Indonesian EFL Pre-service Teachers' Experiences: Revealing English Instructional Challenges during Teaching Practice

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ABSTRACT

EFL pre-service teachers who desire to become qualified must practice teaching in school settings to apply classroom-learned skills. Consequently, adequate preparation at the numerous schools and their readiness where they would teach is essential. This qualitative research investigates the challenges Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers encounter in English instruction during teaching practice. This study utilized a phenomenological case study approach, as it offers significant benefits in comprehending the intricate dynamics involved in becoming an English teacher. To ensure impartiality and fairness in the research, a purposive sampling technique was employed to select 10 out of 40 pre-service teachers as critical informants who could provide valuable insights into the subject matter and facilitate the identification of information-rich cases. The collection of data was conducted through the utilization of semi-structured interviews, teaching diaries, and teaching videos. The findings indicate that EFL pre-service teachers encounter challenges in effectively communicating instructions, which can be attributed to various factors such as insufficient resources, limited access to media, inadequate preparation, disruptive behavior of learners, and insufficient proficiency in English and pedagogical knowledge. Nevertheless, this study has identified three significant challenges: inadequacy of teaching resources, the absence of respect, and insufficient content knowledge. The findings suggest that school administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders must develop productive, systematic, and structured induction experiences for novice teachers, particularly those still in the process of completing their teacher training, to address the challenges they encounter.

1. Introduction

Acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to become an effective teacher is multifaceted and intricate. Consequently, how student trainees acquire teaching skills has emerged as the focus of various interests and methods for exploring its multiple dimensions, actors, and dynamics. The domain of research and publications in this field has increased significantly, particularly in teaching practice. Teaching practice plays a determinant role in the teachers' initial education and their early development (Arends, 2015; Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 1994; Caires & Almeida, 2005; Capel et al., 2004; Evelein et al., 2008; Thiessen, 2000; Veale, 1989). Since the establishment of training colleges in the nineteenth century, it has remained a fundamental aspect of teaching and learning (Cohen & Manion, 1997). Developing the expected duties of teachers requires teacher training in particular. The teacher training program must balance theoretical and practical components properly. In teaching practice one of the programs that serve this aim is the teaching practice program (Özdaş, 2018).

Consistent with the preceding statement highlighting the importance of teaching training in the area of education, empirical evidence has shown that teaching practice provides numerous advantages to teacher trainees, including the opportunity to learn and develop as professional teachers while also embodying their philosophies, theories, and understandings (Abongdia et al., 2015) along of the components of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, rural knowledge, ecological knowledge, inquiry knowledge, and personal knowledge (Mokoena, 2017). The theories and knowledge gained by prospective teachers will be valuable and meaningful if they are exposed to the information, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors they need in actual

educational settings. In other words, teaching practice is a platform that is designed in such a way as to enable pre-service teachers to implement the theoretical knowledge they have acquired in real-life classroom scenarios to develop their understanding and competence as future professional teachers (Abdullah & Mirza, 2020; Marais & Meier, 2004). In addition to being a compulsory prerequisite for prospective teachers, teaching practice serves the purpose of providing them with exposure to authentic scenarios and circumstances of practice, as well as challenges and potential solutions for overcoming them.

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Despite the benefits that teaching practice offers to prospective teachers, the term teaching practice itself is portrayed as a phase in which a teacher candidate is immersed in the authentic teaching and learning environment (Abongdia et al., 2015; Adebola, 2022; Fandiño, 2013; Foncha et al., 2015). Upon commencing their teaching careers, student teachers are likely to encounter a range of emotions, including excitement, anxiety, anticipation, and apprehension (Foncha et al., 2015). The efficacy of teaching practice can be influenced by a range of factors, including the emotions of prospective teachers, their beliefs and knowledge regarding classroom instruction, teaching, and content knowledge, as well as contextual factors such as expectations, requirements, and the impact of influential school and university figures (Borko & Mayfield, 1995).

Teaching practice undoubtedly provides significant opportunities for student teachers to attempt the art of teaching before entering the world of the teaching profession (Abongdia et al., 2015), which is much needed by prospective teachers to be professionally trained and prepared to become effective (Khalid, 2014). A plethora of studies have been conducted on diverse aspects of teaching training. A plethora of studies has been conducted on diverse aspects of teaching training. Literature indicates that pre-service teachers engage in teaching practices to develop pedagogical knowledge, competencies, and values relevant to future teacher performance improvement programs or teacher professionalism (Abdulwahed & Ismail, 2019; Azano & Stewart, 2015; Mafugu, 2022). In addition, teaching practice is utilized to help student teachers to be aware of their choice as professional educators (Mahmood & Iqbal, 2018). Several prior research that examined a variety of practical teaching and teacher training development domains including Bosnyák and Gáncs (2012); Cheng (2013); Coşkun (2013); Gan (2013); Genc and Buyukkarci (2013); Gurbuz (2006); Haigh et al. (2006); Hamaidi et al. (2014); Leke-ateh et al.

