



Preservice English Language Teachers' Practicum Course Provision Practices: Diploma Teacher Preparation in Focus

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Abstract

This study aimed to look into the effectiveness of practicum course provision practices for preservice English language teachers. An evaluative qualitative case study design was employed. Document analysis and semi-structured interview methods were employed. The purposive sampling technique was used to choose five English language teacher educators, two administrative body teachers, and four mentor teachers from teaching practice schools, and the random sampling method was used to choose ten preservice teacher candidates. Thematic data analysis methods were applied in relation to each research question. The finding showed that practicum courses were prepared and taught in the mother tongue by non-English subject teachers in which candidates failed to apply in English subject teaching. Further, the candidates' school teaching practice was poorly implemented, as most candidates were assigned to work with non-English subject mentor teachers and didn't engage in reflective practice. Moreover, there was no supervisors' cooperation with mentors in guiding and mentoring teacher candidates during teaching practice. The English language department should take responsibility for preparing and teaching practicum courses in English and give attention to the teacher candidates' teaching practice implementation.

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of what teachers can do, what learners learn, and the education system in general depends on the way teacher candidates are prepared (Hull et al., 2015). Ethiopian primary school teacher education pays attention to preservice teachers' preparation in subject knowledge, teaching skills, and behaviours that enable them to perform tasks effectively (MoE, 2013). The practicum course

is an essential element in preservice English language teacher candidates' preparation (MoE, 2013). The course has a theoretical aspect that aims to develop how to teach knowledge and a practical part that engages candidates in experiential learning. The theory behind the course provision relies on social constructivist principles for preparing preservice teachers. Constructivists state that knowledge is constructed personally and

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socially by learners' active engagements (Biswas, 2018). The theory also recognises the theory-practice link in teacher preparation, which first develops candidates' knowledge about the course and then exposes them to school-based practice teaching and reflective practice (Beck & Kosnik, 2006). The practice aspect also led candidates to work under the joint guidance of school mentors and supervisors. Teague (2010) describes the constructivist view of learning to teach values through the social interaction of teacher candidates with teacher educators, peers, and mentors.

Preservice English language teacher candidates require theoretical and practical knowledge to be English language teachers (Chan, 2013). Practicum is one of the teacher preparation curriculum components to develop preservice English language teachers' teaching skills (Muzaffar et al., 2011). The course provision requires teaching theory and engaging candidates in practice learning. Sari (2021) asserts that effective practicum course provision involves the quality of both theory and practice of the course to ensure candidates' knowledge and teaching skills enhancement. Benedict et al. (2016) describes that practicum course contents (on-campus and field experiences) provide the knowledge and skills teacher candidates need to apply in their professional preparation. The effectiveness of the theoretical part addresses the knowledge of the course on how to teach subjects. Abdel Razeq (2022) describes that the theoretical knowledge of the practicum increases candidates' understanding of how to teach major areas in an authentic setting. Further, the medium of instruction used to prepare and teach practicum courses plays a major role in

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understanding and developing candidates' language and teaching skills. Absolor (2021) describes that the educational and practicum courses teaching preservice English language teachers expose candidates to improving the target language in authentic use. Dereje explains that preservice English language teachers' practicum courses are expected to construct candidates' teaching skills and language proficiency (Dereje, 2009). Kourieos and Diakou (2019) also explain that the practicum course teaching both in a college and school setting develops candidates' language proficiency and language teaching skills. Nguyen (2017) also asserts that the medium of instruction used to offer (prepare and teach) a practicum course in English teacher preparation supports professional career improvement. Her comparative study on English language teacher preparation in practicum courses where the instructor used more Arabic language in one class and more English medium of instruction in another class shows that the class where intensive Arabic language is used doesn't enhance candidates' fluency in speaking English, while the candidates where only English is used have better English proficiency. This implies that the target language used in practicum course provision has impacts on teacher candidates' knowledge and skill development. Similarly, Al Darwish (2017) describes that the target language use empowers candidates to put into practice the theories and principles they studied in the classroom.

