

ADAPTING TO DIVERSE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: STRATEGIES APPLIED BY STUDENTS PARTICIPATING THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUM PROGRAM IN THAILAND AND MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Teaching practice is very influential in improving the ability of student teachers. In the current era, many universities collaborate with foreign schools to conduct the International Teaching Practicum (ITP) program. ITP is the topic of this research to become a bridge for student teacher candidates to transfer and practice the knowledge they have acquired. This study aims to answer the question: "What are the obstacles experienced by Indonesian English pre-service teachers when conducting International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia, and what strategies are used to overcome the obstacles?" This research used qualitative methods with a case study design. In this study, we selected two teacher-training students at a private campus in Malang. These participants were selected because they had an International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia and were willing to participate in this study. We used semi-structured interviews and documents in the data collection and used holistic analysis methods in analyzing the data. The finding of this study is the obstacles experienced by student teachers. In this study, researchers divided two obstacles: Teaching Problems and Sociocultural Problems. In Teaching Problems, the researcher divides again into 2 parts, namely Pre-teaching (an obstacle that occurs before teaching) and During Teaching (an obstacle that occurs when teaching in class)

Keywords: Obstacles, Strategies, International Teaching Practicum

INTRODUCTION

Teaching practicum programs are essential to bridge the gap between what they have learned in the class and the reality of teaching practice in schools (Sulistiyo, 2017). Teachers are the key to the success of the nation's successors in building the country's future, especially English teachers, who can speak English, which is one of the factors needed to compete globally (Yunus, 2023). Many people consider English the key to getting a better job in today's era of globalization (Ubaidillah, 2018). Therefore, it is essential to provide learning for pre-service teachers by doing a teaching practicum because it can make them qualified. Undoubtedly, teachers are key to societal changes because they are delivery centers and quality of education. Qualified teachers are the biggest determinant of student achievement (Tuli & Educ, 2009). Cohen et al. (2013) explained that teaching practicum is the most influential component of pre-service teachers and is a rewarding, challenging, and motivating experience for them. A teaching practicum is a place to channel theory into a teaching practicum obtained from the learning in the Teacher Education Study Program (Dang, 2013). In teaching practicum activities, pre-service teachers are expected to solve problems and find solutions that occur where they teach, making pre-service teachers good and responsible teachers (Yunus, 2023). From some of the research results above, it can be proven that teaching practice must be done

before we become teachers officially. After participating in teaching Practicum, pre-service teachers must make a report on the results of their work (Sasaki, 2020). Improvements occur in the pre-service teachers in the field of religious studies after the teaching practicum is carried out, such as improving and developing the teaching and learning process in total, providing guidance and coaching in terms of curriculum implementation, selection and use of teaching methods, learning tools, teaching evaluation procedures and techniques (Syahputra, 2021) and improve the quality of learning and teacher quality (Lalupanda, 2019).

In several cases, many obstacles are faced when doing a teaching practicum. Obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers when doing a teaching practicum include learning materials or resources, classroom management, tools or teaching media, student English skills, Yunus and Ubaidillah (2021) such as being able to answer questions, summarize what has been read, identify the main idea in the text, and then teaching methods, electives language use, slow internet connectivity, student motivation, evaluation techniques, and parental support (Mudra, 2018), lack of information and communication technology (ICT) such as how to use technology such as laptops, computers, internet networks, language laboratories (Binod, 2015). The ways or strategies to overcome the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers during teaching practicum are through two types of mechanisms of support. The first is psychological support is having support from peers, mentors, and family members. The second is technical support is support from mentors who explain to students that they should call them 'teachers' instead of sisters (Prabjandee, 2019).

In the current era, many teaching practicums are carried out abroad, not only domestically. Several educational institutions participate in and support the International Teaching Practicum program, which aims to prepare pre-service teachers to teach in various conditions in the real world. According to Arterberry et al. (2020), the international internship program is part of the campus curriculum to which students will be assigned off-campus (International) and adapt to the local community according to the location where the student was assigned. This program is also very important for students' personal growth because they will adapt and interact with people from different backgrounds with different personalities, ethnicities, cultures, and lifestyles (Reskyani et al., 2023). International Teaching Practicum has many benefits for participants, such as increasing our awareness of culture, increasing a sense of unity in cultural diversity, and supporting other cultures (Sahin, 2008). International internship experience can enhance personal and professional development and improve pre-service teachers' teaching and pedagogical skills. The program has also helped promote global awareness by building a sense of unity in diversity, as experienced by the participants (Al Mardhiyyah, 2019). According to Kabilan, 2013 and Kabilan et al. (2020), the International Teaching Practicum offers opportunities for pre-service teachers to learn, work, and interact in a multicultural environment and context.

