

## PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES AT TEACHING PRACTICUM

Wakhid Nashruddin

[wahid1n@yahoo.co.id](mailto:wahid1n@yahoo.co.id)

*IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, Indonesia*

**Abstract:** For many years, the teaching and learning English (as a foreign language) in Indonesia has been considered unfruitful for students' low ability in using the language in communication. For many times, government (as the leader of schools) and campus (as teacher producer) do not sit together to discuss this problem. This results to gaps between school and campus. I am interested in seeing this problem by viewing gaps occur in the process of campus preparing qualified English teachers. This paper will tell the result of my interviews with pre-service teachers about their experiences at teaching practicum program.

**Key words:** *gaps between school and campus, pre-service teachers' experiences, teaching practicum*

### Introduction

The emergence of new curriculum in Indonesia, the curriculum 2013, emerges some queries from many sides; teachers, parents, educational practitioners, and even students. Some reasons come up, such as the claim that schools failed to implement the school based curriculum, the lack of supports in the teaching and learning, and the low quality of teachers. These reasons bring further analysis, that teachers were mostly blamed for their failure to develop the school based curriculum. Teachers were just regarded to be too lazy to adapt the standards of content and to produce the correct indicators for the objective of the teaching and learning. On the other side, teachers, then, blamed the government for it does not support the teachers to understand the curriculum. Teachers get confused for the changes of the curriculum from time to time. Then the two sides blame each other. This is just an example how the emergence of the new curriculum brings up some issues.

Indonesia, unlike some other countries, is centralistic, mainly in the area of education policy. Curriculum is designed by government and then applied by schools in the country. This is different with what other countries apply. United States, for example, let the states provide their standards of curriculum, which is known as Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (Yardley, 2013). These standards can be referred by schools as much as they need.

In US, there are also schools which set up their own standards or curriculum. So, unlike US government, the government of the Republic of Indonesia controls the standards, the goals, and the curriculum at schools.

The claim that schools, also the teachers, are not serious in applying the school based curriculum has been raised by some sides. Wahidah (2013), for instance, says that she has never seen a real school based curriculum, as schools just take the curriculum from teachers' union, or from disreputable and unclear sources. This brings to the fact that school based curriculum fails to attain its main purpose, that is incorporating school's need into the curriculum. Different schools have different background, culture, and situations that different schools need a slightly different curriculum. It becomes hard to implement curriculum from one school to different schools as what it is.

Teacher, as the main core of the implementation of school based curriculum, are forced to design the curriculum. Teachers' creativity was a must in the implementation of the school based curriculum. So, high qualified teachers are needed as they play the most important role in the teaching and learning process.

Some attentions have been paid to the area of English teachers' professional development. Saukah (2009) pays a great attention to the new Laws & Regulations Affecting English Language Teacher Education, they are the National System of Education Act No. 20/2003, the Government Regulation No. 19/2005 on the National Standards of Education, the Teachers and Lecturers Act No. 14, 2005, the Government Regulation No. 74/2008 on Teachers, and the Minister of National Education Decree No. 8/2009 on Teachers' Professional Education Program. These, according to him, bring to a very crucial move on "standardizing English language teacher education in Indonesia." Saukah believes that many universities running English language education do not have standards in producing qualified English teachers.

Rukmini (2009), on the other hand, was curious with the real quality of graduates of English language education program. She was interested in portraying the junior high school English teachers' linguistic competence. The teachers in Rukmini's study failed in the teacher's certification program. She regards that their "linguistic competence does not tend to be satisfactory." Her analysis was that "this is mostly caused by their choice of lexical items and grammar used to create the texts. While the sociocultural competence, the generic structures of the texts are likely to be satisfactory." In relation to Saukah's idea, it can be seen that the standards of English teachers in Indonesia is still questionable.

There are some ways in improving teachers' competence in teaching English. For teachers, they can take graduate degrees, join workshops, participate in seminars, and

participate in conferences. For pre-service teachers, in the beginning stage, it can be by being involved in teaching practicum, the pre-service teachers' first experiences involved in the real teaching and learning process and activities at school. This makes teaching practicum becomes important in teachers' training.

