

EFL Teaching Practicum: Problems and Suggestions for Solutions

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ABSTRACT

Although studies on the teaching practicum experiences of pre-service English teachers have tried to identify some problems and offer solutions, research addressing the issue from the perspectives of all stakeholders by examining both the expectations of pre-service teachers and the potential problems they face in this process is rather limited. In this regard, as part of a larger project, this session aims to uncover prospective EFL teachers' expectations and problems during the practicum process based on the opinions of various stakeholders. 160 pre-service teachers studying in the final year of an English language teacher education program, 22 teacher educators and 39 English teachers supervising those teacher candidates during the practicum process participated in the study. Data came from two sources: reflective reports requested from all participants of the study in the fourth and eighth weeks of the 12-week practicum process and the focus group interviews conducted with five pre-service teachers, five university supervisors and five cooperating teachers. The analyses documented problems related to pre-service teachers, their teaching skills, classroom management, pupils, teaching procedures, and school context. Maximizing practice opportunities in quantity and quality and higher levels of communication and interaction among the stakeholders were the main suggestions as solutions to problems. These recommendations and some suggestions for future research will potentially increase the quality and effectiveness of the practicum process.

Keywords: EFL teacher education, EFL teaching practicum, Pre-service EFL teachers, Teaching practice