

Deconstructing Expert and Practical Knowledge of EFL Student Teachers¹

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Abstract

Research has revealed that student teachers benefit from teaching practicum programs. The programs present the student teachers with myriad opportunities to negotiate and deconstruct their personal and practical knowledge with the help of teacher mentors and supervising faculty members. This study reports on a case study that examines the deconstruction of English student teachers' changes in expert and practical knowledge during their teaching practicum. Seven student teachers (two males and five females) were involved in this study. The data were gathered from reflective journaling and interviews documenting their prior learning experiences during teaching practicum. A self-reflection framework by Dewey was employed to analyze the data. The findings have indicated that the student teachers encountered both enjoyment and dissatisfaction. Enjoyment included materials beyond the textbook, opportunities to express ideas and classroom activities, moral messages, and understanding of teaching and learning. Dissatisfaction occurrences are linked with textbooks and workload. By deconstructing expert and practical knowledge using reflective practice, there is an urgent need for stakeholders including mentor teachers and supervising faculty members to reframe practicum systems to offer more opportunities to maximize experiential interaction, in addition to their formal authorized clinical role. By doing so, a new perspective might be running in line with the development of improving the quality of teaching as a direct impact of practical pedagogical knowledge.

Resumen

Las investigaciones han revelado que los estudiantes de magisterio se benefician de los programas de prácticas docentes. Los programas ofrecen a los estudiantes de magisterio innumerables oportunidades para negociar y deconstruir su conocimiento personal y práctico con la ayuda de profesores mentores y profesores supervisores. Este estudio informa sobre un estudio de caso que examina la deconstrucción de los cambios en el conocimiento experto y práctico de los estudiantes de magisterio de inglés durante sus prácticas docentes. Siete estudiantes de magisterio (dos hombres y cinco mujeres) participaron en este estudio. Los datos se recopilaron a partir de diarios reflexivos y entrevistas que documentaban sus experiencias de aprendizaje previas durante las prácticas docentes. Se empleó un marco de autorreflexión de Dewey para analizar los datos. Los hallazgos han indicado que los estudiantes de magisterio experimentaron tanto disfrute como insatisfacción. El disfrute incluía materiales más allá del libro de texto, oportunidades para expresar ideas y actividades en el aula, mensajes morales y comprensión de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje. Los casos de insatisfacción están vinculados con los libros de texto y la carga de trabajo. Al deconstruir el conocimiento experto y práctico mediante la práctica reflexiva, existe una necesidad urgente de que las partes interesadas, incluidos los profesores mentores y los profesores supervisores, reformulen los sistemas de prácticas para ofrecer más oportunidades de maximizar la interacción experiencial, además de su función clínica autorizada formal. Al hacerlo, podría surgir una nueva perspectiva en línea con el desarrollo de la mejora de la calidad de la enseñanza como un impacto directo del conocimiento pedagógico práctico.

Introduction

For student teachers, being engaged in real classroom practice is a crucial phase during their L2 teacher education. It is the phase in which they should get their first field experience. However, many student teachers have found a disconnection between what they learn in teacher education and what they should know and do as teachers. Numerous research conclusions have revealed serious concerns about how well institutions of teacher education provide practical knowledge for their students (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Lohmander, 2015; Onnismaa et al., 2015). In the meantime, other empirical studies have shown that initial teachers encounter difficulties when they complete their initial teaching (Grossman et al., 2009; Meijer, 2010), and often feel stressed in the classroom (Eisenschmidt et al., 2013; Hong, 2012; Tynjälä & Heikkinen, 2011).

In teacher education, a practicum program aims to provide student teachers with initial professional development that enables them to gain authentic teaching experience and to construct their professional identity as teachers (Borg et al., 2018; Swart et al., 2018). Prior research has shown that a teaching

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practicum also promotes student teachers with myriad opportunities to negotiate and deconstruct their personal and practical knowledge with the help of teacher mentors and supervising faculty members (Kim & Choi, 2019; Ulvik et al., 2018; Widodo & Ferdiansyah, 2018). Physical, social, and cultural environments in the practicum shape student teachers' professional identities as they interact with their teacher mentors, supervising faculty members, peers, and students (Allas et al., 2017; Maaranen & Stenberg, 2017). The aim of this paper is to report on a case study that investigated the ways in which a reflective teaching practicum helped student teachers deconstruct their personal and practical knowledge.