The practice aspect of the practicum course empowers preservice English language teachers to put their skills into practice via educational activities like teacher candidates' interactions with peers, mentor teachers,

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supervisors, and students (Kazaz & Alagözlü, 2020). It enables candidates to learn how to teach through experiential learning in a classroom setting (Ulla, 2016). Furthermore, it enhances candidates' basic experiences, skills, strategies, and knowledge that will be used to start their teaching careers as teachers (Abdel Razeq, 2022; Gan, 2013). Besides, non-native English speaker teacher candidates get the opportunity to interact with students, mentors, and supervisors in practical aspects so that they improve their skills (Igawa, 2011). The roles and responsibilities teacher candidates play also enhance their proficiency and confidence in using the target language. Candidates' interaction with mentors and supervisors lets them cultivate their interaction and social skills in the English language. The use of target language during the theory sessions gives the knowledge that helps implement real-life teaching via target language. This encourages teacher candidates to ensure their teaching knowledge and expertise, which they need to establish during preservice preparation (Eğinli & Solhi, 2021). The candidates also share experiences with mentors, supervisors, and peers through target language use so that teacher candidates become capable of reflecting on their ideas and enhancing their efficacy (Chiang, 2008).

Moreover, the effectiveness of practical aspects of practicum course teaching is seen when the following activities are implemented: First, the teaching practice schools need to be selected with reasonable requirements that determine their implementation quality. For instance, teaching practice schools have to be selected carefully by the institution (Muzaffar et al., 2011). It is the teacher education providers who have to identify practice

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schools for their teacher candidates (Nel, n.d.) because they are responsible for deciding the qualifications candidates will earn. Nguyen (2017) states that practice schools are selected if they have well-trained and experienced mentors in the field of teacher candidates and resources to enable candidates to work effectively. The schools have to be closer to the teacher education college, where teacher candidates get access to observe best practices, participate in teaching experiences, and link their research to teaching (Nel, n.d.). Nel argues that schools have to be functional, constantly attempt to achieve their full potential, understand the roles they play in supporting candidates' development, and show commitment to meeting their roles. Moreover, schools should have to be selected if they have subject area mentors who guide and offer professional support to candidates' practice (Aglazor, 2017).

Besides, the criteria for selecting and assigning mentors in the schools have impacts on the effectiveness of the implementation of candidates' teaching practices. Literature indicates that teacher preparation institutions should identify mentor teachers who can define their role as mentors of candidates because mentors are required to offer quality experience that leads to better preparation (Korth et al., 2009). The selection criteria need to focus on their field's deep expertise, extensive experience, and planning that matches the candidates' subject area teaching, the grade level they will teach, and similar ideologies on teaching (Hobson et al., 2012). Besides, criteria need to check English language mentors' knowledge of the current education system, EFL curricula, how to teach in school, and expertise in subject areas to

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provide direction for teaching (Hudson, 2004). Hudson argues that mentors who have poor subject area knowledge and current trends in foreign language teaching methods can create a conflict between teacher candidates and themselves, let alone support teacher candidates in their teaching experiences. Delaney (2012) also points out that mentors should have interpersonal relationships with teacher candidates to mediate the emotional, social, and professional aspects of candidates' learning. According to Delaney, effective mentoring of language teachers requires understanding their role as mentors in the new language teacher education paradigm. Besides, the mentors need to have intense social interaction and the capability to negotiate for a variety of professional purposes with teacher candidates (Ambrosetti, 2010). The selection process needs to consider the educational needs of candidates and the personal and work relationships of mentors to help candidates in planning, coaching, and evaluating candidates, and to manage and ensure the candidates get used to doing the same (Trskan, 2017). Further, mentors have to have at least three years of teaching experience from accredited public schools, an approved teaching license in a similar discipline area, and the recommendation of principals in all domains of teaching roles (Lawrence & Johnson, 2022).

