

TEACHING PRACTICUM: INVESTIGATING EFL PRESERVICE TEACHERS' SELF- EFFICACY

by Fika Megawati

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TEACHING PRACTICUM: INVESTIGATING EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY

Fika Megawati

*English Education Program Study, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia
E-mail: fikamegawati@umsida.ac.id*

Yuli Astutik

*English Education Program Study, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia
E-mail: yuliastutik@umsida.ac.id*

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Abstract: Self-efficacy is influential in determining someone's future competence. Identifying self-efficacy towards pre-service teachers provides significant information about how competent they are in applying theoretical concepts of teaching in the real school. It also becomes reflection for the institution on the quality of courses related to TEFL carried out in the implemented curriculum. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate pre-service EFL teachers' self-efficacy during the teaching practicum. This study involved 27 EFL teacher candidates who conducted teaching performance in some different schools. To collect the data, online Likert scale questionnaire was disseminated to the informants. The responses were interpreted through percentage and analyzed descriptively. The results indicated that generally the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy in terms of teaching skill, constructing and applying lesson plan, assessment, and classroom management, was quite high although some of them seemed to find difficulties in carrying out some classroom activities with the students. Self-efficacy analysis towards EFL learners' practicum gives implication to any institutional parties for preparing the better quality and program of future generation teachers.

Keywords: *competent; teacher candidate; self-efficacy; reflection.*

INTRODUCTION

In certain situation, the following expressions perhaps ever appear to our mind or our students' "Can I do it well? Does my performance make my students understand? Can I do better than him or her?" These expressions deal with self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to people's belief that the specific target they have set can be reached successfully. As stated by Sharp, Brandt, Tuft, and Jay (2016) that self-efficacy is not based on one's actual ability to do a task, but rather on that person's perceived ability to complete that task. To know "how competent I am", self-efficacy is the right term to use or measure. It potentially becomes a determinant for someone's

success in their future career including for teacher candidates.

Research on self-efficacy with various development and analysis gives a crucial contribution. Plenty of studies have shown its effect and positive correlation. Students' motivation in the classroom is a part of its influence (Jaengaksorn, Ruengtrakul, & Piromsombat, 2015; Ersanl, 2015). In addition, investigating self-efficacy can also give information regarding adolescents' variation in future education and future career orientation (McLennan, McIlveen, & Perera, 2017). Considering its great significance, self-efficacy becomes a never-ending topic in scientific research.

In the area of English language teaching, Yazici & Sur (2017) have investigated self-efficacy and epistemological beliefs between pre-service and in-service teachers related to problem-solving skill. In the same vein, Jimenez-Silva, Ols7n, & Jimenez Hernandez (2012) found with the foundational knowledge through the use of meaningful and engaging pedagogical practices, the pre-service teacher can increase their self-efficacy in teaching English language learners. In addition, Çakır and Alici (2009) compared pre-service English teachers' self-efficacy beliefs with their instructors' views of the teaching competence. The results indicated that the pre-service teachers' judgement is higher than the instructor. Furthermore, in relation to teaching English reading, Begum and Hamzah (2018) give insight that policy to increase teacher efficacy is significant in order to improve student reading comprehension. The studies proved that self-efficacy closely relates to the pre-service teachers' life, and the result can be used for significant evaluation to provide better performance.

From the previous studies, it appears that self-efficacy has the strength, and it needs to be explored more. However, the existing discussion has not talked much about self-efficacy during facing the most determining experience as teacher candidates, namely Teaching Practice Program. In Indonesian context, based on the curriculum of teacher education program, the institution applied teaching practice in the new platform. It is called Internship program, and has three sessions with different credits to get in touch with school, *Magang I*, *Magang II*, and *Magang III*. Before the pre-service teachers face internship III, they have to pass the previous two internships. The two programs have equipped the prospective teachers with the basic principles about school life and teacher' activities and responsibilities. In Internship I, the teacher candidates have observed and analyzed school environment, officials, and facilities. Internship II assigned the students to conduct observation on how

the teacher constructs the learning instrument and implement it in the classroom with full of activities and evaluation. With the two programs, it is expected that the pre-service teachers can build positive communication and adaptation with the school. Consequently, when they take the Internship III (the biggest credits), they can perform more confidently and can manage the situation better. In short, the last *Magang* has big role for the practitioners in shaping their teaching competence (professional, pedagogical, personal, and social) since they have to teach in front of the real students with the lesson plan consulted and with school mentor and institutional advisor.