Review of Related Literature

L2 teacher education and the quality of practicum for the would-be-teachers

Obviously, one of the responsibilities of L2 teacher education is to guarantee the quality of their EFL student teachers; thus, the institution needs to improve the institutions' performance in order to enhance the outcomes. For the L2 teacher education in Indonesia, government regulation directs the university curriculum. Higher education curricula must be in line with the nine levels of qualifications stipulated in the country's Qualification Framework, and all Indonesian universities must refer to these curricula as they set up their learning outcomes. However, each university has its own right to determine the extent of attainment of their students' knowledge (Susilo, 2015), which offers them some freedom to create content for the curriculum. Littlewood (2005) emphasized four aspects of learning environments in achieving L2 proficiency, i.e., opportunities to use L2, emotional climate of the learning situation, learner's linguistic input, and formal instruction. Specifically for L2 teacher education in Indonesia, due to different conditions of the university governance, these are given differently. However, one thing which is the same is having a teaching practicum in partner schools.

In the 21st century, L2 teacher education presents equally tough challenges to student teachers and would-be teachers. The new paradigm of language teaching requires the EFL student teacher's education to give more space to up-to-date teaching practice experience for their teacher candidates (i.e., pre-service teachers). Some experts on L2 teacher education propose a shift of its main goal from the traditional approach of teaching to the situated and social nature of student teachers' L2 learning (Johnson, 2009; Lave & Wenger, 1991), learning L2 as a means of mediating thinking (Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978), and focusing on function in learning L2 (Gee, 1996). As summarized by Freeman and Johnson (1998), the importance of student teachers' L2 pedagogical acquisition should be highlighted in the process of teaching and learning in English teacher education, that is to say, their practicum qualities. The importance of teaching practicum for student teachers has been endorsed by a number of research findings showing that quality of students' practical knowledge would be the guarantee for the quality of student teacher (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Caspensen & Raaen, 2014; Lohmander, 2015; Onnismaa et al., 2015). Empirical evidence has indicated that practicum has been a predominant educational approach in L2 teacher education implying the challenges initial teachers often experienced when they did initial teaching (Grossman et al., 2009; Meijer, 2010) and often experienced psychological stressful time in the classroom (Eisenschmidt et al., 2013; Hong, 2012; Tynjälä & Heikkinen, 2011). Furthermore, student teacher professional identity will develop as they interact with their teacher mentors, supervising faculty members, peers, and students in physical, social, and cultural environments (Allas et al., 2017; Maaranen & Stenberg, 2017). Therefore, improving the quality of the teaching practicum for student teachers would be one of the determiners of the quality of student teachers after completion of their studies.

Deconstructing expert and practical knowledge of EFL student teachers

The term "deconstruction" was pioneered by Jacques Derrida in his literary works. Although the term is difficult to define, as it has various definitions and has been used in many fields, the deconstruction in this study is about "finding a new perspective, one that resituates the story beyond its dualism or singular viewpoints" (Sikirivwa, 2020, p.47) The idea is then developed and the perspective of deconstruction is commonly used in educational field particularly for learning from experiences (Higgs, 2003; Winter, 2007). According to Derrida, deconstruction and criticism are vital as the foundational conditions of experience. Lawlor (2021) elaborates the deconstruction perspective to experiences. It is understood that experience is determined by time, and every experience or event has its own unique kernel. The present experience is different from experiences in the past. Additionally, anticipating what is about to happen after the present experience is a concern.

I remember the recent past and I anticipate what is about to happen. The memory and the anticipation consist in repeatability. Because what I experience now can be immediately recalled, it is repeatable, and that repeatability therefore motivates me to anticipate the same thing happening again (para. 14).

Therefore, every experience has an event and repeatability. In this study, the experiences were when the participants studied English at schools, studied at teacher education, and when they were at the teaching practicum program. Therefore, what the participants experienced in the past could similarly happen in the present and provide awareness what they anticipate to do in the future.