(2013); Ralph (2007); Starkey & Rawlins (2012); Tuli & File (2009); Yusof et al. (2014). As mentioned earlier, most studies emphasize real teaching practicum; from practical training to evaluation to advantages and disadvantages, those same studies demonstrate that training teaching research has become increasingly intriguing in teacher education. Additional studies concentrating on prospective teachers must demonstrate a specific relation to the practicum experience; however, the features established there could substantially affect it. A number of the studies concentrated on the perceptions of pre-service teachers (Fajardo, 2013; Gutierrez, 2015; Jaimes, 2013; Lopera & Monsalve, 2015; Sánchez, 2014), their perspectives of ideological influence (Osorio et al., 2009; Viáfara, 2016), the growth of their research skills (Cárdenas B et al., 2005; Ortiz & Duarte, 2014), the improved performance of their linguistic or cross-cultural competencies (Castañeda & Montenegro, 2015; Franco & Galvis, 2013; Garcés & Olivera, 2014; González, 2008; Holguín, 2013), and their perceptions on language instruction (Castillo & Cortés, 2012; Cortés, 2016) whereas others suggested changes to the teaching practicum component of the curriculum for language teacher training programs (Bohórquez, 2012; Fandiño, 2013; Granados-Beltrán, 2016; Holguín & Morales, 2011; Medina, 2012; Mendez & Bonilla, 2016). To the greatest of our understanding, numerous studies have addressed classroom management in the setting of EFL and ESL classrooms (Aliakbari & Heidarzadi, 2015; León & Castro, 2017; Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Habibi et al., 2017; Haukås, 2016; Islam, 2017; Karim et al., 2020; Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016). Merç and Subaşı (2015) elaborated on Turkish teachers' classroom management problems and coping strategies. In a study examining students' attitudes toward educators' affective factors in EFL classes, Ranjbar and Narafshan (2016) identified that teachers' self-confidence, culture, attitude toward native English speakers as well as the language, absence of anxiousness (class and topic management), and motivation are the affective factors that have the greatest impact on students' English language acquisition.

It is evident from the preceding review of pertinent literature that many investigations have examined the challenges pre-service teachers encounter during their teaching practicum. However, certain gaps persist in the literature. First, most previous research concentrates solely on actual teaching practicum, including practical training, evaluation, positive and negative aspects, and classroom management. Second, previous studies on teaching practice have also neglected student teachers' lived experience of doing the practicum to a large extent. In addition, the starting point for this study was the assumption that training to become a teacher is a period of intensive investigative process and exploration of oneself,

others, and novel environments. Examining the perceptions and experiences of those in the process of becoming teachers must be deemed the most relevant. In response to the issues previously discussed, this study attempts to portray how teachers in teaching practicum enact classroom instructions. This study will concentrate on the instruction of English as a foreign language in Indonesia to fill a gap in the literature since the previous study has not been explicitly investigated within the contexts of Indonesian teaching practice.

In conclusion, the study contends that classroom instruction research will generate new insights for teacher training programs and policymakers as it will be correlated with teachers' professional identity construction, materials used, student engagement, and policy implementation. These characteristics are crucial to investigate in the context of teacher education. Even though previous studies have examined classroom instruction in the educational sector (Adebola, 2022), they have not specifically investigated foreign language learning, such as English language instruction. This study was conducted to see how 10 Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers' understanding of teacher development evolved in light of their eight-week practicum experiences. To exemplify the view that teaching is fundamentally experiential, the qualitative research method was deemed more appropriate than the quantitative research method. Therefore, it is necessary to concentrate on the thoughts, feelings, and meanings that emerge and to pay attention to the prospective teachers' challenges, skepticism, and issues regarding their teaching practice experience. It is widely acknowledged that adopting a phenomenological approach can yield significant benefits in comprehensively grasping the dynamics and multifaceted nature of becoming a teacher. The findings of this study were enhanced by the diverse range of data sources utilized, although the primary investigation centered on a limited cohort of EFL pre-service. Consequently, it could be argued that a larger group of participants, comprising not solely pre-service teachers but also relevant stakeholders, would have yielded different results. Due to the limited number of participants and the idiosyncratic nature of first-year teaching experiences, no claims could be made regarding the ability of the findings to be generalized.

The findings would provide valuable insights into the teaching practicum program in educational training institutions, which would assist policymakers, school administrators, supervisors, and other stakeholders in making prudent choices concerning teaching training as a component of initial teacher preparation. Particularly, the stakeholders involved may utilize this information to minimize or solve the difficulties pre-service teachers confront throughout their teaching practicum and to initiate prevention measures against the obstacles. Besides that, pre-service teachers can also utilize this study as a source of information and reference when preparing to conduct teaching training by recognizing the likely challenges that student teachers will face. The study would also stifle interest in future research into the teaching practice program at education faculties and colleges.

2. Method

The current research focuses on student teachers' field experiences, specifically emphasizing the instruction of English as a foreign language. This study employed a qualitative phenomenological case study method, which is advantageous for gaining a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics and complexity of becoming an English teacher. Creswell and Poth, (2016) explicated that the phenomenological approach centers on scrutinizing a phenomenon through a group of individuals who have collectively experienced the phenomenon. Due to its emphasis on subject perspectives and the interpretations they generate of the phenomenon being studied, the phenomenological case study design was deemed appropriate for this research. Furthermore, according to Merriam (1998), a case pertains to a fundamentally restricted occurrence wherein a specific duration exists for data collection or a finite count of individuals who can be interviewed or observed. The case study offers a thorough examination and depiction of a particular phenomenon. The case study provides a comprehensive analysis and description of a specific phenomenon. This study's qualitative phenomenological case study design extensively relies on participants' vivid descriptions of a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Therefore, this study's data were derived from semi-structured interviews, student teachers' diaries, and teaching videos. This study attempts to shed light on the challenges that prospective teachers encounter when employing English during their field practicums by describing the experiences of the participants in order to provide a comprehensive knowledge of this phenomenon (Gall & Borg, 2007).