A study conducted by Riesky (2013) was about pre-service teachers' difficulties in teaching practicum. She did interviews with her respondents and concludes that there are three types of problems faced by preservice teachers in their teaching practicum. The problems are related to students at the schools where the teaching practicum were held, to the supervising teachers at the schools where the teaching practicum were held, and to the preservice teachers themselves (Riesky, 2013: 250). Furthermore, she reported that "from the total of forty teaching difficulties reported, 25 of them (62.5%) are related to the students they teach; 12 of them (30%) are related to their personal competence; and 3 of them (7.5%) are related to their supervising teachers at schools" (Riesky, 2013: 256). This study shows that pre-service teachers should prepare themselves in facing different kinds of problems when they get into teaching practicum program.

I was also interested in learning from my own teaching practicum program. I reflected on a teaching practice session when I took my masters' degree. I found out that teaching practicum program gave many lessons for the participant (Nashruddin, 2010). "Lesson plan, trainee's mastery of the lesson, trainee's teaching techniques / performance, trainee's classroom management, trainee's use of English should be considered for the sake of quality of the teaching and learning activity" (Nashruddin, 2010). In my previous study, the teaching practicum was in form of peer teaching.

The current study sees teaching practicum in the form of pre-service teachers involved at activities at schools, facing real situations at school. They met members of schools, a headmaster, teachers (purposively English teachers), students, and other elements around schools. This teaching practicum program surely provided rich experience and familiarity with the real state of being teachers. This research does not only discuss pre-service teachers' problems (as Riesky (2013) did), but also the lessons they got from teaching practicum.

Looking into Riesky's study (2013), it seems to me that, when looking at the findings of this study, there are gaps between school and campus. In my understanding, there must be "something wrong" with campus, or with school. However, looking into the results of my previous study (Nashruddin, 2010), teaching practicum (in this current study is school) can provide lessons for pre-service teachers. In sum, I would like to address the gaps between school and campus.

The question raised in this research was “What gaps occur between school and campus?” So, the purpose of the study is to understand and to clarify gaps occur between school and campus. The usefulness of this study is to get a better understanding on the relationship between school and campus.

I limited this research only at the pre-service teachers’ experience during a teaching practicum program. For now, I do not have enough chance to broaden the discussion from other sides’ perspective. I did not talk to headmasters and English teachers in which the pre-service teachers did the teaching practicum. Perhaps further study can study deeply from these sides’ perspectives.

To clarify terms used in this paper, some definitions need clarifications; they are school, campus, pre-service teachers, and teaching practicum program.

School is a place for students of high schools to learn and get education, in term of skills and knowledge (in this paper, skills and knowledge are in English language learning).

In this paper, campus refers to refers to schools of education of universities or institutes of education where the students learn and prepare themselves to be teachers, in this case English teachers.

Pre-service teachers or learner teachers or student teachers refer to students of schools of education of universities or institutes of education. These terms will be used interchangeably with students, respectively.

Teaching practicum program is a program prepared by campus (schools of education of universities or institutes of education), in cooperation with schools, to provide learner teachers to work in a real situation and condition as real teachers.

## **SCHOOL AND CAMPUS**

School and campus are two sides that should have mutual relationship and partnership. Schools need campuses as the “producers” of teachers, and campuses need school as the “users” of campuses’ products. However, this view is not the only view of this kind of relationship. Schools, on the other hand, are the places for campuses to understand better the real situation in the teaching and learning process.

School can be defined as a place where formal education takes place. School is “a place where children go to be educated” (CALD, 2008: 1273). So, the purpose of schooling is to get educated. It is the job of the school to ensure that the teaching and learning run well and come to the parents and the students’ expectations.

Campus can be described as a place for students, after graduating from high school, to continue their studies and gain a degree. Hornby (1995: 161) defines campus as “(US) a

university or branch of a university” (OALD, 1995: 161). It can also refer to an institution which its job is to produce scholars in the areas of concern.

In this study, campus is seen as an institution which provides future teachers. Campus is responsible for the quality insurance of future teachers. In this way, campus should work on ensuring how the process of producing good teachers could happen.