Furthermore, the ongoing reflective practice of teacher candidates in their teaching practice is another indicator of effective implementation (Muzaffar et al., 2011). Murdoch (1994) points out that candidates should make as many reflections as possible while their teaching practice is ongoing through seminars, workshops, and discussions to improve their classroom practice. Nguyen

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(2017) also asserts that reflection during candidates' teaching practice allows preservice English language teachers to receive timely feedback on teaching performance and drawbacks from colleagues, supervisors, and school mentors. Nguyen (2017) clarifies that reflective practice helps teacher candidates to change their teaching behaviour since it provides candidates with opportunities to discuss and share experiences with mentors, supervisors, and peers.

However, although mentoring is an important aspect of early professional teacher preparation, mentors' selection and assignment during teaching practice pose some challenges. First, mentors' selection does not rely on relevant criteria (Genc, 2016). Mentors also complain that mentors' selection criteria are not fair and the principals show favouritism to some mentors in the selection process (Bulunuz et al., 2014). The view that any practitioner or teacher can serve as a mentor to preservice teacher candidates in transmitting skills and knowledge is one challenge to choosing and assigning effective mentors (Genc, 2016). The mismatches between teacher candidates' knowledge and mentors' comments during teaching practice are the other major challenges (Hudson et al., 2008). Moreover, the poorly filed related knowledge and experience of the assignment of supervisors (AL-Mekhlafi, 2010) affects the effective mentoring of candidates because supervisors are keen on developing candidates' experience and providing constructive feedback and effective communication skills. In line with this, Nguyen (2017) states that supervisors should know the field, be aware of the current theory, have teaching experience related to the candidate's field, and work with

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mentor teachers. Furthermore, a poor way of identifying and assigning supervisors and mentors who share target language skills, experience, and recent language teaching methodology knowledge is another challenge (Merc, 2010).

Moreover, poor cooperation and collaboration between supervisors and mentor teachers are the other factors affecting the effective implementation of teacher candidates' teaching practices. Hudson and Nguyen (2009) point out that effective cooperation and collaboration of supervisors to mentor teachers and mentor teachers with teacher candidates are crucial elements of teacher candidates' teaching practice. The supervisors and mentors must have a common understanding of how the candidates' teaching practice is operated (Muzaffar et al., 2011). This involves the great care taken by mentors and supervisors in planning, organising, and coordinating the overall process of teaching practices for the candidates (Genc, 2016). Close cooperation and understanding of supervisors and mentors with teacher candidates by observing teaching sessions, providing ongoing feedback, and engaging candidates in reflective practice (Cogshall et al., 2012) enhance effective implementation of teaching practice. Furthermore, Endeley (2014) states that supervisors are expected to organise and conduct meetings and conversations with mentor teachers, teacher candidates, and concerned school teachers during candidates' teaching practice.

Nekemte Teacher Education College in Oromia is the study area where practicum courses are offered for four

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semesters in three years to preservice English teacher candidates with different focus areas to ensure candidates' fitness in teaching English to their levels (Practicum IV, 2019). Though preservice primary school English language teachers are offered subject areas, common courses, and practicum courses, it is observed that the graduate English language teacher candidates have shown poor performance in their teaching skills (Tesfa, 2014). Sulistiyo, Wiryotinoyo, and Wulan (2019) mention that candidates' ineffectiveness can be attributed to admitting poor English background candidates and assigning poor college English language instructors, while Zein states the cause can be a poor preservice teacher education system (Zein, 2015).