2.1 Participants

Ten fourth-year students (7 females and 3 males) registered for a bachelor's degree in the education program at a state university in Medan, Indonesia, were invited to participate in this research through a purposive sampling technique. The use of purposive sampling was evidenced by selecting samples that were "abundant in necessary information" (Patton, 1990). This implies that any individual with a similar experience can be chosen as a respondent from a specific setting (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). Since the study's primary objective was to identify student teachers' difficulties, this present study will concentrate on student teachers' field experience by

analyzing the experiences of fourth-year student teachers who had just completed their final practicum. A purposive sampling technique was employed to reach the objective. Furthermore, purposive sampling was used because not all final-year students in the institution possess criteria that correspond to the phenomenon being investigated. Therefore, the researchers established certain considerations or criteria that the participants should meet: the student teachers who have just completed their teaching practicum. For ethical compliance, the tenth participants were identified in numerical order (Participant-1,-2,-3,-4,-5,-6,-7,-8,-9,-10) for anonymous sake to conceal their actual identities.

2.2 Data collection

The current investigation utilized multiple data sources to triangulate and comprehensively depict the examined issues. The primary data sources included semi-structured interviews and teaching diaries, while the secondary data was taken from teaching videos recorded during the pre-service teachers' teaching practice. These data were obtained to gain information regarding the experiences and voices of the prospective teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand the issues under investigation better. All 10 participants were individually interviewed to gain a full explanation of their viewpoints and perspectives on their field-based teaching practicum experiences. This method permits the ahead-of-time specification of questions, provides the interviewer with wide latitude to inquire about various topics, and allows the interviewee to define the nature of the interview. In addition, it permits the collection of comparable and systematic data from respondents via an interview form and the examination of the phenomenon's depth (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Patton, 1990). All interviews were done upon the participants' return to their home university and were audio recorded in Bahasa Indonesia and transcribed verbatim, and later further translated into English in their entirety. Each interview lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. The interview started with a few pre-determined questions which reflected the perceived problems participants had throughout their teaching practicum; however, there was also some space for flexibility and freedom of expression.

Respondents were asked, for instance, to explain whether or not their pre-practicum expectations were met and significant moments they encountered in lesson planning, teaching, and engaging with their learners and others. The teaching diary was collected as an additional data source to investigate how teachers see the phenomenon of their classroom practices. The teaching diary will be photographed as documentation for the results' data analysis process. This is repeated to triangulate the data and obtain a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation. Throughout the field experience term, the participants kept diaries. Due to our limited time and availability

that prevented us from visiting the teaching practicum sites consistently, the student teachers were asked to hand in their teaching diaries discussing the disadvantages and advantages aspects of the days' teaching and how those things affected them as student teachers. The research's veracity and reliability were proved by the participants' firsthand accounts of their experiences as inexperienced teachers (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Finally, the student teachers recorded their classes during their teaching practicums. Each participant recorded their class throughout two meetings, producing twenty video recordings. The collected videos were observed, and the data was used to validate or refute the information derived from the other two sources.

2.3 Data analysis and Ethical consideration

The researcher coded and examined the data in order to identify emergent themes (Karim et al., 2020). Hence, the data gathered from the two-three sources were analyzed using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) characterize thematic analysis as a versatile and helpful research approach that can produce a richly comprehensive and intricate data description. The patterns and themes within the data were identified, evaluated, and presented with a minimum organization but detailed descriptions of the data, which were then utilized to interpret various aspects of the prospective teachers' experiences during their teaching training. To accomplish this, at first, all audio-recorded interviews were converted transcriptions using word processing software and then, all ten participants' transcripts were analyzed and compared to determine differences and similarities, and each transcript was reread line-by-line to identify patterns, emerging themes, and subthemes among the data. (Jati et al., 2019; Muyassaroh, Asib, & Marmanto, 2019). Initially, the transcribed interviews were reviewed to gain a broad understanding of the results of the interviews. Based on our global perspective of the interview results, the researchers combined similar data into a single theme. In arranging the data, the researchers chose the most prominent voices that, from the researchers' viewpoint, were closest to the emerging themes.

Ethical consideration is an essential part of the research because it addresses respondents' consciousness and willingness to participate in research; hence, it is necessary to inform them by requesting their consent (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). Adhering to this, the researchers assumed that all interviewees were aware of their right to an explanation of the aims, methods, purposes, and findings of the research, as well as their right to refuse participation or withdraw at any time. The researchers also emphasized how they will profit from the study, and the assurance of confidentiality and privacy of the research, as Creswell and Poth (2016) highlight.

3. Result

The purpose of this study is to explore the viewpoints of Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers concerning the challenges encountered in English instruction. The study utilized data triangulation through the implementation of semi-structured interviews, the collection of pre-service teachers' teaching diaries, and the observation of teaching videos.