In addition to the benefits of an International Teaching Practicum, many obstacles occur, such as a lack of understanding. This can happen due to language differences, differences in mindset, cultural differences, and ways of learning. Being required to live abroad, communicate with people from various backgrounds, working in an unfamiliar environment where pre-service teachers are forced to adjust to their environment (Alfaro, 2008). The main challenges experienced by pre-service teachers who intern abroad are difficulty communicating, different working hours, differences in attitudes and behaviors, self-confidence, ability to cope with problems, and different environments (Vo et al., 2022). International Teaching Practicum can bring obstacles that can harm the psychological, emotional, and physical of pre-service teachers (Muluk et al., 2021). Pre-service teachers are relatively new to the world of teaching. Therefore, they are not aware of, are not fully prepared, and cannot face the complexity of obstacles in this profession (Long et al., 2012). Along with increasing global and intercultural competence through international teaching programs, a major obstacle for pre-service teachers involved in international exchanges remains around socio-cultural differences in the locations they are assigned to (Taylor, 2008).

Jin et al. (2019) explained the negative impacts of the International Teaching Practicum, such as conflicts between supervisors and interns and some remaining silent because of a lack of intercultural knowledge (Gilliland, 2015). According to Kham (2022), there are four main challenges faced by pre-service teachers and interns when doing International Teaching Practicum: imbalance between teaching and other activities, lack of more detailed guidance, inappropriate additional activities (visits), and lack of communication with supervisors. Fernandez Deocampo (2020) explained that the obstacles include classroom management, student learning style, vocabulary knowledge, lesson planning, classroom motivation, English communication barriers, and teacher's voice. In Indonesia, there is also an International Teaching Practicum in Thailand, and there has been research discussing teaching practicum like this research. Fauziyah et al. (2021) explained that three themes explain the obstacles when participating in an International Teaching Practicum: lack of clarity in Thai English, experience of emotional shifts, and hybridity of Thai and English. Nurbatra (2017) showed that the difficulties experienced by pre-service teachers of the faculty of teacher training and education who are doing teaching practice in Thailand are such as visa validity period, illness due to weather differences, the use of English as an international language only used by certain people, different prayer times, difficulty finding halal food, different types and tastes of food, differences in academic calendars, and also social differences. The obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers who do Practicum in Thailand at the elementary school level have determined the results that the four main difficulties experienced are difficulty communicating with students due to language and cultural differences, teachers are not confident to become English teachers even after graduating S1 because communicating with them is very difficult, teachers do not have enough training to handle the time faced, and finally, teachers do not have training programs on how to be effective teachers (Yulia, 2019)

Based on the explanation of the research above, it is known that there are many obstacles experienced when participating in International Teaching Practicum, but still very rarely publication about the ways or strategies used to overcome obstacles during International Teaching Practicum. There are only those who discuss strategies to overcome obstacles when teaching Practicum in the country. Moreover, the strategy to overcome the obstacles experienced abroad is essential as a best practice for the next pre-service teachers. Thus, this study focuses on finding answers to the questions 1. What are the obstacles and strategies experienced by the pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand? and 2. What are the obstacles and strategies experienced by the pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia?

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach and multiple case studies as a research design. This study used a multiple case study design, which goes into more detail and produces two results with two different cases. The study found the difficulties of pre-service teachers and strategies to overcome the obstacles. It also compared the two cases to find similarities and differences in obstacles and strategies by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia. Creswell (2016) explained that qualitative case studies are explanations and intensive analyses of "systems bound" to phenomena such as people, processes, institutions, programs, and policies. Creswell (2016) also explained that case studies are very appropriate when the research objectives have not been studied more deeply, such as the obstacles experienced by Indonesian pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia and strategies to overcome the obstacles. The setting of this study is one of the schools in Southern Thailand, specifically in Krabi. This school has junior and senior high school levels and is based on Islamic boarding schools. In Malaysia, pre-service teachers are placed in a private school in Tanjung Sepat, Selangor. There is also a school based on Islamic boarding schools. In addition to being a school, the Maghrib Quran program, which accepts students aged 5-17, is also a place to learn the

Quran. The participants in this study were four female students from the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of the 7th semester English Language Education Study Program at one of the private universities in Malang, namely Dita and Rara (pseudonyms), where they attended the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand while Lisa and Ayu (pseudonyms) they attended at the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia.

In this study, researchers used two instruments: the primary data is semi-structured interviews, and the secondary data is documents such as photos. A semi-structured interview asked thirty-eight questions, which consisted of three questions adapted from (Makmur et al., 2013) and thirty-five follow-up questions that researchers had made according to the topic in this study and have gone through a validation process. The interview questions were adapted from (Makmur et al., 2013), There were ten questions, but only three were taken, and seven were deleted because they did not match the topic in this study. Examples of deleted questions include, "How is your relationship with your mentor teacher? Did he give you enough guidance, suggestions, and feedback?" This question was not included because this study focused on the obstacles that occurred during the International Teaching Practicum and what strategies were carried out to overcome these obstacles. After completing all the steps for data collection, the researcher then resends the interview transcript, which serves for the trustworthiness of the data that has been obtained.