Becoming EFL prospective teachers is something challenging, especially when they face teaching practicum program in the real school with the real students and community. During this period, the student teachers share their knowledge in teaching situation according to the theories and the best practice they had ever read or seen (Riesky, 2013). Furthermore, the teachers need to comprehend the theoretical concept of teaching as well as English language. Unfortunately, not all of the exposure is from the direct source of language. The knowledge about the language comes from non-native speaker teachers which some time has a different substance from what is expected. In another side, they need to transfer the English concept to the students that are supposed to be accepted in the community using the standard of the target language.

Therefore, the role of self-efficacy is crucial. When the pre-service teachers have moderate to high self-efficacy, they tend to be highly motivated and more creative in teaching (Moradkhani, Raygan, & Moein, 2017). They will be less stressful when facing teaching time. However, it turns out to be a problem when they believe that their teaching competence is low. It affects not only the teaching performance but also to the respondents in that class. Considering the urgency of understanding students'

competence belief to the quality of teaching, this paper presents the results of a study that examines self-efficacy of pre-service teachers in carrying out teaching practicum in Internship III program. Exploring students' perception related to their teaching performance is also discussed to give some clarification regarding the findings.

METHOD

The design used in this study was survey. The researchers selected pre-service English teachers purposively who became practitioners to teach English subject in school partners around Sidoarjo, Indonesia for accomplishing their internship III. The program was implemented in several schools varied from junior high school, senior high school, and vocational high school. Some of the institutions are state schools, while the others are private schools. The participants of this study consisted of 6 males and 21 females, and they were aged between 22-23 years old in their seventh semester. It was observed that only a few of student teachers had experience in teaching, particularly in English course.

For data collection, online Likert scale questionnaire was initially distributed to 30 prospective teachers of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo majoring in English education study program. Nevertheless, only 27 student teachers responded. It was conducted on October 2017, mainly in the odd semester of academic year 2017/2018. From four main variable questions, the researchers elaborated it into 25 questions with 5 possible responses: *strongly agree*; *agree*; *I don't know*; *disagree*; and *strongly disagree*. *Agree* statement indicates that I am capable to do the item, *I don't know* means the respondent is in doubt or not really sure that the activity is finished successfully, and *disagree* refers to I am not capable to do the item. The word *strongly* facilitates the response with high certainty. The items of question are adapted from Kinnunen (2012). The data analysis was conducted by finding the percentage of the students' response in

each question. Afterwards, the response was classified based on the variable – teaching competence, lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment to know the general self-efficacy information of the students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part outlines results taken from the questionnaire responses. The questionnaire consists of fifteen questions in which six questions deal with teaching competence, two questions discuss learning instrument construction, particularly lesson plan, five questions deal with learning assessment capabilities, and two questions explore the classroom management. Each part is connected to the related literature for discussion.

Self-efficacy in teaching English language skill, grammar, and culture

Teaching competence in demonstrating particular language skill at secondary school level takes a pivotal part in shaping an English pre-service teachers' performance. Although in the curriculum it is not explicitly stated that the students need to master all English skills separately (it is more integrated), the student teachers who conduct teaching practicum have to perform the best to train the students how to use the language appropriately that can reflect the function of each skill. It is undeniable that when someone teaches language, the concept appears first in mind is how to make the students recognize the new language so that later they will be able to listen, speak, read, and write the target language for effective communication. Language component such as grammar and cultural aspects also something that can be introduced to the students to strengthen their target language development. Thus, question number 1 until number 6 exposed the students' efficiency in teaching English skills as well as grammar and culture. The detailed questions are described as follow.