## **TEACHING PRACTICUM**

Teaching practicum is very important in giving learner teachers a chance to work as real teachers. As Richards & Schmidt (2010: 589) define it, teaching practicum is “(in teacher education) opportunities provided for a student teacher to gain teaching experience, usually through working with an experienced teacher –the co-operating teacher– for a period of time by teaching that teacher’s class). This kind of internship supplies learner teachers the real conditions of the classroom; the atmosphere, the students, and real problems in classroom management. These experiences can be different with what they learn at campus.

Teaching practicum is a compulsory subject in school of education. Normally, there are some other courses that relate and are requisite before students taking teaching practicum. Those subjects may be method of teaching, TEFL, curriculum and material development, testing language proficiency, educational psychology, and microteaching. These subjects are foundations before students taking teaching practicum subject.

In teaching practicum, students are placed at schools and learn to live as real teachers, with almost all loaded that teachers have. Of course, pre-service teachers only practice working with those loaded, while the responsibility of the completion of the teachers’ jobs is still at the teacher’s hands. Teaching, receptionist shifting, organizing students’ unions, and managing the library are some of the teachers’ jobs to fulfill.

## **METHOD**

The respondents in this study were students from English Language Education Department of a state institute in Cirebon. They had taken all subjects taught in campus, including method of TEFL, curriculum development, and testing language proficiency. The students’ names are Ara, Olive, Lisna, and Rofi. They had undergone three-month experience in teaching practicum from January to March 2013.

This study is qualitative in nature, which it seeks for description of a case. The data gathered in this study were from interview with the four students who did teaching practicum in four schools. The interviews were conducted from 9 to 13 June 2013.

There were ten questions raised to the students. The questions and answers were delivered in Bahasa Indonesia. The purpose of this is to ease students' express what they have in their mind.

The questions raised were about their feelings during the teaching practicum program, the benefits they can take from the program, interesting things during the teaching practicum program, the subject which they took or did not take at campus, the gaps between school and campus, and other things they wanted to note. The detail question in English version is provided in the Appendix 1.

In this article, the data, i.e. the answers of the questions in the interviews, will be discussed in form of description and interpretation of the students' answers. It will mainly quote what students told about things related to the teaching practicum program; how they felt, the benefits they took, and other things referring to the questions raised.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Students' Feeling in the Teaching Practicum Program at School

Overall, the respondents think that the teaching practicum program is good, interesting, and fruitful for them. Furthermore, when they were asked about their feeling in the beginning, during, and in the end of the teaching practicum program, they felt three different phases; anxiety, settle down, and relief. The three phases are internalized in students' experience.

In the beginning, the pre-service teachers feel afraid, worried, and nervous; as described by Lisna, Ara, and Olive.

*“Deg-degan, gemeter, karena belum pernah ngajar sebelumnya.” (Lisna)*  
*(My heart beat fast; I was shaking, because I've never taught before.)*

*“Pertamanya deg-degan, terus grogi, ... soalnya belum pernah jadi guru” (Ara)*  
*(In the beginning, my heart beat fast, I also am nervous, ... because I've never been a teacher before.)*

*“Awal pasti deg-degan, grogi, nervous, karena menghadapi orang-orang baru, lingkungan gurunya, anak-anaknya juga baru. Terus selain deg-degan juga ada rasa penasaran dan exited, senang, pengen ngajar, sampe kebawanya gugup, jadi demam panggung” (Olive)*  
*(In the beginning, my heart beat fast, worried, nervous, because I was going to see new people, teachers, environment, and the kids are also new. Besides, I was also curious and exited, happy, wanted to teach, until I became nervous, and become stage fright.)*

All respondents in this research feel anxious, worried, and nervous in facing teaching practicum program at school. This is mainly because they never teach high school students. Two of them had ever taught English, but not in formal schools. All of them might have done some presentations, but only in front of their classmates, friends they are familiar with.

However, after they started their first days, they felt settle down with the condition at schools. Schools are cooperative in making students feel comfortable. As Lisna described:

*“Enak sih kalau sudah terbiasa. ... Udah sering liat materinya, anak-anaknya sudah kenal, karakternya.” (Lisna)*  
*(It’s nice when we get used to, ... After I often see the materials, the kids and I had known each other, their characters.)*

In the end, the students felt relief after completing their teaching practicum program. They felt that they had accomplished a journey in shaping their teaching.

