

Exploring English Education Students' Teaching Practicum Experiences: A Narrative Inquiry into The Crafting of Their Teacher Identity Journey

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelajahi pengalaman praktikum mengajar siswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dalam pembentukan identitas guru mereka. Melalui pendekatan penyelidikan naratif, penulis mengeksplorasi keyakinan guru pra-jabatan tentang praktikum pengajaran dan mengidentifikasi kontribusi program pendidikan guru terhadap pandangan mereka. Fokus penelitian juga mencakup pentingnya praktik mengajar, keyakinan, dan ketidakpastian yang muncul selama praktikum. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman praktikum mengajar memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk identitas guru. Dengan refleksi mendalam terhadap pengalaman praktikum, guru pra-jabatan dapat secara aktif membangun identitas profesional mereka. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan berharga bagi program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dan pelatihan guru, terutama dalam pengembangan kompetensi guru dalam bidang pedagogi, personal, sosial, dan profesional. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan naratif, penelitian ini memberikan pemahaman yang mendalam tentang perjalanan transformatif dalam pembentukan identitas guru. Implikasi dari penelitian ini dapat membantu dalam pengembangan identitas guru yang kuat dan berkualitas melalui pengalaman praktikum yang terencana dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: *Praktikum mengajar, kompetensi guru, Metode penyelidikan Naratif.*

Abstract

This study aims to explore the teaching practicum experiences of English Education students in shaping their teacher identity. Through a narrative inquiry approach, the author investigates the beliefs of pre-service teachers about teaching practicum and identifies the contributions of teacher education programs to their perspectives. The research also delves into the importance of teaching practicum, beliefs, and uncertainties that arise during the practicum. The findings reveal that teaching practicum experiences play a crucial role in shaping teacher identity. Through deep reflection on practicum experiences, pre-service teachers can actively construct their professional identity. These findings provide valuable insights for English Education programs and teacher training, particularly in developing teachers' competencies in pedagogy, personal, social, and professional aspects. By employing a narrative approach, this study offers a profound understanding of the transformative journey in teacher identity formation. The implications of this research can aid in the development of strong and quality teacher identities through well-planned practicum experiences.

Keywords: Teaching practicum, Teacher identity, Narrative inquiry, and Teacher competencies.

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, proficiency in English is integral to scholastic achievement, professional success, and international communication. Consequently, the study of English plays a pivotal role in enhancing students' communication skills, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. Effective English teaching goes beyond language skills; it fosters acceptance of diverse perspectives and meaningful societal contributions. Among the critical phases of teacher preparation, the teaching practicum stands out (Dewey, n.d.).

According to (Communities of Practice: 2 and Social Learning Systems, n.d.) the national education system must undergo planned and periodic improvements

encompassing various standards, including content, process, management, assessment, and financing. Teachers, as learning facilitators, are expected to possess a blend of personality, pedagogical, social, and professional competencies (Lestari, 2021). A crucial part of a teacher education program is the teaching practicum. To become a competent and professional teacher, pre-service teachers must eventually apply the theories they have learned in the classroom to their mastery and practice of all concepts, principles, skills, and values. According to (LITERATURE REVIEW 2.1. Theoretical Framework 2.1, n.d.) a number of factors influence how teachers choose to teach. Specifically, learning was supported by a supportive classroom atmosphere; (2) teachers were

dedicated and compassionate, and they had clear expectations of their pupils; (3) teachers and students respected one another; and (4) teacher personality and style mattered more than methods.

The proficiency of teachers in these key competencies, namely Personality, Pedagogical, Social, and Professional Competence, is vital for delivering high-quality education. Particularly in Indonesia, where teachers play a crucial role in advancing the educational system, the teaching practicum is recognized as a crucial part of teacher preparation (Republic of Indonesia Law (Dewey, 1986)). The four main qualities that professional educators need to have in order to be effective teachers are Professional Competence, Pedagogical, Social, and Personality are seen as follows:

1. Firstly, Personality Competence encompasses a teacher's personal ability to reflect maturity, wisdom, authority, stability, and noble character, serving as a positive role model for students. This includes maintaining a stable and steadfast personality in line with societal norms, demonstrating maturity, and wisdom in decision-making, authoritative behavior, and embodying noble morals for students to emulate.
2. Secondly, Pedagogical Competence describes a teacher's ability to understand, design, implement, and evaluate the learning process to actualize students' potential. Teachers should deeply understand students, execute learning plans, create a conducive learning environment, design and evaluate learning processes, and facilitate the development of students' academic and non-academic potentials.
3. Thirdly, Social Competence refers to a teacher's ability to communicate and socialize effectively with educational staff, students, parents, and the community. This involves having an inclusive attitude, acting objectively without discrimination, polite and empathetic communication, and adaptability to diverse cultures, and proficiency in verbal and written communication.
4. Lastly, Professional Competence involves a comprehensive mastery of learning materials, including subject curriculum, scientific substance, and methodology.

