

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF  
EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY  
AND COUNSELLING  
(IJEPC)**[www.ijepe.com](http://www.ijepe.com)**A REVIEW ON THE EXPERIENCES FACED BY ESL TRAINEE  
TEACHERS DURING TEACHING PRACTICUM**

Nur Anisah Tahir<sup>1\*</sup>, Sangeeth Ramalingam<sup>2</sup>, Ezzan Amnie Azizan<sup>3</sup>, Fairuz Umira Azmi<sup>4</sup>, Nur Ilyani Hadzir<sup>5</sup>, Norashikin Che Pi<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: anisah\_t@uptm.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: sangeeth@uptm.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: ezzan@uptm.edu.my

<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: fairuz.umira@uptm.edu.my

<sup>5</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: nurilyani@uptm.edu.my

<sup>6</sup> Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia  
Email: shikincp@uptm.edu.my

\* Corresponding Author

**Article Info:****Article history:**

Received date: 27.10.2024

Revised date: 07.11.2024

Accepted date: 10.12.2024

Published date: 18.12.2024

**To cite this document:**

Tahir, N. A., Ramalingam, S., Azizan, E. A., Azmi, F. U., Hadzir, N. I., & Che Pi, N. (2024). A Review On The Experiences Faced By ESL Trainee Teachers During Teaching Practicum. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 9 (56), 322-334.

**DOI:** 10.35631/IJEPC.956021

**Abstract:**

Good and high-quality tertiary education is crucial to ensure that learners can compete globally and achieve high employability. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) emphasizes good quality education where the learners must be equipped with all the necessary skills and abilities needed by the industries. In line with SDG 4, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia also greatly emphasises the ESL students' skills and competencies. Thus, teaching practicum becomes necessary to produce well-equipped future teachers in learning institutions. Past works of literature revealed mixed perceptions among the teacher trainees' expectations and the reality they face during their practice. Students often have different expectations from the actual experience. This shows that there is a gap between theory and practice. Additionally, practicum teachers discovered challenges that had huge implications for their teaching performance. Entering a teaching practicum, students are often filled with anticipation and expect to apply their learned strategies in the classroom. Yet the reality often challenges these expectations, showing how complex teaching can be. A review that included previous articles related to teacher trainee experiences revealed an in-depth investigation of their various expectations and realities. Findings based on this review benefit the Ministry

This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



of Education, the administrators of universities, and educators in terms of implementing appropriate adjustments for a better practicum experience, particularly for trainee teachers. In conclusion, the contrast between what practicum students expect and what they experience in the classroom highlights the unpredictable nature of teaching. However, these challenges are invaluable for long-term success in education.

**Keywords:**

Training Teachers, Teaching Practicum, ESL, Experiences, Review

## Introduction

Sustainable Development Goal 4 places greater emphasis on good quality education in learning institutions all over the world (Marshall, 2019). It is very crucial to provide good and high-quality education to the students so that they would have high employability and they would be able to compete globally. In line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal, the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia also focuses on providing high-quality education to the students, and this includes ESL education (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). This can be clearly seen in the Roadmap for English Language Education 2015-2025. This roadmap emphasises English language education based on the multiple perspectives of the teachers. An effective English language education is significant as it can directly affect the calibre of English language instructors as well as the calibre of English language instruction and learning occurring throughout the education systems. The entire English language education process must be in line with worldwide standards for English language competency and proficiency in order to enhance the level of English to meet global standards. A steady stream of qualified English language instructors who engage in planned, ongoing professional development throughout their careers is necessary to provide high-quality English education.

Tertiary institutions play an important role in producing good and qualified ESL teachers who will be teaching in primary and secondary schools after the completion of their studies. An essential component for a good education and a major factor in determining students' success is teacher quality (Pushpanadham, 2020). Teachers who are highly proficient in English and who possess the linguistic, pedagogical, and professional knowledge and skills necessary to produce a new generation of English-speaking Malaysians. Thus, it is imperative that English language education remains of the highest quality. This is the reason why higher learning institutions provide courses and teacher trainings to the students so that it will help and guide the students to equip themselves with all the necessary skills and qualities to deliver the knowledge to the students in primary and secondary schools.