*“Secara keseluruhan senang.” (Lisna)*  
*(Overall, I feel happy.)*

### **Benefits from the Teaching Practicum Program**

When the students were asked to describe what benefits they can take from the teaching practicum program, getting lots of experience is an answer that all respondents agree on. Experiences that they got range from experiences of facing different kinds of students, teachers, and other people related to schools—places they will work.

*“Untuk melatih kita sebelum jadi guru, latihan” (Lisna)*  
*(To train us before becoming teachers, to practice.)*

*“Kita terjun ke dunia yang nantinya kita disana, disini tuh kaya dikarantina dulu ibaratnya, terus disana baru dicoba” (Olive)*  
*(We went into the world where we will live, so it is like being quarantined first, then out there we will be tested.)*

*“Kita latihan disini, teman-temannya udah pada pinter” (Lisna)*  
*(When we practiced here at campus, our friends are smart.)*

So the main point from teaching practicum is to provide time for pre-service teachers to engage with the real situation of being real teachers. The fact that experience is the main concern that the students really care about is undeniable. Therefore, teaching practicum

becomes a very important program that cannot be dropped from the curriculum of English language education department.

### **Interesting Things during the Teaching Practicum Program**

Students spotted different kinds of interesting problems, or mainly problems, in some areas, they are the uneven distribution of pre-service teachers' place for practicum and the different lesson plan formats. These two things get their attention. Ara discussed the first issue by saying:

*“Komplain sekolah terhadap kampus adalah mengenai penempatan mahasiswa ... sedangkan sekolah itu sudah bosan dengan prodi bahasa Arab dan bahasa Inggris, pengennya prodi yang lain ... kampusnya membaginya kurang rata” (Ara)*  
*(School's complain on campus was about the students placement at schools ... in fact that school had enough with students from Arabic and English education department, they want to have students from other departments ... the campus did not distribute the students evenly. )*

On the other hand, Olive and Lisna paid attention to the second thing, as they portrayed:

*“Di kampus tuh RPP begini, disana guru pamong dan dosen pembimbing beda.”*  
*(Olive)*  
*(At campus, the format of the lesson plan is in a certain format, at school, the teacher showed a different format and the lecturer also used a different format of the lesson plan.)*

*“Kita biasanya buat sesuai guru pamong.” (Lisna)*  
*(We normally made the lesson plan according to the format from the teacher.)*

The format of the lesson plan was finally taken from the teachers at school. This fact shows that teachers at school should be up to date as they become examples for pre-service teachers. If the teachers are left behind, in some aspects, they will teach wrong or inappropriate examples.

Talking about the headmasters, students were of the opinion that the headmasters at their teaching practicum places are nice. They had good impression on the headmaster welcoming them. Olive, Lisna, and Ara described what they feel. Lisna and Olive a little bit doubt on commenting the headmasters, except they told me that the headmasters are kindhearted. Olive and Lisna said that the headmasters were rarely seen at school:

*“Kepala sekolahnya jarang ke sekolah.” (Olive, Lisna)*  
*(The headmaster rarely came to school.)*

*“Dateng pagi, belum siang sudah pulang. Ngga sempet ngobrol banyak.” (Lisna)*

*(He came early in the morning, but not long time at school, he went off. We did not have chances to talk.)*

Ara, on the other hand, thinks that the headmaster was very kind. She often met the headmaster as the pre-service teachers at this school were asked to submit the lesson plans they had made. Here is what Ara experienced, contrasting Olive and Lisna's experiences:

*“Nggak, saya sering. Kan RPP harus ditandatangani kepala sekolah. ... Satu hari sebelum mengajar RPP harus sudah selesai. Jadi sering ketemu sama Pak Kepala Sekolahnya, sering dikasih motivasi.” (Ara)*  
*(No, I often see him. In fact, the lesson plan should be signed by the headmaster....A day before teaching, the lesson plan should have already made. So, I often met the headmaster, he motivated me.)*

Responding to Ara's explanation, Lisna talked about her experience with the vice headmaster as he often reminded the pre-service teachers when they did not do their jobs. For example:

*“Kalau jam 7 belum ada yang piket, sama wakasek dimarahin, ditelepon.” (Lisna)*  
*(If the clock said 7 o'clock in the morning, the vice of headmaster would be angry, he even would phone us.)*

At this point, the role of a headmaster is crucial in the formation of pre-service teachers' characters. Showing good examples by meeting the pre-service teachers will leave good impression while showing bad examples by rarely meeting the pre-service teachers may leave two different impressions; the headmaster is kind or the headmaster seems to be do not care with the presence of pre-service teachers at teaching practicum program. The second one is not expected, of course.