Researchers used the Embadeed Analysis in data analysis, which is more detailed because this article examines multiple sub-themes. After collecting data, researchers analyze it (Clarke, 2006) using coding and themes with steps: First, researchers carried out the transcribing stage by writing back the carefully recorded interview results to avoid mistakes. The second is familiarizing, which involves reading the transcript repeatedly until researchers become more familiar with the participants' answers. This will help researchers understand and analyze participants' answers. Third is coding (marking participant statements). At the coding stage, researchers used the deductive coding method with colors. Researchers made color coding at the beginning and then divided them based on research questions or research problems, such as by giving yellow to participants' answers that explain obstacles during the International Teaching Practicum and green to the strategies used by pre-service teachers to overcome obstacles in the International Teaching Practicum. Fourth is theming, which is to make a theme or grouping of the participants' statements coded at the coding stage by how researchers divide two types of obstacles that occur when participating in an International Teaching Practicum.

FINDINGS

These findings present answers to the research questions in Chapter I. The research questions in this study are as follows: 1) What are the obstacles and strategies experienced by the pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand? And 2) What are the obstacles and strategies experienced by the pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia?

A. The Obstacles and Strategies Experienced by Pre-Service Teachers Participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand.

This research found two types of obstacles experienced by Dita and Rara participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand. The first is *Teaching Problems*, which contain obstacles when teaching practice, and the second is *Socio-Cultural Problems*, which are obstacles experienced outside of teaching practice time related to their culture. In the Teaching Problems section, researchers divided the study into two parts, namely Pre-Teaching, which contains problems that occur during learning preparation, and the second part, During Teaching, which contains obstacles that occur when learning occurs in the classroom.

Teaching Problems

This section contains the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand. These obstacles are in the form of difficulties in preparing things that must be fulfilled before carrying out learning activities in class, which are included in the Pre-Teaching category, and obstacles that occur when carrying out learning in class, which are included in the *During Teaching* category.

Pre-Teaching

As previously explained, this section contains obstacles that arise when pre-service teachers fulfill what must be done before learning activities occur in class. The obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers when preparing for teaching practicum are prevalent because it is in this position that they can learn and truly feel like they are teachers. Moreover, when they do teaching practice abroad, they have to adapt to their culture and language. The two participants, Dita and Rara, are 8th-semester students at a private university in Malang who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand. In the Pre-Teaching section, the first obstacle that arises is the problem regarding teaching modules. Dita and Rara find this difficult because the school where they teach does not provide teaching modules or a curriculum. As Dita and Rara stated,

Dita: "So you know, there is no such curriculum there. There is also no curriculum from the government, so there is no established curriculum, teaching materials, or teaching modules."

Rara: "There is no curriculum there, so we just continue as usual."

However, Dita's and Rara's strategies were slightly different. Dita overcame this obstacle by discussing the material that would be taught next with her friends. At the same time, Rara asked the students about the previous material and then continued the material that had been taught previously.

Dita: "Discussion with friends there. "What material do you want to fill in for the first week, and what kind of material will you fill in for the second week?" Meanwhile, Rara said,

Rara: "So, ask the students what you have studied before. Like that."

The second obstacle Dita and Rara faced was the problem of learning media. When the learning was taking place, it was discovered that the student's ability to speak English was still said to be low. Also, the availability of facilities was minimal, which required many media to improve the student's English skills effectively. Therefore, Dita implemented a strategy to overcome these obstacles by holding an English Camp program. Meanwhile, due to limited existing facilities, Rara makes learning media as interesting and creative as possible with existing media, such as group work.

Dita: "The facilities are very lacking, and the English language skills can be said to be very low. There, the students don't understand English at all. So, we immediately created a practice program at English Camp so that students could speak English a little better."



Figure 4. 1 English Camp.

Figure 4.1 explains the pre-service teacher program called English Camp, which involves learning activities that require students to talk to each other using English to improve their English skills.

Rara: "So there is only one room where the projector is installed, so you cannot take it everywhere. So, we must be as creative and interesting as possible in creating learning media."



Figure 4. 2 Make a small circle and a big circle.

Figure 4.2 explains students' learning activities by making big and small circles to prevent students from getting bored due to limited learning media.

The third obstacle is in class management, where they find it difficult to control the students because miscommunication often occurs between them due to language differences, so it is very difficult for pre-service teachers to control the students. Dita and Rara said,

Dita: "The English language there is still inferior. So, there is much miscommunication."

Rara: "Once, we experienced difficulties because we often miscommunicated with students."

The strategy they used to overcome this obstacle is to ask teacher assistants or civil service teachers to help them interpret what the students are talking about.

Dita: "The teacher also guided us to translate at the school."

Rara: "Accompanied by our tutor."

The final obstacle in the Pre-Teaching section was the learning method, but only Dita experienced difficulties. The obstacles during classroom management are the same: difficulties in communicating due to language differences.

Dita: "It is the same. The difficulty, in general, is communication. If you cannot even communicate, you cannot teach."

Rara: "Thank God there were no problems, everything went smoothly."

The way to overcome this is the same as in classroom management, which a teacher accompanies. Dita said,

Dita: "We were also guided by the teacher at the school to translate."