Teaching practicum is one of the trainings that need to be joined and completed by the tertiary students so that they would be able to deliver lessons in schools. Past literature revealed mixed perceptions among the teacher trainee teachers' expectations and the reality that they face during their actual practice (Noordin et al., 2019; Yusof et al., 2023). Findings from the current literature indicate trainee teachers have different expectations as compared to their actual experiences that they encounter when they are doing their practicum. Massari et al., (2021) stated that trainee teachers frequently have difficult experiences in order to make sure the students' learning progresses and the continuance of curriculum-based education. Deocampo (2020), on the other hand, stated that among the problems and difficulties the trainees faced were the teacher's voice, classroom management, teaching tactics, learning strategies, and

impediments to English communication. In addition, Maharani and Fithriani (2023) mentioned that trainee teachers were facing challenges in strengthening their ability to select instructional strategies based on students' abilities and needs. Hence, it is vital to examine the experiences faced by ESL trainee teachers during practicum, as this would assist in shedding light on the aspects that need to be focused on and improved during the students' practicum.

Several review papers have been done regarding teacher education, such as possibilities of integrating ICT to develop teacher trainees' skills in collaborative and critical analysis of literature in English texts (Nambi, 2018), general review on the practicum among the pre-service teacher education (Pratiwi, 2020), and issues related to pre-service teachers in Malaysia (Ag-Ahmad et al., 2023). Nevertheless, review papers documenting the latest issues and challenges experienced by teacher trainees during their practicum are still insufficient. Hence, there is a need for this review to be conducted. The development of committed and competent trainee teachers is considered essential in the Malaysian context to promote lifelong learners. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure trainee teachers enjoy their practicum experience and are well-prepared to meet obstacles. During the teaching practicum, pre-service teachers are supposed to be able to critically think and assess themselves. This would be beneficial for them to work as professional instructors in the future. On top of that, it is also vital for the teachers to equip themselves with the soft skills needed to teach future learners, such as digital literacy and technologies, metacognition, communication, and others. These abilities are crucial because they enable 21st-century learners to be self-directed and able to interact with various categories of individuals. The findings from this review paper provide practical implications for the stakeholders in education. The Ministry of Education, the administrators of universities, and educators will benefit from this review and implementation of appropriate adjustments for a better practicum experience, particularly for trainee teachers.

The authors organised this review paper by providing the background of ESL education and teachers in Malaysia. Following this, the authors provide a comprehensive discussion on the experiences of ESL trainee teachers during their practicum, covering the challenges they face, their expectations, and the realities they encounter while teaching. Then, the authors discussed ESL trainee teachers' experiences, which includes the challenges, expectations and realities during teaching practicum. The following is the research question of this review.

Research question: What are the experiences faced by the teacher trainees during their practicum?

### ***Teaching Practicum In Higher Education***

The teaching practicum is a structured course of study or curriculum designed to provide students with practical experience in applying the knowledge and skills they have acquired. In order to establish a strong resonance between pedagogical knowledge acquired at the university and practical teaching skills, it is essential to have well-designed teacher education programs (V. Sathasivam et al., 2024). The author further discussed that the curriculum for teacher education aims to cultivate the competencies of pre-service teachers to facilitate their transition into the teaching profession. This curriculum is designed to provide in-depth knowledge of educational theory (pedagogical knowledge) and hands-on experience in pedagogical practices (teaching practical), aimed at preparing future educators for the challenges they will face in the teaching profession. In the national education system, Martín-Romera et al. (2022) have identified a varied distribution of credits for this component. This distribution stems from the

Ministry of Education's mandate for universities and educational institutions to allocate 8 out of the 60 credits. However, the distribution of credits may vary for educational institutions in different countries, as it depends on the specific guidelines set by the Ministry of Education in each respective country. Therefore, credit distributions for courses taken at international educational institutions may differ from those at local institutions.

In addition, various educational institutions will have different arrangements for teaching practicum within their program structure. These arrangements could include opportunities for student teachers to engage in classroom observations, lesson planning, teaching under supervision, and receiving feedback from experienced educators. Each institution's approach to teaching practicum may vary based on factors such as curriculum requirements, partnerships with local schools, and the specific goals of the teacher education program. Some institutions schedule it during the second year of the semester, while others plan it for the third year of the semester. For example, students from the International Islamic University Malaysia complete their teaching practicum during the final semester of their traineeship. This marks the conclusion of their three-and-a-half years of training and competency development. The first year of the program establishes the essential groundwork for trainee teachers, providing them with comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and theories that underpin the teaching profession (Ismail et al., 2024).