In this study, the focus will be on investigating of English Education Students' live experience about teaching practicum, with a specific emphasis on the four teacher competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional. Additionally, the research aims to explore the narratives of English education students during their teaching practicum to illuminate the journey of identity formation and development as future language teachers.

This research was chosen because teaching practicum is an essential aspect of teacher education programs in preparing quality teachers. It encompasses all the learning experiences of pre-service teachers in schools. The urgency of this research lies in the importance of understanding the beliefs of pre-service teachers about teaching practicum in the context of teacher identity development ("Reviews," 2002).

(Barkhuizen, 2021) and other research publications are just a handful that look at teacher identity construction. However, the application of autobiographical narrative inquiry in research is still relatively new. Thus, through a narrative inquiry into the identities of those student teachers throughout their teaching practicum, we explore the complex processes of teacher identity development in this work. Drawing on theory of identity formation, this study examines how the language learning experiences of those student teachers have influenced who they are today, how they became English teachers, and how they plan to pursue their careers in the future. Their experiences have demonstrated that teaching and learning in schools may take on multiple meanings, which can be attributed to their passion to teaching English.

METHOD

This chapter elucidates the research approach utilized in exploring the practicum experiences of teaching English language education students as they progress in their careers. It offers a comprehensive foundation for understanding the research participants, data collection methods, and analysis techniques employed in this narrative inquiry study.

This report employs a narrative inquiry approach to investigate the lived experiences of student teachers as they engage in teaching practicums within the Indonesian teacher education landscape (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), (Barkhuizen, 2014)). Participants were selected based on their enrollment in English Education programs at university. Recruitment involved sending out invitations to all eligible students, and students agreed to participate. This qualitative approach seeks to understand how student teachers navigate their experiences and construct their professional identities during teaching practicums.

Narrative inquiry, as the chosen approach for this study, embodies a qualitative research methodology centered on understanding individuals' experiences through the lens of storytelling. Grounded in the works of scholars like (O' Toole, 2018, Triyanto & Handayani, 2019) narrative inquiry offers a means to explore the rich narratives of English language education students during their teaching practicum. This approach facilitates a deep exploration of the complexities, emotions, and transformative moments embedded in their journey to

becoming teachers. By allowing participants to share their stories in their own words, narrative inquiry captures the subjective and nuanced nature of their experiences, offering a holistic understanding of identity construction and professional development.

As a research methodology, narrative inquiry emphasizes data collection by including semi-structured interviews with participants and analysis of their reflective journals via online zoom. Interviews are conducted over two to three months, and journals are collected at the end of the practicum period and personal stories are analyzed to reveal the deeper meanings, emotions and perceptions that shape the individual's journey. By focusing on stories or narratives gathered through interviews, journals, or autobiographies, researchers gain insights into the lived experiences of participants. This methodology acknowledges the role of researcher subjectivity and ethical considerations while employing techniques such as thematic analysis to derive meaning from the stories. Data analysis involved thematic analysis of interview transcripts and reflective journals. Themes were identified through an iterative coding process. And for Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was guaranteed through data pseudonymization. The researcher also acknowledged the potential for bias in the data collection and analysis process. Through writing and representation, narrative inquiry creates texts that convey the richness and complexity of the narratives, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of a narrative inquiry analysis of teaching practicum experiences (Byrne, 2022) in crafting teacher identity would likely involve the exploration of the stories, experiences, and reflections of teacher candidates during their practicum. Through narrative inquiry, researchers would delve into the lived experiences of these individuals, examining how their interactions, challenges, successes, and reflections contribute to the construction of their teacher identities.

