

**INTERNATIONAL TEACHING
PRACTICUM: CHALLENGES
ENCOUNTERED BY PRE-SERVICE EFL
TEACHERS IN
MALAYSIAN ESL CLASSROOMS**

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for Gaining the Bachelor's degree
in English Language Education

By:



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ABSTRACT

Title : **International Teaching Practicum:
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EFL Teachers in Malaysian ESL
Classrooms**

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Globalization has brought significant changes in education, particularly in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Pre-service teachers are required to have adaptive skills in dealing with multicultural and multilingual learning environments. The International Teaching Practicum (ITP) program is one way to equip teachers with real-life experiences of teaching outside their cultural and educational comfort zones. This study aims to explain the challenges pre-service EFL teachers face during ITP in ESL classrooms in Malaysia as well as the strategies used to overcome them. This study uses a qualitative research design with phenomenological case study. Data were collected through observation and semi-structured interviews from five pre-service teachers of the English language education department UIN Walisongo who participated in ITP programs in secondary schools in Malaysia. Data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method (data condensation, data display, conclusion). The results showed three main challenges: (1) language challenges, including differences in vocabulary, intonation, and pronunciation; (2) cultural adaptation, including adjustments to social norms, local terms, and students' cultural diversity; and (3) multicultural classroom management, which is related to differences in students' ability levels, learning habits, and expectations. Strategies used by teachers include the use of visual aids to bridge

language barriers, small group discussions to increase student participation, and adjustments to learning materials and methods to be relevant to students' needs. This study emphasizes the importance of teacher training that focuses on intercultural competence development, local context-based pedagogical adaptation, and multicultural classroom management. Teacher education programs are advised to integrate elements of globalization and diversity into the training curriculum to prepare teachers for increasingly complex classroom challenges in the global era.

Keywords: *Challenges; ESL learners; International Teaching Practicum; Pre-service EFL Teacher*

DEDICATION

By the authority of Allah *'AzzawaJalla*, the ruler of this world, the compassionate and the forgiving. A writing effort cannot achieve success without the collective patience and supplication of all those involved. Ultimately, this thesis is devoted to them, with the primary dedications being to:

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The researcher acknowledges that this thesis is not perfect. Suggestions from readers are welcome to help improve it. It is hoped that this thesis will be valuable for readers and other researchers pursuing similar studies.
Aamiin

Semarang, 16th December 2024
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MOTTO

“Boleh jadi kamu membenci sesuatu padahal ia amat baik bagimu, dan boleh jadi pula kamu menyukai sesuatu padahal ia amat buruk bagimu, Allah mengetahui sedang kamu tidak mengetahui”

Surat Al-Baqarah ayat 216

“Hatiku tenang Ketika mengetahui bahwa apa yang melewatkanmu tidak akan pernah menjadi takdirku, dan apa yang ditakdirkan untukmu tidak akan pernah melewatkanmu”

(Umar bin Khattab)

*"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.
The important thing is not to stop questioning."*

~ Albert Einstein

“Kesempatan tercipta oleh mereka yang mempersiapkannya dengan baik”

Louis Pasteur

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CRT	: Culturally Responsive Teaching
ESL	: English as a Second Language
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ITP	: International Teaching Practicum
PSTs	: Pre-Service Teachers

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the research, research questions, research objectives, limitations of the study, and research significance

A. Research Background

Globalization has profoundly influenced education, particularly in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse environments has become an essential skill for educators. This has led to the rise of programs such as the International Teaching Practicum (ITP), which provides pre-service teachers (PSTs) with the opportunity to immerse themselves in international teaching settings. These programs expose PSTs to real-world challenges and prepare them to navigate complex cultural and linguistic dynamics in their teaching careers.

For EFL teachers, the transition to teaching English in an English as a Second Language (ESL) context can be particularly demanding, as it requires adapting to new teaching environments, understanding diverse student needs, and overcoming potential language and cultural barriers. The role of globalization in education highlights the importance of teacher preparation programs that incorporate international

experiences, equipping future educators with the skills to address these challenges effectively. The increasing demand for English language proficiency worldwide has pushed teacher education institutions to adapt to the needs of a globalized world.

English is a communication tool and a critical resource for access to educational, economic, and professional opportunities. Consequently, there is a pressing need for qualified English teachers capable of teaching in multicultural and multilingual environments. International Teaching Practicum (ITP) programs have emerged as one solution, offering pre-service teachers (PSTs) real-world exposure to teaching in international contexts.

In a multicultural learning environment, teachers and students have the opportunity to learn from each other and acquire insights of the various philosophies and ideas of different individuals. As globalization continues to change educational environments, particularly in the area of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the phenomenon known as International Teaching Practicum (ITP) has gained attention. In order to meet the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds, future educators are expected to embrace and incorporate multicultural approaches into their curricula in the increasingly globalized 21st century. This method seeks to make them more capable of instructing in socially and

culturally diverse settings Luk, J. C., & Lin (2017). Many teacher education institutions worldwide (such as in Uganda (Bunoti, 2011); in the US, Canada, and Russia (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2009) and Malaysia (Kabilan, 2013; Kabilan et al., 2017) are designing and implementing educational initiatives that are increasingly emphasize globalization. These initiatives aim to prepare future teachers to function as global citizens, comprehend the global system, and deliver education with a global orientation. In the context of English language teaching and globalization, this means that the fields of English as Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) should advance by pursuing internationalization initiatives and projects that promote multiculturalism and diversity Baker (2003).

Many institutions have implemented international teaching practicums (ITPs) to provide pre-service teachers (PSTs) with real-world international learning experiences. The PSTs would have the chance to "observe and work with real students, teachers, and curriculum in natural settings"(Huling, 1998). PSTs would be able to gain a "contextualized understanding of the intricacies of teaching" in a global setting by actively participating in the classroom, having conversations and dialogues with mentor and supervising teachers, and observing the methods of more seasoned educators. (Spooner-Lane, Tangen & Campbell,

2009, p. 80). (Spooner-Lane, R., Tangen, D., & Campbell, 2009). Several studies demonstrate the advantages of such programs, including the expansion of global perspectives (Kabilan et al., 2017), and becoming more cognizant of, comprehending, and affirming of various cultural ideas and values (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). These advantages ought to enhance PST's professional growth, particularly in dealing with the dynamics and difficulties of education and the "eventualities of the future to deal with the challenges of the present." (Amobi, 2003) and eventually lead them to become effective teachers in the future.

Nevertheless, most of the studies on ITP involved PSTs, who were either native English speakers or had an ESL background (Luk, J. C., & Lin, 2017). There are also studies of English language PSTs that came from EFL contexts but trained and completed their practicum in a native-speaking setting (for example, Spooner-Lane, Tangen & Campbell, 2009). There aren't many studies in the literature about PSTs who were trained in EFL contexts or from EFL contexts going through their ITP in an ESL or native-speaker setting. There is a great interest in investigating and analyzing the difficulties that PSTs trained in an EFL context would encounter during their ITP in an ESL context because the literature shows that numerous ITP projects conducted globally have encountered numerous difficulties (see literature review section). Such an

inquiry would provide comprehensive data on how PSTs from an EFL context would identify obstacles and overcome them. This would then give EFL teacher education providers important information about which training components should be prioritized or changed, particularly in light of the current demands for internationalization and globalization of teacher education programs.

The researcher discovered various issues during the teaching practicum at Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah Selangor Malaysia. The issues were pre-service EFL teachers' challenges with language barriers, as the teachers struggled to communicate effectively with students who had varying levels of English proficiency, and cultural adaptation issues, where they had to navigate a new educational and cultural environment. Additionally, pre-service teachers encountered difficulties in classroom management, balancing administrative tasks with teaching responsibilities, and implementing pedagogical approaches suitable for diverse student needs. These challenges highlighted the need for effective strategies to overcome obstacles in international teaching contexts.

To broaden perspectives, it is important to note that international experiences not only provide PSTs with opportunities to develop their pedagogical skills but also to build professional networks that can support them throughout

their teaching careers. Facing challenges in an international context can strengthen their sense of connectedness to the global community of education, where the exchange of ideas and best practices is becoming increasingly important. In addition, this experience can foster the adaptation skills and creativity needed to cope with unexpected situations in teaching, which are often part of a dynamic educational environment. As such, the ITP can provide a strong foundation for PSTs to become educators who are not only effective but also responsive to the needs of students in diverse contexts and agents of change in the ever-evolving world of education.

Based on this statement, this study aims to address several key objectives in exploring the experiences of pre-service EFL teachers during their International Teaching Practicum (ITP) in Malaysia. First, it seeks to identify the primary challenges these teachers face while adapting to the ESL classroom environment. Second, it investigates the strategies they employed to overcome these challenges, offering insights into the ways pre-service teachers navigate cultural and educational differences. providing valuable perspectives on the impact of the ITP on their professional development. As a result, the researcher is interested in conducting research at Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah Selangor Malaysia and giving this research by title, “*International*

Teaching Practicum: Challenges Encountered by Pre-Service EFL Teachers in Malaysian ESL Classrooms”

B. Research Question

According to the research objectives, the research questions are:

1. What are the primary challenges encountered by pre-service EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo during their international teaching practicum in Malaysian ESL classrooms?
2. What strategies do these pre-service teachers use to overcome these challenges?

C. Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study will be the following:

1. To explain the challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo during their international teaching practicum in Malaysian ESL classrooms.
2. To describe the strategies employed by these pre-service teachers to overcome the challenges encountered in their international teaching practicum.

D. Research Significance

This research explores the challenges encountered by pre-service EFL teachers during their international teaching practicum in Malaysian ESL classrooms. The findings are

expected to provide valuable contributions to the field of language education:

1. Theoretical Significance

This study seeks to enhance understanding of the specific challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers in diverse educational settings. By examining their experiences, the research aims to contribute to existing literature on teacher preparation and the complexities of teaching English as a foreign language in multicultural environments. Insights gained can help refine theoretical frameworks related to teacher development and cross-cultural pedagogical practices.

2. Pedagogical Significance

- a. For teachers, this study aims to offer practical insight into the challenges pre-service teachers face in International and multicultural ESL classrooms. By identifying effective strategies used to overcome these challenges, this research can inform teacher training programs, helping future educators develop skills in classroom management, cultural adaptability, and intercultural communication. Practicing teachers and teacher trainers can also benefit from understanding how these experiences shape teachers' approaches to diverse learning needs and classroom dynamics.