Additionally, teaching practicum offers students many advantages that help students to progress in the teaching profession, as well as offering the opportunity to observe and document the professional practices and responsibilities of educators in a real-world setting. As noted by García-Noblejas et al. (2023), practicums are essential components of initial teacher training, providing exposure to real-life educational settings. In the realm of education, the teaching practicum holds significant importance as it offers a pivotal platform for both current and prospective educators to amass knowledge and practical experience prior to their immersion into the professional sphere of pedagogy. Sasson & Malkinson (2021) highlighted that teaching practicum can furnish teachers with different views and deepen their understanding of the teaching profession. This invaluable opportunity permits the application of theoretical expertise acquired from years spent in tertiary educational institutions while simultaneously cultivating a cohort of adept and astute educators equipped to cater to the needs of successive generations. This aligns with the findings of Entika Fani Prastikawati et al. (2024), who concluded that integrating a teaching practicum into the curriculum offers valuable opportunities, especially for English trainee teachers, to improve their teaching skills, enhance their ability to assess student learning, and gain exposure to authentic teaching environments, thus improving their assessment literacy. This shows that besides providing opportunities to improve teaching skills, teaching practicum bridges the gap between theory and practice.

Moreover, Ferraz et al. (2020) noted the significance of the teaching practicum in enabling students to integrate theoretical knowledge with real-world teaching experiences. They observed that engaging in the practicum allowed students to actively apply and expand upon the theoretical concepts they had acquired during their academic studies. This hands-on experience provided them with the opportunity to deepen their understanding and proficiency in applying these concepts in real-world situations. On the other hand, Lestari (2020) revealed the significance of teaching practicum from the students' perspective, and it was found that the students agreed that teaching practicum helps them build pedagogical knowledge, one of which is understanding the teaching preparation a teacher should have before teaching. This involves

preparing lesson plans and teaching materials for class lessons. It is evident that the teaching practicum provides numerous advantages by enabling students to gain authentic teaching experiences in real-life settings. Furthermore, Ismail et al. (2024) asserted that experiencing real school environments helps them build confidence in their teaching abilities and refine their skills in an authentic setting through a supportive and step-by-step process. As a result, trainees are steered toward mastering not just theoretical knowledge but also practical skills crucial for effective teaching.

In conclusion, the teaching practicum is a vital component of teacher education, serving as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This structured experience not only reinforces the pedagogical principles learned in academic settings but also equips future educators with the essential skills and confidence needed to navigate real-world teaching environments (Zhou R et al., 2024). The varied approaches to teaching practicum across institutions underscore its adaptability to different educational contexts, yet its core purpose remains consistent: to prepare pre-service teachers for the complexities of the teaching profession. By immersing trainees in authentic classroom settings, the practicum fosters a deeper understanding of educational practices and ensures that future educators are not only theoretically sound but also practically adept, ready to contribute meaningfully to the education system.

### ***ESL Trainee Teachers' Experiences During Teaching Practicum***

Teaching is a systematic approach that is evidence-based practice which involves planning and delivering instructions in an impactful way. In addition, the teaching profession requires aspiring teachers to cultivate a variety of essential skills throughout a complex and intricate venture. Teachers are not only perceived as knowledge transmitters but also as mentors and role models who can influence the attitudes, values, and behaviours of the students (Berkovich & Eyal, 2020; Bandura, 1977). During teaching practicum, trainee teachers, including ESL trainee teachers, often face a range of experiences, which serves as a critical phase in their professional development. This period allows them to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings, but it also presents challenges, as described in the next section.

### **Challenges**

During their teaching practicum, ESL trainee teachers often confront a wide range of challenges that can greatly influence their professional development and effectiveness in the classroom. These challenges can encompass aspects such as classroom management, lesson planning, language barriers, and adapting to diverse learning styles. According to trainee teachers' experiences in Malaysia (Khusniyah et al., 2023), one of the main difficulties is classroom management, where they frequently struggle to maintain discipline and manage a variety of student behaviours. Additionally, the tension between theoretical knowledge and practical application is a significant obstacle, as pre-service teachers find it difficult to translate their subject-matter knowledge into effective teaching practices (Fithriani, 2023; Gan & Yang, 2018).