Temesgen's (2017) study shows that teachers' ineffectiveness in their teaching is due to candidates' poor understanding of language teaching methods and teaching practice courses during teacher preparation. Dereje (2012) also reflects that the inadequacy of teachers' teaching skills emanates from the inadequacy of the curriculum offered for teacher preparation. According to Dereje, one of the causes of teachers' ineffectiveness in their teaching skills is the poor practicum course offering practice during English language teacher preparation. The aforementioned studies didn't stick to assessing the effectiveness of practicum courses offered to preservice English language teachers to identify the cause of the ineffectiveness of graduate English language teachers' teaching skills. The current study provides insights to teacher education providers on how the overall practicum course offered to preservice English language

teachers should be prepared, taught, and organised to play a crucial role in teacher candidates' preparation. Furthermore, it reminds us to emphasise teacher candidates' teaching practice implementation prior to qualifying them for the teaching profession. This study also informs the roles supervisors and mentors should play in guiding and supporting teacher candidates during teaching practices.

As this study focused on the effectiveness of practicum courses for preservice English language teachers' competency development, it opted to answer the next basic questions.

1. *How effective are the practicum course preparation and course teaching session practices in developing preservice English language candidates' teaching skills?*
2. *To what extent is the teaching practice aspect of the practicum course effectively implemented by preservice English language teachers?*

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Participants Selection

The case is an entity or a phenomenon with defined boundaries that the researcher studied (Merriam, 1998). The case in this study is the effectiveness of practicum course provision practices for primary-level English language teachers' preparation. Participant selection in a case study refers to specifying contexts and units of analysis for the study. The site of study, Nekemte Teachers' Education College in Oromia, was chosen for some reasons. The college was serving as the first-generation college's satellite before becoming an

independent college so that it had the culture of the first and second generations in preparing teachers. Research on the graduates' competency in the college showed that most graduate candidates who completed course work had poor teaching skills. The number of graduate candidates who passed the certification of competency exam every year was declining. The participants in the case study are entities that form the case (Gerring & Cojocar, 2016): English teacher educators, mentors, and English language teacher candidates. The researcher chose five teacher educators and six mentors, three from two different schools, purposefully, and ten English teacher candidates randomly based on relationship selection methods for interviews (Gentles et al., 2015).

Instruments

This study used document analysis, interview and observation methods to collect data. The document involved reviewing the course module offered to teacher candidates to see the relevance of course preparation and teaching to prepare the candidates. Semi structured interview guide questions were devised based on a review of the literature (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger, 2020) to get insights of teacher educators, mentors and teacher trainees' reflections on the courses' provision practice effectiveness. The observation was used to watch the cooperation and coordination of mentors, supervisors and teacher candidates during the teaching practice program.

Procedure

The researcher collected the practicum course module and reviewed it thoroughly to see the relevance of the course preparation. Then, the researcher observed two schools where English teacher candidates were assigned for teaching

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practice. The observation involved watching mentors' supervision in classroom teaching practices and mentors and supervisors' cooperation to guide and support candidates. Furthermore, an interview was conducted with English mentor teachers, supervisors, and teacher candidates consecutively in their free time. The data co-collector recorded the interview on a mobile phone while the researcher took field notes simultaneously during each interview context.

Methods of Data Analysis

The researcher reread and discussed the document data in line with the research question theme. The researchers used the (Braun & Clarke, 2006) thematic data analysis method for analysing the intelligently transcribed interview data. The intelligent transcription method helped the researcher become familiar with and immerse themselves in the content of the data and group similar segments of transcribed data. Then he formed themes from similar segments. Next, the researcher reviewed the themes and grouped common themes in line with the research questions. Finally, the researcher discussed document data, interviewed data, and observed data using the narrative method to report on candidates' practice teaching. The narrative method in a qualitative study is used to explain human experiences, actions, happenings, events, and other data elements that occur in a particular setting independently or in complement to other data themes (Kim, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

A practicum course has been offered to help preservice English language teachers get real-world experience in teaching English and

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knowledge about the complexity of current classroom practices. The course has a theoretical part, which is offered in classroom teaching, and field practice, in which the candidates practice exercise teaching in the school context. This part assessed the relevance of course preparation and teaching sessions and the implementation of teaching practice to ensure candidates' deep learning in the teacher preparation programmes.