1. The teaching practicum experiences of English education students can be examined in the context of how these experiences contribute to the development of their teacher identities based on the interview results and utilizing Gary Barkhuizen's narrative inquiry methodology. Barkhuizen's method of narrative inquiry places an emphasis on the social and personal aspects of stories, concentrating on the ways in which people interpret their experiences. The student narratives demonstrate a dynamic process of identity development and learning that is in line with the four

fundamental teaching competencies—pedagogical, professional, social, and personal.

a. Pedagogical Competence

Experience and Reflection: The practicum experiences and reflection were described by the students as important chances to put their theoretical knowledge to use in actual classroom environments. A student, for example, recounted a situation in which they were forced to modify their lesson plan on the spot due to unexpected classroom dynamics:

"I had a detailed plan, but when I saw the students were struggling, I had to change my approach immediately." Although difficult, it helped me become more adaptable and responsive." (Student B)

b. Professional Competence

Mentorship and Collaboration: Students showed how they started to regard themselves as competent teachers who could handle the challenges of teaching through this narrative. They began to gain self-assurance in their educational abilities and saw the value of ongoing reflection and practice modification.

"I learned that teaching is just as much about learning as it is about imparting knowledge every day in the classroom. With every new task, I could feel my competence and confidence increasing." (Student D)

c. Personal Competence

Self-awareness and Growth: Moments of emotional development and self-discovery are common themes in personal narratives. One student related how she overcame her fear of speaking in front of a large group of people, saying,

"At first, I was scared of speaking to a full classroom. I was able to control my anxiety over time, and this experience strengthened my resilience and self-awareness." (Student B)

d. Social Competence

Cultural Sensitivity and Engagement: A number of students shared personal stories that underscored the significance of comprehending and interacting with their peers' varied cultural origins. In one story, a student teacher discovered how to better connect with their pupils by bringing ethnic perspectives into their classes:

"I had students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and I understood how important it was to incorporate their experiences and perspectives into my lessons. It increased the

learning's accessibility and inclusivity." (Student C).

The teaching practicum is seen through the lens of narrative inquiry as a crucial time for English education students to develop and polish their teacher identities (Cohen, 2010). The students' accounts of their experiences show how the four essential teaching competencies pedagogical, professional, personal, and social are gradually developed. These stories highlight the complex process of becoming a teacher by presenting a path of ongoing learning, introspection, and adaptation. Through active engagement with their practicum experiences, student teachers establish a professional identity that combines knowledge, values, and a dedication to the holistic development of their students, in addition to improving their abilities.

Tabel 1.
Four Fundamental Teaching Competencies

Teacher	Pedagogical Competence	Professional Competence	Personal Competence	Social Competence
A	Differentiation, variety of engagement strategies	Actively seeks feedback, adapts teaching methods	Highly organized, calm demeanor, resilience, growth mindset	Builds strong relationships with students and colleagues
B	Integrates technology, diverse teaching methods	Seeks mentors, continuous professional development	Positive attitude, resilient, proactive in learning new trends	Builds relationships with parents and colleagues
C	Active learning, differentiation, applies educational research	Regular self-assessment, discussions with colleagues	Organized, continuous self-improvement	Fosters teamwork, supportive classroom environment
D	Interactive teaching methods, engaging learning environment	Involved in school-wide initiatives, seeks feedback	Calm under pressure, resilience	Strong relationships with students, inclusive environment
E	Project-based learning, engagement strategies	Seeks feedback from students and colleagues	Maintains work-life balance, organized	Strong relationships with parents and colleagues

CONCLUSION

Reflection on Teacher Competencies the teaching practicum has been an invaluable experience in developing and refining key teacher competencies, essential for fostering effective and meaningful learning environments. The four primary competencies focused on during this practicum. With a contextualized understanding of the importance of understanding how teacher identity is formed in the context of actual classroom teaching, especially in practicum. This understanding recognizes the complexity and subtlety of training to become a teacher, as well as the special opportunities and challenges that arise in practicum settings.

The results showed that student teachers actively create and hone their identities during the teaching practicum, which is a transformative time. The stories emphasized how crucial real-world classroom experience is to developing teaching skills, how professional communities and mentoring can help professionals grow, how facing obstacles head-on can help people become resilient and self-assured, and how social interaction and cultural sensitivity are essential to establishing inclusive learning environments.

The implementing these suggestions, teacher education programs can better support teacher candidates in crafting their identities as educators, preparing them for the complexities and demands of the teaching profession.

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