The lack of standardised English language norms further complicates this, as trainee teachers must navigate various accents and dialects without a clear standard to follow (Asikin & Ibrahim, 2020). Cultural differences and the need to adapt to a multicultural classroom environment also pose substantial challenges, especially for those teaching in an ESL context while being trained in an EFL setting (Gan & Yang, 2018). Moreover, the shortage of teaching



technology and resources, coupled with limited time for practicum, exacerbates these difficulties, making it hard for trainee teachers to deliver effective lessons and receive adequate feedback (Fithriani, 2023; Khusniyah et al., 2023).

Pronunciation teaching is another area where novice teachers face internal challenges such as a lack of confidence and pedagogical knowledge, as well as external challenges like insufficient teaching materials and time constraints (Asikin & Ibrahim, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced additional hurdles, with pre-service teachers struggling to adapt to online teaching environments and lacking the necessary skills for online assessments (Gan & Yang, 2018). Furthermore, the mentoring process itself can be problematic, with issues such as lack of feedback, mentee exploitation, and insufficient guidance from mentors that hinder the professional growth of trainee teachers (Khusniyah et al., 2023).

Another challenges as discussed by Coellho and Freitas (2012) as cited in Farah Ilyani et al. (2020) who have questioned the effectiveness of education and teaching programs in changing practicum teachers' learning environment and their previous trusts are still controversial. In this matter, teaching courses offered by the institutions have not fulfilled the needs of practicum teachers, in which the issue where practicum teachers' teaching courses are considered obsolete, traditional and even contradicted with the preparation for their practicum. (Farah Ilyani et.al. 2020 ; Watzke 2007). The findings indicated that the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the practical applicability of the pedagogical theories taught in academic institutions. The participants demonstrated a tendency to merely comprehend and memorize these theories for examination purposes, yet struggled to implement them in authentic classroom settings.

Moreover, in Malaysia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) emphasizes 21st century education (PAK-21), which aims to equip students with a diverse set of skills including communication, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities to prepare them for real-life scenarios. To attain these goals, teachers widely employ information technology and multimedia in the teaching and learning process (Nur Afiqah et al., 2020). However, there were challenges in making the lifelong learning process happen due to COVID-19 pandemic which restricted people of moving around due to the risk of getting infected. Based on the research from Fatimah (2023), practicum students have problem in implementing teaching and learning from home (Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran dari Rumah;PdPR) due cost in preparing teaching materials and internet data. The research also stated that students' commitment in attending online classes along with punctuality and poor internet network contributed to the challenge of teachers in PdPR. (Fatimah, 2023 ; Mahathir Yahya and Wardatul Adnan, 2021) On the other hand, the challenge which practicum teachers face is students' motivation in teaching and learning session (PDP). According to Fatimah (2023), students' motivation level in learning decreases due to no encouragement from teachers and the students' peer who are not serious in class.

Finally, the overall perception of the teaching practicum varies, with some practicum teachers finding the observation period beneficial while others face significant challenges related to classroom teaching skills and school environments (Gan & Yang, 2018). These multifaceted challenges underscore the need for comprehensive support systems, including better integration of multicultural elements in teacher education programmes, enhanced mentoring practices, and improved collaboration between universities and schools to bridge the gap

between theoretical knowledge and practical application (Khusniyah et al., 2023; Fithriani, 2023; Asikin & Ibrahim, 2020; Gan & Yang, 2018).

### **Expectations**

The expectations of ESL trainee teachers during their practicum are both varied and critical for their professional growth, as they represent a significant step in bridging the gap between theory and practice. These expectations are shaped by multiple factors, including the theoretical knowledge gained from their teacher preparation programs, the pedagogical approaches they are trained to apply, and the specific needs of the diverse learners they encounter. Moreover, their expectations are influenced by the mentoring they receive from cooperating teachers, feedback from university supervisors, and the overall school environment. For many, the practicum serves as a testing ground where they hope to implement best practices, manage classroom dynamics, and refine their instructional strategies. Understanding the personal expectations of ESL trainee teachers is crucial in designing effective and supportive training experiences (Mitka, 2011). Key expectations include opportunities for professional growth, teaching readiness and continuous constructive feedback.