The teachers have their own place in the pre-service teachers' hearts as different teachers behaved differently. Most teachers felt happy with the presence of the pre-service teachers as pre-service teachers, in this case, would be able to help the teachers in doing their jobs. In fact, many teachers let the pre-service teachers entered the class without supervising the pre-service teachers. Lisna described her experience as follow:

*“Waktu saya nggak pernah memantau. Kalau saya ngajar ya dibiarkan aja masuk. Kata beliau udah lah, kan udah bisa dihandle.” (Lisna)*  
*(In my practicum time, he never observed me teaching. When my schedule to teach came, he would just let me go to the class. He said: “go on, you can handle the class, can't you?”)*

Olive had unique experience, as she replaced the job of the teacher after a-month supervision. The teacher was pregnant, and after one month supervising Olive, she took a maternity leave. Here is what Olive said:

*“Satu bulan masih ada bimbingan, itu juga ngga di kelas. Dua bulannya, cuti hamil. Malah saya ngelanjuin ngegantiin satu bulan setengah.” (Olive)*  
*(In the first month, she guided me, though it was not at class. The next two months, she took a maternity leave. In fact, I replaced her while she was absent for the next one and a half month.)*

It seems to me that school felt helped by the presence of pre-service teachers doing teaching practicum at school. Despite the fact that pre-service teachers are immature to handle the students, they were, in Olive’s case, trusted to handle students in some classes. The benefits can be taken from the two sides. The first, the school was assisted by the pre-service teacher’s existence, and the second, the pre-service teachers can get more time to practice their teaching and to learn more. This is good for school and pre-service teachers.

At the case with their friends, the pre-service teachers expressed their opinion by telling that some of them had problems with their friends. The main problem, in this case, was pre-service teachers’ discipline. Some of them did not do their jobs well, in relation to the activities that had been scheduled. Olive described her experience:

*“Paling masalah piket, jarang masuk apalagi yang cowok.” (Olive)*  
*(It’s all about the receptionist shift, my friends rarely came, mainly the boys.)*

Different with Olive, Ara thinks that her friends were very cooperative that they did their jobs with good discipline.

*“Rajin-rajin. Di saya mah setiap hari dijadwal.” (Ara)*  
*(My friends were diligent. At the school, the schedule was for everyday.)*

Talking about problems with themselves, the pre-service teachers in this study did not tell anything about it. They felt confident or perhaps too shy to admit their problems. In fact, the participant said that they did not have any problems from inside of themselves. This finding is not the same with the result of Riesky’s study (2013). In her study, the pre-service teachers found some problems related to themselves.

Other things they spotted were that the students, in the pre-service teachers’ experience, did not want to study seriously. The students just wanted to come and play without a clear purpose for learning at school. This is, of course, something that should

become our concern as the respondents in this study found that high school students, many of them, are not serious in attending schools. Or perhaps, they were too bored with the way the their teachers or pre-service teachers taught them.

*“Anak-anaknya mintanya mainan terus. Games Bu, games.” (Lisna)*  
*(The students asked to play games anytime. Ma’am, games!)*

*“Kalau 1 jam nggak usah masuk lagi Bu..kaya Bu N\*\*\* \*.” (Lisna)*  
*(If the time is only one session, you don’t need to come Ma’am, just like Ms. N\*\*\*\*.)*

The next thing spotted by Ara, and also agreed by all respondents, was that the fact that they were always compared to pre-service teachers from different campus. This can results to two ways; the first is that the pre-service teachers would feel down and do their jobs not seriously, or the second is that they will do their best as they do not want to be left behind. The second one is the expected outcome of such comparison. However, campus should be alert with such “competition,” that it should benefit in positive ways. Ara sharply said that:

*“Kita tuh dibanding-bandingin.” (Ara)*  
*(We were often compared (with pre-service teachers from another campus).)*

Another interesting problem is discipline in a private school. It was found out that in a school, the discipline is low. Olive described her experience:

*“Kalau disana kan masuk tuh jam 12.40. Kalau saya mau masuk, anak-anaknya nggak ada, walaupun saya masuk jam 13, anak-anaknya bilang: Bu, kalau ke sekolah jangan cepet-cepet Bu. Nanti masuk jam 13.15 sedangkan harus selesai jam 14.”*  
*(Olive)*

*(At the school, the class started at 12.40. If I wanted to come to the class, the students were not there, if I came at 13, the students said: Ma’am, don’t come to the school too early. So, I came to the class at 13.15, in fact, the class should end at 14.)*

### **Useful Subjects during the Teaching Practicum**

The respondents mention some subjects they took on campus, from English skills and components to methods of TEFL and curriculum and material development when they were asked about useful subjects during the teaching practicum. Rofi, Olive, Ara, and Lisna expresses their ideas:

*“Iya, kaya listening, speaking, grammar.” (Rofi)*  
*(Yup, just like listening, speaking, grammar.)*

*“Method of Teaching, TEFL, Curriculum, Psikologi Pendidikan.” (Rofi, Olive, Ara, Lisna)  
(Method of Teaching, TEFL, Curriculum, Educational Psychology.)*

However, an interesting point was delivered by Lisna, telling that psycholinguistics subject was not delivered appropriately as she expected. The subject did not talk about the process of second language acquisition in which this is the most important discussion to be in the subject. Lisna expressed her disappointment:

*“Psycholinguistics membahas language dari otak kanan, otak kiri, terus dyslexia.”  
(Lisna)  
(Psycholinguistics discussed language from the aspects of right brain, left brain, and dyslexia.)*

In this case, it seems to me that the lecturer did not prepare the course very well, as the lecturer failed to meet pre-service teachers' expectation in the study. In fact, need analysis is a very crucial component in preparing a subject. What students' needs should be the materials in the subject.

### **Fruitless Subjects in the Teaching Practicum**

It is interesting to note that some subjects in their study on campus do not directly useful during the teaching practicum program. These subjects are from the institution level, those form identity of graduates from the institution. As the students learn at an Islamic institute, there are some subjects that are used to understand Islam, and these subjects are not directly useful in the teaching practicum program. Nevertheless, the subjects are regarded beneficial to form the students' characters as Muslims.

Different with other respondents that claimed that Islamic subjects were not useful, Olive felt that the subjects about Islam were beneficial for her. She replaced absent teachers and taught the subjects about Islamic education. She said that:

*“Ketika harus ngegantiin..sering..tiga kali kayaknya. PAI pernah, matematika pernah.” (Olive)  
(When I had to replace absent teachers..often..three times, as I remember. Islamic education subject, also mathematics.)*

Beneficial or not, subjects taken at campus are beneficial in different context. Those subjects, in which discuss Islamic education, can from, shape, and mold pre-service teachers' characteristics. Religious teacher and teaching is in fact needed in nowadays

education at school (Chodijah, 2013). Teaching any subjects in Indonesia should include moral and religious teachings, although the second is still debatable (Chodijah, 2013). In fact, religious teaching is important to mold and shape students with “religious beliefs and practices” (Ornstein, Levine, Gutek, & Vocke, 2011: 88).

### **Subjects Needed For Teaching Practicum**

Some subjects are needed to strengthen the students’ readiness in facing the teaching practicum program. Information technology, current issues in psychology (for understanding students), current curriculum, and library science are four subjects that, in the students’ minds, are necessary for them in their teaching lives.

*“Kayaknya mengetahui karakteristik anak, pendekatan sama anak.” (Lisna)  
(I think to know and understand the students’ characteristics, how to approach students.)*

Lisna, added one more subject that should be mastered by pre-service teachers. Information technology was very important as she was obliged to teach IT. She said that:

*“Kalau Sabtu wajib ngajar TIK.” (Lisna)  
(On Saturday, it is a mandatory to teach IT.)*

Rofi, added one more subject to be studied at campus. Library science is a subject that she found out to be needed at school. Schools have libraries, but many of them did not function properly. She replied about this enthusiastically:

*“Perpustakaan!” (Rofi)  
(Library science!)*

So here we can see that some subject should be considered to be included in the curriculum of English language education department. These subjects are needed by pre-service teachers in the real lives as real teachers. The inclusion of these subjects should be regarded on the basis of the pre-service teachers’ need.