It can be concluded that the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers in the Pre-Teaching section include obstacles in the teaching module, learning media, classroom management due to difficulties in controlling students because miscommunication often occurs, and learning methods.

The strategy used to overcome the obstacle is to discuss with friends and also ask students what material they have studied previously, carry out English Camp activities, make learning as interesting and creative as possible, and ask for help from the accompanying teacher because if students do not understand what is conveyed by the pre-service, then the learning method will not be successful.

During Teaching

This section describes the obstacles that Dita and Rara experienced when teaching in class or during the ongoing learning process. The first obstacle was having problems communicating with students. There was quite a big language difference between Indonesian and Thai, and students' English language skills were still low. So, they had great difficulty communicating with students in class.

Dita: "There are difficulties. Yes, all the difficulties are related to communication."

Rara: "Yes, it is difficult because even if they want to use English, they do not understand."

The strategies used to overcome this obstacle are different between Dita and Rara. Dita asked for help from the accompanying teacher to inform the students about the material being presented by Dita. Meanwhile, Rara's first step is to use body movements or sign language, but if students still do not understand what Rara means, they ask their tutor for help.

Dita: "When we came back (after teaching), we studied with the teacher there to learn the basics of Thai."

Rara: "So the first alternative we use is sign language. If they don't understand English, we use sign language, but if they are given sign language or pictures, they still don't understand what we are explaining, so next, we ask the tutor for help."

The second obstacle is the difficulty of controlling students in class. Both participants experienced this obstacle because, again, the main cause was communication due to language differences.

Dita: "There are a few. The students obey just because, for example, if we want to teach, they cannot participate. "The problem is they do not understand what we are saying."

Rara: "Yes, I have experienced difficulties."

The strategies they used to overcome obstacles to controlling students in class are different. Dita asks for help from a companion teacher, while Rara creates activities that make them focus back on lessons, such as studying while playing or singing.

Dita: "Ask the accompanying teacher for help. The accompanying teacher will translate it later."

Rara: "That is us, um.. attracting their attention, maybe they um.. I think they are bored and not interested in us because maybe because of the language difference, so we fill it by playing games and singing like that. OK, so this is to get your enthusiasm back and want to learn again."

The final obstacle that Dita and Rara experienced while teaching was a lack of self-confidence when teaching, which shows that both of them were not confident when teaching, especially since this was their first time teaching abroad. Dita and Rara said,

Dita: "First day. Yes, the first day could be said to be down, like oh why is it like this, like that, because we speak Thai and the accent is different and it is difficult."

Rara: "I have, I have. Everyone has experienced this, especially in a foreign country that is not our own country, so we feel nervous, right?"

The strategies they used to overcome obstacles to self-confidence are, of course, different. Dita overcomes them by doing things as optimally as possible, enjoying the learning process, and having to go with the flow. Meanwhile, according to Rara, we must continue to be serious, whatever the results and never be afraid to try new things.

Dita: "The trick is that we also have to enjoy it. We have to enjoy teaching time even though they laugh if we are wrong, we also have to laugh, just follow the flow."

Rara: "The strategy is that even if we are not sure about ourselves, but that is enough, just try it."

The important thing is that we try it like that."

It can be concluded that the obstacles that occur during the learning process are communication with students, student control, and lack of self-confidence when teaching. The strategy to overcome this obstacle is to ask the accompanying teacher for help to tell the students what the pre-service teacher said or by using sign language or body movements, ask the accompanying teacher for help and carry out activities that make them focus back on learning, such as learning while playing or by singing together, try our best when teaching, and have to keep trying even if the results are less than satisfactory and not be afraid to try new things.

Socio-Cultural Problems

This section describes obstacles related to culture or socio-culture, where we, as immigrants or foreigners, will be shocked and have difficulty adapting to an environment that we have never visited before regarding culture, weather, time, and so on. This research discusses the socio-cultural obstacles experienced by Dita and Rara. The first obstacle is the difficulty of adapting. In this case, Rara is the only one who finds it difficult to adapt because misunderstandings often occur due to different languages. Meanwhile, Dita did not experience any difficulties because Dita felt that the people there were very friendly towards Dita and helped her adapt. Rara said,

Rara: "There are difficulties adapting. Even though they understand more or less Malay, sometimes there are still misunderstandings."

Rara's strategy is we must accept their culture, and we inevitably have to learn their language a little, because if we do not want to learn their language, then we will always experience difficulties in whatever circumstances and wherever we are.

Rara: "Accepting their culture. We have to accept it because we are immigrants. We have to accept their culture. We cannot reject things like that, and we inevitably have to learn their language a little."

The second obstacle that occurs is difficulty when communicating with the public. The people there have very different backgrounds from ours. In this obstacle, Dita did not find it difficult because she had learned many languages at school, so when she entered society, Dita did not feel any difficulty. In contrast to Rara, Rara had difficulty communicating with the community; for example, when Rara wanted to buy something outside, she had difficulty. Ask for the price of the item. So, Rara learns basic words such as numbers and prices before shopping to overcome obstacles when communicating with people.