The practicum trainees expected the practicum to provide them with several opportunities to develop their self-identity, meaningful learning experiences, and participate in concrete teaching experiences, which are essential for their growth as educators (Kanwal, 2023; Nissim & Naifield, 2019; Gourgiotou, 2018). The authors highlighted that the practicum trainees anticipated engaging in meaningful learning experiences, such as observing and participating in classroom activities, and gaining exposure to diverse teaching methods and strategies. They also expected to have the chance to apply theoretical knowledge in real teaching situations, which they believed would be essential for their growth and development as future educators. Trainee teachers perceive the practicum as a transformative phase whereby they are able to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application (Gráf, 2023; Nordin et al, 2019). This integration is crucial for their professional growth as educators.

Additionally, ESL trainee teachers expected that the practicum will enhance their readiness for the teaching profession, simultaneously increasing their self-efficacy and allowing them to collaborate with colleagues and administrators effectively (Ismail, 2024). Practicum experiences offer invaluable hands-on experience, allowing trainee teachers to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings, thereby boosting their teaching efficacy and confidence (Nissim & Naifield, 2019). Furthermore, practicum assists trainees to navigate the complexities of classroom management and instructional strategies, preparing them to meet the demands of diverse students' needs and fostering their adaptability in the educational environment (Gina et al, 2023).

ESL trainee teachers have high expectations when it comes to receiving feedback. They anticipate specific, timely, and actionable input that can directly contribute to improving their teaching methods. This feedback is vital for their professional development and growth as educators. According to Richards and Farrell (2021), formative feedback is crucial because it can assist the trainee teachers in refining their teaching practices by providing them with constructive feedback that is tailored to their requirements. This type of feedback allows trainee teachers to successfully address specific challenges and enhance their pedagogical approaches effectively. Moreover, regular and thorough feedback helps trainee teachers become more competent and confident in the classroom and guarantees successful addressing diverse

demands of the students (Kim & Kim, 2022). Furthermore, the continuous exchange of ideas and insights enabled by constructive feedback nurtures a culture of introspection, creating a conducive environment for constant professional development and the evolution of teaching approaches (Gina et al, 2023).

By taking into account and actively addressing these specific expectations, teacher education programmes will be better equipped to prepare and enhance students' teaching practices with a deeper understanding and clearer guidance. To better address the diverse needs and potential challenges encountered by ESL trainee teachers, teacher education programs should enhance their curricula and instructional methods (Gina et al, 2023; Richards & Farrell, 2011). This means that in order to provide comprehensive support for ESL trainee teachers, teacher education programs should carefully review and update their curricula and instructional methods to ensure they are equipped to address the diverse needs and potential challenges faced by these educators. This may involve incorporating specialised training, resources, and strategies tailored to the unique circumstances of ESL teaching. This strategic focus not only ensures trainee teachers are equipped with essential skills and competencies but also aligns their training programmes with real-world demands and expectations.

### **Realities**

During their teaching practicum, trainee teachers often find that the reality of classroom teaching is quite different from the theoretical knowledge they acquired during their studies. As mentioned by Perrow, M. (2013), practicum teachers sometimes experience a gap between best practices that they learn in teacher preparation programs and actual practices that they encounter in classrooms as student teachers. The author further elaborated that there are consistent complaints from distressed student teachers who encounter a disparity between the teaching practicum they expect to see during their classroom placements and the actual practices observed in the classes taught by their cooperating teachers or school mentors. While educational theory provides a strong foundation in pedagogy, classroom management, and instructional strategies, it cannot fully prepare them for the dynamic, unpredictable nature of real-life teaching environments. These experiences often reveal gaps between theory and practice, highlighting the complexity of teaching and the need for flexibility, creativity, and resilience. Sands and Goodwin (2005) provided further support for this idea by emphasising that trainee teachers frequently express dissatisfaction with the disparity between their university learning expectations and the actual realities they encounter. Hence, this matter emphasises the need for better alignment between teacher training programs and the practical demands of the classroom.

