long time to deliver the materials or to identify the student's understanding since each group had to understand their parts before presenting the result to the teacher or other groups. A personal guide was provided inside the class and in the dormitory when the participant had time to meet the students.

Small group discussions will run effectively if the teacher can manage the process correctly. The participant realized that the role of a mentor's supervision in the first week was important because the participant had difficulty directing the students to learn autonomously. Some suggestions were given by the mentor, such as appointing an active student as the class president for a starter or giving a deadline to finish the discussion. Showing the model from the video was also an interesting method to help students understand the task before practicing it. The summary of activities to enhance the basic skills in teaching is depicted in **Table 1**.

Table 1: The Core Teaching Skills adapted from **Hasibuan & Moedjiono (1988)** and their fulfillment during teaching practicum

No	Basic Teaching Skill	Performance	Activities
1	Set Induction and Closure	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening: Speaking training Closure: Reviewing materials
2	Questioning	✓	Translating into Malay if necessary
3	Explaining	✓	Based on the four English language skills, English is not 100%
4	Reinforcement	✓	Giving applause, saying "good" for the active or fastest respondent
5	Stimulus Variation	✓	Playing games and providing diverse media
6	Classroom Management	✓	Asking the students who did not finish their homework to say, Ashadualla ilaha illallah wa ashaduanna Muhammadar Rasulullah , I promise to do my homework."
7	Teaching small group and individual learners	✓	A personal guide is provided in a dormitory at a certain time.
8	Guiding small group discussion	✓	Provide a model for conducting discussion effectively in the group when working on an assignment.

The Time of Success or Failure in Teaching

Ideally, pre-service teachers enrolling in the ITP program will face various challenges contributing to future self-improvement as they complete certain program

targets. This section explains the obstacles the ITP participant underwent at the beginning of teaching in the partner school.

Quoted from the interview, the participant stated that her classroom teaching experience was not always successful. She felt her teaching went wrong since she did not know the student's traits and abilities then. Furthermore, she thought the students' English level was comparable to that of Indonesian students. However, as she saw in her class, her expectation was incorrect. Therefore, she attempted to evaluate the classroom difficulties to find a solution. She recognized that the students had difficulty receiving English because the materials were too demanding.

Consequently, she gave other appropriate materials and media by selecting some topics and exercises for EFL beginner level. One of the ways to introduce fun English learning was by using songs and pictures as teaching media. As a result, at the end of the class, the students could improve their performance, as reflected by their improving grades.

Unlike teaching English in the regular class, she encountered more exciting experiences as a teacher in the English club. The students were classified based on their English mastery through a test to qualify for this school activity. The learning objectives were not the same as the classroom instruction. There were two categories for students, namely high and low proficient groups. With a clear division of the group, she could manage her instruction based on her level of proficiency. Furthermore, it was found that the students could be more enthusiastic and make progress by joining this fun learning club.

Critical Incidents

Teaching practicum is crucial to teacher training to transform an individual into a good educator. When teaching practicum in a real classroom, we must understand the problems teachers frequently face. In dealing with these problems, the concern is not how we can manage the classroom using the theory learned but how classroom situations sometimes do not appear like anything the theory mentions. Such situations are referred to as critical incidents. In other words, the practice does not realize what is expected to happen. Based on the participant's experience, negative and positive critical incidents occurred, but these incidents taught her to come up with solutions as the teacher.

"With teaching practicum, we know the real task for the teacher. Because being the teacher is not just teaching but something more, such as becoming parents of the class, friends of the students, friends for another teacher, staff in the school, and more."

When she learned and did micro-teaching in Indonesia, she had limited time to use and explore English for daily communication. In contrast, she was exposed to communicative English daily during teaching practicum as she interacted with the students and school mentor. She did not use Bahasa Indonesia since there was no Indonesian partner in that area. Malay and Thai supported her informal daily communication to express attention or appreciation. Having successfully faced such a challenge, the participant felt lucky and more confident to meet and speak to anyone inside and outside the school.