Rara: "We are experiencing difficulties like buying and buying, so before we buy or shop or something like that. "We study first, learn simple things like this, how much Thai we learn first."

The third obstacle is the difficulty of finding food with the same taste as Indonesian tongues. Dita and Rara experienced difficulty in this matter because Dita explained that the average food in Thailand has a dominant sour and salty taste, as we often see on social media, for example, somtam, whereas in Indonesia, it is dominant with a sweet and spicy taste. Meanwhile, according to Rara, she felt difficult because the food did not match the taste she was used to and also the limited supply of food provided by the person in charge there.

Dita: "I did not know before, but there the taste is different to us Indonesians. Indonesians prefer sweet and spicy, but there it is sour, and finding the same sweet soy sauce as in Indonesia is difficult because there, they mostly sell salty soy sauce."

Rara: "Very difficult. We do not match the tastes that exist there and also the limited food we get."

They used to overcome these obstacles by buying and searching for their raw materials, then processing and cooking them according to their desired tastes and tastes.

Dita: "So we buy more ingredients at the market, like eggs, and we then cook the raw ingredients ourselves."

Rara: "Cook them yourself. We try to go to the market ourselves to mix our spices to make our cooking so that we share our tastes like that."

The final obstacle that occurs in the socio-cultural section is the difficulty of determining the time of worship. In this case, Dita does not feel difficult, but it is different from Rara. Rara explains that the actual hours in Indonesia and Thailand, for example in Indonesia it is 1 pm, then in Thailand, it is also 1 pm. However, the only difference is the prayer time.

Rara: "At first, I was jetlagged when I got there because dawn in Indonesia is usually at 4.10, for example. In Thailand, it is around half past 6 in the morning. "The hours are the same, but the meaning is that the prayer time is different."

Rara's strategy is to reschedule all her activities, starting from what time she goes to bed or other activities, and adjust the time there.

Rara: "So we reschedule our activities like that. For example, if we usually go to bed at 9 in Indonesia, we postpone the bedtime. For example, we go to bed at 8, so we normally adjust it."

From the information above, we can conclude that the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers Dita and Rara when participating in the International Teaching Practicum include difficulties in adapting, difficulties in communicating with the community, difficulties in finding food with the right taste, and finally, difficulties determining prayer times. The strategy used to overcome the obstacle is to accept their culture, learn a little of their language, learn basic or simple words that are often used, such as numbers, objects, and prices, buy your raw materials, and then process and cook them according to your taste, and reschedule all activities from waking up to going to bed or other activities by adjusting the time there.

Table 4.1 Obstacles and strategies by two participants who took part in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand

No.	Aspects		Obstacles	Strategies
1	Teaching Problems	Pre-Teaching	Teaching modules (P1, P2)	Discussions with other friends (P1) Asking students about previous material (P2)
			Learning media (P1, P2)	Practicing speaking English (P1) Making learning as creative as possible (P2)
			Classroom management (P1, P2)	Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher (P1, P2)
			Learning methods (P1)	Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher (P1)

		During Teaching	Communicating with students (P1, P2) Controlling students (P1, P2) Lack of self-confidence (P1, P2)	Learning Thai with a Thai teacher (P1) Using sign language and asking the accompanying teacher for help (P2) Asking the accompanying teacher to help translate the language (P1) Attracting students' attention with games and singing (P2) Enjoying and following flow (P1) Just keep going even if you're not confident, and do not be afraid to try (P2)
2	Socio-cultural Problems	Difficulty adapting (P2) Difficulty communicating with the public (P2) Difficulty finding food according to Indonesian tastes (P1, P2) Difficulty determining praying times (P2)		Slowly accepting Thai culture (P2) Learning simple Thai words such as prices and numbers (P2) Buying food and cooking it yourself (P1, P2) Rescheduling the daily activity schedule accordingly with the Thai clock (P2)

*P: Participants

*P1: 1st Participant

*P2: 2nd Participant

From the table above, we can conclude that the obstacles experienced by the two participants who participated in the International Teaching Practicum are complete, starting from difficulties when preparing to teach, difficulties when teaching, and also difficulties when adapting to the community environment.

B. The obstacles and strategies experienced by the pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia

The results of this research found two types of obstacles experienced by Lisa and Ayu who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia, the same as the obstacles and strategies that occur when carrying out International Teaching Practicum in Thailand. Here it is also divided into two parts, the first is *Teaching Problems* which contain obstacles when carrying out teaching practice and the second is *Socio-Cultural Problems* which are obstacles experienced outside of teaching practice time related to their culture. In the Teaching Problems section, we divide it into two parts, namely Pre-Teaching, which contains problems that occur during learning preparation, and the second part, During Teaching, which contains obstacles that occur when learning occurs in the classroom.

Teaching Problem

This section describes the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia. The obstacles that occur include difficulties in preparing everything that must be fulfilled before carrying out learning activities in class, which are

included in the Pre-Teaching category, and obstacles that occur when learning takes place in class, which are included in the During Teaching category.