In addition, the mismatch between what trainee teachers experience during their practicum and the reality of the teaching profession often became the topic of interest for many researchers. Sutherland et al., (2010) highlighted that making sense of what it means to be a classroom teacher takes time, which means that the discrepancy between training and practice reinforces the notion that becoming a skilled, effective teacher is a gradual process, requiring continuous learning, adaptation, and time to fully comprehend the multifaceted responsibilities of the profession. Furthermore, Gilad and Alkalay (2014) highlighted that new teachers often find themselves in a challenging and demanding environment, as they strive to adapt to a reality that differs from their experiences during their teaching practice. This is even more overwhelming, as mentioned by the authors, when new teachers come to school where the staff is more experienced than themselves. So, exposure to real school environment should be started



not only during practicum in which to be taken during the final year of study but also during the early year by structuring courses involving schools.

On top of that, Fenwick (2011) argued that it is common for teachers in the initial years of their teaching careers, following their training, to experience transition and change. This is further complicated by curriculum adjustments, as noted by the author. Additionally, Sabar Ben-Yehoshua (2001) suggested that new teachers' adjustment stages resemble those of immigrants. When transitioning from the teaching practicum to actual teaching in their first year, new teachers experience intricate processes of re-socialisation and de-socialisation while assimilating aspects of the school's organisational culture. Thus, Sabar Ben-Yehoshua (2001) drew a parallel between this adjustment period and the experiences of immigrants, suggesting that the stages of adjustment for new teachers are similar to those of individuals moving to a new country.

After all, the discrepancies between what is learnt in teacher preparation programs and what is experienced during practicum placements highlight the complexities of the teaching profession. Researchers like Perrow (2013), Sands and Goodwin (2005), and Sutherland et al. (2010) emphasise the need for continuous learning and adaptation as trainee teachers transition into professional educators. As they navigate these challenges, the practicum becomes a crucial phase in their development, requiring resilience, creativity, and the ability to reconcile theory with the realities of classroom teaching. Ultimately, this process underscores the importance of aligning teacher education with practical classroom demands, as well as the gradual nature of becoming an effective, skilled teacher.

## Conclusion

In summary, practicum teachers that had undergone various challenges left them with an impactful experience throughout their journey as a teacher trainee. The experience made them realize their growth professionally and enabled them to understand their strength in classroom experience. Practicum also serves as an essential bridge between theoretical knowledge and practical application for ESL trainee teachers, offering a unique opportunity for these future educators to immerse themselves in real-world teaching environments. The practicum experience, though invaluable, is fraught with challenges that range from classroom management issues and adapting to diverse student needs to navigating resource constraints and aligning theoretical knowledge with practical realities. These challenges highlight the existing gap between teacher education programs and the dynamic nature of actual classroom settings. Despite these difficulties, the practicum is a crucial phase for professional growth, equipping trainee teachers with the resilience, adaptability, and skills needed to navigate the complexities of the teaching profession.

For stakeholders in education, including the Ministry of Education, university administrators, and teacher educators, it is imperative to recognise these challenges and work towards providing better support systems and practical training environments. This can be achieved through enhancing the curriculum, improving mentoring practices, and fostering closer collaboration between universities and schools. Universities can always make sure that the curriculum used in the programme structure is always up to date and can cater to the students needs and capabilities. Before going out to the real world, trainee teachers must be given ample opportunities to actually experience the real setting so that they will not be culture shock upon arriving at the real world. The realities of classroom teaching often slightly deviate from

expectations, revealing gaps in preparation. Trainee teachers frequently express dissatisfaction with the differences between their training and actual classroom practices. This stresses the need for better alignment between teacher education programs and real-world classroom demands, along with ongoing support systems to aid their transition into professional roles. Addressing these areas will help bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring that trainee teachers are well-prepared to face the realities of the classroom.

Ultimately, the teaching practice is not just about preparing trainees to teach. These teachers went through several challenges, had numerous expectations when diving into the world of teaching and also went through the harsh realities in becoming a true educator. The experience that they gained shaped them into becoming reflective, competent, and confident educators who are capable of contributing meaningfully to the education system. By understanding and addressing the challenges faced during the practicum, we can ensure that trainee teachers are better equipped to inspire and educate future generations, thereby fulfilling the broader goals of quality education as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 4. Safe to say that the experiences, the challenges and realities faced by the trainee teachers are crucial for them to endure so that they can be an individual that is resilient, adaptive to any situations and will continuously learn to improve themselves once they are in this complicated but lovable profession.