Student teachers need skills related to knowledge, decision-making, and action (Kryacou, 2007). In terms of knowledge, Burns and Richards (2009) have emphasized two different kinds of knowledge, i.e., expert knowledge, referring to pedagogical knowledge learned on campus, and practical knowledge, which is practical experience from the field after the student teachers did teaching practice in partner schools. Practical experience enriches the student teachers' socially situated conceptualization of language (DiCerbo et al., 2014) which can finally lead to their experiential knowledge (Barrett, 2007), the one that Dewey proposed as reflective thinking (Dewey, 1933). In this concept, to take a trajectory from experience to knowledge requires personal and social construction and reconstruction of past, present, and future experiences (Craig, 2004; Craig, 2009; Olson & Craig, 2005). Dewey's ideas about such experience are claimed by a large part of educational research on experiential knowledge and is later labelled as so-called practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1981, 1991) and personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Reflective practice

This study explored deconstruction of expert and practical knowledge of student teachers gained from the events and experiences in the past that inform them in their teaching. We employed Dewey's (1933) reflective practice concept as a framework to analysis the data. According to Dewey, reflection is an action that emerges from "the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it" (p. 9). Schön (1983) says that reflection is a process of making sense of problems or concerns while simultaneously reflecting on understanding of what is being concerned. Further, Helyer (2015) emphasizes that reflective practice is important since it can be learned, applied, and refined to gain the gist of experience and learning.

Reflection can be classified into three types namely reflection on action, reflection in action, and reflection for action. Reflection on action takes place after an action and it is a retrospective look in the past experience (Burhan-Horasanli & Ortaçtepe, 2016; Farrell, 2006). Reflection in action occurs at present and during an action itself while reflection for action takes place prior to an action in the future including planning. Mann et al. (2009) and Moon (2005) state that the reflection process yields new understanding of the context that involve awareness, emotion, and action.

Dewey (1933) considered that reflection is a confused thought that captures previous, present, and future experiences. The experiences that have been personally and socially constructed and reconstructed continuously will lead to experiential knowledge that eventually becomes practical. Experience of being taught by ex-teachers and recent teaching experience are both past activities which, according to Dewey, lead to the likelihood that the student teachers will learn better teaching performance in the future. This is something suggested which needs reflective consideration.

Methods

Design

The study is an explanatory case study. It focuses on the investigation of how and why questions with limited involvement of the researcher and concentrates on particular phenomena within the contexts of real-life situations. Clear description of the phenomenon should be provided (Mills et al., 2010; Yin, 2018) Content analysis was employed to conceptualize the data (Krippendorff, 2018) and the concept of reflective thinking by Dewey (1933) was used as the main parameter in creating categories supported by the deconstruction perspectives relating to events or experiences determined by a period of time.

The context of the study

The teaching practicum program, implemented at five secondary schools in one of the biggest cities on East Borneo, Indonesia, is regularly offered to third-year student teachers majoring in English Language Education. This practicum program spans three months and is designed to encourage student teachers with

authentic teaching experiences so that they can translate their pedagogical knowledge gained during their formal studies into real-life classrooms. Each of the student teachers is placed in one of the schools, partnered with the university and supervised by a faculty member and a cooperating mentor teacher. They are required to have a one-week orientation in which they get familiarized with the schools and their mentor teachers. Supervision is conducted biweekly, and this practicum is evaluated in the middle and at the end of the program. The teaching practicum program also provides the student teachers with the opportunity to implement reflective practice. In their reflection, they discussed with their peers what they practiced. Knowledge construction occurs through this discussion.

Participants

Initially ten students would participate in this study as they had completed their practicum; however, three of them were unable to take part in the interview sessions due to with their personal activities. In this study, the participants were purposively selected based on their willingness to participate in the interview after completion their teaching practicum program. Therefore there were seven student teachers (two males and five females) who had completed their teaching practicum along with a group of 32 other student teachers (8 males and 24 females) were from the English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Mulawarman University, Indonesia. The teaching practicum was carried out in the partner schools of the University, i.e., five public schools located in Samarinda, the capital city of East Borneo, Indonesia. As soon as the ethical protocols had been approved by the Research Ethic Committee from the university, the participants were informed about the study and the required participation, including their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Consent forms were given after they were briefed on the purpose of the study and research procedures. They were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be preserved and that participation in the study would have no effects on their studies. Pseudonyms were used for the participants.

