



**A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF INTERNATIONAL TEACHING
PRACTICUM: EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EXPERIENCE FOR
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SKRIPSI

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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MEI 2024**



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BY

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ABSTRACT

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Despite the existing literature on international teaching practicum in ELT, little attention has been geared toward uncovering the interplay of challenges, coping strategies, and perceived gains of international teaching practicum encountered by EFL pre-service teachers (henceforth, participants). To fill this lacuna, this narrative research aims to elucidate how two Indonesian EFL preservice teachers majoring in the English education department at a local private university in Probolinggo experienced international teaching in an Islamic Boarding school in Selangor, Malaysia. This research utilizes a narrative inquiry approach to explore and investigate the personal life stories and experiences of pre-service teachers (PSTs) during the International Teaching Program (ITP), drawing on data from in-depth interviews and self-reflective journals (diaries).

Thematic analysis is employed to qualitatively analyze the collected data, guided by Braun and Clarke (2006) that provides a six-phase guide such as (1) Getting acquainted with the information, (2) creating coding categories, (3) taking a glance for topics, (4) evaluation topics (5) Create topics and (6) Write up, to ensure the study's credibility. This research specifically explores their experiences of challenges, coping strategies, and perceived gains of such an overseas teaching program and how it affects their professional development. The analysis suggests a dynamic interplay that supports the participants' professional development as a teacher candidate. The findings divulge a continuum of self-experiences in an international teaching practicum, where participants develop their teaching engagement through facing challenges, enacting strategic behaviors, and perceiving benefits for their professional development. Therefore, the participants were akin to develop valuable insights and a deeper understanding of their professional development.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, several subjects are covered which pertain to the study's introduction. These include background knowledge, research problems, study objectives, research significance, the study's scope and limitations, as well as the definition of key terms.

1.1. Research Background

In a multicultural learning environment, both teachers and students can learn from one another while gaining insights into the many ideas and philosophies held by various individuals. In 21st-century education, which prioritizes globalization, prospective teachers must actively adopt and incorporate multiculturalism and diversity within their educational programs (Kabilan et al., 2020). This mutual exchange enables teachers and learners to engage in teaching and learning within a supportive atmosphere that fosters stronger connections while promoting a deeper understanding of different perspectives, beliefs, and cultures (Zacharias, 2013).

In the realm of English language education and the globalized world, the domains of teaching English as a Second Language (henceforth ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (henceforth EFL) should progress and explore internationalization efforts and endeavours that promote multiculturalism and inclusivity (Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019) which enterprise important aspect to encourage teachers' education programs for initial licensure should primarily concentrate on coursework, field experience, and student internship involvement as well as stated by Lehman and Welch (2020) "An exponential rise in the need for global education instead of International Teaching Practicum"

Many institutions have considered International Teaching Practicum (henceforth ITP) as a means to provide their pre-service teachers (henceforth PSTs) with authentic international learning experiences. A

study examining the outcomes of experiential learning revealed that undergraduate students believe that practical experiences outside the classroom contribute positively to their growth and advancement in their chosen fields (Mukeredzi, 2016; Knutson Miller & González, 2015) and enhance their comprehension of multicultural and urban environments (Boyle-Balse, 2005). Participating in international service-learning programs can provide distinct chances to improve academic performance and personal growth as participants engage with community needs that align with their goals (Tambyah, 2019).

It is observed that the implementation of ITP significantly broadens PSTs' experiences, and they may also communicate and promote effective strategies and innovative initiatives they have developed ITP provides PSTs with the chance to observe and collaborate with actual students, teachers, and curriculum in authentic educational environments (Weinberg et al., 2020; Dos Santos, 2019; Kabilan et al., 2017). Learning to teach in an international context, however, has several challenges. The ITP highly demands PSTs to participate in teaching, engage in discussions with teachers and mentors, and observe experienced teachers' practices (Ahmad et al., 2019). PSTs often encounter some of challenges related to school's curriculum, Language Proficiency and Cultural differences (Kabilan et al., 2020). These challenges encourage and lead to the PSTs' professional development while maintaining their identity as a prospective EFL teacher. Additionally, ITP also gives the EFL PSTs with the opportunity to challenge themselves in International environment that affords meaningful and enriching learning situations, albeit difficult and complicated ones that they have never experienced before.