- b. For students, by addressing the difficulties pre-service teachers encounter and the strategies they employ, this research indirectly benefits ESL students. Improved teacher preparation, particularly in managing multicultural classrooms, can lead to more responsive and inclusive teaching practices. This may contribute to a more engaging and supportive learning environment where students from various cultural backgrounds feel understood and encouraged to participate actively.
- c. For future research, this study lays foundation for further exploration into the dynamics of international teaching practicums, especially in culturally diverse ESL settings. It highlights areas where future researchers can delve deeper, such as exploring the long-term impacts of international teaching experiences on teacher efficacy, retention, and adaptability in diverse classrooms. Additionally, this study encourages cross-cultural comparisons, allowing researchers to examine how teacher challenges and coping strategies may vary across different ESL or EFL contexts worldwide.

E. Research Scope

This research was conducted during an international teaching practicum at Maahad Tahfiz Alqur'an Darul Falah Selangor Malaysia. The participants in this research were five EFL pre-service teachers majoring in the English Education Department at UIN Walisongo in the 2024 academic year. This research was limited to the primary challenges teachers face and the strategies in teaching in ESL environments according to culturally responsive teaching theory by Gay (2010).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consist of previous research, literature review, and conceptual framework.

A. Previous Research

Researchers use previous research by others as a reference to conduct the study.

One research study is “*International Teaching Practicum: Challenges Faced by Pre-service EFL Teachers in ESL Settings*” by (Kabilan, M. K., Ramdani, J. M., Mydin, A., & Junaedi, 2020). This qualitative study investigates the challenges encountered by pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers during their International Teaching Practicum (ITP) in English as a Second Language (ESL) settings. The research aims to uncover how these challenges influence the teachers' understanding of teaching in an international context. Data were collected through focused interviews and reflective journals from four pre-service teachers who underwent their practicum in Malaysia. The study employs a phenomenological case study approach to explore individual experiences and perceptions. The study identifies four primary challenges faced by the pre-service teachers: (1) curriculum differences, (2) lesson planning, (3) language proficiency, and (4) cultural differences. Each challenge reflects the teachers' struggles to adapt to the ESL

context, often prioritizing content knowledge over language instruction. This research and the researcher's study are similar in that they explore the experiences of pre-service English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Malaysian English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, highlighting the unique challenges presented by the multicultural and multilingual environment of Malaysia. The main difference is Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan et al's study involved four female pre-service teachers (PSTs), while this study involved five PSTs, consisting of three females and two males. In addition, the participants in their study came from two universities in Indonesia, namely Siliwangi University and IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, while this study only involved participants from one university, UIN Walisongo. The researcher's study addresses a gap in existing literature regarding the experience of EFL teachers in ESL settings, particularly those from a specific educational background (e.g., from Maahad Tahfiz Alquran Darul Falah Selangor Malaysia).

Meanwhile, similar study is "*Challenges and Coping Strategies of EFL Trainee Teachers in International Teaching Practicum*" by (Khusniyah et al., 2023). the main objective was to explore the challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers during international teaching practice in Malaysia and to identify the coping strategies they applied in dealing

with these challenges. This study aims to provide deeper insights into how teaching practice experiences can affect pre-service teachers' professional development and identity. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach using narrative as the main tool for data collection. The researcher conducted observations and open-ended interviews with three participants involved in international teaching practice. The data obtained were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify key themes related to the challenges and coping strategies faced by the participants. With this approach, this study can capture the subjective experiences of pre-service teachers and provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics that occur in ESL classrooms in Malaysia. The findings highlighted challenges in student behaviour, school facilities, managing mixed-ability classrooms, adapting to the school curriculum, and time management. Various coping strategies were identified, such as anticipatory planning, learning through play, and grouping students. The key difference between Khusniyah et al's study and this research lies in the number of participants and the focus of the research. While Khusniyah's study focused on three EFL Trainee Teachers from Indonesia, whereas this research focused on five EFL pre-service teachers from Indonesia. This study seeks to fill some of the gaps that exist in previous research, such as that conducted by Khusniyah et al. Firstly, that study did not

specifically examine the challenges faced by pre-service teachers from UIN Walisongo in the context of ESL classes in Malaysia, so this study will identify the specific challenges faced by that group, which may differ from other participants studied previously. Secondly, although Khusniyah et al. mentioned coping strategies, their study did not deeply investigate how those strategies are applied in the unique context of an ESL classroom in Malaysia. This study aims to investigate in detail the strategies used by pre-service teachers of UIN Walisongo to cope with such challenges, providing a more specific and focused perspective.

Compared to previous research, this study is “*Narratives of Experiences in International Teaching Practicum: Lessons from an EFL Pre-Service Teacher*” by (Megawati et al., 2023). This research explores the experiences of EFL pre-service teachers during an International Teaching Program (ITP) in Thailand, focusing on how these experiences contribute to their professional development. The study employs a narrative inquiry approach, utilizing semi-structured in-depth interviews alongside classroom observations. The study reveals that pre-service teachers navigated various challenges and successes while attempting to balance classroom management and pedagogical skills. While some aspects of teaching were prioritized (such as classroom activities and content delivery.

The researcher's study addresses a gap in existing literature that examined various aspects of teacher education and international teaching programs, there remains a lack of comprehensive studies focusing on the nuanced experiences of EFL pre-service teachers, especially those from Malaysia participating in ESL environments. The key difference between Fika Megawati et al's study and this research lies in the number of participants and the focus of the research. Fika Megawati et al's study examines the narrative experience of a single EFL pre-service teacher in Thailand, focusing on professional development, teaching skills, and personal reflection. This research also discusses the challenges faced by multiple EFL pre-service teachers in an ESL classroom in Malaysia, providing a broader perspective on the various obstacles they face.

Another study is *"Challenges and Adjustments in Undertaking Teaching Practice Across Countries in Disruptive Era of Education"* by (Ratih et al., 2021) explained some of the challenges that prospective EFL teachers face, including difficulties in planning and implementing lessons that fit the local curriculum, managing different classes, and adjusting to a new culture. In addition, varying support from educational institutions and a lack of technology skills were also issues. Nonetheless, this experience provided opportunities for learning and development, and emphasized

the importance of institutional support and pre-experience training. The fundamental difference between this article and my research lies in several important aspects, including the focus, participants, methods, context and results obtained. The article highlighted the challenges and adjustments faced by pre-service EFL teachers in international teaching practice in general terms, covering a range of challenges that pre-service teachers from different backgrounds might face, and did not provide a detailed account of the number and characteristics of the participants involved. In this sense, the analysis is more generalized and broader which may not capture the unique experiences of individuals in specific contexts. In contrast, my research has a much more specific focus, examining the experiences of five prospective EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo Semarang who practiced teaching in Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia. The study not only seeks to identify the challenges they faced, but also explores how these experiences shaped their understanding of teaching practices in the unique context of an ESL classroom. Thus, the expected outcome of this study is an in-depth insight into the specific challenges faced by the pre-service teachers, as well as how they adjusted to the new environment and culture.

Lastly, the research study is *"Students Insights on Indonesian EFL Pre-Service Teachers in Malaysian ESL Schools"* by (Liskinasih et al., 2020) reveals the various

challenges faced by Indonesian EFL teacher candidates during their teaching practice in ESL schools in Malaysia. The research findings show that the pre-service teachers faced a number of challenges, including heterogeneous student characteristics, varying language abilities, problems in classroom management, and culture shock. Despite these challenges, they also experienced significant benefits, such as improved English language proficiency, a better understanding of the Malaysian curriculum, and the development of soft skills essential for the teaching profession. On the other hand, my research has a more specific focus, examining the experiences of five pre-service EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo Semarang who did their teaching practice at Maahad Tahfiz Dar Darjeeling. in Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia. This research utilizes the phenomenological case study method, which allows the researcher to explore the subjective experiences and individual perceptions of the participants regarding the challenges they face in the context of faith-based education. The striking differences between the two studies lie in their methods and contexts. While this article explains the challenges in a more general context with a descriptive and narrative approach, my research focuses on specific experiences in the Maahad Tahfiz environment, which has unique characteristics, including the influence of religious

values in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the number of participants in my study was smaller, at five people, which allowed for a more in-depth exploration of their personal experiences and reflections. In terms of results, this study provides a broad picture of the challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers in various schools in Malaysia, while my research seeks to delve deeper into how local contexts and individual experiences shape understanding and practice. As such, my research is expected to provide a more in-depth insight into the specific challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers in different schools in Malaysia, as well as the adjustment strategies they employ to cope with the situation. These findings are important for designing more effective training programs

Following the previous description, the researcher investigated International Teaching Practicum Challenges Encountered by Pre-Service EFL Teachers in Malaysian ESL Classrooms. The method of data collection was Observation and Interview.

B. Literature Review

This study's theoretical review consists of five components. It would involve a comprehensive examination of existing research on the Concept of Challenges, International Teaching Practicum (ITP), EFL pre-service

teachers, Malaysian ESL Learners, and the Challenges faced by Pre-service EFL teachers.

1. Concept of Challenges

Before delving into the challenges of international teaching and practicum, the researcher would like to present the definition of the challenges. A challenge, according to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (University, 2003) is "the situation of being faced with something needing great mental or physical effort to be done successfully." As for challenge, as in noun, it has several synonyms. The Second Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (Simspon, J. & Weiner, 1989) provided those synonyms. The book states that challenge also means "problem, difficult task, trial, test, trouble, bother, obstacle."

Challenges in English language education refer to difficulties or obstacles teachers and students face in the teaching and learning process. These challenges include linguistic, cultural, technological, or classroom management difficulties. They require effective strategies and solutions to overcome (Kumaravadivelu, 2006)

There are several types of challenges faced by English teachers, such as difficulties in managing heterogeneous classes (Tomlinson, 2011), lack of student motivation (Nunan, 2003), and limited resources (Wedell,

2011). These challenges require flexible and creative approaches. Challenges in English language education can affect the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. According to Abdullah (2017), these challenges can cause stress and anxiety in teachers and students. Therefore, research is necessary to identify effective strategies for overcoming these challenges.

2. International Teaching Practicum (ITP)

Students' teaching practicum or field experience is essential in a teacher preparation program (Clarke et al., 2014). The teaching practicum program's primary activity is teaching practice, in which students actively engage in the teaching and learning process to gain first-hand knowledge of those activities in the classroom. (Caires et al., 2012). Since the 1970s, many teacher education institutions have initiated international practicums, allowing PSTs to teach in settings beyond their cultural and educational comfort zones (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014; Parr & Chan, 2015). The ITP program involves pre-service teachers engaging in classroom activities at partnered schools abroad. Previous research indicates that teaching practice is vital in teacher education programs globally (Zhu et al., 2020).