Practicum Course Preparation

Preservice language teacher preparation is a combination of theory and practice activities through which teacher candidates learn to develop interwoven language skills and teaching experiences. This is learned in course sessions and acquired through experience to become a professional teacher. A practicum course is prepared and offered as an essential element of preservice English language teachers' preparation. The theoretical and practical components of the course are intended to develop candidates' teaching knowledge and skills by doing.

A review of the Practicum IV (2019) course module demonstrates that all practicum courses are prepared in a local language, although the candidates are prepared to teach English. The review also showed that it is stated in the module that the course gives guidance in local language on how to write a report on observation, develop a portfolio, do action research, and make reflections. Furthermore, interviews with English language teacher educators on how the practicum courses were prepared showed that the practicum courses were prepared in local language to meet preservice English language teachers' professional needs and English language skill development. For instance,

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College Teacher Educator 1 (CT1) displayed that practicum courses are prepared in a local language with non-English language teacher educators to give to preservice English language teacher candidates, whereby the candidates receive little benefit from their knowledge of subject teaching skills. Besides, College teacher educator two (CT2) asserted that practicum course preparation lacks relevance to English language teacher candidates' professional development because all activities of the course are designed in a local language by non-language teachers. CT4 and CT5 also explained that practicum course preparation didn't help English language teacher candidates' professional preparation as the courses are designed in a local language by non-English subject teachers, which means candidates miss language skill improvement and English teaching skills.

Practicum Course Teaching Sessions

This section focuses on assessing how the practicum course is taught in English language teacher candidates' sessions. A review of the Practicum IV course module (2019) showed that the practicum course taught preservice English language teacher candidates has shortcomings. For instance, the review of the same course module depicts that the practicum course module suggests a framework in the local language that English language teacher candidates would follow when they do activities with mentor teachers at schools. The course activities—portfolio writing, action research procedures, and school observation reports—are directed to be done in the local language. Besides, the English language teacher educators' interviews showed that the practicum course was taught in the local

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language by non-English subject teachers. This implied that the role the English language played in practicum course learning and teaching activities was replaced with the local language in preservice English language teacher candidates' preparation for teaching English.

Teaching Practice Implementation

Teaching practice is the practical aspect of the practicum course that teacher candidates perform as part of teacher preparation courses. Effective teaching practice implementation is the extent to which candidates are engaged in practice time properly to bring about the desired development in their teaching skills. The data on assessing practice implementation effectiveness involve how the practice schools identify, mentor teachers' assignments, and how often reflective practices are put into practice. The assessment also addressed the existence of supervisors and mentors' cooperation to guide and support teacher candidates during teaching practice.

Teaching Practice School Selection

This data showed the analysis of the requirements used to choose a suitable practice school for the candidates' exercise. The interview of English language teacher educators on what criteria are used to sort teaching practice schools showed that there were no reasonable criteria to select schools for candidates' practice places. For instance, three of five English language teacher educators mentioned the willingness of school directors to choose internship schools and place candidates for teaching practice. They also reported that the college randomly

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assigned and sent candidates' to the teaching practice schools. Similarly, the vice dean reflected that there are no criteria for choosing practice schools where candidates do teaching practice. He also added that the college requested the school directors' willingness, whether they were okay or not, to admit candidates. Furthermore, he described how the college randomly assigned the candidates to schools found in the countryside or around the town. Moreover, the college's practicum coordinator displayed that internship schools are selected based on the proximity they have to the college. The supervisors need time to supervise candidates from nearby school areas and do normal classes. The afore-mentioned ideas showed that the teaching practice schools of candidates were identified based on school directors' wiliness and the proximity of the schools to the supervisors' teaching areas.