Values for EFL Teacher Candidate in ITP

During the four-year study, pre-service teachers have to pass many challenges in their campus life. Besides thesis examination, students of teacher education programs must implement their EFL knowledge into teaching in a real secondary school, called a teaching practicum. Selected as one of the ITP candidates, the participant felt it was the most challenging moment because she had to be away from family and close friends and meet new people and cultures. Conversely, the participant was also grateful for the full support from family, home institution, and host institution during the ITP program in Thailand.

When asked about developing her teaching competence, the participant said she learned numerous positive values from the program. First, she learned about different tasks teachers must do in school life after teaching. Second, the participant knew how to control the classroom in a real setting. Previously, the participant only practiced it in the classroom with her peers in a micro-teaching course. She also knew the different qualities that teachers need to have. Because she lived in a multicultural environment, the participant must be aware of cultural differences. No matter where the teacher teaches, having a good personality is important.

"Dealing with the pupils, I met various students from different classes. Furthermore, the system used in the partner school was different, demanding that I work hard to adapt to the situation. In the school partner, secondary school was conducted continuously from grade 1 until grade 6. To manage the class, I tried to be able to solve some problems that occurred. For instance, when there was bullying in the classroom, I knew how to solve it."

Finally, the participant stated that she could encourage low-confident students to speak up in English. At the beginning of the teaching, the participant observed that

most of the students in her class disliked English and were reluctant because they worried about making mistakes; thus, the atmosphere of English instruction seemed less interactive and passive. Then, the participant realized that it was important for her to motivate the students whenever possible. She had never missed a day encouraging her students to speak in English and gave tips on handling nervousness. It appeared that the student's motivation and self-confidence gradually improved.

Students General English Competence after ITP

School students hold a crucial role in the teaching practicum. Hence, observing their progress is an alternative to reflection on pre-service teacher performance in the ITP program. From Tina's stories, most regular English materials in classroom activities focused on beginner-level vocabulary mastery. Similarly, when the subject was taught to high-proficiency learners in the English club, the participant identified that most focused on learning structure. The curriculum itself was focused on grammar. When the subject asked the students to speak, the participants discovered they worried about making mistakes. Nevertheless, they were better at writing when she asked them to write.

Further significant information from the interview was that the school had run a program to send students learning English abroad in a town famous for its concentration of English courses in Indonesia. The students are expected to strengthen their English proficiency by taking intensive English courses there. Most Pare students were enthusiastic about joining the English club that Tina piloted. At that time, they performed better in English and showed higher English proficiency than students who had not taken the program.

Discussion

This study shows the ITP participant's personal and professional development measured from the participant's responses to questions concerning several aspects. Generally, the questions deal with how nerve-wracking and challenging the participant's first teaching experience was (Megawati & Astutik, 2019). The first part deals with classroom situations, focusing on students' engagement and the pre-service teacher's instruction experience. Accordingly, the general English learning atmosphere during classroom activities was not always good. One of the factors contributing to this was the students' motivation for learning English. Both instrumental and integrative motivation seemed not to be found in the teaching and learning

process. In line with this, Cook (2004) agrees that students who do not have instrumental or integrative motivation tend to face difficulties in learning a second language.

Consequently, it becomes the teacher's job to show the importance of learning the target language. For the English instruction experience, the participant observed two interesting points regarding reinforcement and classroom management. Complement was strongly needed in this context since English was unfavorable, and students needed encouragement to learn. Several studies have shown the positive effects of compliments and the response to compliments in learning (Miller, 2008).

Regarding classroom management, the participant tried to cultivate the student's sense of responsibility in doing homework by inserting religious values and adapting to the learning environment in an Islamic culture. As one of the stakeholders in the school community, students should take responsibility for their role in that community. Doing their homework is a part of the responsibility to enhance their competence. This implemented strategy worked well in practice. It supports the study of Purrostami (2012), which proposes that ethical and religious teaching contributes to developing knowledge sources in education. It is hard to change the mindset of the students regarding the importance of English. Parsonson (2012) showed that appropriate management would result in positive behaviors. According to Sieberer-Nagler (2015), teaching needs insight into corrective feedback, a strategy of praise, problem-solving, student question types, and systematic procedures of lessons. The information can be used to control the class more effectively.