Teaching practicum offers real-world experiences in the school environment, such as learning how to

collaborate with school staff and potential problem that may arise once they become real teachers (Becker et al., 2019). Additionally, several advantages of the teaching practicum program include providing pre-service teachers with insights into future technique requirements, increasing their confidence and readiness to teach, and reinforcing their sense of responsibility as future educators (Mauri et al., 2019)

Teaching practicum, as a mandatory program for pre-service teachers, generally has a positive impact. However, some concerns have also been raised regarding the teaching practicum program (Grant-Smith, D., & Gillett-Swan, 2017). During their teaching practice, pre-service teachers often feel inadequate and face dilemmas, such as balancing the ethic of care with classroom authority, navigating their role as either a local or outsider in the school community, handling administrative tasks versus teaching responsibilities, and using different pedagogical approaches for students with varying academic achievement levels (Deng, Y., Lee, W., Yuan, R., & Tsang, 2018).

3. EFL Pre-Service Teachers

The concept of an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher is multifaceted and has been explored through various theoretical lenses. EFL pre-service is an

individual who participates in an internship program, field studies, school-based experience, or teaching practice. Unlike other professions, pre-service teachers often bring to their preparation strong attitudes and convictions about what constitutes good teaching and good teachers because of their previous experiences as a student (Sirotnik, 2001). However, pre-service teachers are less equipped to teach students with diverse needs and abilities. Their limited coaching time in the pre-service teacher education program is one of several factors that can contribute to their lack of preparation. Another is that they are learning more theory than practice, and the teacher they are assigned to requires them to instruct a large number of students (Hemmings, B., and Woodcock, 2011).

The goal of pre-service teacher education is to prepare graduates to become qualified educators with high-quality teaching practices that will give them the experience and knowledge they need to meet the ever-increasing demands of the teaching profession. (Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, 2005)

4. ESL Learners

ESL (English as a Second Language) learners are individuals who are learning English as a second language, not a mother tongue. They have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, which affect the learning process

(Hinkel, 2006). ESL learners usually aim to improve their English language skills for academic, professional or social purposes. They need effective learning strategies to overcome phonetic, grammatical and vocabulary difficulties (Robbins, 1995).

ESL learners face various challenges in the learning process. One of them is the difficulty in understanding and using correct English structures (Nunan, 2003). They also face difficulties in understanding the cultural context and values associated with English (Zotzmann, 2011). In addition, ESL learners also face psychological challenges such as anxiety and lack of confidence in using English (Horwitz, 2001).

To overcome these challenges, ESL learners need effective learning strategies. These strategies can include developing speaking and writing skills and using local cultural contexts in teaching (Chapelle, 2003). ESL teachers also need to understand learners' needs and interests to improve the quality of teaching. Thus, ESL learners can improve their English language skills and achieve their goals.

5. Challenges faced by EFL Pre-Service Teachers in ESL Teaching

Research on teaching English as a second language (ESL) has shown that EFL teachers face

significant challenges in teaching in multicultural classrooms. According to (David, 2010) EFL teachers must understand effective communication strategies to overcome difficulties when communicating with students from different languages and cultures. (CANAGARAJAH, 2007) adds that using English as a lingua franca requires a deep understanding of different cultural and social contexts. Therefore, EFL teachers need to prepare them to systematically integrate theories, expectations, and perspectives to address problems and face these challenges by developing flexible and adaptive teaching strategies.

(Arrindell, 2003) stated that differences in cultural values and norms between different countries affect human behavior and interaction. In the context of teaching English as a second language (EFL), these cultural differences can affect the learning and teaching process. Understanding these cultural dimensions can help EFL teachers develop effective teaching strategies sensitive to the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds.

In teaching English as a second language (EFL), teachers need to understand the complexity of the learning and teaching process. A sociocultural approach can help EFL teachers understand how students interact with the learning environment and how social and cultural factors influence the learning process (Johnson, 2009). EFL

teachers must develop awareness of their teaching practices and understand how they affect students' learning. Both perspectives emphasize the importance of understanding the complex learning and teaching contexts in EFL teaching (Tsui, 2003)

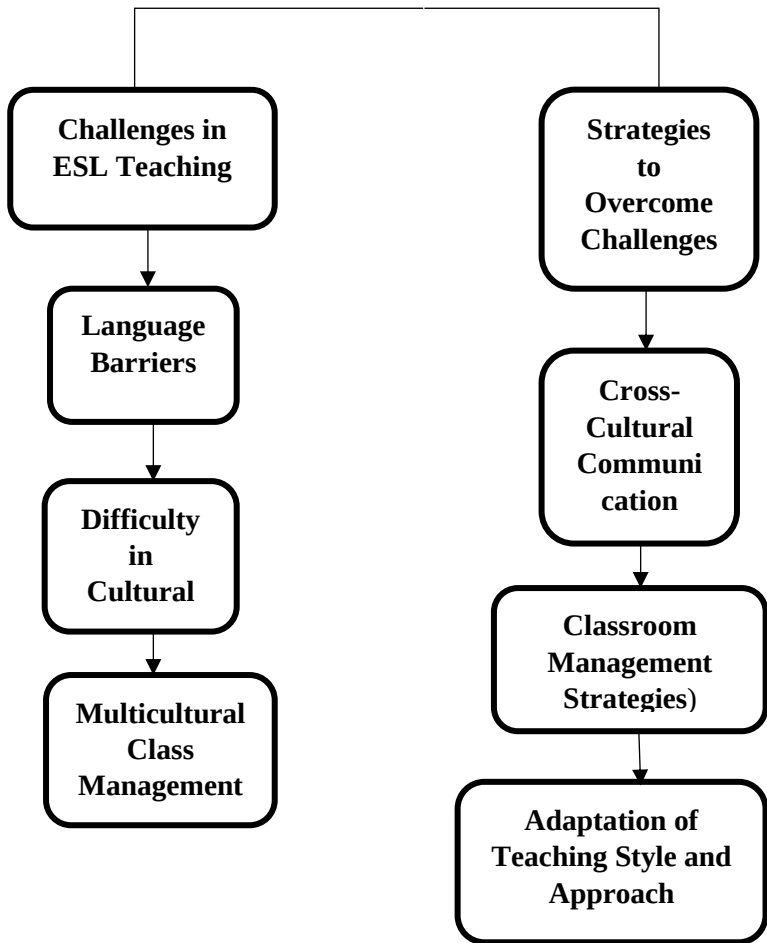
In the context of international teaching, especially in the English as a Second Language (ESL) environment, the challenges faced by practicing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers often revolve around language barriers, cultural adaptation difficulties, and multicultural classroom management. (Gay, 2000) in his Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) theory emphasizes the importance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and values into learning practices. Gay argues that teachers need to understand cultural differences and use them as a source of strength to create relevant and meaningful learning. In ESL classrooms, culturally responsive teaching can help teachers overcome language barriers through effective cross-cultural communication, manage the classroom with respect for diverse cultural norms, and adapt teaching materials and approaches to be relevant to the needs of heterogeneous students. In addition, CRT principles also encourage flexibility in pedagogical approaches, allowing teachers to deal with the challenges posed by students' different language levels and

learning styles. Therefore, the CRT approach is not only a strategy to overcome challenges in ESL environments, but also a conceptual framework that helps practicing EFL teachers understand and deal with the realities of teaching in multicultural and multilingual contexts.

C. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework consists of interconnected concepts that collectively provide a thorough understanding of a phenomenon. It outlines relationships among ideas, assumptions, beliefs, and theories to explain how a phenomenon operates or interacts with its elements. Acting as a structured lens, it systematically integrates theories, expectations, and perspectives to address problems. Conceptual frameworks also depict relationships between variables, offering theoretical insights into the phenomena's nature and underlying causes. Ultimately, they present coherent models that guide research and foster comprehension of complex ideas or systems.

Culturally Responsive Teaching theory by Gay (2000)



The conceptual framework in the diagram serves as the foundation for understanding the challenges and strategies of international teaching, specifically in ESL contexts. It

begins with challenges in ESL teaching, such as language barriers, cultural adaptation difficulties, and managing multicultural classrooms. These challenges are addressed through cross-cultural communication, classroom management, adjusting teaching materials, and adapting teaching approaches.

The researcher used Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) by (Gay, 2000) in this study because CRT provides a holistic approach to understanding and addressing the complexities of teaching in multicultural and multilingual classrooms. This aligns with the focus of the study, as international teaching in ESL contexts inherently involves diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains research's methodology that consists of research design, research setting, research participant, research focus, method of collecting data, instrument, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

This phenomenological case study sought to understand the individual experiences of five Pre-service teachers (PSTs) of English language department UIN Walisongo Semarang academic year 2024/2025 during their International Teaching Practicum (ITP) in Malaysia. Unlike other teaching experiences, ITP was considered a distinct phenomenon due to its specific characteristics (Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, 2014). This research focused on how the PSTs interpreted and made sense of their ITP experiences. By examining their perspectives, we aimed to identify the challenges they encountered and how they understood these challenges within the context of teaching English as a second language (ESL).

B. Research Setting

This research was conducted at Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, located at Jalan Masjid Peket 100, Selangor, Malaysia. Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah is an Islamic institution that integrates academic education with religious studies. UIN Walisongo sent 6 students, including the researcher, from the English Education Department to conduct a teaching practicum in Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia. The researcher took 5 students to be observed. The practicum was carried out for 21 days from 26th August - to 15th September 2024. During the practicum, each pre-service teacher had opportunities to teach Senior High School and Junior High School levels. The education department mandated this course and program. Preservice teachers participated in this internship program to practice teaching. The researcher chose Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah as the site of this study to explore the challenges pre-service EFL teachers face during their international teaching practice.

C. Research participants

This study employed purposive sampling to select participants. Purposive sampling as an approach in qualitative research to select individuals who can provide the most relevant information about the research problem (Creswell, 2014). This technique does not aim for generalization, but to gain in-depth insight into a particular phenomenon. The pre-

service teachers were chosen because they participated in the International Teaching Practicum (ITP) program and had direct experience teaching ESL in Malaysian classrooms, making them highly relevant to the research objectives. All the selected PSTs were three females and two males with an average age of 21 and, are in their final year of their academic programmes.