Three themes and multiple sub-themes were identified from the analysis of data collected from three sources, as depicted in Figure 3.1.
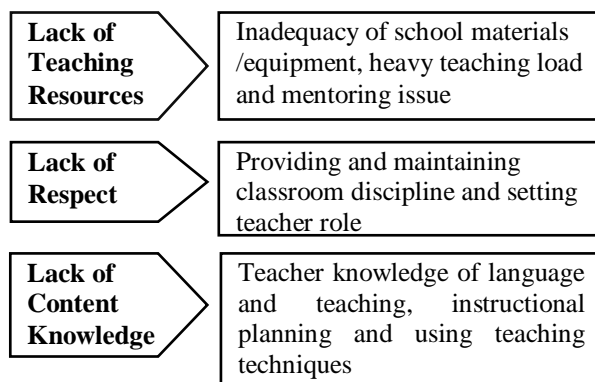

Lack of Teaching Resources	Inadequacy of school materials /equipment, heavy teaching load and mentoring issue
Lack of Respect	Providing and maintaining classroom discipline and setting teacher role
Lack of Content Knowledge	Teacher knowledge of language and teaching, instructional planning and using teaching techniques

Figure 3.1. Themes and sub-themes of challenges about English instruction.

Accordingly, direct case quotations are additionally provided in the qualitative findings report. The letter D after each quotation denotes "diary" and "I" interviews. All participants are categorized by numerical order (Participant-1,-2,-3,-4,-5,-6,-7,-8,-9,-10). In what follows, all these challenges reported by the EFL pre-service teachers will be discussed in detail.

3.1 Lack of Teaching Resources

Appropriate instructional materials across all domains must support the implementation process to attain optimal learning goals. Hence, the provision of resources is required to efficiently and effectively deliver instructional material during teaching and learning. The teaching and learning process will be relatively straightforward if a school has sufficient teaching resources. In the same vein as pre-service teachers, students currently undergoing university training and placed in schools for practical training should be equipped with the necessary resources to become effective teachers. However, there exist several notable obstacles that pre-service teachers face. However, student teachers must overcome several obstacles to achieve optimal educational outcomes. Various obstacles, such as stress, heavy workload, limited teaching time, and insufficient support from mentor teachers and facilities, hinder aspiring student teachers' acceptance into schools.

1) Inadequacy of School Materials /Equipment

A shortage of educational resources prevents student teachers from teaching, as study mentioned earlier, that a shortage of educational resources renders it difficult for pre-service teachers to apply their theoretical knowledge to real-world classroom scenarios. The study revealed that many student teachers encountered challenges in teaching and learning due to insufficient school resources during their teacher training.

"*The books students use as learning resources are too high for student competency, there are too many terms learners do not understand, plus the school does not have a library, so I have to look for material that fits students' needs.*"

Participant 1, (I)

"*Learners never apply the theory I have taught because the school has no language laboratory to conduct experiments or practical works.*"

Participant 2, (I)

"*At the beginning of teaching practice, I experienced problems when I wanted to explain learning material, due to not having stationery (broad marker and whiteboard eraser). The school where I did the teaching practicum did not provide stationery to the teacher, so I had to bring my own.*"

Participant 6, (I)

Nearly all pre-service teachers in this study struggled to manage instructional resources. Participant 6 pointed out that the school does not provide instructor stationery. It hampered the participant's ability to implement a high-quality student learning process. Moreover, according to participants 1 and 2, the schools where they conducted their practicums lacked supporting facilities such as a library and a language laboratory, making it difficult for them to conduct practical work or access relevant materials that might meet their requirements.

2) Heavy Teaching Load and Mentoring Issue

Two of the student instructors identified the heavy teaching workload as a challenge. The observed challenge seemed to augment the pedagogical and emotional burden of the student educators, who were already encumbered by their duties as both student teachers and university students. The participant remarked that she appeared unmotivated and cognitively overloaded:

"*My mentor teacher depends on me for all his tasks (making lesson plans, syllabi, semester program plans,*

and annual program plans). This overwhelmed and stressed me because I was also working on my college assignments."

<div align="right">**Participant 9, (I)**</div>

The significant workload results from the number of tasks, school programs, and responsibilities that pre-service teachers must complete during their fourth year in university while teaching practice placement in schools. This constitutes a burden for them to meet the requirements of both components, to which pre-service teachers attribute their lack of articulation. In other words, the tasks anticipated to support their teaching practice in the fourth year are frequently unrelated to the pedagogical project they are developing in schools. Participants also felt stress and detachment due to the mentor teacher's constant assignment of numerous tasks and lack of attention or guidance during the teaching practicum, as Participant 3 mentioned.

"*In school, where I was doing my practical, my mentor teacher never guided me during the teaching practicum process, so I always had to try to ask for feedback on my teaching performance in class.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 3, (I)**</div>

The EFL pre-service teachers were assigned mentor teachers, but the mentor teachers did not adequately assist them during their teaching practice. The present investigation also discloses that the most substantial support they need is guidance or feedback for enhancing individual student teachers' performances, including their pedagogical skills, discipline, work ethic, collaborative skills, dependability, and content knowledge. This heightened feelings of isolation, social detachment, and inadequate teacher learning.

3.2 Lack of Respect

Implementing innovative pedagogical approaches by prospective educators has increased student engagement and motivation toward learning. Notwithstanding, the pre-service teachers in this study encounter challenges concerning maintaining discipline and managing their classes. They struggled with preserving and regulating classroom discipline in their designated schools. The students are cognizant that they are in the institution solely to acquire teaching experience and, therefore, cannot assert power over them (Abongdia et al., 2015).