The participant's perception of her practicum success is closely related to improvisation. The reflection shows incongruence between the theory learned in university and reality. The instructional plan was different from what was given in Indonesia. Among what Mæland and Espeland (2017) proposed, the participant explained that she had modified the design and the communication in her ITP. From what had been put in a lesson plan, she tried to maximize the process by reflecting on the classroom situation and the students' proficiency. The lesson plan was an important guide for her. However, without modification to the implementation, the lesson plan might have caused difficulties in implementing classroom activities. Highlighting the aspect of communication, when the students did not understand the

participant's instruction in English, she improvised the conversation by mixing English, Malay, and Thai. It allowed her to build self-confidence (Kabilan, 2013).

The points to highlight in small group teaching are the variation in materials and type of small group. Gibson (2010) mentioned that materials or tasks for small group discussion, particularly for English literature class, include puzzles, card sorts, random quotations, translating some figurative language, creating posters, and others. For the subgroup classification, he states six types of activities to be introduced to the teacher and teacher candidates: buzz groups, specified roles, metamorphic groups, passing material, pyramids/snowballs, and fishbowls. Meanwhile, the role of teacher as the model provider is crucial for guiding small discussions. Dolmans et al. (2003) agreed that instruments to measure the effectiveness of teachers in guiding small group plays an important role. The measurement result will be feedback to help teachers improve their teaching behavior.

In reality, failures cannot be excluded from learning how to teach. Accordingly, Ventouras (2016) stated that the potential challenges are too much workload, discouraging feedback, negative relationships with mentors, inappropriate role models, and individual limitations. Furthermore, Gürsoy (2013) mentioned that the success of ITP is determined by the quality of feedback and observation from the experienced teacher. Also, emotional dimension such as fear needs attention. Twenty fear categories are found during pre-service teachers' (PST) teaching practicum (Ozmantar, 2019). Living abroad and teaching in a placement school without accompaniment from my home country potentially triggers fears of many things. Investigating participant's fear can be an input for evaluation and PSTs' preparation for their profession. However, in this ITP, the participant was very confident and perceived the new situation as a challenge that needed her quick wit. Relating to the emotion in pre-service teacher development, Yuan and Lee (2016) found that it is crucial to bring in teacher preparation as a part of professional learning. It is believed that the cognition about emotion appearing during the teaching process can assist the pre-service teachers' experience in managing unstable feelings in the practicum school.

Moreover, in ITP, an additional feature that differentiates it from other regular programs is a multicultural issue in which the participant must uphold her cultural identity while simultaneously showing respect for the new culture. The school's rule of not using gadgets also influenced the participants to find alternatives for fun learning.

Various online and mobile learning could not be realized in this particular context. The situation is similar to the studies conducted by (Cahyono, 2010; Chinnappan et al., 2013). It made the participant improvise by using her adaptability skills and critical thinking to solve problems. Besides, she realized that when she becomes a teacher later, she will assume different roles, such as a parent, friend, sister, problem solver, and more, which belong to social competence. In that case, she realized that she had to be responsive and ready for any possible problems happening to the school community.

Core teaching skills can be built effectively during the Micro Teaching course (Remesh, 2013). Therefore, it is recommended that the participants of microteaching sessions (lecturer and students as teacher, student, and observer) create good collaboration, emphasize the significance of giving and receiving constructive feedback with an open mind, and reach appropriate learning goals set in the lesson plan. Finally, this type of study gives valuable information for the institution to make curriculum enrichment (Malagar et al., 2016). It is expected to give better preparation to the student candidates considering enrolling in an International Teaching Practicum program.