Mentors' Selection and Assignment

This section presents the requirements used to identify mentor-to-English language teacher candidates' mentoring during teaching practice. It was seen that there were no relevant criteria for assigning mentors. Teacher educators' interviews showed that there were no specific criteria for identifying and assigning mentors to teacher candidates. For example, college teacher educator one (CT1) described that the directors have the authority to sort and assign mentors to teacher candidates' teaching practices. The CT2 mentioned that the school's director or practicum coordinator determines the effectiveness of mentors who support teacher candidates' teaching practice. He also explained that most candidates are assigned

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non-English mentors. In addition, the CT3 explained that there are no specific criteria to identify mentors who work with candidates during teaching practice. Although directors assign mentors, many mentors are reluctant to follow and support candidates and cooperate with supervisors. Besides, he mentioned that subject-area mentors are rarely assigned to candidates' support.

Furthermore, CT4 describes that there are no specific criteria for selecting mentors who support candidates. He mentioned that many mentors are assigned randomly and are non-English subject teachers. Besides, the college assigns non-subject area supervisors who guide, follow, and assess candidates' teaching practice. CT5 also asserted that most candidates are assigned to work with non-English subject supervisors. Since various field teacher candidates are assigned to the same school, any field supervisor is assigned to supervise all candidates regardless of their discipline area.

On top of that, the vice dean reflection showed that the college has no mandate to select and assign mentors. Besides, the college practicum coordinator described that there are no criteria the college uses to identify and assign mentors during teaching practice. He also mentioned that the schools assign any mentor who teaches that grade level as a mentor to teacher candidates.

Furthermore, an interview of mentors on how they are selected to guide and supervise demonstrates that there are gaps in mentors' assignments to English language teacher candidates' support. The criteria were not relevant. For instance, Gute School mentor teacher one (G1) displayed that many English teacher candidates' mentors are other field

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teachers. G2 also mentioned that mentors' selection and assignment to candidates' profession support criteria were not appropriate. Diga Kolobo school mentors (D2 and D3) reacted by saying that most candidates are assigned to work with non-English subject mentors.

Candidates' Reflective Practice

Reflection is one element of teaching practice in the study area of college. English language teacher educators' interview whether the teacher candidates make reflections on their teaching practice or not indicated that candidates didn't make reflection practices to get ongoing feedback and improve their teaching practices. For instance, CT1 reacted by saying that candidates didn't practice reflection during their teaching practice. However, he mentioned that candidates make reflections only once to their individual supervisor as a means of evaluating candidates after completing teaching practice.

Besides, CT2 reflected that candidate had no reflection practices during the teaching practice time. But candidates make reflections to their college supervisors in local language on their teaching practice after completing the program. CT2 pressed that if candidates encounter serious problems in their teaching practice, they can't get immediate feedback and support to improve their work. Moreover, CT3 revealed that candidates conducted teaching practice in English, but they reflected on their teaching practice in the local language. Besides, CT4 described that despite the fact that the candidates are English major teachers, they conduct reflections in the local language. CT5 also explained that there was no reflective

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practice of candidates in the meantime of teaching practice. In addition, the college vice dean and practicum coordinator explained that there were no reflection practices during candidates' teaching practice. They also asserted that candidates reflected only once to their supervisors individually after the teaching practice programme was completed. Furthermore, teacher candidates reacted that they made a reflection in local language on their teaching practice at the end of the programme with their college supervisors, despite the fact that they were preparing to be English teachers. The above reflections showed that teacher candidates didn't have reflective practice as a part of their' teaching practice to get ongoing and timely feedback.

Supervisors' and Mentors' Cooperation

Mentoring is a method by which teacher candidates are guided, supervised, and supported by joint supervisors and mentors during teaching practice. The two experts' guidance engages candidates in school work so that candidates get feedback to improve their practice. Effective mentoring is conducted through cooperation between supervisors and mentors and with teacher candidates during teaching practices.

The interviews of teacher educators demonstrated that there was no cooperation between supervisors and mentors while they gave feedback and assessed candidates' teaching practices. For instance, CT3 asserted that supervisors do not work jointly with school mentors. He claimed that mentors are not willing to cooperate with supervisors at work. He also explained that supervisors didn't cooperate with school mentors. CT2 asserts

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that supervisors don't join and discuss with school mentors how to support and give feedback because they have very little time to stay in the school and mentors are not usually available around mentees' classes. Moreover, the dean also reacted by saying that supervisors and school mentors didn't work together to guide and give feedback during teacher candidates' teaching practice. The practicum coordinator explained that the "practicum rule says supervisors and school mentors should work collaboratively with the teacher candidates," but they evaluate and give feedback individually. Besides, candidates also explained that they didn't see when supervisors and mentors worked together to support them.