Considering various aspects such as academic performance, active participation in the community, clarification of career objectives, and the enhancement of cultural skills (Knutson Miller & González, 2015). Heyl and McCarthy (2005) argue that higher education institutions need to equip teachers with international experience and the ability to integrate a global

perspective into their teaching. This highlights the specific interest in understanding the potential influence of international experiences on educators' preparation for incorporating a global outlook in their teaching practices. By enhancing the consciousness and admiration of various cultures among aspiring teachers, PSTs can also promote a greater understanding of their own cultural identity, in turn fostering both professional and personal development that will ultimately benefit their future students and classroom (Dos Santos, 2019)

Furthermore, the benefits of ITP experience for PSTs were reported including increasing confidence in speaking and communication, improving teaching skills, developing PSTs' interpersonal skills, and awareness of diversity, new world views of education and culture, understanding of science teaching and learning before the four-step problem-solving, and adapting to new working cultures. The above gains of ITP in terms of enhanced learning experiences and professional growth for PSTs have numerous international practicum projects worldwide, such as in Maldives and Bangladesh – India (Kabilan, 2013; Kabilan et al., 2017); Hongkong – China (Dos Santos, 2019); Malaysia (Ahmad et al., 2019; Kaur et al., 2021); Thailand (Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019).

However, PSTs also face emotional challenges when implementing their ITP, as well as moral and sociocultural factors that affect interpersonal communication within the political geography context (Sulistiyo et al., 2022). At the other time, curriculum challenges instead of planning the lesson, language proficiency and cultural differences could be a crucial defiance for PSTs (Kabilan et al., 2020). This presumption may affect EFL pre-service teachers to provide novice teachers a chance to discover their drawbacks in teaching and broaden their view about teacher profession and teaching professionalism (Yan & Mingyao, 2022)

Considering the findings obtained from the previous studies, only few of perceiving gains toward PSTs were obtained where some of the study only focusing on the challenges and the strategy in short-term

implementation that employs a case study and phenomenological study. Globally speaking, a case study aimed to explore unique phenomena that have received limited prior research and not constrained by specific theories or hypotheses in line with phenomenon of the prior study. Given the current gap in this frame, through this present study, the researcher aims to identify PSTs personal stories also deepen PSTs' experiences during ITP and find ways to improve further the recent practices of teaching practicum as purpose to inquire about the perceived gains, challenges faced, and the prime strategy to cope the limitation regarded to teachers' professional development during ITP in the secondary school which definitely has different context over education order and culture review .

1.2. Research Questions

To fulfil the purpose of this study, which is grounded in the background information, the four main questions are addressed involves;

1. What are the challenges and limitations faced by EFL PSTs during ITP?
2. How do EFL PSTs cope with ITP challenges and limitations?
3. What are the PSTs' perceived gains in professional development during ITP?

1.3. Objectives of the study

This study aimed to explore the experiences of PSTs during their ITP in secondary schools. Therefore, the main purposes of this study consist of four objectives involves:

1. To inquire the challenges and limitations faced by EFL PSTs for ITP in secondary school.
2. To inquire and find the prime strategy to cope with challenges and limitations encountered by EFL PSTs for ITP in secondary school.
3. To inquire about the perceived gains of EFL PSTs' experiences during ITP in secondary school.

1.4. Research significance

This current study is expected that the reader will acquire comprehensive information regarding EFL PSTs' teaching experience in ITP concerning its challenges, strategies, perceived gains and further provision to be a professional teacher. Additionally, this research is expected to serve as a valuable point of reference.

1. Theoretically, this research makes a valuable contribution to the related literature by comparing and showcasing the challenges, strategies, and benefits associated with conducting international teaching practicum. The findings provide a framework of what triggers pre-service teachers to carry out Intensive teaching approach and term of teaching refrence during international teaching practicum which shapes the competence of pre-service teachers in managing classroom dynamics. Hence, further researcher is expected to enlarge the sample size of EFL PSTs that possess ITP to obtain authentic contribution toward teacher's professionalism, alongside a contrast of national and international teaching practicum for PSTs.
2. Practically, the results of the current study are expected to afford EFL PSTs to gain experiences through ITP on how PSTs gain during their teaching experience in a diverse classroom and showing the appropriate strategies related to cultural differences, student characteristics, and other unforeseen circumstances in order to create effective classroom management for pre-service teacher or in-service teacher. Moreover, the invaluable experiences and skills PSTs acquired during ITP enhance their professional development as prospective teachers.

1.5. Scope and limitation of the study

ITP obviously contains a few of possible impacts toward PSTs in case of teaching techniques in cross-culture, educational character, classroom management and planning a good lesson. By those obtained aspects, the

researcher mainly focuses on PSTs' experiences during their international experience in Islamic boarding school Tanjong Sepat – Malaysia, regarding what limitation and challenges they faced, prime strategy to cope within, perceived gains and ensured provisions for teachers' professionalism in the future.

In this recent study, in-depth interview and reflective journal (diary) were employed to collect the data and limits the research to EFL pre-service teacher in private university who had fulfilled their teaching practicum as selected participants for international program. In order to have inline result with the researcher intention.

1.6. Definition of the Key Terms

In order to comprehend the relevant concepts to the research being conducted, it is essential to grasp the key terms. The subsequent terms have been included to provide a comprehensive explanation of all the key terms associated with EFL pre-service teachers' experience in international teaching practicum for their professional development.