The effort to send students to learn English abroad indicates the institution's support for equipping teaching students with sufficient English skills. In other words, learning from non-native speakers also opens a chance to get better at mastering English. This idea is connected with the Non-native English Speaker Teachers (NNETS) movement regarding the status of English as an International Language (EIL). Through an ITP program, the countries agree to consider NNETS potential and support the effort to facilitate the process of teachers' self-development, which is important for their language teaching career (Floris & Renandya, 2020).

Highlighting the whole aspects of the narration delivered by the subject, the findings of this study contribute to the implementation of teaching practicum abroad in three parts, particularly the strengths, limitations, and solutions for the effective implementation. The strength was focused on how the PST built her student-teacher identity during the teaching journey (Prabjandee, 2019). The limitation deals with the communication barriers due to the low mastery of the language used in the target country. This cross-cultural transition contributes to the culture shock that should have been anticipated (McKenzie et al., 2013; Roskell, 2013). In other words, limited preparation seemed to be a part of the challenges the PST encountered during the

learning process. It determined the length of cross-cultural adjustment of the PST. The third part is about reflective practice. When PST told her teaching experiences, she was also encouraged to be reflective, identifying what makes her teaching effective. This reflection also makes her aware of learning self-regulation skills for self-improvement (Guo et al., 2009).

Conclusion and Suggestion

To sum up, this study gives ITP providers insight into giving more attention and consideration in selecting school partners and teacher candidates. Preparation can be done through previous courses required for teaching practicum, mainly Micro Teaching, and CCU in non-native speaker countries with potential for collaboration. Moreover, this article gives insights for the institutions in planning for better future international platforms that will benefit students pursuing educational careers. The reflection can enrich the data and the clues for more meaningful activities. Also, the Micro Teaching course can introduce various lesson plans to broaden students' awareness of diverse applicable instructional designs worldwide and prepare them with the best knowledge to support the pedagogical process during international teaching practicum. For language teaching and learning in an international context, the finding implies that the host institution that receives teacher candidates to conduct ITP needs to communicate the monitoring and evaluation of the program regularly to give further information or feedback related to the learning atmosphere or model of teaching instrument.

The present study can be developed further by involving more participants from different contexts of ITP and more instruments that reflect pre-service teachers' professional development. Investigating this program from different perspectives, such as from the viewpoint of mentors, can also elaborate the body of knowledge about reflective teaching. Although the qualitative study has the power to present it more clearly as a pilot program, it does not limit future researchers' opportunity to explore the program through cross-sectional or longitudinal surveys. Dealing with the time and improvement given, the implementation of ITP may have different results from the program conducted in the following years or from different levels of participants. In the Indonesian context, this is a good opportunity to see the teachers, students, and other stakeholders' response toward the recent policy of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, which started implementing more international

credit transfer and student mobility programs to support the implementation of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM), and international teaching practicum has a big chance to be promoted to pre-service teachers.

Acknowledgment

The dissemination of this research is supported by BSLN. Thanks also to TEFLIN International Conference 2023 and Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo for accommodating this research publication process.

References

- Aksit, N., & Sands, M. (2006). Issues and challenges facing education in Turkey. In J. Earnest & D. F. Treagust (Eds.), *Education Reform in Societies in Transition: International Perspectives* (pp. 13–28). Sense Publishers.
- Ambrosetti, A., & Dekkers, J. (2010). The interconnectedness of the roles of mentors and mentees in pre-service teacher education mentoring relationships. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(6), 42–55. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2010v35n6.3>
- Ambrosetti, A., Knight, B. A., & Dekkers, J. (2014). Maximizing the potential of mentoring: A Framework for pre-service teacher education. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 22(3), 224–239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2014.926662>
- Azizah, N. (2016). International teaching practicum. *ICTTE FKIP UNS 2015*, 706–709.
- Barkhuizen, G., & Feryok, A. (2006). Pre-service teachers' perceptions of a short-term international experience programme. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(1), 115–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598660500479904>
- Cahyono, B. Y. (2010). *Teaching english by using internet resources*. State University of Malang.
- Caires, S., Almeida, L., & Vieira, D. (2012). Becoming a teacher: Student teachers' experiences and perceptions about teaching practice. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(2), 163–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2011.643395>
- Chinnappan, M., McKenzie, B., & Fitzsimmons, P. (2013). Pre-Service teachers' attitudes towards overseas professional experience: Implications for professional practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(12), 36–54. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n12.5>
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2004). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Cook, V. J. (2004). Chomsky's universal grammar and second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 1–17. <http://applied.oxfordjournals.org/>
- Cushner, K. (2007). The role of experience in the making of internationally-minded teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 27–39.
- Dallat, J. (2013). *Learning and teaching set induction and closure: Key Teaching Skills*.