Furthermore, Gute School mentor two (G2) asserted that supervisors explain they don't have time to stay in the school so that they could discuss with school mentors. Furthermore, teacher candidates (T6, T2, and T5) reacted by saying that they didn't see when supervisors and mentors came together during their teaching practice. T2 stressed, "I saw my supervisor only one day when he evaluated my teaching practice".

The observation at two different schools showed that the supervisors and mentors were not working together on guiding and supporting candidates in their teaching practice. For example, observation over four days indicated that there was rare common supervision and guidance from supervisors and mentors because the researcher saw only one supervisor who came to evaluate candidates' teaching practice. It was observed that the supervisor didn't consult and discuss with mentors. This is similar to what CT1 asserted, saying that mentors and supervisors do not

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work commonly on supporting candidates' teaching practice. This implies that there was no cooperation from school mentors and supervisors to work with teacher candidates during teaching practice, so candidates had different feedback from the experts during teaching practice. Besides, the emphasis given to the teaching practices of the candidate was weak.

DISCUSSIONS

Discussion presents the findings obtained from the study. The study focused on assessing the effectiveness of a practicum course offering practices to develop preservice English language teacher candidates' professional knowledge and teaching skills. The assessment involved analysing course preparation, course teaching, and teaching practice implementation.

The data on practicum course preparation and teaching effectiveness showed that the course was prepared and taught in the local language by non-English subject teachers. This affects preservice English language teacher candidates' competency in teaching English. The document data and interview reflection indicated that the English major teacher candidates' preparation courses were prepared and taught in local language by non-English subject teacher educators, whereby the course provision doesn't support candidates' language knowledge and language teaching skills development. This indicated practicum course teaching isolated teacher candidates' learning teaching skills from learning English language during teacher preparation. This contradicts what Nguyen (2017) describes: that the medium of instruction in which practicum

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courses are offered should support teacher candidates' language development. Her comparative study between English language teacher educators who used more Arabic language in one class and more English medium of instruction in a practicum course on preservice English language teacher preparation shows that candidates from the intensive Arabic language class can't speak English fluently while the other class candidates show better performance in English skills. Byrnes (2009) also asserts that courses are designed for language teachers not only to prepare teachers for teaching but also to raise their language proficiency. Thus, preservice language teachers need to study their courses in the target language, and teacher educators should teach them in the target language (Merc, 2010). This indicates that using the first language of teacher candidates in practicum course preparation and teaching the preservice English language teachers' preparation at the college is one of the causes of teacher candidates' ineffectiveness in teaching English.

In addition, the findings on the requirements used to choose internship schools for teacher candidates indicated that there were no scientific and justifiable criteria for selecting schools for effective teaching practice implementation. The interview data showed that the teaching practice schools were identified based on the school directors' willingness and proximity of the schools to the supervisors.

This finding mismatches with what Nguyen (2017) states: teaching practice schools are identified if they have well-trained and experienced mentor teachers and resources that enable candidates to get effective

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mentoring practices. Besides, Nel (n.d.) describes that the proximity of teaching practice schools should enable teacher candidates to get access to observe best practices, participate in teaching experiences, and link their research to teaching.

Nel argues that schools should constantly function to ensure their learners achieve full potential, understand the role they play in supporting candidates' development, and show commitment to meeting their roles. Furthermore, Aglazor (2017) asserts that teaching practice schools are expected to allow candidates to get subject area mentors in their field and at similar grade levels.