1) Providing and Maintaining Classroom Discipline

The total absence of respect experienced by pre-service teachers among learners is also associated with schools' unpreparedness to accept pre-service as a place for their teaching practicum. (Mufidah, 2019; Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). However, school unpreparedness is not the only reason pre-service teachers experienced a decline in moral standards and a lack of discipline. This poor attitude is not exclusive to a single nation but is a worldwide phenomenon. Unfortunately, this behavior was cited as one of the obstacles that inhibited the effectiveness of prospective teachers throughout teacher training. To verify the above statement, the following respondent quotes are provided:

"*I never tolerate students eating in class during class hours. Almost every time I go to class to teach, they still eat. I am confused about making them understand that their actions are impolite and breaking the rules. Finally, I always tell them to finish their food before the lesson.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 2, (I)**</div>

"*I was disappointed by the disruptive students in my classroom. When their host teacher is speaking, they will remain silent.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 3, (I)**</div>

"*I find many students who like to make fun of me when I am usually teaching; they throw body shaming, so sometimes I feel annoyed. I always reprimanded them, but this continued until I finally decided to ignore it.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 4, (I)**</div>

"*Almost all students feel trivial about the student teachers who teach in their class. What shocked me was when I found several students causing a fight in the classroom and the class had to be suspended due to a non-conducive situation.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 6, (I)**</div>

"*They were very impolite when they spoke to me. The intonation was always high, they were stubborn, and they always made excuses when they made mistakes. Sometimes when I am busy explaining, they laugh while watching videos on their cell phones. It is horrible to see it because it made me think, "Can't I teach well?" or "Am I not that competent to function the teaching method well? Yeah, it is sad but true.*"

<div align="right">**Participant 7, (I)**</div>

Disruptive learner behavior appeared to be a formidable obstacle for all participants. As the participants noted, it commonly took the form of bullying, unnecessary talking, initiating a fight, being noisy, using inappropriate language, disobedience, or disrespecting the student teacher. Based on the response, Participant 4 complained that many students enjoy making fun of her when she is teaching. Although she consistently reprimanded them, this situation persisted until she eventually ignored them. It is also pointed out that the learners greatly underestimate the student teacher. This happens to Participant 6. The fact that he discovered his students engaging in a fight in class prompted him to assert that his students treated him with extreme disrespect and deemed him to be of no consequence.

All of the student teachers appeared to be having difficulty managing disruptive behavior. Particularly, they complained about being incapable of anticipating inappropriate behavior, using ineffective methods to address it, or being unable to surmount it. They also appeared helpless and uncertain about how to manage disruptive student behavior. As Participants 2 and 7 reported above, they argued that they had not figured out how to convince learners that their actions were improper. In addition, they misjudged their ability as prospective instructors because they could not implement the teaching method effectively.

2) Setting Teacher Role

The pre-service teachers' dissatisfaction was also apparent due to the differential treatment they received from students compared to their permanent teachers. It could be observed from the diary entry provided by Participant 3:
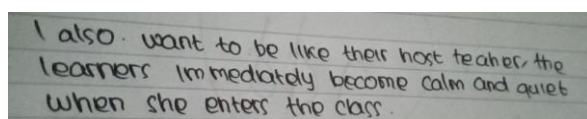

Figure 3.2 Participant 3

*{I also want to be like their host teacher, the learners immediately become calm and quiet when she enters the class (**D**)}*

The statement made by the respondent above implies that the participant held the host teacher in high regard and acknowledged the distinctions between their respective roles as prospective educators and the host teacher. It can be inferred that the participant experienced difficulty maintaining a comparable level of control over his students compared to the host instructor, indicating a potential deficiency in his capacity to manage his students effectively. This criterion ultimately determines the quintessential representation of a teacher. Other individuals preparing to become teachers acknowledged that there are differences between their

perspectives and those of practicing teachers. The individual remains indecisive regarding the specific type of teacher they aspire to be. Nonetheless, the performance of student teachers may be impacted if they cannot attain their envisioned ideal teacher, as highlighted by Participant 9.
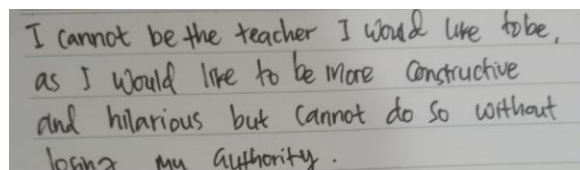

Figure 3.3. Participant 9

*{I cannot be the teacher I would like to be, as I would like to be more constructive and hilarious but cannot do so without losing my authority (**D**)}*

The excerpt from Participant 9's teaching diary illustrates that the ideal image of a teacher is that of an individual who is both constructive and humorous. However, she admitted that she could not embody this ideal without relinquishing her authority. The issue at hand, as previously noted by two participants, pertains to the potential inability of student teachers to attain the status of an ideal teacher. This predicament may result in insecurity, leading to a crisis of identity in which they cannot determine whether to adopt the role of a controlling or a facilitative teacher.

3.3 Lack of Content Knowledge

Becoming a pre-service teacher involves the acquisition of content and practical knowledge. Content knowledge pertains to various teaching theories, whereas practical knowledge links to the teaching experiences of trainee teachers. It is believed that pedagogical subject knowledge, in particular, can aid teachers and student teachers in establishing clarity in high-level degrees, as pedagogical content knowledge often consists of content-specific strategies for creating authentic instructional material for learners (Ball et al., 2008; Baumert et al., 2010). In addition to chaotic classrooms, lack of content knowledge appeared to be the issue pre-service teachers encountered during classroom practices.