- 1) I can efficiently teach oral communication in English (speaking)

- 2) I can efficiently teach written communication in English (writing)
- 3) I can efficiently teach grammar in English (English component)
- 4) I can efficiently teach listening comprehension in English (listening)
- 5) I can efficiently teach reading comprehension in English (reading)
- 6) I can efficiently introduce and teach about different English speaking cultures (cultural aspect)

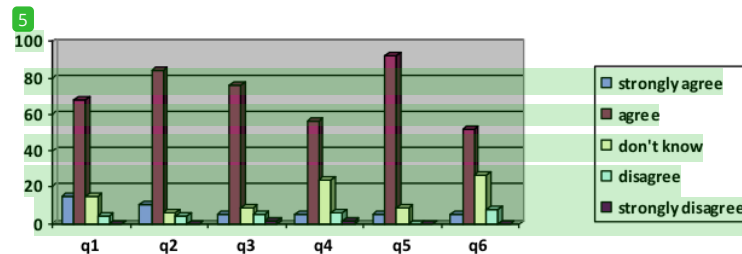


Figure 1. *Students' responses towards questions related to teaching competencies*

Figure 1 shows that the students mostly agree with the statement. In other words, self-efficacy to teach English language skills, grammar, and English culture was relatively high. The top point is in response to number 5, namely the self-efficacy related to teaching reading comprehension. This response is in line with the most activities set in the curriculum that the students are exposed to learning based on the texts oriented first. Even, in many assessments, the teachers tend to assign the students to read and answer reading comprehension questions. Therefore, the pre-service teachers seem to have a lot of exposure from reading activities. From reading, they can create many activities in the learning process as well as develop learning materials from various references. Through these programs, the pre-service at the same time have tried to enrich English literacy for the secondary level students.

However, in Figure 1 it also appears that there were respondents who mention disagree for question number four and six. In addition, strongly disagree was selected to answer number 6. This response indicates that Listening and English culture information is not mastered quite well to be transferred to the students in the school. The pre-service teachers seem to have found difficulties in comprehending listening and cultural issue when they took the courses.

Thus, for them, the better decision is not to teach what they are not really capable of.

Competence in constructing lesson plan

The next part is related to the capabilities of the pre-service teachers in developing their lesson plan and modifying the materials based on the students' need and the school curriculum. The two questions are formulated as follows.

- 1) Making lesson plans is easy for me
- 2) I can modify my teaching materials to suit the student's need

Composing a lesson plan is a crucial activity in a pedagogical context. Composing lesson plan involves many aspects for consideration. Understanding the implemented curriculum and syllabus in the school become ones of the determinants to set the lesson plan format and content. Thus, it is not something strange if in one area, the schools apply different curriculum. It depends on the readiness and human resources to support the selected curriculum to the school life. Surprisingly, the response of competence in constructing lesson plan shows almost 20% of the respondents are incompetence. The self-efficacy was found at the moderate level. Several factors were identified for this problem. Based on the supplementary data, the participants admitted that they were still confused in comprehending how the lesson plan is

constructed. They just knew about *Promes* (semester program) and *Prota* (yearly program) in making a schedule for each lesson, and need more time to understand the concept before they make their own lesson plan to be applied in the classroom for specific meetings.

Next, the tendency of teaching too many grammatical theories make them eliminate time to train the students' English skills. From the lesson plan they developed, it seems that to build more interactive

situation, the pre-service teacher could not show variation during the instruction. Meanwhile, the ability to integrate the target structure into English language skill is significant to create meaningful learning as suggested by Clark (2010) in the form of integrating grammar as a whole, not only writing skill. In addition, Arikan (2009) promotes the importance of giving context in Grammar course such as learning English grammar in relation to environmental peace education.

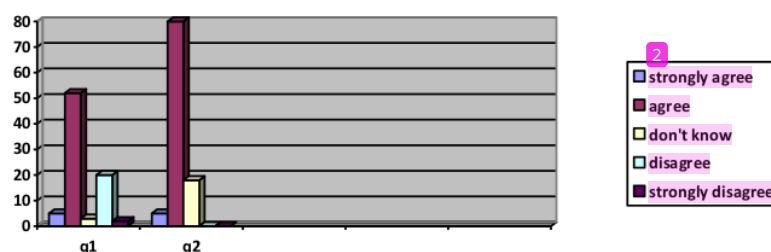


Figure 2. The result of students' responses towards questions related to Lesson Planning

To get more information about the lesson plan production process, the students were asked a question after expressing their competence through fulfilling the questionnaire. The result shows various ideas since the students relate this point with several aspects, yet the researchers have limited the relevant points dealing with how they worked with their lesson plan.

Question:

"Reflecting the teaching performance during Micro Teaching class, can you give me your opinion about the things that you find similar, different, or even new in the school?"