Data collection

The seven participants of the study participated in reflective journaling documenting their teaching practicum and sat for interviews. They were initially given a set of structured questions in the Indonesian language as the first language (see Appendix). The researchers created the questions by considering the aim of the study. The questions asked about their perspectives on English teachers, their experiences in studying English while studying English at schools and their teaching practicum in relation to their English teachers when they were students at schools, and the role of English teachers in the future. Additionally, they were offered opportunities to freely construct their reflections during the week they were given for reflection. Initial analysis was carried out as soon as the reflection was completed by making some notes related to the responses that needed more elaboration and clarification, for example when one participant reflected that her English teacher also taught her about judgment based on physical appearance. The interviews, which also used the first language, aimed to confirm and clarify the responses to the reflective questions and were conducted after the reflecting journaling was completed. The notes based on the reflective journaling were then revisited during the interviews. Each participant was interviewed for about 10-15 minutes in at a time convenient to them. During the interviews, notes were taken of important information for further consideration in data analysis.

Data analysis

The data were then analyzed using a content analysis framework (Krippendorff, 2018). This analysis aims to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation that focuses on the content or textual meaning with the purpose of classifying the texts as the data into an efficient number of categories, both explicit and implicit communication, to represent similar meaning. Therefore, interpretation of the content of the text data was based on systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Prior, 2014). All responses from the interviews were transcribed and returned to the interviewees to ensure that their responses were the information they intended to deliver. Following this, all data were initially translated into English. The transcriptions were then read in order to make sense of the data. The data, all the student teacher responses of the reflection and interview transcripts, were coded. Discussions between the researchers were carried out to ensure the coding. When there were some different views about the coding, each researcher read and reread the data. In this stage, the researchers understood the essence or features of the data by capturing the significant ideas or issues of teaching and learning when the participants at schools as students and when they were teachers in the teaching practicum

program. The role of ex-English teachers in the student teachers' future minds in the process of constructing teaching practical knowledge was included. Further, categories and chunks of themes were then developed. Similar chunks of the theme were merged into two major themes: enjoyment and dissatisfaction as results of mirroring past experiences when the student teachers studied at schools and when they became teachers in their teaching practicum.

Findings and Discussion

Mirroring past experience in the teaching practicum program

Based on the analysis, the student teachers' responses to the reflective journals and interviews found in this study are related to past, present and future perspectives. These three sequence phases show that past experiences gained from their ex-teachers had a big impact on how the student teachers completed their teaching in the practicum program and the expected prospective experiences as teachers. The past experiences gained in learning English can be classified into two types: enjoyment and dissatisfaction. These types of reflection on their past experiences of learning were then elaborated by their present role as the student teachers who engaged in the teaching practicum program and their future as a professional English teacher. Enjoyment covers materials beyond the textbook, opportunities to express ideas and classroom activities, moral messages, and understanding of teaching and learning. Dissatisfaction comprises textbooks and teacher's workload. Discussion in this section presents the reflections with pseudonyms.

Enjoyment

The student teachers' fun, interesting, or impressive experiences when they were at schools provided them ideas for teaching methods and classroom activities.

Materials beyond the textbook

Sella reflected on her experiences in learning English when she was a student:

My favorite teacher was Ms. Yati, an English teacher who had a different teaching style from other teachers in my senior high school. She never used textbooks in her teaching, instead I could understand all her materials which she made herself. In addition, in her class, Ms. Yati often asked her students to write diaries in English and she always gave comments on them. Those are things that I remember about my ex-teacher, Ms. Yati. (Sella)

This part of Sella's reflection illustrates how her ex-teacher taught. She did not rely on the textbooks, but she designed her own materials to be relevant to her students. In addition, the students needed to engage with their diary for writing to which she gave feedback. A study (Masuhara et al., 2008) has indicated that typical textbooks used in teaching and learning in the EFL context suggest activities that provide few opportunities and/or encouragement to teachers to adapt the materials to the learners' and teachers' needs, or teachers' teaching styles. This student teacher, Sella, enjoyed herself since she had comments from her ex-teachers on her diary, and this encouraged her to write more. Not using a textbook, in some cases, can reduce the students' boredom. This belief suggests the possibility of avoiding textbook use in certain situations. The experience taught her that up to a certain point, there are situations where a teacher should be encouraging and creative by making own their materials so that the students can be more active and independent, leading to a more student-centeredness (Nunan, 2012).