Pre-service teachers (PSTs) have to complete a number of essential courses designed to ensure their readiness for international ESL teaching contexts in order to participate the International Teaching Practicum (ITP). These include Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) and ICT-based Language Materials Development, which provide PSTs with the skills to integrate technology and create engaging digital resources for language teaching. Effective teaching of fundamental language skills can be achieved through courses like Teaching Grammar, Teaching Listening and Speaking, and Teaching Reading and Writing. Additionally, Teaching English to Young Learners focuses on age-appropriate methods for engaging children in language learning. Practical readiness is further strengthened through Microteaching, which offers a controlled environment for honing teaching techniques, and Teaching Internship 1, where PSTs gain hands-on experience in authentic classroom settings. Together, these prerequisites ensure that PSTs are well-

prepared to navigate the challenges of the ITP and excel in diverse, multicultural ESL classrooms.

D. Research Focus

The ITP program was a collaborative project between UIN Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia and Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah Selangor, Malaysia designed to provide opportunities for the PSTs trained in the EFL setting to gain teaching experiences in an ESL context. It was undertaken in two classes in Malaysia. This study was carried out in an odd semester, academic year 2024. To identify the topic, a focus group interview was conducted with the five ITP participants from the English Language Education Study Program. The four female and two male PSTs who were chosen were all in their final year of school and had an average age of 21. A few factors led to their selection as the subject. First, according to the outcome of the ITP selection process conducted by one of Indonesia's Islamic state universities, they met the general requirements, which include passing the microteaching course, being a third-year student, and having a GPA greater than 3.0.

In the third year of their tertiary education, they had an excellent opportunity to participate in an international program to teach overseas in Malaysia. The program was converted into an internship course replacing the typical local

practicum within the city. In the host country, they were assigned to teach English intensively in a classroom setting.

E. Method of Collecting Data

Data collection techniques are the most important part of the research. Using appropriate data collection techniques will result in a standardized data analysis process, and vice versa. The researcher recorded, examined, and observed data sources as materials studied in data analysis. Furthermore, data collection techniques can be carried out using interviews, questionnaires, observation, documentation, and triangulation.

1. Observation

The researcher conducted observation in order to gather information about preservice teachers' practices. Observations in case study research are usually detailed reports of events, happenings, and incidents that give particular context to the study's conclusions. The researcher recorded time, place, specific incidents, transactions, and conversation, as well as the characteristics of the people and setting (Leavy, n.d.). Sugiyono 2021 divided kinds of observation to three kinds: 1) Participatory observation is the process of involving the researcher in the person being observed's everyday activities or using them as a source of research data. 2) Frank observation, in which the researcher collects data,

states frankly to the data source, in fact he is currently conducting research. 3) Unstructured observation is an observation that is prepared systematically about what are observed (Sugiyono, n.d.). According to Schumck (1997), observation provides a means of regulating nonverbal emotional expression, assessing participant interaction, comprehending how individuals interact with one another, and monitoring the duration of time dedicated to different activities.

2. Interview

The purpose of the interview is to collect accurate and in-depth data about the research subject. Creswell (2014) adds that interviews help researchers understand social contexts and phenomena. In addition, Kvale (2007) states that interviews aim to explore respondents' meaning and understanding of their experiences. Interviewing is the method employed, with a concentration on semi-structured interviews. Because semi-structured interviews give the interviewer greater flexibility to follow up on any angle they deem significant, they can better leverage the knowledge producing potential of dialogues. Additionally, a semi-structured interview offers the interviewer more freedom to direct the conversation toward topics they believe are crucial to the research study (Leavy, n.d.).

F. Instruments

(Sukmadinata, 2010) defines a research instrument as a test that has the characteristic of measuring informants with a number of questions and statements in research, which can be done by making an outline of the objectives of the research being carried out. In simple words, instruments are ways to collect the data to find the best result. There are 2 research instruments used by the researcher:

1. Observation

The researcher finds the observation method useful in a variety of ways. The observation was used to answer the first research question. Through participant observation, which they find useful in verifying the definitions of terms used by participants in interviews, the researchers are able to keep an eye on events that informants may not be able or willing to share during interviews, and they become aware of any inaccurate or distorted information those informants may provide. The participants were observed for a couple of hours in their teaching practicum in order to cross-check the observed beliefs, behavior, verbal reactions, and feelings with the interview results of the participants.

Table 3.1 Observation Guideline for Pre-service

Teacher

Focus	Indicators
1. Language Barriers	
- Clarity of teacher instructions	Are instructions clear and easy to follow for students from different language backgrounds?
- Teacher's language proficiency	Does the teacher adjust language effectively to suit the classroom context?
- Student understanding	Are there noticeable instances of students struggling to understand instructions or content?
2. Difficulty in Cultural Adaptation	
- Cultural Awareness	Does the teacher use gestures or facial expressions effectively to support understanding?
- Flexibility	Does the teacher adjust teaching methods to align with cultural expectations?
- Handling Cultural Misunderstandings	How effectively does the teacher resolve cultural or linguistic misunderstandings in the classroom?
3. Multicultural Class Management	
- Inclusivity	Are students from all cultural backgrounds equally encouraged in classroom activities?

- Fairness	Does the teacher manage the class without showing cultural bias?
- Conflict Resolution	How effectively does the teacher mediate cultural conflicts or tensions in the classroom?

3. Interview

A semi-structured interview after teaching practicum were conducted with each teacher. Interview was a suitable method to be applied in this research because the researcher could explain the questions more detail to the participants. The interview is audio-taped and transcribed. However, as more questions were required to address particular remarks made by the participants, they were added. The researcher used interviews to gather information. Interview were chosen due to their flexibility in exploring the specific experiences and challenges faced by the EFL PSTs during ITP. These interviews were conducted after ITP completion. The researcher specifically targeting PST's experiences and the challenges they encountered while undergoing ITP in the Malaysian schools. The purpose of the interview is to understand the experiences, perspectives, and meanings given by the respondents (Patton, 2002). By conducting an interviewing section, this method of collecting data seeks to obtain information to support this research. This is the

case with pre-service teachers who view their teaching practicum experience in an international context.

Table 3. 2 Interview Guideline for Pre-service Teacher

No	Focus	Indicator	Questions
1.	Challenges in ESL Teaching	Language Barriers	What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language background?
		Difficulty in cultural adaptation	What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?
		Multicultural class management	What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia?
2.	Strategies to overcome challenges	Cross cultural communication strategies	How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students?
		Classroom management strategies	What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or

			expectations in the classroom?
		Adjustment of teaching material and approaches	• Did you change the teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for the students here?

G. Method of Analyzing Data

Data analysis in this study aims to make the collected data and its results comprehensible and communicable to others. By analyzing the data, the researcher aims to extract meaningful insights into the challenges and strategies pre-service EFL teachers encounter when teaching in an ESL context.

The research design follows (Miles, M., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2014) by three-stage framework of data analysis: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Each of these stages plays an important role in ensuring that the thematic analysis is conducted systematically, generates in-depth interpretations, and provides a comprehensive understanding of PSTs' experiences during their international teaching practicum

1. Data Condensation

At this stage, the researcher read the transcripts of the interviews with PSTs in depth to select and simplify

relevant data. Important pieces of data, such as challenges faced in managing a multicultural classroom, difficulties adapting to the local culture, and language barriers, as well as strategies used to overcome these challenges, such as cross-cultural communication strategies or adjustments to teaching materials, were coded or labeled. The data were then grouped into initial categories that could identify patterns or main themes, for example: “language challenges,” ‘classroom management strategies,’ and “cultural adaptation.” This ensured that the focus of the study remained on the main objective, which was to identify the challenges and strategies faced by PSTs during ITP, while less relevant data were removed.

2. Data Display

The condensed data was presented in tables or matrices to facilitate analysis. For example, the table may contain columns for the PSTs' anonymized names or codes, the challenges faced (e.g., language barriers, cultural adaptation, multicultural class management), the strategies implemented (e.g., use of cross-cultural communication methods or classroom management techniques), and additional details about their experiences. This visual presentation of the data helped the researcher to see comparisons between PSTs, find common patterns, and

identify unique strategies used by particular PSTs to overcome challenges.

3. Drawing and Verifying Conclusions

The researcher drew preliminary conclusions, such as the main challenges faced by PSTs (e.g., language difficulties or managing a multicultural classroom) and the most widely used strategies to deal with them (e.g., customization of teaching materials or cross-cultural communication). These conclusions were then verified by reconfirming them with PSTs or through data triangulation (e.g., by seeking the opinion of mentors or academic supervisors) to ensure the validity and accuracy of data interpretation. This stage aims to ensure that the research results obtained are correct and reliable.

Through this systematic analysis process, the researcher was able to gain comprehensive insights into EFL Pre-service teachers' challenges they encountered and strategies they use in international teaching practicum especially in ESL context.

H. Trustworthiness

Several methodical techniques were used in a thorough validation process to guarantee the reliability of the research analysis. In order to guarantee that their views and experiences were fairly reflected in the study, the first step was member checking, in which the participant checked the accuracy of interview transcripts and interpretations (Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, 2015). By including participant viewpoints in the final analysis, this cooperative verification approach increased the validity of the study findings. In order to find trends, parallels, and discrepancies in experiences, the second stage used data triangulation by comparing instructor interviews with classroom observations. This triangulation technique improved the findings' credibility. It made it easier to comprehend in detail how the challenges and strategies EFL Pre-Service teachers encountered when teaching in an ESL classroom setting.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter provides the study findings and discussion of international teaching practicum challenges pre-service EFL teachers encounter in Malaysian ESL classrooms. The main objective of this chapter is to answer the research questions mentioned in Chapter 1.

A. Findings

In this part, the researcher presents the research findings. Which seeks to address the formulation of the problem: 1) To identify the primary challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo during their international teaching practicum in Malaysian ESL classrooms, 2) To investigate the strategies employed by these pre-service teachers to overcome the challenges encountered in their international teaching practicum, and 3) To examine how these experiences shape the pre-service teachers' understanding of teaching realities in international ESL contexts.

1. The Primary Challenges encountered by EFL Pre-service Teachers during their International Teaching Practicum in the ESL context

The researcher employed observation and interviews to obtain the results of the first formulation

problem. To strengthen the observation results, the participants were interviewed to explore their preferences for primary challenges encountered during their teaching practicum in the ESL context. The interview focused on three main aspects of the conceptual framework: language barriers, difficulty in cultural adaptation, and multicultural class management.

1.1 Challenges in Language Barriers

One of the main challenges teachers face is the language barrier, which includes two main aspects: translating terms and differences in meaning.

Observations showed Teachers often have difficulties in ensuring students' understanding of the instructions given, mainly due to vocabulary differences. In addition, teachers' language skills are also an important factor; they often mix Indonesian, Malay and English terms when explaining the material. While some terms can be conveyed well, technical vocabulary remains a significant challenge. Even with the use of visual aids, students, especially those with low language skills, still struggle to understand some instructions and materials, requiring repeated explanations to achieve better understanding.