- Dolmans, D. H. J. M., Wolfhagen, H. A. P., Scherpbier, A. J. J. A., & Van Der Vleuten, C. P. M. (2003). Development of an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers in guiding small groups. *Higher Education*, 46, 431–446.
- Floris, F. D., & Renandya, W. A. (2020). Promoting the value of non-native english-speaking teachers. *PASAA*, 59, 1–19.
- Gibson, J. (2010). Small group teaching in english literature: A good practice guide. In J. Gawthrop (Ed.), *Number* (Vol. 23). The Higher Education Academy.
- Gilliland, B. (2018). Teacher research during an international practicum. *ELT Journal*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccx054>
- Guo, Y., Arthur, N., & Lund, D. (2009). Intercultural inquiry with pre-service teachers. *Intercultural Education*, 20(6), 565–577. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675980903448619>
- Gürsoy, E. (2013). Improving practicum for a better teacher training. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 93, 420–425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.09.214>
- Hasibuan, J. J., & Moedjiono. (1988). *Proses belajar mengajar*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Jin, A., Parr, G., & Cooley, D. (2019). An australian international teaching practicum in China: Exploring multiple perspectives. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 47(2), 263–281. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-019-00343-1>
- Kabilan, M. K. (2013). A phenomenological study of an international teaching practicum: Pre-service teachers' experiences of professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 36, 198–209. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.07.013>
- Kim, Y., & Choi, M. (2019). Out of the book and into the classroom: The experiences of korean social studies pre-service teachers in an international teaching practicum in the united states. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 47(2), 176–192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2018.1444142>
- Koc, I. (2012). Preservice science teachers reflect on their practicum experiences. *Educational Studies*, 38(1), 31–38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2011.567030>
- Larsen, M. A., & Searle, M. J. (2017). International service learning and critical global citizenship: A cross-case study of a canadian teacher education alternative practicum. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 63, 196–205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.12.011>
- Lawson, T., Çakmak, M., Gündüz, M., & Busher, H. (2015). Research on teaching practicum - A systematic review. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2015.1055109>
- Levine, T. H. (2011). Features and strategies of supervisor professional community as a means of improving the supervision of preservice teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, 930–941. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.03.004>
- Macalister, J. (2017). English and language teacher education in malaysia: An exploration of the influences on and experiences of pre-service teachers. *RELC Journal*, 00(0), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217690936>