Pre-Teaching

As previously explained, this section contains the obstacles that arise when prospective teachers fulfill and prepare the things that must be done before learning activities take place in class. The obstacles experienced by prospective teachers when preparing for teaching practicum are very common because it is in this position that they can learn and truly feel like they are teachers. Moreover, they practice teaching abroad and have to adapt to the culture and language. The two participants, namely Lisa and Ayu, are 8th-semester students at a private university in Malang who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia. In the Pre-Teaching section, the first obstacle that emerged was the teaching module problem. With this obstacle, only Lisa felt it was difficult because the school already had a curriculum and teaching modules, but Lisa had difficulty matching the curriculum with the existing curriculum in Indonesia and there were also system differences. As Lisa said,

Lisa: "Adapting the independent curriculum to their curriculum may be a bit difficult for us, that's how it is matched, especially since there may be several different systems such as teaching systems, like organizational systems in schools like that."

The strategy that Lisa used to overcome obstacles in the teaching module was to ask for help from a companion teacher to help Lisa match the teaching module.

Lisa: "Not too difficult but requires guidance with a supervisor."

The second obstacle is difficulties in learning media, in this case, Lisa and Ayu experienced the same problem in finding learning media because the school where they taught could be said to be still new so the facilities were very minimal. They also explained that the school where they taught still lacked technology such as LCD, and laptops were unavailable. Lisa and Ayu said,

Lisa: "It's difficult because everything is limited there. There is a lack of technology, such as laptop projectors."

Ayu: "The difficulty is because there are limitations... Is it quite limited because it is said to be a new school, so there is minimal technology, and there is no LCD."

The strategy they used to overcome this obstacle was using personal laptops and making learning as interesting as possible with limited media, such as grouping, quizzes, ice-breaking, games, etc. So, students would not feel bored and would continue to be enthusiastic about improving their English skills.

Lisa: "Using my laptop."

Ayu: "Just using a laptop, so they're kind of ahead of the pack for watching movies together, like that. I like making quizzes like that, grouping later, getting lots of points, and making games."



Figure 4. 3 Making games with paper and quizzes.

Figure 4.2 explains students' learning activities by making games from paper and quizzes to prevent students from getting bored due to limited learning media.

The third obstacle is difficulties in classroom management. Lisa and Ayu found it difficult to manage the class because they explained that the students were still lacking in ethical learning, so it was difficult for them to control the students. Also, because the students were boarding school students, they often slept and were not interested in the material being presented. Lisa and Ayu said,

Lisa: "So we have difficulty managing their character. How do we bring students into class? It's very difficult because of their low educational character."

Ayu: "Yes, it is difficult, because the boarding school children sometimes sleep, and sometimes they do not have much interest at the start."

The strategy they used to overcome these obstacles was inviting students to do ice-breaking between lessons so that they didn't get bored. They also often made games or watched movies on laptops to restore the students' enthusiasm for learning.

Lisa: "Inviting icebreakers to get them focused and enthusiastic about learning."

Ayu: "Like from playing games in class and then when I was using the laptop, I started watching together like that. Maybe that is what I applied there."

The final obstacle is the difficulty of determining learning methods that suit students' abilities, where students' English language skills are still low. Regarding this obstacle, only Ayu felt it was difficult because she explained that students easily get bored if they only use the lecture method in delivering material. Ayu said,

Ayu: "It is difficult to learn methods or methods that are suitable for them. You will get bored if you only use the lecture method at the start."

Ayu's strategy for overcoming difficulties in choosing a learning method is discussing with friends who have previous teaching experience and asking what methods are not boring for students and also combining the lecture method with other methods, such as grouping so that students don't get bored.

Ayu: "I asked my other friends who had more teaching experience than me, so I shared what good teaching made them interested. After that, I combined it so that apart from the lecture method, I also used class discussions and group study. "

It can be concluded that the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers in the pre-teaching section include problems with the teaching module, learning media, classroom management, difficulties controlling students because students usually sleep in class, and difficulties in learning methods.

The strategy used to overcome the obstacle is to ask the supervising teacher for help in creating teaching modules that are appropriate to the curriculum, use a personal laptop, and also make learning as interesting and creative as possible by utilizing existing media, carrying out ice-breaking between lessons so that students refocus on the material and also create exciting games so that students do not get bored, discuss with friends who have previous teaching experience, and also combine the method of delivering lecture material with additional grouping to make students enthusiastic about receiving the next material.

During Teaching

This section presents the obstacles that Lisa and Ayu experienced when teaching in class or the obstacles that occurred during the learning process. The first obstacle is experiencing difficulties when controlling students in class. Perhaps students are bored and fed up with the presented material, so they are not conducive and noisy. In this problem, only Ayu experienced difficulty in controlling the class. Ayu said,

Ayu: "There are difficulties; for example, the class is no longer under control; maybe this is like an ice-breaking; I will use an ice-breaking first, then later on, I will make the material like a game."