The interviews corroborated these observational findings by emphasizing two key areas:

Table 4. 1 Challenges in language barriers

Informant	Translating terms/Differences of meaning	Data Reduction
LB.P.1.1	Translating the term	...translating to Malay which is difficult to explain to students.
LB.P.2.1	Difference of meaning	The language is sometimes the same, but the meaning is different.
LB.P.3.1	Translating the term	Differences in language levels, barriers to understanding instructions
LB.P.4.1	Difference of meaning	The intonation of pronunciation is sometimes confusing, especially the different meanings
LB.P.5.1	Difference of meaning	Body and facial gestures are needed to help students understand language differences....

From the analysis, the main challenges teachers face in multilingual teaching can be divided into two main aspects: translating terms and differences in meaning. The challenge in translating terms was identified by two informants, namely

LB.P.1.1 and LB.P.3.1. These two informants highlighted that translating terms from English to Malay often requires additional effort, as the language has different structures and specific contexts of use. LB.P.1.1 revealed that translating terms to Malay is difficult and thus often requires additional explanations to ensure students understand. *“As teachers, our job is to make students understand the material, but we are often constrained in translating terms from English to Malay. For example, when translating a sentence such as ‘the uncle goes to the market’, we cannot directly translate it into ‘paman pergi ke pasar’ but must explain it more precisely, such as ‘pakcik pergi ke pasar’”* This is a challenge in the teaching process”. This becomes even more complex when students have limited language skills, as mentioned by LB.P.3.1, *“constraint in translating terms can also be a problem; for example, when translating terms from English to Malay, we may not be able to give the exact meaning, which could cause confusion among students”*.

In addition, the more dominant challenge is the difference of meaning, which was mentioned by three informants: LB.P.2.1, LB.P.4.1, and LB.P.5.1. LB.P.2.1 pointed out that although some words look

linguistically similar between English, Malay, and Indonesian, the meanings contained in them can be very different, thus often causing confusion among students. *“Language usage often shows similarities, but has different meanings. For example, in English language learning, there is the vocabulary “jar,” which in Indonesian means “jar.” However, students may still not understand the term”*. This is exacerbated by intonation and pronunciation, as expressed by LB.P.4.1, where teachers have to be careful in pronouncing certain words, as the wrong intonation can cause students to misunderstand the meaning. *“There are differences in meaning between Indonesian and Malay that make me have to be more sensitive. These differences in meaning, although seemingly trivial, greatly affect daily communication and often pose a funny and confusing challenge”*. LB.P.5.1 added that in some cases, this difference in meaning can only be explained through the help of body gestures or facial expressions. This shows the importance of non-verbal communication in overcoming this language barrier, even though all parties come from the same language clumps. *“The difference in meaning creates challenges in communication and understanding in the classroom.*

A specific example that often happens is when I give the affirmation “ini gampang” but I express it in a more casual way. Instantly, some students have a tense and silent expression, while others laugh. This happens because the word “gampang,” which in our context can be interpreted as “easy,” but in this situation causes confusion because it can have different connotations. In certain contexts, students associate it with the term “bastard child,” which can mean something negative” (LB.P.5.1)

1.2 Difficulty in Cultural Adaptation

In terms of cultural awareness, teachers are still in the process of adjusting to cultural differences, particularly with regard to local customs and language nuances. They show flexibility in adjusting teaching methods based on students' needs, although understanding them takes time. In addition, in handling cultural misunderstandings, teachers often resolve misunderstandings by directing group discussions and using visual examples. However, the time it takes to find the most effective approach is often quite long, requiring teachers to constantly search for the right way to explain concepts to students.

The interviews corroborated these observational findings by emphasizing two key areas:

Table 4. 2. *Difficulty in cultural adaptation*

Informant	Adapting to Local Culture and Traditions/Communication Barriers in Adapting to Local Language	Data Reduction
DC.P.1.2	Adapting to Local Culture and Traditions	Different learning methods require adaptation...
DC.P.2.2	Adapting to Local Culture and Traditions	Culture and language remain different, despite being of the same family....
DC.P.3.2	Communication Barriers in Adapting to Local Language	The example I gave in Indonesia does not exist in Malaysia
DC.P.4.2	Communication Barriers in Adapting to Local Language	It is difficult to catch their meaning if they speak fast, especially with different vocabulary.
DC.P.5.2	Adapting to Local Culture and Traditions	Greater effort to understand new cultures, such as different schedules and religious traditions

The analysis identified two key challenges teachers face in adapting to a new cultural and linguistic environment: adapting to Local Culture and Traditions and Communication Barriers in Adapting to Local Language. Of the five informants, three (DC.P.1.2, DC.P.2.2, and DC.P.5.2) emphasized challenges related to adapting to local culture and traditions, while two (DC.P.3.2 and DC.P.4.2) focused on communication barriers in adapting to the local language.

Adapting to Local Culture and Traditions emerges as a significant theme. Informants pointed out that differences in teaching methods, cultural expectations, and daily practices require teachers to make considerable adjustments. For instance, DC.P.1.2 highlighted that differing teaching methods necessitated adaptation to fit the cultural context of the classroom. *“The teaching style or learning methods here are also very different, so we need to adapt. Here, there are more discussions and group activities compared to the traditional methods we are used to in Indonesia”*. Similarly, DC.P.2.2 noted that, despite sharing linguistic roots, cultural differences between Indonesia and Malaysia posed challenges in understanding local norms and traditions. *“I was also*

a little surprised by the cultural differences that exist here. This shows the importance of adjusting to different cultural contexts to improve understanding and interaction in the classroom”. DC.P.5.2 elaborated further, emphasizing the additional effort needed to adjust to new traditions and schedules, such as religious practices and local time arrangements, which often diverged from what they were accustomed to in their home country. *“The main challenge I faced was the need for greater effort to adjust to the new culture. This included understanding the students' intentions as well as the cultural differences that existed. For example, the significant time difference of 2 hours from Indonesia made all activities change”*

In contrast, Communication Barriers in Adapting to Local Language addresses teachers' linguistic hurdles when working in a multilingual environment. Informants highlighted how language proficiency and vocabulary differences between students and teachers impede effective communication. DC.P.3.2 identified that varying levels of language skills among students made it challenging to ensure instructions were universally understood. *“Differences in ways of communicating*

and collaborating can hinder effectiveness in teaching and learning”. Furthermore, DC.P.4.2 pointed out that the speed at which students spoke and differences in vocabulary made it difficult for teachers to grasp the intended meaning, thus creating barriers to effective teaching and learning. “One of the main challenges I faced while adjusting to the new culture here was the speed of their speech, which sometimes made me feel left out. In addition, Indonesia and Malaysia have a different vocabulary; even if a word is the same, the meaning can differ. This requires me to be more sensitive when communicating, but it also often leads to confusion”

1.3 Challenges in Multicultural Class Management

Observations show that practicing teachers successfully manage multicultural classrooms with an inclusive, fair and responsive approach to cultural differences. They actively encouraged the participation of students from different backgrounds through group assignments that involved cross-cultural interactions and the selection of relevant themes. One of the practicing teachers stated, “I try to engage all students, even the less confident ones, by asking simple questions,” emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive learning

environment. In terms of equity, practicing teachers maintain a balance of attention between students, ensuring all students feel valued. A participant added, “I always try to avoid the impression of taking sides,” which is consistent with the theory of the importance of culturally bias-free classroom management. In addition, practicing teachers demonstrated good skills in handling cultural conflicts through open discussions and visual examples. A practicing teacher explained, “When misunderstandings occur, I invite students to discuss and listen to each other,” although conflict resolution times may vary. Despite the challenges, the practicing teachers demonstrated good awareness and skills, but some felt the need to improve their understanding of students' culture to anticipate potential conflicts or imbalances.

The interviews corroborated these observational findings by emphasizing two key areas:

Table 4. 3 Challenges in multicultural class management

Informant	Students' Vocabulary Level/Adjustment of Teaching Methods	Data Reduction
CM.P.1.3	Students' Vocabulary Level	...the material can be made a little more difficult.

CM.P.2.3	Adjustment of Teaching Methods	Teaching in ESL requires a focus on different vocabulary, and I use interactive methods....
CM.P.3.3	Adjustment of Teaching Methods	...I add interactive elements such as casual discussions.
CM.P.4.3	Students' Vocabulary Level	There is no big difference, but the language barrier still makes me struggle more.
CM.P.5.3	Students' Vocabulary Level	In ESL students understand English vocabulary more easily than in Indonesia, so I often provide clarification of meaning

Based on the table above, the Multicultural Class Management challenge findings show two main themes, namely the Adjustment of Materials and Student Vocabulary and the Use of Interactive Methods to Increase Student Engagement. Of the five informants interviewed, three of them (CM.P.1.3, CM.P.4.3, and CM.P.5.3) highlighted the importance of adjusting materials and student vocabulary. At the same time, the other two (CM.P.2.3 and CM.P.3.3) emphasized more on using interactive methods to create better student engagement.

Material Adjustment and Student Vocabulary were the themes that were mentioned the most.

Teachers adjust the material's difficulty level to accommodate ESL students' more advanced vocabulary compared to students in Indonesia. For example, informant CM.P.1.3 noted that materials can be made slightly more complex *"In the ESL environment, I like that their vocabulary is more advanced than in Indonesia, which allows me to give slightly more difficult material"*, CM.P.5.3 emphasized the importance of clarifying the meaning of certain vocabulary to ensure students' understanding *"in Indonesia, students feel more insecure because the language feels foreign. In ESL classes, the use of English vocabulary in Malay becomes more common. My adjustment is more about reminding them that this vocabulary comes from English, and I write it on the board"* Nevertheless, the language barrier remains a significant challenge, as expressed by CM.P.4.3, who found it difficult to navigate the language barrier, although the difference was not too great. *"for classroom management, the only challenge is the language barrier, I struggle more to adjust their language"*.

Meanwhile, Adjustment of Teaching Methods was the second most frequent theme. Teachers use interactive methods like casual

discussions and participation-based activities to create a more inclusive and engaging classroom atmosphere. Informant CM.P.2.3 mentioned that interactive methods help support student understanding, *“Teaching in ESL requires a focus on different vocabulary, and I use interactive methods to support students' understanding”*, while CM.P.3.3 added that casual discussions are important in increasing student engagement in the classroom *“In ESL students are more focused on language, so I add interactive elements such as casual discussions”*.