## Gaps between School and Campus

Gaps identified by pre-service teachers are in terms of insufficient practical preparation process in campus. Some subjects are identified to be needed by them. The subjects, as have been identified in the previous section, are information technology in language teaching, current issues in psychology, current curriculum, and library science.

Cooperation and collaboration between campus and school should also be intensified, as teaching practicum involves the two sides. Campus cannot do teaching practicum without the cooperation with school as the “owner” of the real situation of the teaching and learning process at formal school. In reality, pre-service teachers felt that what they had at campus did not provide real descriptions on what actually happened at school. Olive explained this by saying:

*“Teori dan Praktek. Ketika dikampus teori seperti ini, ketika praktek kelabakan. Ternyata tidak terduga. Misalnya menghandle anak.” (Olive)*  
*(Theory and practice. At campus, the theory said this, in practice I was confused. Unexpected facts. For instance, how to handle the students. )*

Lisna added her comments on what she experienced at school:

*“RPP nggak harus detail. Misalnya, mengabsen kan nggak usah, kita kan sudah tahu yang nggak berangkat siapa aja, bisa lihat agenda.” (Lisna)*  
*(The lesson plan should not be detail. For example, calling out students’ names for checking students’ presence is not necessary, we know which students present or absent, just see the class agenda book. )*

What I learned from these comments is that campus should learn more from schools. What campus had in the past might have changed. So, campus needs to update the knowledge of anything related to the real conditions at school.

## Suggestions in Relation to the Gaps that Pre-Service Teachers Had Identified

Suggestions came up was about the length of the teaching practicum and the preparation towards it. Olive asserted that:

*“Perbanyak microteaching. Pas PPL I cuma dua hari.” (Olive)*  
*(Provide more time for microteaching sessions. I just had two days for it. )*

What I learn from this is that the preparation should be longer than the real action. Pre-service teachers should be prepared well before they go into the teaching practicum

program. The teaching practicum may be not as long as three months, as it possibly will hinder the real teachers' programs.

### **Has Campus Provided Everything which Students Need as a Teacher?**

Most students think that campus has already provided anything that they need for being teachers. They think that, when they have problems in their teaching practicum, it is about how they can use and apply the knowledge they got from campus. In this sense, the maturity is a possible cause on what makes the pre-service teachers fail to incorporate their knowledge into practice.

Olive, Ara, and Lisna felt confused when they were asked to identify whether or not campus has already provided everything they need as teachers.

*“Kalau kompli kayaknya belum.” (Olive, Lisna)  
(I don't think so.)*

*“Apa ya, bingung.” (Olive)  
(I don't know; I get confused.)*

Rofi, on the other hand, identified that what they need had been explained when they talked about subject needed and gaps between school and campus. So, again, the preparation should be perfect to make pre-service teachers feel more confident in going through teaching practicum program.

### **Notes on the Teaching Practicum Program**

Closing the interview, the respondents in this study paid attention to the length of the teaching practicum program, the pre-service teachers' distribution to schools, and the feeling after experiencing teaching practicum. Lisna describes her feeling:

*“Enak sih, buat latihan yang tiga bulan itu, kan saya belum pernah ngajar. Tapi berangkat jam 5.30, jam 5, capek badannya. Pulang jam 4 jam 5 sore, kalau ngajar English club. Malamnya buat RPP, nyiapin materi. Guru sungguhnya sih nggak gitu-gitu amat. Kalau ada perlu-perlu, tugas aja. Ngasih tugas tapi nggak diperiksa.” (Lisna)  
(It's nice, for the three month practicing, since I've never taught before. However, leaving home at 5.30 or 5 in the morning, I felt tired. Going home at 4 or 5 p.m, if I taught English club. In the evening, I should make the lesson plan, prepare the materials. The real teachers don't do things like that seriously. If they had things to do, just gave the students assignments. Giving assignments without checking them.)*