Ayu's strategy for overcoming obstacles in controlling students is to do Ice-Breaking between lessons, combine learning with play, and invite them to tell stories to restore students' focus.

Ayu: "Maybe this is umm... like an ice-breaking. I used ice-breaking first, and then later on, I made the material like a game. Sometimes, I can also tell stories with them."

The final obstacle is difficulty managing self-confidence. This is very common when we do something new for the first time, such as pre-service teachers who are carrying out a real learning process for the first time, especially abroad where the background and environment are different from Indonesia. In this problem, only Ayu had difficulty managing her self-confidence because she explained that this was her first experience teaching abroad. Ayu said,

Ayu: "Yeah, on the first day, at first, I was nervous, and there were still a lot of people confused."

The strategy that Ayu used to overcome obstacles to self-confidence was to encourage herself that she could get through today and that it wouldn't be difficult. So, it could be said that we can increase our self-confidence by giving positive affirmations and changing our mindset to get through all of this.

Ayu: "Giving positive words to myself, like I can teach this first day like that and like umm... this is easy and not as difficult as I imagined."

From the information above, it can be concluded that the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers in the During Teaching section were only experienced by Ayu. These included problems in controlling students and obstacles in overcoming self-confidence.

The strategy Ayu used to overcome the obstacle was doing ice-breaking between lessons, creating fun games, inviting students to tell stories to restore the students' focus and enthusiasm, giving positive affirmations to ourselves, and also changing our mindset that we can do this easily because we were chosen to do this and that because we can do it.

Socio-Cultural Problems

In this section, obstacles related to culture or socio-culture are presented, where we, as immigrants or foreigners, will be surprised and have difficulty adapting to an environment we have never visited before regarding culture, weather, time, and so on. This research discusses the socio-cultural obstacles experienced by Ayu and Lisa. However, there was only one problem, and only Ayu experienced this problem, namely difficulties due to the difference in weather between Malaysia and Indonesia. Ayu was sick for two days because she said the weather there was sweltering and it was located in the middle of an oil palm plantation. Ayu said,

Ayu: "I've been sick, but only for 2 days, I think, because it's really hot there because the palm oil fields are like those in the middle."

The strategy that Ayu uses to overcome the obstacles of being sick due to the differences in weather between Indonesia and Malaysia is taking the medicine that has been provided, getting enough rest, and also getting support from other friends who care for Ayu when she is sick.

Ayu: "Take medicine and enough rest with the support of friends."

From the information above, it can be concluded that there is only one obstacle in the Socio-Cultural Problem section, namely the obstacle in adapting to differences in weather because Malaysia

has very hot air compared to Indonesia. The only person who experienced this problem was Ayu, who explained that she had been sick for two days because she couldn't stand the very hot weather.

The strategy that Ayu uses is to take medicine, get enough rest, and also get support from Ayu's friends.

Table 4.2 Obstacles and strategies by two participants in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia.

No.	Aspects	Obstacles		Strategies
1	Teaching Problems	Pre-Teaching	Teaching modules (P3)	Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher (P3)
			Learning media (P3, P4)	Using own laptop (P3) Watching movies together and quizzes (P4)
			Classroom management (P3, P4) Learning methods (P4)	Doing ice breaking (P3) Watching movies and games (P4) Discussion and sharing with friends who have a lot of previous teaching experience (P4)
		During Teaching	Controlling students (P4) Lack of self-confidence (P4)	Doing ice-breaking and games Change the mindset and give positive affirmations (P4)
2	Socio-cultural Problems	Sick because of different weather (P4)		Take medication and get enough rest (P4)

*P: Participants

*P3: 3rd Participant

*P4: 4th Participant

From the table above, we can conclude that the obstacles experienced by the two participants who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia were very comprehensive. They started with difficulties when preparing to teach, difficulties when teaching, and difficulties when adapting to the community environment, even though they could say Indonesia and Malaysia are almost the same in language and culture.

C. Comparing the Obstacles and Strategies Used by Pre-Service Teachers When Doing International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia

This section discusses the similarities and differences in obstacles and strategies experienced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum. Four pre-service teachers, Dita and Rara (ITP in Thailand) and Lisa and Ayu (ITP in Malaysia), had several obstacles and strategies of their own. Two pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand experienced more obstacles. In comparison, two pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia experienced fewer obstacles.

Table 4.3 Comparing the Obstacles and Strategies Faced by Pre-service Teachers in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia.