The findings on the criteria used to select and assign mentor teachers to English language teacher candidates' support during teaching practice showed that there were no relevant criteria for identifying and assigning mentors. The interview data showed that many mentors were assigned by school directors to supervise and guide the candidates, yet they were non-English subject area teachers. For instance, English subject mentor teachers complained against non-subject area mentors' assignments by directors for teacher candidates' mentoring.

This finding is dissimilar from the fact that teacher education institutions should identify mentor teachers who can define their roles as mentors since this determines the quality of experiences candidates gain to have better preparation and academic performance as teachers (Korth et al., 2009). Nel (n.d.) also states that the teacher education institutions are responsible for identifying and assigning mentors to teacher candidates because the institutions decide the qualifications candidates earn at the end of graduation. Besides, mentors are selected and assigned

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because they master candidates' subject teaching methods, determine candidates' educational needs, establish good personal and work relationships with candidates, help candidates to plan, coach, and evaluate, provide feedback, manage and teach the same grade level, and ensure the candidates get preparation to do similar things (Trskan, 2017; Nguyen, 2017). Moreover, the supervisors are expected to carefully identify effective mentors who have experience, target language skills, and recent language teaching methodology knowledge (Merc, 2010). This showed that mentors' random assignments affect the knowledge and skills candidates should have gained in their field during teaching practice.

The finding on the implementation of reflective practice during candidates' teaching practice showed that candidates didn't make reflection practice to get on-going feedback while practicing teaching. The interview data indicated that candidates didn't reflect while they were conducting teaching practice to get timely feedback and improve their practices. This finding contradicts what Hyatt (2015) displays: that the social practice of the teaching profession is visualised through shared reflective practice held among supervisors, mentors, and teacher candidates. Murdoch (1994) also explains that candidates are expected to make as many reflections as possible during their teaching practice to develop their preparation quality and classroom practices. Further, Nguyen (2017) asserts that candidates' reflection allows preservice English language teachers to gain ongoing feedback on teaching and drawbacks from colleagues, supervisors, and school mentors. This showed that missing reflective

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practice during teaching practice affects candidates' preparation and teaching skills.

The findings about whether the supervisors and mentors cooperated to guide and supervise the candidates' teaching practice or not showed there was no collaborative work between the two experts to provide timely professional support. The interview data indicated that teacher candidates get feedback from the experts separately. Besides, the emphasis given to preservice English language teacher candidates' teaching practices was weak. This contradicts what Hudson and Nguyen (2009) point out: effective cooperation and collaboration of supervisors with mentor teachers and mentor teachers with preservice teacher candidates are crucial elements of teaching practice. Moreover, Coggshall et al. (2012) assert that candidates' effective teaching practice involves close cooperation and understanding of supervisors and mentors with teacher candidates in observing the teaching sessions, coaching, providing ongoing feedback, and engaging candidates' in reflective practice. Endeley (2014) also states that supervisors should conduct meetings and conversations with mentor teachers and teacher candidates during teaching practice. This showed that the lack of cooperation of supervisors and school mentors during candidates' practice teaching affected the effective implementation of candidates' teaching exercises.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the effectiveness of practicum course provision that involves course preparation and teaching and teaching practice implementation in preservice English

language teacher preparation. The findings showed that the course preparation and teaching operations lacked relevance to preparing preservice English major teachers since the course preparation and teaching isolated candidates' learning to teach from improving the target language. Furthermore, the teaching practice aspect of the course is poorly implemented since the candidates are assigned randomly to the school to conduct teaching practice. There was no field-based mentor assignment to give professionals support in preservice English language teacher preparation. Besides, there was no cooperation between college supervisors and school mentors in guiding and supervising candidates' teaching practices. Finally, there were no reflective practices that provided chances for candidates to learn and share experiences from different teacher preparation communities during their teaching practices. Thus, the practicum course preparation and teaching should be conducted in the target language and by English language teacher educators. Besides, there should be serious follow-up on preservice English language teacher candidates' teaching practice programmes.

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DECLARATION

There is no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All data were included in the article.

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