Lisna's response is very interesting that she tried to open my eyes that the real teachers did her jobs not seriously. She talked about a big weakness of real teachers, that they were not as serious as they were in the beginning of their teaching career. They neglected their jobs without feeling guilty. Being questioned about what of teacher she would like to be; a real teacher or just a pre-service teacher, she said:

*“Pengen jadi guru PPL, tapi digaji.” (Lisna)*  
*(I want to be pre-service teachers, but paid.)*

Rofi and Olive paid attention to different thing. They thought that the duration of teaching practicum was too long. They said that:

*“PPL-nya tiga bulan kelamaan. Mungkin satu bulan cukup” (Rofi)*  
*(Three-month teaching practicum was too long. Perhaps a month will be enough.)*

*“Mungkin tiga bulan kelamaan. Apa mungkin karena saya empat bulan sendiri ya?” (Olive)*  
*(Perhaps three months are too long. Or perhaps because I did it in four months?)*

However, Lisna disagree with Olive and Rofi's statements. It seems to me that Lisna enjoyed her stayed at the school very much. She said:

*“Nggak, nggak terasa kok.” (Lisna)*  
*(Not really, I didn't realize it had passed as that long.)*

Olive talked about the pre-service teachers' distribution that it should regard the distance between schools and the pre-service teachers' current residence. She said that:

*“Penyebaran sekolahnya kalau bisa disesuaikan dengan jarak rumah. Kasihan yang dari ujung sana ke ujung situ. Ada yang dari Majalengka ke Japura.” (Olive)*  
*(The school distribution should be based on home distance to school. Too bad for students living in that side going to this side. I had a friend from Majalengka taught at Japura (about 30 to 40 kms))*

Closing the interview, Ara wrapped up her talk by saying about her feeling after joining teaching practicum program. She said that:

*“Kesannya enak. ... Ilmu-ilmu dari PPL bisa bermanfaat untuk kedepannya.” (Ara)*  
*(I think it was nice... Our experience from teaching practicum can be beneficial in the future.)*

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

To sum up, I think I can see the gaps between school and campus. The first thing I notice is that campus should learn from schools about the current conditions of students at school. The next thing I notice is that Saukah's (2009) idea on standardizing English language education department is really an important and urgent. The third thing is that

campus should be serious in preparing the future teachers by providing subjects they need and eliminate the burdens that pre-service teachers have from unimportant subjects. By doing this, what Rukmini (2009) found, that is the low quality of English teacher, will not be met again. The fourth is that teaching practicum is a fun activity because pre-service teachers learned many things as real teachers that this program should not be dropped from the curriculum of English language education department. This is in line with the finding of my previous research (Nashruddin, 2010).

Suggestions I can deliver are related to the conclusion above. School and campus should work hand in hand so that the purposes of education can be reached. Preparing pre-service teachers as well prepared teachers is urgent in this era. There should be a simultaneous discussion in which both sides can listen to each other so that the two sides can have mutual understanding between them. For further research, I think more respondents are necessary to be added to enrich the data for portraying the real gaps between school and campus. Headmasters, teachers, and students at the schools where teaching practicum program are held can be potential sources of data for further follow up research.

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**Appendix:**

Interview guide: The questions raised in the interview with pre-service teachers in English version.

1. How did you **feel** when you did the teaching practicum program at school?
  - a. In the beginning? Why?
  - b. During the practicum? Why?
  - c. In the end? Why?
  - d. Overall? Why?
2. What benefits can you take from the teaching practicum program?
3. Did you spot interesting things (e.g. problems) during the teaching practicum program?
  - a. With campus?
  - b. With the headmaster?
  - c. With the teachers?
  - d. With your friends?
  - e. With yourself?
  - f. Other things?
4. What subjects, which you take at campus, are useful during the teaching practicum?
5. What subjects, which you take at campus, are not useful during the teaching practicum?
6. What subjects, which you did not take at campus, did you need for teaching practicum?
7. Do you see gaps between school and campus? In what aspects?
8. Do you have any suggestions in relation to those gaps?
9. Do you think campus has provided everything you need as a teacher? Please describe what you think about this.
10. Do you want to say anything about the teaching practicum program?