Response 1

"I found many differences in the lesson plan. I cannot apply my "previous" lesson plan, because the teacher has her own style and rule. Also, I got problem while consulting with the school mentor because we were not taught clearly about the method, model, technique, and assessment that are suitable with K-13."

Response 2

"The similar is the use of lesson plan in the teaching and learning in the classroom. The difference is the lesson plan because the school uses the revised k13. So, the teacher makes a lesson plan based on the revision of education ministry. The condition and situation are even new in the school."

Response 3

"The similar is: In teaching-learning process, a teacher must have a lesson plan before he/she teaches or the class management to make the class enjoyable and give the students motivation."

"The different: In a real situation, they are many characteristics of students. This is the job for teacher on how to manage them and still make the class comfortable and enjoyable."

The responses indicate that there is no congruence in students' background knowledge to implement the applicable lesson plan. Having clarified with the

respondents, it is found that in their Micro teaching classroom, they had used two different curriculums, *KTSP* and *K-13* since at that time some schools in the regency have not been ready yet to shift their curriculum to the new one automatically. A year later, the condition changed. Thus, in the field, the students had a different experience in developing the lesson plan. To face this condition, some pre-service teachers had been active in confirming the changes to their teacher based mentor as well as supervisor for the guidance. To achieve the good communication with those important people in this program, building good attitude becomes a pivotal consideration. In some pre-service teachers' reports, there was a statement that their communication with Internship III supervisor was not good, and it influenced the impression in conducting the whole activities, especially making a report.

To know the appropriate materials for students, the ability to predict the students' need for learning is crucial. However, this ability is not that easy. Mostly, the pre-service teachers depend on handbook used in the class since they think that it will be beneficial for them in facing the exam. In 6)

addition to textbook adaptation, the pre-service teachers had already implemented their classroom activities with media. Most of them agree that visual media and audiovisual media can attract students' attention.

Self-efficacy in assessment

The following classification in the questionnaire is about assessment. Teaching practice does not complete without measuring the output of learning whether it is in the form of test or not. One of the ways to examine the students' progress is through assessment. Therefore, in this study, the researchers asked the informants to share their opinion regarding the following statements:

- 1) I can use different types of evaluation methods in teaching
- 2) I can easily notice mistakes in spoken English
- 3) I can easily notice mistakes in written English
- 4) I know many different ways to correct students' mistakes
- 5) I can correct a student's mistake without lowering his or her motivation

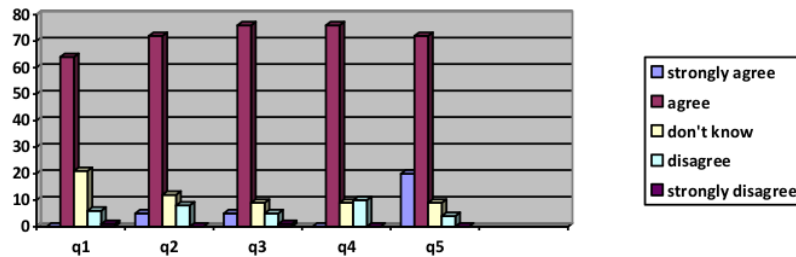


Figure 3. *The result of students' responses towards questions related to Assessment*

The responses that need to be highlighted are agree, don't know, and disagree. Although the general ideas go to the positive competence through their selection in agree and strongly disagree, there were several pre-service teachers felt that assessing students' English proficiency in the class is something difficult. Thus,

don't know and disagree option still appear. Furthermore, familiarizing to some different types of evaluation becomes their problem in teaching. So far, a written test is often implemented. Textbook-based evaluation is the best option to adapt or adopt. They just substituted the subject or the verb of the questions for adapting. Consequently, it

provided ineffective test impact for teachers and learner. The principle of assessment itself is washback that provide interactive feedback for both teacher and the students. One thing to enhance washback effect is in the form of discussing and reconstructing the test performance for improvement. Ren (2011) and Pan and Newfields (2011) put their similar concerns on washback effect on English test of the tertiary level students, but they took different kind of test.

There is another kind of assessment, such as alternative assessment in the form of portfolio or performance. Focusing on the portfolio, to get the optimal result, of course, a lot of sources are needed. For some school condition, it perhaps needs a long period to realize. Facing the fourth Industrial Revolution, education also feels the impact. The existence of mobile devices influences the way teachers and students search for any related information for classroom activities.