1) Teacher Knowledge of Language and Teaching

As revealed by the data, the EFL pre-service teachers were uncertain about their grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, English-speaking skills, and teaching expertise. These appeared to have caused quite a commotion in their pedagogical and affective environments and turned out to be face-threatening actions. As Participant 3 pointed out:

"As an English student teacher, I realize my English skills are low, especially in teaching English. When I teach, I am doubtful about what I am teaching; I am

worried that what I teach is wrong or less precise than it should be."

Participant 3, (I)

Regarding the content knowledge-related challenges, Participant 3 remarked that this teaching challenge is due to insufficient expertise in the subject matter. The participant expressed a deficiency in self-assurance regarding his capacity to guide the students. His perceived lack of proficiency in English hindered his ability to teach the students.

2) Having too Little Preparatory Teaching Practice

In addition to the pre-service teacher's lack of subject matter expertise, the unpreparedness of student teachers' teaching practice contributes to their lack of content comprehension, as Participant 5 reported:

"Other student teachers and I only have a little time to prepare things related to teaching training. Our school observations were brief; we only focused on completing permits to conduct teaching practicum there."

Participant 5, (I)

According to the response, the participant stated that she could barely prepare things herself for teaching practice and that the observation she conducted was extremely brief. It demonstrates that the student teacher was unprepared to conduct a teaching practicum and unfamiliar with teacher training. The student teachers were keen to get more 'hands-on' teaching experience in school, which they believed would prepare them better for their teaching practicum.

3) Instructional Planning

Methods of instruction, classroom management, planning lessons, and learner motivation posed the greatest challenges for these EFL pre-service teachers. The study demonstrates that some participants had difficulty creating lesson plans and syllabi, as they could not write them due to differences in the training they received during their study.

"I am fine with my teaching method, but I have difficulties making lesson plans because the method I learn from my campus differs from the subject teacher who guides me during teaching practice. Because I needed clarification about which one to choose, I followed my teacher's previous steps."

Participant 7, (I)

"On campus, I had already learned about how to design excellent and correct lesson plans, but when the school assigned me to make a syllabus, I had never studied design before, which made it difficult for me, and finally, I started to learn it slowly while asking my mentor teacher for help."

Participant 10, (I)

According to Participant 7, there were significant disparities between what she discovered on campus and lesson planning. Eventually, she simply followed the lecture plan created from the start. This demonstrates that the pre-service educator is unaware of the purpose and significance of a lesson plan. The response of Participant 10 indicates that she finds it challenging to create a syllabus because she has never been taught how to do so on her campus.

4) Using Teaching Techniques

According to Graham (1997), pre-service teachers frequently struggle to implement the concepts gained in teaching methods in their classrooms. Pre-service teachers are frequently characterized as having trouble applying ideas acquired in teaching methods to their classrooms. Below are the participants' comments for the preceding.
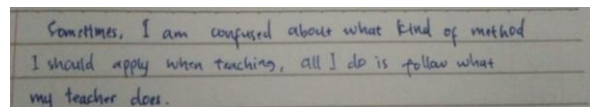

Figure 3.4. Participant 1

*{Sometimes, I am confused about what kind of method I should apply when teaching, all I do is follow what my teacher does (**D**)}*
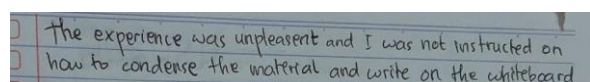

Figure 5. Participant 3

*{The experience was unpleasant, and I was not instructed on how to condense the material and write on the whiteboard (**D**)}*

Based on the responses above, it is evident that pre-service teachers had difficulty executing the teaching method, although they neglected to recognize their difficulties in this category. The researchers also observed that pre-service teachers had difficulty comprehending the teaching method, either because they lacked sufficient information about the teaching method they were employing or because they proposed implementations during the lesson-planning stage that did not align with the teaching method.

From the comprehensive data analysis, it can be inferred that most participants experienced challenges during their teaching practicum. It is imperative to highlight that the challenges mentioned above are not attributable solely to a singular party or factor but rather to a confluence of various elements. Based on the data gathered, EFL pre-service teachers encounter challenges in effectively conveying knowledge during instruction. The issue can be attributed to various factors that exert influence, including inadequate facilities and media that fail to support the learning process and schools' unpreparedness to support student teachers during their teaching practicum. Furthermore, the disruptive behavior of learners constitutes a noteworthy impediment to the teaching efficacy of pre-service teachers. Moreover, the paucity of English proficiency and pedagogical expertise makes it unfeasible for pre-service teachers to complete an ideal teaching practicum.

4. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the challenges EFL pre-service teachers faced in English instruction during their teaching practicum. According to the findings of this study, EFL student instructors began their pedagogical practicum in a challenging environment. On the one hand, they faced various foreign language pedagogy-related challenges. The results also indicate that the challenges encountered during the teaching practice were related to teaching resources, classroom management, teaching facilities or media, both technical and non-technical content knowledge, pre-service teachers' English skills, pre-service teachers' motivation, and teaching technique.

This research reveals the need for educational institutions to redouble their efforts to develop teacher preparation programs that integrate a culturally responsive pedagogy with content area pedagogy to assist student teachers in attending to the knowledge that their learners bring to the classroom rather than focusing on perceived deficiencies (González et al., 2005). There is a glaring disparity between what potential teachers are trained for and what schools require of them. As it seemed, sometimes, prospective teachers' understanding of school culture, physical amenities in schools, and academic assistance (resource materials) in schools is unrealistic, resulting in difficulties with adaptation. However, it is abundantly obvious from the exchanges mentioned above with prospective teachers on teaching practice that schools cannot employ student teachers in light of the readily available educational materials.