1. EFL pre-service teachers

EFL pre-service teachers are individual in the process of preparing to become an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher. They are typically enrolled in a teacher education program or undergoing formal training to develop the necessary pedagogical skills and knowledge to teach English to non-native speakers which have extensive practical experience in the classroom as well as the recent PSTs who had participated their teaching practicum in international program for international community service in 6th semester from private university In Indonesia. However, they are enthusiastic and dedicated to their professional growth and actively working towards becoming effective EFL educators

2. International teaching practicum

International teaching practicum refers to a hands-on teaching

experience that takes place in an international setting including Malaysia. It provides an opportunity for pre-service teachers (PSTs) to gain practical teaching experience in a different cultural and educational context. This type of practicum allows participants to develop cross-cultural competencies, adapt their teaching methods to diverse student populations, and broaden their understanding of global education. This research opted teaching practicum in Islamic boarding school Malaysia that was conducted by international community service (ICS) in UNISMA as it can be valuable experience for professional growth, fostering intercultural understanding, and preparing educators to work in an increasingly interconnected world.

3. Narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry research design involves a qualitative research approach that focuses on exploring and understanding personal stories and experiences. Regarding to this research that emphasizes the power of storytelling as a means of generating knowledge and meaning which allows researchers to delve into individuals' lived experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of events, providing rich and contextualized data. In order that, it shapes our understanding of the world and offers a unique lens for examining complex social and cultural phenomena.

4. Professional development

Professional development regarding to pre-service teachers can be defined as the process of enhancing their knowledge, skills, and competencies to deepen their understanding of pedagogy, subject matter, and classroom management to become effective educators, fostering continuous growth and improvement throughout their teaching practicum fulfillment. As well as pre-service teacher experiences on this research to ensure their teaching professionalism throughout international teaching practicum involves professional emotion (the sense of occupational belonging & professional attitude).

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter provides a summary of research related to various topics and offers suggestions for teachers, students, and future research. It compiles the key findings and conclusions from previous studies, highlighting their relevance to the subject matter.

5.1. Conclusion

During the international teaching practicum in Malaysia, the pre-service teacher acquired valuable experience. This experience had significant implications for the professional development of pre-service teachers, especially when the study focused on those who were taught in non-English speaking environments, although Malaysia holds English as second language (ESL) since the PSTs were placed in remote are so they did not have basic English as non-English speaker. The ITP also offered new learning opportunities and allowed the pre-service teacher to reinforce positive teaching practices developed throughout the practicum. The pre-service teacher gained teaching experience, particularly in the areas of teaching, classroom management, and academic needs.

In accordance with ITP experienced by both pre-service teachers, there are four emerging themes regarding to their challenges involves; unorganized institutional system, students' character, language adjustment, inadequate learning facility. And four themes over coping strategies such as; creating term of teaching references (TOR), interactive teaching and learning, adaptation to language usage and self-initiating learning facility. Besides that, pre-service teacher definitely gains positive experience as its advantages on ITP which arised five themes involves; classroom management skill, enhanced teaching skill, assessment knowledge, teaching professionalism, and pre-service teachers' networking. Ultimately, the International Teaching Program (ITP) served as a platform for pre-service teachers (PSTs) to learn and gain a

comprehensive understanding of their shortcomings and strategy undertaken as English language teachers, as well as the knowledge and abilities they required to grow.

5.2. Suggestions

The researcher would like to give some suggestion in term of the obtained result from these international practcies which are similar to those seen in other similar programs, highlighting the significance of such opportunities for all stakeholders involved; pre-service teachers, educational institutions and future researcher to gain numerous benefits from the support provides

1. Pre-service teacher

PSTs have the role to actively seek out opportunities that enable them to engage in international teaching experiences. They can participate in organizations, communities, or events that foster supportive environments and ignite their curiosity about global education. Moreover, international exposure is crucial for PSTs to expand their perspectives on the education landscape they will encounter in the upcoming years.

2. Pre-service teacher education

To ensure better organization and preparations from the institution and the PST, it would be beneficial for the organized committee to conduct a preparation seminar. This seminar would aim to provide all the necessary information and preparations that need to be taken into account such as the students' background, English proficiency level, number of classes, timeline, materials to be delivered, and job descriptions for all participants involved in the exchange program. Additionally, selecting stakeholders from the host country who have a significant difference in working culture can enhance the sense of impact and contribution for the pre-service teachers (PSTs). In order to gain valuable insights and develop the necessary skills to thrive in such contexts.

3. Future researchers

It is recommended to select more participants regarding to EFL pre-service teacher in order can gain accurate understanding of their teaching effectiveness and make informed adjustments to enhance student learning outcomes. Additionally, other researchers are expected to show contrast experience for national and International teaching practices that encourage authentic evidence from PSTs both experience.



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