Opportunities to express ideas and classroom activities

Other prior experiences indicated that teachers who gave their students more opportunities to express their opinions and created varied classroom activities impressed their students as was exemplified in the following part of Tity's reflection journal:

Her teaching was very impressive for me, utilizing facilities such as LCD, speakers with videos that supported our learning. It is still in my memory; we were often asked to give opinions about videos that were shown in front of the class, and she asked us how we responded to the video. Like the video titled "Father and Daughter" a film by Michael Dudok de Wit. The story of a young daughter's lifelong journey of love and longing, yearning for her father's mysterious return. There was no speaking at all in the video so that we had to guess what happened. We shared our opinions and described the contents of the story. (Tity)

Tity reflected that the use of video without any conversation invited students to pay more attention, particularly when they were asked to give comments on the content of the video. She viewed this moment as personally beneficial because this encouraged more students' interactions as they had to interpret the topic of the video. The students were actively occupied with the classroom activities and participated actively. Thus, the students were more engaged in their learning, leading to a more student-centered style.

This event has demonstrated that what the teacher did in the classroom was taken as an impressive event that has contributed to Tity's practical knowledge and skills how to develop interactions using the teaching media of video with no conversations. In the context of EFL teaching in an Asian setting, film (e.g., video) has been used as a stimulator of learner's cognitive learning (Kaur et al., 2014) or allowing English teachers to make teaching points (Blasco et al., 2015) serve as a type of teaching tool which helps language learning but also provides learners' authentic language input or materials. This will allow the students to learn and absorb real-life language (Yeh, 2014).

Moral messages

In addition, the student teachers perceived that their teachers at schools also conveyed ethical reminders as in this example from Tity:

Besides, she also showed her students moral message from our learning such as for not judging someone from his appearance, but we were also reminded that first impressions were also judged by appearance. The teachers who motivated and reminded us to be grateful for this made me believe that she was the teacher that students needed. I want to be a teacher like her. (Tity)

Tity remembered that her English teacher was the motivator and moral informant for her students, and she perceived it as essential value to her life as she kept in mind the teacher's quote "for not judging someone from his appearance, but we were also reminded that first impressions were also judged by appearance". This moral message is not only informed for the students but also for the student teachers from their mentor teachers (Barrett, 2007; Craig, 2004; Craig, 2009; Dewey, 1933; Oslon & Craig, 2005).

Ivan told us that teachers not only teach and share knowledge but also develop students' character and behavior:

My mentor teacher always said that when we were inside the classroom, the subject was not the only thing we should talk about with the students. Teaching was not only to increase knowledge, but also to build students' character. She said that as the teacher, we were the ones who had the responsibility to teach students about what was right and what was wrong. Even when the students did well in answering every question the teacher asked them, it would have no value if they behaved badly in their everyday lives. (Ivan)

The mentor teachers highlighted the importance of character building in the students as part of teacher's responsibility. The advice of the mentor teachers also impacted the student teachers' perception of teaching and learning as reported by Mitha:

I had a teaching practicum at the school where I had attended during at secondary school. I felt awkward because when I was a student, I collected my friends' homework and turned them in at the teachers' office and always got some advice from the teachers. At that time, I was the one who was the teacher. I also felt that having lunch and discussion with the teachers and acting like them became a good role model and example for students. I still remembered when Mrs. Aniek and Mrs. Nur always reminded us that teaching did not only provide material in the classroom, but also provided guidance for students. (Mitha)

Mitha had a flashback to an event she experienced when she got advice from her teacher. During the teaching practicum, she, as the teacher, was the one who gave advice to her students. This implied that the deconstruction of practical knowledge came from the ex-teacher (Higgs, 2003; Winter, 2007). Further, an interaction between the pre- and in-service teachers during the practicum offered her new insight into her students. The mentor teacher's advice related to the teacher's role in students' lives deepened her understanding of teaching. This is relevant to previous studies that a teaching practicum encourages student teachers to negotiate and deconstruct their personal and practical knowledge with the help of their teacher mentors and supervising faculty members (Kim & Choi, 2019; Ulvik et al., 2018). Besides the advice about the role as teachers, the student teachers gained perspectives on what they had to do in their classes as Uti reported:

When I did my teaching practicum, I became the real teacher. I had to prepare the materials, dealt with various student personalities, and disciplined them. I had to figure out how to make the class comfortable for my students and explain topics clearly so that they could understand what they learned. Sometimes I gave them some games so they would not feel bored and sleepy. Basically, I did not want to teach like my teachers taught me when I was at schools. (Uti)

Uti became aware of the importance of teaching preparation as well as the learning atmosphere, as she highlighted in her teaching practicum. The ways her teacher taught her when she was at school affected her knowledge of how to support her students' learning during her practicum. Therefore, prior experience of learning English at secondary schools has informed the student teachers' practical knowledge and sensitivity

of being a good teacher for their students (Burhan-Horasanli & Ortaçtepe, 2016; Dewey, 1933; Farrell, 2006).

Understanding of teaching and learning

The student teachers also indicated that the practicum program extended their understanding about the teaching and classroom as Huda reported:

When I was in the teaching practicum, there were so many changes that happened to me as a teacher. Before the practicum, I thought that teaching in a classroom was quite easy since I also taught smaller classes outside of school. However, being in a large class made me realize that I was wrong. I learned that teaching in a large classroom with so many students was not only about teaching the subjects that I had prepared beforehand. A classroom always had many students, and each student had a different personality and attitude. I learned how to control a classroom with many kinds of students in this practicum and that was something I could not get without going into a real classroom in a school. (Huda)

When Huda did his teaching practicum, he realized that his view about teaching in the real classroom changed (Mann et al., 2009; Moon, 2005). Real teaching was complicated, particularly with a large class with different student personalities, even though his preparation had been completed. The practicum offered him opportunities to improve his classroom management skills. Additionally, Sella concluded that the practicum was essential:

As someone who has just experienced teaching practicum, these are probably all the stories worth being told. About three months of teaching practicum period, I experienced a meaningful time with my group, the teachers, students, and everyone involved in the school. I had happy times, silly times, and stressful times together with them. In short, I would like to say that no matter how much a person can learn in the classroom, the knowledge the person has, can only be completed by experiencing the real things on the field. This made teaching practicum so meaningful to me as a teacher. (Sella)

Sella reflected the experiences, knowledge, and skills she had gained during the practicum into profound expression as a "meaningful teacher". Therefore, it could be said that the teaching practicum helped the student teachers to become the real teachers who could teach in a real classroom settings (Borg et al., 2018; Swart et al., 2018).

Dissatisfaction

Experiences of dissatisfaction as secondary school learners have provided the student teachers some awareness to evade similar teaching methods and activities in present and future situations.

Textbook oriented

One participant reported that the teachers relied on the textbook to deliver the teaching material and that bored the students:

I learned English formally for the first time at junior high school and I got bored. Why? Because the teacher was not creative, he used a textbook as his only medium in class. All he did in class was explain the lessons, while the students took notes and completed assignments. The teacher did the things in every class he taught. (Nia)

Past experiences of learning English especially when the teachers adhered to the textbooks lessened students' interest in learning English (Helyer, 2015). However, this encouraged the student teachers not to perform similar, as reported by Anti about her teaching practicum program:

For example, when they have to learn about describing things. I asked them to pay attention to the objects that were around them and then I mentioned the characteristics of these objects and asked them to guess what I was describing. What I learned from this activity was that my students became more active and found that the lesson was less boring. They not only focused on the explanations in the book, but they also had better understanding if they observed and took a part directly in a lesson rather than having to read long explanatory texts and listen to teachers who tended to explain concepts too much. (Anti)

This shows that the student teachers employed learning activities that attracted students' interest. Anti noticed that the activity allowed her students to concentrate more and engage in their learning more than when they had to read their textbooks and listen to the teacher's explanation. Additionally, she did not only demonstrate how to employ things around the students to be part of learning but also adapted what had been learned from teachers' education, as Ivan explained:

After becoming a student of teacher training, I decided I had to teach my students in more effective and enjoyable ways. I was taught by Mr. Fendi about technology-based teaching methods, such as the PACI or PACIFIC method. In terms of technology, I think what and how I teach will be different from the way my elementary or junior high school teachers did. (Ivan)

The student teachers practiced the knowledge and skills they obtained from the teacher education. They are committed to implementing knowledge and skills which are dissimilar to their teachers' way of teaching when they were at schools (Dewey, 1933; Mann et al., 2009; Moon, 2005; Schön, 1983).