2. Strategies do the pre-service EFL teachers use to overcome the challenges

In this section, we will explore the strategies employed by pre-service EFL teachers to address the challenges they encounter during their teaching practicum. The findings focus on three key areas: cross-cultural communication strategies, classroom management strategies, and teaching materials and approaches adjustment.

2.1. Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies

In multicultural classroom management, cross-cultural communication is one of the main challenges faced by teachers, especially in delivering materials to students with diverse language backgrounds. Based

on interviews with five informants, it was found that teachers use two main strategies to overcome this obstacle: Non-Verbal Communication and Language Simplification and Adjustment. These strategies help teachers bridge language and cultural differences so that students can understand the material better.

The data shows what strategies the teacher used.

Table 4. 4 Cross-cultural communication strategies

Informant	Use of Non-Verbal Communication/Simplification and Adaptation of Language	Data Reduction
CC.P.1.1	Use of Non-Verbal Communication	Body gestures and facial expressions are necessary to help students understand the meaning.
CC.P.2.1	Simplification and Adaptation of Language	Simplify terms or repeat them to ensure students don't misunderstand.
CC.P.3.1	Use of Non-Verbal Communication	Body language is used to explain terms that are difficult to explain verbally
CC.P.4.1	Use of Non-Verbal Communication	Intonation and word emphasis help prevent misunderstandings

CC.P.5.1	Simplification and Adaptation of Language	Vocabulary is adapted to the local context to reduce misinterpretation
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Based on the table above, the findings show two main strategies used by teachers in dealing with cross-cultural communication challenges in multicultural classrooms, namely the Use of Non-Verbal Communication and Language Simplification and Adjustment. Of the five informants, three of them (CC.P.1.1, CC.P.3.1, and CC.P.4.1) highlighted the importance of using non-verbal communication, while the other two (CC.P.2.1 and CC.P.5.1) emphasized language simplification and adjustment to support student understanding.

The use of Non-Verbal Communication is the dominant strategy in dealing with language barriers. Teachers utilize body gestures, facial expressions, and intonation to help students understand the material. Informant CC.P.1.1 highlighted the importance of using body gestures and facial expressions to explain meaning to students *“I also utilize non-verbal communication, such as gestures and facial expressions, as well as visual aids to aid student understanding. With this approach, I try to ensure that all students can follow the lesson well”*, CC.P.3.1

noted that body language is effectively used to explain terms that are difficult to explain verbally. *“Using visual aids, simple language, or even translation (if needed) is helpful”*. In addition, CC.P.4.1 adds that proper intonation and word emphasis help prevent misunderstandings, which often occur due to language differences *“I use non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and gestures, to show curiosity and help students understand the context of my question, so they feel more comfortable answering”*

Instead, Language Simplification and Adaptation of Language is used to ensure students understand the material without difficulty. Teachers simplify terms or repeat them to avoid misunderstandings, as mentioned by CC.P.2.1. *“It is enough to show visuals, as I gave an example earlier when in English the vocabulary is ‘toples’ which means jar. However, in Malay, they don't know what jars are in English. The meaning of jar and also the meaning of ‘toples’. So, in the end, we show visuals that resemble jars”* (CC.P.2.1). In addition, CC.P.5.1 reveals that vocabulary adjustment based on local context can reduce interpretation errors, so students can more easily relate the material to their

experiences. *“I simplify and adjust the language I use to make it easier for students to understand, such as translating terms directly when necessary”* (CC.P.5.1)

2.2. Classroom Management Strategies

In a multicultural classroom, effective classroom management relies heavily on the teacher's ability to encourage inclusive student participation and balance attention between students of different ability levels. Based on interviews with five informants, two main strategies emerged as solutions to this challenge: Encouraging Inclusive Participation, Balancing Attention, and Maintaining Classroom Harmony. Both strategies play an important role in creating a classroom atmosphere that supports students' diverse cultures and abilities so that all students can actively participate and feel valued.

The data shows what strategies the teacher used.

Table 4. 5. Classroom management strategies

Informant	Encouraging Inclusive Participation/Balancing Attention and Maintaining Classroom Harmony	Data Reduction
CM.P.1.2	Encouraging Inclusive Participation	Involving all students in group discussions to make them more active
CM.P.2.2	Balancing Attention and Maintaining Classroom Harmony	Low-ability students are given additional attention without neglecting other students
CM.P.3.2	Encouraging Inclusive Participation	Initial discussion of student culture creates a respectful classroom atmosphere
CM.P.4.2	Encouraging Inclusive Participation	Group work with students of different ability levels
CM.P.5.2	Balancing Attention and Maintaining Classroom Harmony	Clear classroom rules help prevent conflict between students

Based on the table above, the findings show two main strategies teachers use in dealing with the challenges of multicultural classroom management, namely Encouraging Inclusive Participation and Balancing Attention and Maintaining Classroom Harmony. Of the five informants, three of them

(CM.P.1.2, CM.P.3.2, and CM.P.4.2) highlighted the importance of encouraging inclusive participation, while the other two (CM.P.2.2 and CM.P.5.2) emphasized the importance of balancing attention to students and maintaining harmony in the classroom.

Encouraging Inclusive Participation is a dominant theme in classroom management strategies. Teachers use a variety of approaches to ensure all students, regardless of their abilities, can actively participate in learning. Informant CM.P.1.2 noted the importance of involving all students in group discussions to make them more active *“I implement classroom management strategies that encourage inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel comfortable to contribute and ask questions”*, CM.P.3.2 highlighted that initial discussions about students' cultures can create a respectful classroom atmosphere *“I implement classroom management strategies that encourage inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel valued and motivated to contribute to learning”*. In addition, CM.P.4.2 revealed that group work with students of different ability levels helps improve collaboration and understanding between students *“This approach creates a dynamic classroom atmosphere and*

encourages inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel valued and engaged in the learning process”

In contrast, Balancing Attention and Maintaining Classroom Harmony focuses on strategies to ensure students feel equally supported in the learning environment. Teachers try to overcome the language barrier in an inclusive way, using discussion and visualization to clarify the material being taught. This allows students, regardless of language differences, to remain comfortable and able to participate in learning without feeling difficult or alienated due to language differences., as expressed by CM.P.2.2 *“I prioritize open communication through discussions and providing relevant visual examples. This approach helps to create a harmonious and balanced classroom atmosphere, where every student feels cared for and can contribute without feeling marginalized”*. In addition, CM.P.5.2 highlights that clear classroom rules help prevent conflicts between students, thus creating a harmonious classroom atmosphere conducive to learning *“I usually reprimand them in a gentle and friendly manner. I try always to be that way, especially since they are in the teenage age range*

which can be difficult to approach. This approach helps me maintain a balance of attention and create a harmonious classroom atmosphere where all students feel valued and comfortable contributing”.

2.3. Adjustment of Teaching Material and Approaches

In multicultural classroom management, adjustments to the teaching materials and approaches used are essential to support the understanding of students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Based on interviews with five informants, the two main strategies that emerged were Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials for Students and Combining Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods. These two strategies play a major role in creating an inclusive learning atmosphere and supporting maximum student engagement in the classroom.

Table 4. 6. Adjustment of teaching material and approaches

Informant	Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials/ Incorporating Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods	Data Reduction
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AT.P.1.3	Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials	Learning examples are adapted to be culturally relevant to students.
AT.P.2.3	Incorporating Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods	Language games are used to increase student engagement
AT.P.3.3	Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials	Familiar teaching materials accelerate student understanding
AT.P.4.3	Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials	Materials are relevant to local culture but still challenge students
AT.P.5.3	Incorporating Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods	Teaching methods focus on recall to help students understand the material

Based on the table above, the findings on Adjusting Teaching Materials and Approaches show two main strategies teachers use to deal with the challenges of managing a multicultural classroom: Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials for Students and Combining Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods. Of the five informants, four (AT.P.1.3, AT.P.3.3, AT.P.4.3, and AT.P.5.3) emphasized using materials that are relevant to the local culture and familiar to students, while the other two informants (AT.P.2.3 and AT.P.5.3)

focused on using interactive and simplified methods to increase student engagement.

Using Culturally Relevant and Familiar Materials for Students was a theme that emerged more frequently. Teachers try to adapt the subject matter to the students' cultural context to make it easier to understand. Informant AT.P.1.3 mentioned that learning examples are adapted to be relevant to students' culture *"I try to adjust the difficulty level of the questions to their abilities so that my teaching is relevant to the student's needs"*, AT.P.3.3 stated that using materials that students are familiar with can accelerate their understanding *"I often adapt the teaching materials to the local cultural context to make it easier for students to understand"*, AT.P.4.3 also emphasized the importance of materials that are relevant to the local culture but still challenge students so that they do not feel bored or too easy. This suggests that cultural appropriation of materials is important, but it should still remain a challenge for students. *"I adjust it to the abilities and needs of students, during teaching I ask 'have you studied this?' the I observe if there is something that the students have not understood, the I will discuss what they do not understand"*

Meanwhile, Combining Interactive and Simplified Teaching Methods becomes a strategy that helps increase

student engagement. Teachers use various interactive methods, such as language games, to make students more active in learning. Informant AT.P.2.3 revealed that language games are used to increase student engagement “I integrate interactive and simplified teaching methods so that students can more easily understand the material. With this approach, I ensure that my teaching matches the student's needs and level of understanding”, AT.P.5.3 added that methods that focus on recall are very effective in helping students understand the material more deeply “*I emphasize memorization to support memory skills, but also deep understanding. I use informal language to make it easier for students to understand the material, and I use gestures and movements to create a dynamic learning experience, different from their daily routine*”

B. Discussion

In this part, the researcher presents the answers to the research questions. Which seeks to address the formulation of the problem: 1) To identify the primary challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers from UIN Walisongo during their international teaching practicum in Malaysian ESL classrooms, 2) To investigate the strategies employed by these pre-service teachers to overcome the challenges encountered in their international teaching practicum. This part connects

the research findings from the previous part to the research questions. More explanations are provided below:

1. Challenges Encountered by EFL Pre-Service Teachers during Their International Teaching Practicum

To obtain the results of the first formulation problem's results, the researcher employed observation and interview. The researcher presented the observation and interview data results in the previous section. The following is a discussion of the initial formulation problem outcomes.

1.1 Language Barriers

Language barrier is a major challenge faced by pre-service EFL teachers during their international teaching practice in Malaysia. Most of the learners in this study reported difficulties in conveying the teaching material clearly to the students due to the difference in the level of language acquisition between the teacher and the students. These difficulties are not only related to pronunciation or vocabulary issues but also in terms of syntax and understanding of sentence structure, which often affects teaching and student comprehension. Some participants revealed that they feel inhibited in explaining complex linguistic concepts, which often leads to incomprehension from students.