In this case, teachers do not need to be afraid of losing the opportunity to know the students' learning progress, and they can implement the alternative assessment in the form of e-portfolio (Hung, 2012).

Self-efficacy in classroom management

Classroom management covers many things such as the concept of the physical environment of the class, teacher's voice and body language, mind stream lesson changes, teaching under adverse circumstances, and creating a positive classroom climate. The last part, there are two questions related to classroom management. The researcher focuses on the capabilities in handling the problems both from students and others that influence the learning process.

- 1) I can motivate even the most troublesome students to learn
- 2) I can efficiently solve problematic situations in the classroom

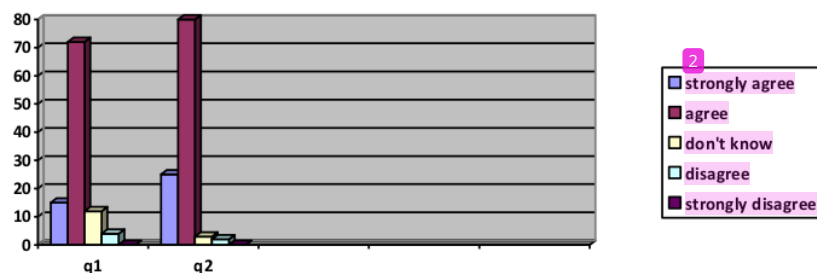


Figure 4. The result of students' responses towards questions related to Classroom Management

The thing that can alter the pre-service teachers' mood when they conduct a teaching practicum is the students' behaviour. In line with this, Riesky (2013) mentioned that student teachers spent their time to solve the students' problem in their teaching practicum in addition to managing their main job (teaching) during the program. With various ways of learning and personalities, the students of secondary level education still need much attention. Although at their age they seem to be independent, changing condition in their environment sometimes hinders the success

of learning. It forces the teacher to give a good example through their way of overcoming the problems. Fortunately, based on the responses in this study, most of the pre-service teachers have quite high efficacy to handle any unexpected situation happening in the schools which have a big number of students in one class.

Ideally, one class consists of at most 20-25 students in order to obtain a conducive situation. However, this regulation cannot be implemented in all areas in Indonesia. Even, to some schools which have limited classes, the number of students can be overloaded,

around 40-50. In addition, if there is no rule in the classroom, the students normally decide their self-selection location to sit. Sometimes, in their pattern, there is an unfair collaboration of a group. Therefore, giving variation in seating arrangement probably gives an alternative way to bridge effective communication between the students and the teacher. The position the students usually select tends to influence their learning performance as well as teacher's perception toward the students (Zhang, 2018). This case can be paid attention by the pre-service teachers to be more creative in controlling the class through seat location modification.

From the pre-service confirmation, seating arrangement for conducting group work in English class is strongly needed since the students can mobile and share to each other in accomplishing English tasks. The results also indicate that the students work better and more confident during the activities done in a group. To give different idea, Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2015) mention that teacher's assertiveness in managing classroom has positive relationship with the students' performance.

Based on the result of self-efficacy level in this research, the researchers comprehend that there were diverse obstacles in performing teaching practicum during internship III that potentially make them unconfident to select the option I agree in certain teaching competencies. It is true that the most difficult student to teach is the learner who believes he or she cannot succeed. Inconvenience they found during the program cannot be easily forgotten from their mind. This indicates that the lecturers of English teacher education study program have big homework to approach those who have low self-efficacy to have positive belief that they can teach better in the future through a lot of exercises and experiences. To make them have a high level of self-efficacy is not adequate if it is merely provided from TEFL related courses taken before the program. The reinforcement is still highly needed during the practice especially from lecturer assigned as a

supervisor in giving guidance for their better teaching performance. This can help the pre-service teachers move a step higher in passing the bridge of self-efficacy. Accordingly, an opportunity for educators to fix the unexpected situation dealing with low self-efficacy is through implementing the concept of a continuum of self-efficacy covering four important aspects, namely cautious, self-esteem, self-confidence, and perseverance (Bray & McClaskey, 2016).