This study also indicates that overcrowding often occurs during the teaching process. Due to the shortage of educational resources and the number of learners exceeding what the school should accommodate, the school is overcrowded, the class is not conducive, and learners are not maximal in learning at school. This would later influence the classroom performance of prospective teachers. In their absence, challenges such as overcrowded classes will continue to impede the advancement of pre-service teachers. Schleifer et al. (2017) argue that when student teachers lack teaching materials, they frequently lack teamwork and experience, significantly impacting their performance. Other than that, due to the absence of adequate facilities, EFL student teachers unavoidably could only offer theories in their teaching method. For instance, when EFL pre-service teachers are required to conduct practical work but lack access to a language laboratory, they can only do the practical work in the classrooms. Since laboratories are significantly more structured than typical classroom settings, laboratories allow teachers to extend beyond the traditional classroom approach, enabling them to consider alternative methods of instruction and encourage greater student engagement and teacher–learner relationship (Hofstein, 2004; Hofstein & Lunetta, 2004). In addition, the study revealed that mentor teachers did not make this differentiation, and while not very cooperative, they had never mentored aspiring teachers. During teacher training and classroom teaching instruction, the EFL pre-service teachers were not adequately supervised by their supervising teacher.

Furthermore, students reported that some of their training instructors did not assist them in designing lesson plans for both practice and actual teaching. Teaching resources do affect the quality of student teachers in the training field. The major reason why learners' effectiveness remained subpar because of a shortage of teaching and learning resources was also cited as limited or inadequate teaching resources that prevented pre-service teachers from accomplishing well due to school unreadiness (Heng & Sol, 2022; Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015).

The research also reveals that EFL pre-service teachers experienced challenges in teaching, mainly in controlling the learners in the classroom. The student teachers also demonstrated that the noise in the classroom had a significant impact on how student teachers managed their classes. Ulla (2016) argued that learners' noises during the class, their disinterest that developed at the beginning of the lesson, unanticipated chats among learners, and their lack of concentration and respect for the students teachers all contributed to the difficulty. Additionally, disruptive learner behavior was revealed to be a significant obstacle for all EFL pre-service teachers. The present study revealed the attitudes of prospective teachers toward the obstacles. In a few instances, the data revealed that prospective teachers preferred to give up doing what they would like to do or what they deemed appropriate in order to accommodate the difficulties. Particularly, they complained about being unable to anticipate inappropriate behavior, utilizing poor methods to address it, or being incapable of overcoming it. They also appeared clueless and

uncertain about addressing problematic student behavior (Sali & Kecik, 2018).

These pre-service instructors entered the educational environment without preconceptions about what it should appear like. This aligns with what Foncha et al. (2015) stated: Pre-service teachers envisioned a congenial setting for learning and teaching without realizing that teachers cultivate such an environment with their learners. Pre-service teachers are extremely anxious about managing the classroom and schedule (Murray-Harvey et al., 2000). It is because the pre-service teacher considered it as an obstacle to their delivery of the teaching plans. Therefore, this is reported that pre-service teachers' abilities to handle their classes differ depending on the teaching and learning environment, learners' responses, and student teachers' preparedness (Mudra, 2018). Ultimately, the pre-service teacher would shed the identity as a teacher.

Managing the learners' noises, addressing inappropriate behaviors, and similar issues are just a few issues that student teachers encounter when training. It reveals that one of the challenges in establishing classroom roles was not becoming the ideal teacher. Because pre-service teachers are currently worrying about their courses, their role in the classroom, the excellent program during their practicum experience, and the impact they are having on their students, not only in regards to language but also in terms of how they may alter learners' lives (Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre-Hernández, 2018). They look up to an authoritarian teacher as their ideal teacher image, which contradicts what participants thought they were expected to be. They risked losing their authority when seriously trying to emulate that idealized educator. Eventually, they slide into feelings of demotivation and dissatisfaction due to this problem.

Not knowing which teacher roles to assume emerged as the other difficulty regarding setting teacher roles. EFL pre-service teachers could not decide whether to become a teacher as a controller or a teacher as a guide. Pre-service teachers pointed out that the reason why they have difficulty in managing the classroom may be because the pre-service teachers are not considered to be real teachers (Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999). This aligns with what Coşkun, (2013) argued: student teachers struggle to manage the classroom because they are not considered real teachers. This is quite incompatible with what Adebola (2022) the lack of respect held by the learners that student teachers went through indicates that schools were not adequately equipped to receive pre-service teachers and prevented them from functioning as intended. This demands a comprehensive and systematic approach to school discipline, intending to determine and prevent or eliminate probable causes.

The study indicates that, as it seemed, the lesson plan templates they were taught in college was not the one they were required to utilize. Pre-service teachers are not well equipped for teaching practicum regarding content knowledge. In addition, they were primarily pressured to change their intentions and demotivated because the ideas they acquired did not apply to the teaching practicum. This ultimately led to a loss of motivation among pre-service teachers, hindering their ability to achieve the learning objective successfully. This notion is reinforced by Premier and Miller (2010), who assert that pre-service teachers encounter the difficult reality of teaching in a classroom setting during practicum, as well as the challenges of a cultural context, curriculum, and work environment, which might leave them confused. This study also reveals that pre-service teachers believed the program they were taught at university was not the same as the program they were supposed to teach, and they consequently continued to struggle with implementation strategies and classroom management during their teaching practice.