Previous research by Kabilan et al. (2020) also found the language barrier as one of the main challenges for pre-service EFL teachers in Malaysia. Their research identified that the issue of clear and effective communication is often a barrier in teaching English as a second language, even more so in complex multilingual contexts such as in Malaysia. Students who have varying levels of English proficiency require more flexible approaches and adaptive teaching strategies in order to understand the material well. In this context, language barriers are not just technical issues but also reflect gaps in the communication process between teachers and students that impact the mastery of teaching materials. Therefore, EFL teaching is not only about knowledge transfer but also about creating an effective communication environment where the language used by the teacher can be well understood by the students.

The findings also highlight the importance of developing more flexible communication skills for pre-service EFL teachers. One suggested strategy is scaffolding or providing support to help students understand more complex material, which is then gradually reduced as their understanding improves. Vygotsky (1978), in his zone of proximal development

(ZPD) theory, explains that this support allows students to achieve better understanding through interaction with teachers or more experienced peers. In practice, scaffolding can be applied by using visual aids such as pictures, diagrams, or videos to support the explanation of the material. In this way, students who may not understand verbal instructions can obtain information in another way that is easier to digest. Therefore, pre-service teachers need to be trained to develop communication skills that can overcome language barriers, such as using various learning media and simpler language.

Furthermore, pre-service teachers also need training in managing linguistic diversity in the classroom. For example, in Malaysia, students may have varying levels of English proficiency, and it is possible that some students are more fluent in Malay or other regional languages. Therefore, pre-service teachers must be trained to utilize local languages or other languages of instruction to help explain material to students who struggle in English. In this case, more inclusive and adaptive teaching strategies are key to successful English language teaching in multicultural classrooms. In addition, pre-service teachers need to be taught how to use body language and other non-

verbal expressions to support effective communication in the classroom. Thus, teaching English can be done in a way that is more easily understood by students with different language backgrounds. The practical implication of the findings is that the training of pre-service EFL teachers should pay attention to cross-language communication skills. Pre-service teachers need to be given specific training in using language that is accessible to all students, developing skills in the use of visual aids, as well as training in understanding ways to overcome language barriers in their teaching.

1.2 Difficulty in Cultural Adaptation

Difficulty in cultural adaptation was also a significant challenge faced by the EFL teacher candidates during their international teaching practice in Malaysia. Most participants felt awkward in interacting with students, both in social and pedagogical aspects, due to the different cultural values, norms, and habits that exist in Malaysia compared to Indonesia. For example, some participants revealed that they had difficulty

understanding the way Malaysian students interacted in class, whether in the way they spoke, how they asked questions, or how they respected the teacher's authority.

Previous research by Khusniyah et al. (2023) also revealed similar challenges in terms of cultural adaptation for pre-service EFL teachers during their international teaching practice in Malaysia. In the study, the participants were surprised by the way students in Malaysia listened more and asked fewer questions directly to the teacher. This culture is very different from the educational culture in Indonesia, where students are often more active in asking questions and discussing with the teacher.

This research found that cultural adaptation is more than just understanding the way of speaking or the prevailing social norms. When teachers understand and appreciate students' cultural backgrounds, they can create a more inclusive learning environment that supports students' development.

In the context of EFL teaching, cultural adaptation includes teachers' ability to align teaching materials with local cultural values and develop culturally sensitive teaching strategies. For example, an understanding of local customs and habits in

Malaysia, such as how students respect teachers or how they interact in class, can help pre-service EFL teachers adapt their teaching style to align with students' expectations and needs. One of the challenges found in this study is how pre-service EFL teachers feel pressured to adapt their teaching style to suit local cultural expectations without compromising the quality of teaching. This also reflects the importance of training on cultural competence, where pre-service teachers are given a better understanding of how to appreciate students' cultural diversity and adapt their teaching practices to such diversity.

Khusniyah et al. (2023) also pointed out that one strategy that can help pre-service teachers overcome this challenge is introducing local social norms and customs during training sessions before teaching practice. This allows pre-service teachers to be better prepared for cultural differences and adapt more quickly when in the classroom. Thus, pre-service teachers' training should include pedagogical and socio-cultural aspects that can support their understanding of multicultural classroom dynamics. The practical implication of this finding is that pre-service EFL teachers need to be given more in-depth training on the importance of cultural competence in

teaching. This training should include knowledge about social customs and local values, as well as ways to adapt teaching materials to students' culture so that the learning process can run more effectively and respect the cultural diversity that exists in the classroom.

1.3 Multicultural Class Management

Multicultural classroom management is one of the biggest challenges that pre-service EFL teachers face during their international teaching practice in Malaysia. Classes in Malaysia consist of students with very diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which creates challenges in classroom management and interaction. The findings of this study show that learners find it difficult to balance their attention between students who are more fluent in English and those who are weaker. This led to some students feeling neglected, affecting their motivation and participation in the class. One of the main difficulties in managing a multicultural classroom is the differences in students' language abilities. In an EFL classroom, students come with varying levels of mastery of English, which often creates gaps in comprehension of the teaching material. In these

situations, pre-service EFL teachers feel pressured to give equal attention to all students while ensuring that the material taught can be understood by students with different language abilities. Some participants reported that they often struggle to manage classroom dynamics, where smarter students often dominate conversations or discussions, while weaker students tend to be silent or passive in the learning process.

This finding is in line with the research of Khusniyah et al. (2023) who also noted similar challenges in classroom management with students of diverse abilities. Their research revealed that more able students in English often filled the classroom more actively, while lower ability students found it difficult to follow the learning optimally. This challenge leads to an imbalance in class participation and students' potential to develop their language skills well. Teachers must ensure that all students feel valued and are allowed to actively participate in learning. One effective strategy in multicultural classroom management is to group students based on their abilities, both for group tasks and discussions. This approach allows students to learn at their own pace and receive more intensive attention from the teacher or their more competent peers.

A concrete example of a grouping strategy is to divide students into heterogeneous groups, where each group consists of students with different abilities. In group work, more advanced students can help struggling students, while weaker students can get direct help from their peers in understanding the teaching material. In addition, more diverse groups can enhance social interaction and communication skills between students from different backgrounds, which is particularly important in the context of a multicultural classroom. In addition to grouping, another strategy that can be implemented is using project-based learning. In project-based learning, students work together to complete a more complex task or problem. This approach allows students to share their knowledge, experience, and skills with each other. Students with higher language skills can help their weaker peers, and conversely, weaker students can contribute through creative thinking and new ideas that may not have crossed the minds of more advanced students. This creates an opportunity for mutually supportive cooperation, which can help create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

However, managing a multicultural classroom is not just limited to grouping students or implementing project-based learning. Teachers must also develop skills in managing students' behavioral diversity, which can vary greatly in a multicultural classroom context. Students from different cultural backgrounds may have different ways of expressing themselves, asking questions, or interacting with the teacher and their peers. In this study, some participants reported that they found it difficult to deal with differences in student behavior, for example how quieter or more polite students often participate less in group discussions. In this context, teachers need to be able to recognize and respond to these differences in a positive and supportive way.

In addition, training for pre-service EFL teachers should focus more on managerial skills in dealing with highly diverse classes. For example, training on how to effectively manage class time is essential because in a multicultural classroom, teachers must ensure that each student gets sufficient opportunities to speak, participate, and complete their tasks. Limited time can be an obstacle in classroom management, especially when students require more attention. One managerial strategy that can be applied

is effective time management. For example, when there is a class discussion, teachers can ensure that every student has a chance to speak without anyone dominating the conversation. Using timers or a clear duration for each activity or discussion can help keep all students engaged and ensure that the learning process remains structured.

The practical implication of these findings is that pre-service EFL teachers need to be trained in more in-depth and varied multicultural classroom management skills. This training should not only include grouping and time management strategies but also training in understanding student behavior, managing cultural diversity, and optimizing students' active participation in learning. By developing better classroom management skills, pre-service EFL teachers can create a more inclusive and effective environment that allows all students to learn in a way that suits their needs.

In this context, training on cultural competence and diversity-based classroom management is essential to ensure that pre-service teachers can handle the various challenges that arise in a multicultural classroom more confidently and effectively. This will contribute to successful student

learning as well as the professional development of pre-service teachers in dealing with the dynamics of teaching in international classrooms.

2. Strategies do These Pre-Service Teachers Use to Overcome the Challenges

To obtain the results of the second formulation problem, the researcher employed only one instrument: an interview. The researcher presented the interview data results in the previous section. In this section, we will discuss the strategies used by pre-service EFL teachers to overcome the challenges they faced during the teaching practice program. The discussion focused on three main areas: cross-cultural communication strategies, classroom management strategies, and customization of teaching materials and teaching approaches. Based on the interviews with five informants, it can be concluded that these pre-service EFL teachers demonstrated outstanding adaptation skills in overcoming the various challenges they encountered in a multicultural classroom, particularly in the context of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in Malaysia. This finding reinforces the findings of previous research but also provides new insights into how these challenges are faced in the local context. The following is a discussion of the initial formulation problem outcomes:

2.1 Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies

In the context of a multicultural classroom, cross-cultural communication becomes a very important and often intractable challenge, especially in English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching environments. Students come from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which can affect their understanding of the material being taught. Therefore, pre-service teachers use various strategies to ensure that their communication with students remains effective despite differences in language and culture. Based on interviews with five informants, we identified two main strategies the pre-service teachers used: non-verbal communication and language simplification and adjustment.

One of the main strategies used most frequently is the use of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and voice intonation, is often the bridge that connects teacher and student understanding when language differences can hinder communication. This finding is in line with research conducted by Khusniyah et al. (2023), which showed that non-verbal communication is very effective in overcoming language barriers. For example, hand gestures or facial expressions can

provide additional clues that help students understand the teacher's intentions without having to rely entirely on words. Informant CC.P.1.1 explained that he uses facial expressions and hand gestures to clarify certain words or concepts, which allows students who do not fully understand English to still grasp the intended meaning.

In addition, language simplification and adjustment strategies are also very important to ensure that students can follow the learning despite differences in language acquisition. The pre-service teachers realize that the use of overly complex vocabulary can confuse students, especially those who are unfamiliar with English. Therefore, they adopt a simpler approach by reducing the use of complex terms and focusing more on using words that are easy to understand. Informants CC.P.2.1 and CC.P.5.1 emphasized the importance of simplifying the language and repeating important words for students to follow the lesson well. For example, CC.P.2.1 explained that he often repeats important words and gives simpler definitions to ensure that students understand the material. This allows students to access the material without feeling overwhelmed by technical terms or difficult phrases.