Teacher's workload

The respondents were also concerned what the teachers today need to do as Huda highlighted:

The English teachers today need to work extra to make their students to love their classes. They need to put more time in on thinking about how to teach English and to help it be important for the community. As I know, the more we are exposed in the context, if we often listen and practice, the language can be more easily comprehended. Additionally, technology could help teachers in their teaching and motivate students by providing various learning media. (Huda)

Huda sees that teachers' workload today is harder, especially for language teachers, who need to consider many things: their significance for the community, language exposure, and the use of technology for learning the language. Along with the learning process that the student teachers experience and acquire in the teacher education, they achieve expert knowledge (Barrett, 2007; DiCerbo et al., 2014). They are able to balance this unpleasant discernment with improved actions with their students, as Zidan reported during his teaching practicum as follows:

I have tried to use all the learning and techniques that I was taught when doing my teaching practice, which is an opportunity to experience being a real teacher. My own experience in teaching was initially quite tense when I had to deal with students directly and keep the learning process moving. At first, I was nervous, but after a few weeks I was getting used to dealing with students in class. Equipped with facilities that are quite adequate, the learning process feels easier and more comfortable. And finally, I was able to feel the learning activities in two perspectives from both as students and finally as teachers in the class. (Zidan)

Zidan emphasizes that the expert knowledge and skills he has acquired from the teacher education have enriched and provided opportunities for him to learn various teaching techniques to be implemented during their teaching practicum at schools (Altan & Sağlamel, 2015; Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Lohmander, 2015; Onnismaa et al., 2015). Although it was initially challenging in the program, he was able to deal with the context where he teaches. He eventually positioned himself as a learner and a teacher which allows him to have a better understanding of learning and teaching from both perspectives (Kryacou, 2007; Lawlor, 2021).

Conclusion

The present study has indicated that prior events or experiences of learning English at secondary schools have informed the student teachers' practical knowledge and awareness of being an ideal teacher. Moreover, they were able to address the discrepancies between the practical knowledge they acquired from their teachers at school and teaching practicum, and expert knowledge from the teacher education. This affects their perspectives on what ideal English teachers should do with their students. Therefore, in this study, deconstruction is taking an event or experience in a particular setting and time and breaking them down into some sequence of procedures or activities, making meaning of those based on the current context. The procedures or activities are more meaningful for learning using reflections, and these reflections will shape a new understanding of the context that involves awareness, emotion, and action (Mann et al., 2009; Moon, 2005).

The study has demonstrated that reflecting on experiences after a teaching practicum can lead to practical knowledge. Therefore, it is crucial for all parties involved in the practicum program, such as teacher mentors, supervising faculty members, and peers, to maximize their roles providing experiential interaction, in addition to their formal authorized clinical role. By doing so, a new perspective might be created in line with the development of a better quality of teaching as the direct impact of practical pedagogical knowledge. In a nutshell, the reflective teaching practicum could help student teachers deconstruct their practical pedagogical knowledge.

This study explored student teachers' reflections of past experiences at schools that impacted their practical knowledge in a teaching practicum. The findings from a qualitative case study design based on small sample of seven student teachers at Mulawarman University are not representative of the universities in Indonesia. Consequently, the conclusions made cannot be generalized. Future research needs to investigate similar research focus with more participants in different settings including in-service teachers as the experts.

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Appendix

The questions

1. What do you think about English teachers in general?
2. How do you perceive an English teacher when you were at schools?
3. What inconvenient event or experience did you have when studying English at school?
4. What was/were the most impressive event(s) or experience(s) when you studied English at school(s)?
5. What materials or topics were the most difficult to understand while you learnt English at schools?
6. Based on your experience, what kind or style of teacher did you love most?
7. How do you perceive an English teacher especially after you completed your teaching practicum program?
8. What event(s) or experience(s) during your teaching practicum informed you about better teaching?
9. As you are going to be an English teacher in the near future, what have you prepared?