### Acknowledgement

The authors would like to acknowledge the invaluable support and guidance provided by Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia (UPTM) throughout the course of this research. This study was made possible through the financial assistance of Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia (UPTM), specifically under research grant number UPTM.DVCRI.RMC.15(72). The substantial financial contributions provided have played a crucial role in facilitating the execution of this study and have markedly enhanced its successful completion. Special thanks are extended to the dedicated team members whose invaluable contributions and collaboration have significantly enriched this study.

### References

- Ag-Ahmad, N., Mohamed, A. T. F. S., & Bakar, E. W. (2023). Systematic Review on Issues and Challenges of Pre-Service English Teachers in Malaysia. *Teflin Journal*, 34(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v34i1/1-20>
- Ashley Fenwick (2011) The first three years: experiences of early career teachers, *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, 17:3, 325-343
- Asikin, N. M., & Ibrahim, N. A. (2020). Challenges in Teaching Pronunciation in Malaysian Secondary Schools. *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11113/LSPI.V7.16349>
- Deocampo, M. F. (2020). Issues and challenges of english language teacher-trainees' teaching practicum performance: Looking back and going forward. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 13(2), 486–503. <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1258795.pdf>
- Entika Fani Prastikawati, Mujiyanto, Y., Saleh, M., & Sri Wuli Fitriati. (2024). Teaching Practicum: Does It Impact to Pre-service EFL Teachers' Language Assessment Literacy? *World Journal of English Language*, 14(3), 242–242. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n3p242>

- Farah Ilyani Zakaria, Khadijah Razak & Hafizah Zulkifli, (2020), kualiti bakal guru dalam pengajaran tilawah al-Quran melalui pengalaman pembelajaran terdahulu (PPT), *Webinar ICIED 2020: International Conference on Islamic Education*, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia p. 744-759, december 2020. eISBN 978-967-14229-7-7
- Ferraz, O. L., Vidoni, C., & Boas, M. V. (2020). Bridging the gap between theory and practice: the impact of school–university partnership in a PETE program. *Sport, Education and Society*, 26(7), 788–799. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2020.1851182>
- Fithriani, R. (2023). Exploring Challenges EFL Pre-Service Teachers Experience in Teaching Practicum: A Transformative Learning Perspective. *Scope*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v7i2.16305>
- Gan, Z., & Yang, C. C. R. (2018). How Prepared are the Preservice ESL Teachers to Teach Diverse Learners? *AsiaTEFL*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18823/ASIAATEFL.2018.15.1.7.99>
- García-Noblejas, B. P., Barceló-Cerdá, M. L., Gómez, I. R., & López-Gómez, E. (2023). Exploring Student Teacher Perceptions on the Benefits of the Teaching Practicum. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 12(2), 242–257. <https://doi.org/10.7821/naer.2023.7.1384>
- Gilad, E., & Alkalay, A. (2014). The gap between role expectations of new teachers and school reality. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 2(12), 473-486.
- Ibrahim, Fatimah (2020), pelaksanaan pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam talian semasa praktikum: isu dan cabaran guru pelatih. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Dedikasi*, [S.l.], v. 21, n. 1, p. 34-51, june 2023. ISSN 2710-6810.
- Ismail, H., Othman, A., Mahmood, S. R. S., Ibrahim, H., & Ismail, N. A. (2024). International Islamic University Malaysia's (IIUM) Islamic Education Teacher Trainees' Self-Efficacy during Teaching Practicum. *Intellectual Discourse*, 32(1).
- Khusniyah, Z. A., Shahrom, S. M., Elfiyanto, S., & Hidayanti, I. (2023). Challenges and Coping Strategies of EFL Trainee Teachers in International Teaching Practicum. *VELES (Voices of English Language Education Society)*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v7i3.21253>
- Lestari, I. W. (2020). First experiences in a school-based practicum: Pre-service teachers' emotion and perceived benefits towards the program. *EnJourMe (English Journal of Merdeka) : Culture, Language, and Teaching of English*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.26905/enjourme.v5i1.4228>
- Maharani, F., & Fithriani, R. (2023). Exploring Challenges EFL Pre-Service Teachers Experience in Teaching Practicum: A Transformative Learning Perspective. *Scope : Journal of English Language Teaching*, 7(2), 173–180. <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v7i2.16305>
- Martín-Romera, A., Martínez-Valdivia\*, E., & Higuera-Rodríguez, L. (2022). The Practicum in Teacher Training: Conditions for Integral Training. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 11(4), 2115–2126. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.11.4.2115>
- Marshall, H. (2019). *The Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Teachers* (p. 32). Oxfam Education. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620842/edu-sustainable-development-guide-15072019-en.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Massari, N., Mat Saad, N. S., Puteh-Behak, F., Ahmad, S., Abdullah, H., Harun, H., Ahmad Mahir, N., Selamat, S., Baharun, H., & Ishak, M. (2021). 21st Century Skills in Practice: Malaysian Trainee Teachers' Experience at Managing Students' Learning during the Pandemic. *Sains Insani*, 6(1), 17–24. <https://doi.org/10.33102/sainsinsani.vol6no1.227>

- Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2015). *English Language Education Reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025*.
- Nambi, R. (2018). Using activity theory to explore the possibilities of integrating ICT in the Training of Literature in English teachers at Makerere University: A literature review. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 17(12), 135–148. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.17.12.8>
- Noordin, N., Abdul Samad, A., Mohamed Razali, A. B., Ismail, L., & Md Rashid, J. (2019). What Teacher Trainees Did Not Expect From Their Practicum Experience. *International Journal of Language, Literacy and Translation*, 2(2), 42–53. <https://doi.org/10.36777/ijollt2019.2.2.026>
- Nur Afiah Fatin Saipullah & Mohd. Isa Hamzah, (2020), tahap penggunaan multimedia dalam pengajaran bidang al-quran dalam kalangan guru pendidikan islam sekolah rendah daerah Kuching. *Webinar ICIEd 2020: International Conference on Islamic Education*, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia p. 114-121, december 2020. eISBN 978-967-14229-7-7
- Perrow, M. (2013). “Welcome to the real world”: Navigating the gap between best teaching practices and current reality. *Studying Teacher Education*, 9(3), 284-297.
- Pratiwi, D. (2020). Teaching Practicum in Pre-Service Teacher Education. *Yavana Bhasha : Journal of English Language Education*, 1(1), 31. <https://doi.org/10.25078/yb.v1i1.1375>
- Pushpanadham, K. (2020). Teacher Education in Global Era: Retrospect and Prospect. In *Teacher Education in the Global Era: Perspectives and Practices* (pp. 1–317). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-4008-0>
- Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. C. (2021). *Practice Teaching: A Reflective Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, N. (2001). Interpretive research: From the Garden of Eden to reality through crisis – Inexperienced teachers as immigrants. In: N. Sabar Ben-Yehoshua (Ed.), *Traditions and currents in qualitative research*. Or Yehuda: Dvir, 441-468. [Hebrew]
- Sands, D.I., and L.D. Goodwin. 2005. Shared responsibility for teacher preparation: An exploratory study of the match between skills of clinical teachers and those required of their teacher candidates. *Teaching and Teacher Education* 21: 817–28.
- Sasson, I., and Malkinson, N. (2021). Co-teaching-based professional development: self-efficacy, attitudes toward the profession, and pedagogical practices. *J. Univ. Teach. Learn. Pract.* 18, 82–100. doi: 10.53761/1.18.6.07
- Sutherland, L., Howard, S., & Markauskaite, L. (2010). Professional identity creation: Examining the development of beginning preservice teachers’ understanding of their work as teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 455–465.
- Ugalingan, G., Edjan, D., & Valdez, P. D. (2021). *Online Internship Experiences Among Pre-service ESL Teachers in the Philippines: Challenges and Opportunities*. <https://tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume25/ej99x/ej99int/>.
- Yusof, N. M., Zainudin, E. N., & Din, N. N. H. J. (2023). TESL Trainee Teachers’ Experiences and Challenges. *Selangor Humaniora Review*, 7(1), 36–49.
- V. Sathasivam, R., Abdullah, M. N. S., & Abd Rauf, R. A. (2024). Theory-Practice Divide: Pre-service Teachers’ Application of Pedagogical Knowledge During Teaching Practicum. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 32(1), 69–86. <https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.32.1.04>

Zhou R, Wang T and Lin H (2024) Climber, mediator, and marathoner: narrative inquiry of career motivation changes of pre-service CSL teachers throughout teaching practicum. *Front. Psychol.* 15:1319507. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1319507