The teacher-education program did not provide teachers with examples of effective approaches to draw from during their practicum. Therefore, the pre-service teachers struggled to construct teaching outcomes since they were not taught how to do so. Therefore, the absence of pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills could adequately hinder their ability to direct the learners (Mkhasibe, 2018). Regarding the challenges-content knowledge issue, this study discovers that the participant lacks teaching knowledge competence. Anxiety about what is taught to students due to incompetence in understanding teaching knowledge and learning subjects is one of the causes that contribute to anxiety in pre-service teachers (Öztürk, 2016). This student teacher was similarly concerned about the absence of content understanding leading to misunderstandings among learners. Therefore, pre-service teachers must have the high content knowledge and pedagogical content understanding due to their teacher training programs. In other words, the content knowledge should be combined with pedagogical components of the teaching and learning process. Teachers' topic knowledge and pedagogy must be incorporated into every school's program for teacher preparation (Santos & Castro, 2021; Turnuklu & Yesildere, 2007).

Concerning subject matter knowledge, it is noted that effective practices do not frequently accompany comprehensive theory. This transpired during the EFL student teachers' classroom meeting. The student teacher does not appear to know which teaching method the respondent should employ. Since they could not integrate the teaching methods described in their tutorial material with those employed by instructors in schools. Allen (2009) observed that prospective teachers respected the theory they had acquired in college throughout pre-service training,

but after becoming practitioners, they adhered to conventional teacher practice. This is consistent with what Benejam (1993) asserted, namely that student teachers are well aware of general theoretical principles, yet they do not understand how to apply them when dealing with learners' specific needs and unique situations, so they implement the old traditional approaches to teaching because they give them the confidence to survive. In addition to subject content and student knowledge, teachers must be familiar with certain methods, approaches, and ideas to employ them in developing their classrooms (Shulman et al., 2005).

The unpreparedness of student teachers' teaching practice is also one of the causes of their lack of content understanding. The pre-service teachers thought that the preparation was insufficient for the field experience. Nevertheless, by conducting observations, pre-service teachers can create effective planning for teacher training because they offer the student teacher a quick way to become familiar with his or her task and then know how to approach it continuously. Furthermore, observation can provide pre-service teachers with materials for creating lesson plans and lesson notes (Etimbi, 1994; Jenkins et al., 2005). It indicates that obstacles exist in preparing student teachers for classroom practices. It is believed that these obstacles stem from the many phases of the procedure, i.e., from the university to the practical schools. Therefore, they attributed their ineffective teaching to inadequate teacher training (Arasomwan & Mashiya, 2021).

There appears to be an urgent need to increase pre-service EFL instructors' understanding of the possibility that their path to becoming language teachers may be extremely challenging. This could be accomplished through problem-based learning. Pre-service EFL instructors are presented with authentic classroom problems instead of the commonplace inauthentic classroom scenarios in teacher training textbooks (Le Maistre & Paré, 2010). Within problem-based instruction, pre-service EFL teachers may be asked to analyze challenging classroom circumstances embedded in real case studies of novice and experienced teachers and what they would do if they were those teachers. Such a case methodology could expand the pedagogical strategies available to EFL pre-service teachers by providing examples of thinking professionally about problems and demonstrating how expert teachers approach problems (Kleinfeld, 1990). Pre-service teachers in Indonesia are typically sent to comparatively easy-to-teach schools for their teaching practice experiences instead of difficult-to-teach schools when they become full teachers. Then, we could design student teachers' practicum experiences so that they are exposed to diverse teaching contexts (i.e., contexts with both positive and negative conditions) and are encouraged to reflect on the realities of these contexts. This would

contribute to the EFL pre-service teachers' understanding of the teaching above contexts.

In addition, the current research results have implications for school administrators and policymakers, indicating the need to develop productive, systematic, and structured induction experiences for beginning instructors. This study's primary findings indicate that pre-service teachers encountered three obstacles during their teaching practicum: 1) a lack of teaching resources, 2) a lack of respect, and 3) a lack of subject matter knowledge. Teacher educators can use this information to reduce or address pre-service teachers' challenges during teaching practicum and implement preventative measures against the obstacles. Pre-service teachers can also use it as a source of information and reference when preparing to conduct teaching training by recognizing the likely challenges that student teachers will face.

5. Conclusion

The present study investigated the challenges faced by Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. The study utilized a phenomenological case study approach, which enabled an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics involved in becoming an English teacher. The findings revealed that pre-service teachers face various challenges in effectively communicating instructions to learners due to factors such as limited resources, inadequate preparation, disruptive behavior of learners, and insufficient proficiency in English and pedagogical knowledge. The study identified three significant challenges: inadequacy of teaching resources, the absence of respect, and insufficient content knowledge. The findings suggest that there is a need for productive, systematic, and structured induction experiences for novice teachers, particularly those still in the process of completing their teacher training, to address the challenges they encounter. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of adequate preparation for student teachers, particularly in terms of providing teaching resources and adequate supervision from supervising teachers. The data also revealed that learners lack discipline in terms of noise and inappropriate behavior, leading to a lack of respect for pre-service teachers in the classroom. The insufficiency of content knowledge is also an issue, which can be attributed to inadequate preparation for the practicum experience. These insights will benefit policymakers, school administrators, supervisors, and other stakeholders making prudent decisions regarding integrating teaching training into initial teacher preparation.

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