No.	Country	Aspects		Obstacles	Strategies
1	Thailand	Teaching Problems	Pre-Teaching	-Teaching modules -Learning media -Classroom management -Learning methods	-Discussions with other friends -Asking students about previous material -Practicing speaking English -Making learning as creative as possible -Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher -Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher
			During Teaching	-Communicating with students -Controlling students -Lack of self-confidence	-Learning Thai with a Thai teacher -Using sign language -Asking the accompanying teacher to help translate the language -Attracting students' attention with games and singing -Enjoying and following the flow -Keep going even if you're not confident, and do not be afraid to try
		Socio-cultural Problems		-Difficulty adapting -Difficulty communicating with the public -Difficulty finding food according to Indonesian tastes -Difficulty determining praying times	-Slowly accepting Thai culture -Learning simple Thai words such as prices and numbers -Buying food and cooking it yourself -Rescheduling the daily activity schedule accordingly with the Thai clock
2	Malaysia	Teaching Problems	Pre-Teaching	-Teaching modules -Learning media -Classroom management -Learning methods	-Asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher -Using own laptop -Watching movies together and quizzes and games -Doing ice-breaking -Discussion and sharing with friends
			During Teaching	-Controlling students -Lack of self-confidence	-Doing ice-breaking and games -Change the mindset and give positive affirmations

		Socio-Cultural Problem	-Sick because of the different weather	-Take medication and get enough rest
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From the table above, it can be concluded that the obstacles faced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia in Teaching Problems in the pre-teaching section are the same. Namely, they experienced difficulties in teaching modules, learning media, classroom management, and learning methods. This problem occurred because pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia were placed in new schools established in rural areas.

The strategies used to overcome the obstacles by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia in the pre-teaching section are almost the same such as discussions with other friends, asking students about previous material, practicing speaking English, making learning as creative as possible, such as games and quizzes, doing ice-breaking, and asking for guidance from the accompanying teacher.

The next obstacle is the Teaching Problems in the during teaching section. In this part, pre-service teachers experienced problems such as communicating with students, controlling students, and lacking self-confidence. This problem occurred in pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand because pre-service teachers are hampered by the differences in Indonesian and Thai languages. However, pre-service teachers who participated in Malaysia did not experience difficulties communicating with students, because the language between Indonesian and Malay is not much different.

Dita: "There are difficulties. Yes, all the difficulties are related to communication."

Rara: "Yes, it is challenging because even if they want to use English, they do not understand."

Pre-service teachers who participated in an International Teaching Practicum in Thailand used strategies such as learning Thai with a Thai teacher or using sign language to overcome the obstacles of communicating with students.

Dita: "We studied with the teacher there to learn the basics of Thai."

Rara: "So the first alternative we use is sign language. If they do not understand English, we use sign language, but if they are given sign language or pictures, they still do not understand what we are explaining, so next, we ask the tutor for help."

The next obstacle is Socio-cultural Problems. This section shows very different obstacles between pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia. The obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand were very complete, namely difficulty adapting, difficulty communicating with the public, difficulty finding food according to Indonesian tastes, and difficulty determining praying times. Meanwhile, pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Malaysia only experienced one obstacle namely illness due to weather differences.

Ayu: "I have been sick, but only for two days. I think it is really hot there because the palm oil fields are like those in the middle."

The strategies used by Ayu are taking medicine and getting enough rest.

Ayu: "Take medicine and rest with the support of friends."

From the information above, it can be concluded that, in fact, the obstacles that occur to pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia are almost the same. The difference is that the Indonesian and Thai languages are very different,

which causes pre-service teachers to experience problems in communication and adaptation. However, Indonesian and Malay are almost the same, so there are no problems with communication.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Teaching Practicum program is essential to testing pre-service teachers' abilities in teaching skills. This program can improve pre-service teachers' skills and provide precious knowledge for the future. It can also give pre-service teachers an authentic atmosphere when we are teaching students so that when they become teachers, they will not be surprised because they already have teaching experience.

International Teaching Practicums are very beneficial and challenging. We must solve all our problems when we live with people we have never known. However, these activities have many advantages, such as improving our teaching skills, increasing relationships, and, most importantly, adding experience. Therefore, the ability to communicate is an important point that must be mastered to minimize the occurrence of obstacles when conducting an International Teaching Practicum. By mastering the interlocutor's language and successfully communicating, we can carry out everything we have done, such as when teaching in class. Learning will not run smoothly when we cannot communicate with students due to language differences.

The researcher would like to provide suggestions to pre-service teachers, accompanying teachers or lecturers, and future researchers, hoping to help reduce the obstacles experienced by pre-service teachers participating in the International Teaching Practicum.

1.) Pre-service Teachers

When participating in the International Teaching Practicum, pre-service teachers are expected to explore information about the country they will visit, such as background, culture, language, weather, and time of day. Moreover, pre-service teachers have to learn the basics of the language of the country we will visit so that it is not too difficult for us to adapt and communicate with people.

2.) Companion teachers or lecturers

Companion teachers or lecturers play an important role in the success of prospective teachers in the International Teaching Practicum program. Therefore, lecturers are expected to be able to provide detailed information about what must be done in the program so that pre-service teachers can prepare themselves well.

3.) Future Researchers

This research still has very little information about obstacles and strategies faced by pre-service teachers who participated in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand and Malaysia because they are not teaching not native residents of Thailand and Malaysia. Future researchers are expected to be able to examine obstacles and strategies using different research methods and also examine pre-service teachers who take part in the International Teaching Practicum from different countries and teach native residents.

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