The role of Internship III supervisor also takes a pivotal point during that process. Supervisors are expected to be a model in all conditions. They also need to be able to utilize methods and strategies or techniques that put the student teachers and their pupils at the centre of learning. Being knowledgeable in subject matter and versatility in the facilitation of learning is also important. A supervisor is also a prudent manager of time and resources. Therefore, in selecting the lecturers to be a supervisor, the faculty needs to select the candidates based on appropriate criteria in order to give maximum assistance to the student teachers during the practicum. It is also possible to open recruitment for the ones who are willing to implement their teaching knowledge in managing the pre-service teachers.

In addition, the supervisor is expected to be able to be a program planner and designer that will accommodate effective teaching practice. Next, they need to have skill in using appropriate resources to stimulate and facilitate the development and assessment of teacher trainees during teaching practice. Finally, after giving optimal guidance, at the end of the program, the supervisors are observers as well as assessors for student teachers. Being an objective assessor is a challenging duty. For some period of being together with the student teachers, they can easily predict the quality of each trainee during accomplishing their teaching practice activity. Besides, the progress will appear clearly if there is a good communication. Thus, interact with student teachers about

their teaching experience needs to be maintained.

Supervisors in Internship program have core tasks in completing their responsibilities. The first one is, of course, providing regular on-site observation of student teachers' teaching performance. Through this direct visit, it is expected that the pre-service teachers will have more preparation. It will be better if the whole student teachers join seminar classes to prepare them and evaluate the success of teaching practice before they go to school. Secondly, it is suggested that the supervisors also help student teachers to develop lesson plans which encourage an activity-based approach. To do this activity, they need to ensure that the concept of the syllabus and lesson plan construction is quite similar to the school concept. If it is too different, it will hinder their reporting process.

Assessing the student teacher's performance based on pre-established teacher performance standards is the big core task for internship supervisors. However, to encourage the student teachers to understand what they have done to identify the strengths and weaknesses, the supervisors can implement self-reflection or sometimes it is called self-evaluation in the form of student teacher's logbook/diary/journal. It is believed that student teachers logbook/diary/journal is meaningful media to obtain information on how prospective teachers think about and engage in the evaluation of their teaching performance. Using teacher logbooks is also a tool for assessing transformative learning process in professional development (Van Meerkerk, 2017) in addition to developing adequate teaching competencies. To get visual performance, another study suggests to use video to support reflective teaching practice (Impedovo & Cheneval-Armand, 2016).

The second key player in teaching practicum is a school-based mentor. Without the mentor's support, the prospective teachers will get many difficulties in the school. Mentors are designed as the closest

person in the school. Everything dealing with the technical problems and implementation in the classroom setting is discussed with mentors. Responsibilities of mentors vary, but the main goal is the same, namely sharing the practical knowledge of teaching profession to the student teachers. The responsibilities are assisting the student teachers to obtain competence in the various elements of the institution functioning, lesson planning, and classroom management (Maphalala, 2013). Furthermore, to gain effective mentoring process, adequate support service such as in-service training, mentor handbook, Department of Teacher Education assessment/grading scale, regular communication and incentives is highly recommended (Tshuma & Shumba, 2014).

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this present study shows that identifying pre-service teachers' self-efficacy when they conducted teaching practicum in Internship III is beneficial for faculty reflection in determining the content of supporting courses as well as selecting supervisors and communicating with school-based mentors. The responses clearly state that most of them agree to say capable of doing activities related to teaching English language skills as well as grammar and culture, lesson plan construction, assessment, and classroom management. However, there were also pre-service students who claim that they have moderate until low self-efficacy from their opinion that they *don't know* or *disagree* to answer the questions. Of course, the factors varied based on their proficiency level and teaching experience.

Furthermore, this feedback can become the evaluation for the lecturers as well as the implemented curriculum to find appropriate strategies in assisting pre-service teachers to survive in the school for accomplishing teaching practicum program. This also reminds lecturers to be professional in transferring knowledge to prepare them in the field experience through updating information from scientific publications and

attending some conferences to get broad insight in the scope of English Language Teaching. Strengthening any courses related to Teaching English as a Foreign Language theory and giving supportive guidance in shaping the teaching competence are truly needed for building a quality performance.

For future researchers, it is important to have deeper investigation in another side of the implementation of Internship (*Magang I, II, and III*) as the response or feedback for the implementation of the current curriculum in Indonesia. Seeking the information of pre-service teacher development models through an Internship program in good universities is also recommended in order to encourage teacher education program in developing universities to enrich their knowledge and improve the model for gaining better prospective teacher quality.

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