- Mæland, K., & Espeland, M. (2017). Teachers' conceptions of improvisation in teaching: Inherent human quality or a professional teaching skill? *Education Inquiry*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2017.1293314>
- Mahon, J., & Cushner, K. (2002). The overseas student teaching experience: Creating optimal culture learning. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 4(3), 3–8. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0403_2
- Malagar, M. C., Villarba, A. C., & Bonotan, A. M. (2016). A Phenomenological Study of SPED student teachers assigned in Non-SPED classrooms: Basis for Curriculum Enhancement. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 4(2), 513–523. <http://www.emro.who.int/child-health/IMCI-preservice-training/what-is-it>
- McKenzie, B., Fitzsimmons, P., Matthes, A., Hinze, J., & Bruce, L. (2013). Pre-service teachers, professional experiences and culture shock: 'Enactment and sense making' in new spaces and places. In *Space and Place: Diversity in Reality, Imagination, and Representation* (pp. 163–173). BRILL. https://doi.org/10.1163/9781848881266_016
- Megawati, F., & Astutik, Y. (2019). Teaching english for the first time: Frightening or challenging? *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 18(4), 158–170. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.18.4.9>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Miller, L. K. (2008). Reviews: intersensory perception and sensory integration. Richard D. Walk & Pick, Herbert L. Jr., (Eds.). New York: Plenum Press, 1981. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 3(1), 86–90. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716400004197>
- Nilssen, V. (2010). Encouraging the habit of seeing in student teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 591–598. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.09.005>
- Ozmantar, Z. K. (2019). A phenomenological study of practicum experience: Preservice teachers' fears. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 15(1), 135–150. <https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2019.184.9>
- Parr, G., & Chan, J. (2015). Identity work in a dialogic international teaching practicum. *Teaching Education*, 26(1), 38–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2014.997701>
- Parsonson, B. S. (2012). Evidence-based classroom behaviour management strategies. *Kairarangka*, 13(1), 16–23. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ976654.pdf>
- Prabjandee, D. (2019). Becoming English teachers in thailand: Student teacher identity development during teaching practicum. *Issues in Educational Research*, 29(4), 1277–1294.
- Purrostami, H. (2012). The role of religious and ethical teachings in the modern system of education. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 4775–4781. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.333>
- Remesh, A. (2013). Microteaching, an efficient technique for learning effective teaching. *Journal of Research in Medical Sciences*, 18(2), 158–163. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3724377/>

- Roskell, D. (2013). Cross-cultural transition: International teachers' experience of "culture shock." *JRIE: Journal of Research in International Education*, 12(2), 155–172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240913497297>
- Rushton, S. P. (2004). Using narrative inquiry to understand a student-teacher's practical knowledge while teaching in an inner-city school. *The Urban Review*, 36(1), 61–79.
- SEAMEO. (2023). *Main programme*. Background. https://www.seameo.org/Main_programme/372
- Sieberer-Nagler, K. (2015). Effective classroom-management & positive teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 163–172. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n1p163>
- Slembrouck, S. (2015). The role of the researcher in interview narratives. In A. De Fina & A. Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis* (1st ed., pp. 239–254). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Spooner-Lane, R., Tangen, D., & Campbell, M. (2009). The complexities of supporting asian international pre-service teachers as they undertake practicum. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(1), 79–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598660802530776>
- Sulistiyo, U., Anwar, K., Astini, S., Ubaidillah, M. F., Mudra, H., & Setiono, P. (2023). The emergence of moral, sociocultural and political geographies experienced by an EFL pre-service teacher during international teaching practicum in an Indonesian primary school. *International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 51(7), 1049–1063. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2022.2042828>
- Tambyah, M. (2019). Intercultural Understanding through a 'similar but different' international teaching practicum. *Teaching Education*, 30(1), 105–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2018.1453795>
- Tillema, H. H., Smith, K., & Leshem, S. (2011). Dual roles - conflicting purposes: A comparative study on perceptions on assessment in mentoring relations during practicum. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(2), 139–159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2010.543672>
- Ventouras, A. (2016). *Contextual factors of unsuccessful teaching practica: The Perspective of The Teacher Candidate* [Thesis]. University of British Columbia.
- Widya, T., Fatimah, A. S., & Santiana. (2020). Students' feedback as a tool for reflection: A narrative inquiry of an Indonesian pre-service teacher. *TLEMC: Journal of Teaching & Learning English in Multicultural Contexts*, 4(1), 1–11. <http://jurnal.unsil.ac.id/index.php/tlemc/index>
- Wyckoff, W. L. (1971). *The effects of stimulus variation on learning from lecture* [Dissertation, University of Massachusetts]. <https://doi.org/10.7275/wdkz-y625>
- Yilmaz, H., & Şahin, S. (2011). Pre-service teachers' epistemological beliefs and conceptions of teaching. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(1), 73–88. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2011v36n1.6>
- Yuan, R., & Lee, I. (2016). 'I need to be strong and competent': A narrative inquiry of a student-teacher's emotions and identities in teaching practicum. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 22(7), 819–841. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2016.1185819>