This language simplification strategy is particularly important in teaching in multicultural classrooms, where students have different levels of language acquisition. In teaching English as a second language, pre-service teachers often adjust the level of language difficulty to suit students' abilities. Informant CC.P.5.1 shared that they often replace unfamiliar vocabulary with terms that are more familiar to students or include definitions in more understandable language. This strategy also reduces the potential for confusion and accelerates students' understanding of the material.

Furthermore, language simplification is not just about choosing easier words but also about customizing instructions. Some pre-service teachers revealed that they give instructions in a simpler form or use shorter sentences. For example, instructions such as "Please open your books" can be changed to "Please open the book to page 5" to avoid confusion. Informant CC.P.3.1 also noted that they often give instructions gradually and repeat them several times so that students can follow them well. In addition, there are also vocabulary adjustments that are more based on the local context, as expressed by informant CC.P.5.1. In a multicultural classroom where students

come from various cultural backgrounds, using vocabulary that is familiar to them can reduce misunderstandings. For example, teaching about food or daily activities using terms that are closer to the local culture will make it easier for students to relate the material to their experiences. This is very helpful in creating a learning experience that is more relevant and easily understood by students while creating a sense of connection between the learning material and students' real world.

This language simplification strategy also shows the importance of student involvement in the learning process. When the language used is easier to understand, students tend to be more confident to actively participate in class discussions. As such, pre-service teachers can overcome cross-cultural communication difficulties and ensure that all students can participate in the learning process, regardless of their language background. This finding reminds us of the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, as described by Vygotsky (1978), who stated that effective learning occurs when the material being taught is connected to students' cultural background.

2.2 Classroom Management Strategies

Classroom management is one of the main challenges in teaching in a multicultural classroom, especially when dealing with students from different cultural backgrounds and different language proficiency levels. In this context, EFL teacher candidates must develop effective classroom management strategies to create a conducive and inclusive learning environment. Based on the interviews with five informants, we found two main strategies they used to overcome classroom management challenges in a multicultural environment: encouraging inclusive participation and maintaining attention balance and classroom harmony.

Encouraging inclusive participation is one of the most frequently used strategies to ensure that all students can participate in the learning process, regardless of their language ability. The pre-service teachers recognize that some students may feel marginalized or lack the confidence to speak in English, especially if they feel they do not know the language well enough. Therefore, they strive for a supportive classroom atmosphere where every student is given equal opportunities to speak and engage in discussions. With inclusive participation, teachers

create opportunities for students to interact, share their thoughts, and learn from each other. In multicultural classrooms, where there are large differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds, inclusive teaching can reduce the sense of alienation among students. For example, in group discussions, students are given the opportunity to talk about their experiences, which often include elements of their own culture. This not only improves language comprehension but also builds mutual respect among students with different backgrounds.

In addition, maintaining a balance of attention to all students is very important in classroom management in a multicultural classroom. Pre-service teachers must be able to give balanced attention to all students, both those who quickly understand the material and those who may take longer. Teachers adapt their teaching style to suit students' level of understanding to ensure that all students feel valued and supported. For example, struggling students can be given additional explanations or more time to understand the material, while more advanced students can be given additional challenges to develop their skills further.

The importance of this balance of attention also extends to addressing the social dynamics within the classroom. Pre-service teachers often face the challenge of maintaining good social relationships with students who come from very different cultures. Cultural differences can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or conflicts between students. For this reason, the strategy used by pre-service teachers is to organize student interactions so that they can work together and respect each other. Informant CM.P.5.1 revealed that she often holds discussion sessions on cultural differences to increase understanding and mutual respect between students. This approach is very important as it can help reduce potential conflicts and create a more harmonious classroom atmosphere.

In addition, pre-service teachers also often use a collaborative problem-solving approach when facing challenges in classroom management. Informants CM.P.4.1 and CM.P.5.1 explained that they sometimes ask students to work together in groups to find solutions to problems that arise, be it related to learning tasks or social interactions between students. In this way, students are invited to be involved in the decision-making process and feel that their voices are

valued, which in turn increases ownership of classroom rules and dynamics.

Thus, effective classroom management strategies in multicultural classrooms depend not only on behavior management techniques but also on the teacher's ability to create an inclusive environment, respect differences, and pay attention to each student equally. The pre-service teachers involved in this study indicated that cultural sensitivity and awareness of social dynamics in the classroom are key in creating an effective and harmonious learning environment.

2.3 Adjustment of Teaching Material and Approaches

Adapting teaching materials and teaching approaches is crucial in overcoming the challenges of a multicultural classroom. In a class of students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, teachers must ensure that the teaching materials are relevant, easy to understand, and accessible to all students. Based on interviews with informants, we found two main strategies used by pre-service teachers to adapt teaching materials and teaching approaches: using locally relevant materials and incorporating interactive and simplified teaching methods

One of the main strategies used is using locally relevant materials. Informants AT.P.1.1 and AT.P.4.1 explained that they often adapt examples in learning to cultural contexts that are more familiar to students. For example, when teaching topics about food or celebrations, teachers can use examples that are closer to local culture, such as festivals or traditions that students are familiar with. This makes the teaching materials easier to understand and more interesting for students, as they can relate the lessons to their daily experiences. In addition, adjustments to teaching materials also include the use of local examples in the explanations given to students. In learning about history or geography, for example, some informants mentioned that they prefer to use examples that are relevant to students' lives rather than relying on international examples that may be foreign to them. These adjustments not only facilitate understanding but also make students feel that the material taught is more meaningful and relevant to their daily lives.

Pre-service teachers can also appreciate the diversity of students in their classrooms by using teaching materials that are more relevant to local culture. When students feel that the teaching materials reflect their culture, they will feel more valued and

more motivated to learn. For example, AT.P.3.1 revealed that she often uses local folktales or legends in learning to introduce new vocabulary or explain certain concepts. This not only helps students understand the material in an easier way but also introduces them to the cultural values that exist in their society. Interactive and simplified teaching methods are also very helpful in creating a more inclusive learning experience. As revealed by AT.P.2.1, pre-service teachers often use activities involving students directly, such as language games and group discussions. These activities allow students to actively engage and practice the language they are learning in a more relaxed and fun context. With this method, students learn passively and develop their communication skills in real social situations.

One example of a strategy found in this study is role-play, which helps students experience the use of language in everyday situations. AT.P.4.1 shared that she often uses the role play technique to teach dialog or conversation in situations they often encounter, such as shopping at the market or talking with friends. This technique helps students to be more confident in using English because they feel that what they learn can be directly applied in real life. This adaptation of

teaching materials and teaching approaches also includes selecting learning media that are appropriate for student's level of understanding. In multicultural classrooms, visual and immersive learning media, such as videos, pictures, or diagrams, are often used to support the understanding of students who may struggle with verbal explanations. By using diverse media, teachers ensure that teaching materials are accessible to students with various learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. Finally, the customization of teaching materials also involves flexibility in teaching. The pre-service teachers we interviewed often changed their teaching strategies dynamically to suit the needs of different students. As explained by AT.P.5.1, she often reflects after each lesson to evaluate whether the approach used has been effective or needs to be adjusted again based on student responses.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This represents the last chapter of this project. After discussing the research findings that center on, the research presents some conclusions and recommendations from this study related to

A. Conclusion

This study identified three main challenges faced by pre-service EFL teachers during their International Teaching Practices (ITPs) in ESL classrooms in Malaysia: language challenges, cultural adaptation and multicultural classroom management. Each of these challenges reflects the complexity of multilingual and multicultural learning environments and demands the implementation of specific strategies to create effective learning processes.

Pre-service teachers encounter significant language challenges when teaching in multilingual classrooms, including differences in vocabulary, intonation, and pronunciation. These linguistic variations can hinder the clarity of communication, making it difficult for students to grasp the material being taught. Cultural diversity among students presents significant challenges for pre-service teachers, particularly regarding the understanding of social norms, local terminology, and varying student behaviors. Managing a multicultural classroom poses challenges

stemming from the diverse ability levels, learning habits, and expectations of students from various cultural backgrounds.

To address the language challenges, pre-service teachers employ several strategies. These include using visual aids such as pictures and flashcards to elucidate abstract concepts, simplifying language by utilizing vocabulary familiar to students, and speaking with clear intonation. Additionally, teachers often ask clarifying questions to ensure students have a solid understanding of the material. To effectively manage cultural adaptation, pre-service teachers implement several strategies. These include integrating local cultural elements into lessons to foster a sense of connection for students, learning local terms—such as replacing "catfish" with "keli"—to better fit the cultural context, and creating small group discussions to encourage participation from shy students. To overcome these management challenges, pre-service teachers adopt a variety of strategies. These include using activity-based learning approaches, such as games, poster-making, and group discussions, to foster an inclusive learning environment. Additionally, implementing small rewards as incentives helps to increase student engagement and maintain positive classroom dynamics. Teachers also analyze students' ability levels and adjust their teaching methods accordingly to ensure that all students can actively participate in the learning process.

B. Suggestion

After conducting this research, several suggestions can be considered by the research related to the findings. Here are some suggestions that the researcher would like to make:

1. For Practicing Teachers

Pre-service teachers are advised to improve their cross-cultural communication skills through intensive training before undergoing international teaching practice. This training could include the use of non-verbal communication strategies, such as gestures and facial expressions, as well as language simplification to ensure students easily understand the message. In addition, teachers need to prepare for language challenges by learning the differences in vocabulary and meaning between Indonesian, Malay, and English. These strategies can help teachers deliver materials more effectively and reduce misunderstandings.

2. For Educational Institutions

Educational institutions that organize international teaching practice programs are advised to provide comprehensive pre-departure training. This training should include aspects of cultural adaptation, multicultural classroom management, and teaching methods that are responsive to the needs of students in ESL environments. In addition, the duration of the teaching practice program should be extended to give pre-service teachers sufficient time to adapt to the new environment, both in terms of culture and education system. This will ensure a more meaningful and optimized experience for pre-service teachers.

3. For Future Research

Future research is recommended to further examine the long-term impact of international teaching practice experiences on teacher professionalism. Research could explore how this experience

affects teachers' ability to deal with teaching challenges in a multicultural environment and how the strategies used can be applied in other contexts. In addition, further research could also explore innovations in teaching methods and cultural conflict resolution strategies, thus making a broader contribution to the development of international teaching practice programs.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Letter of Research Prove



MAAHAD TAHFIZ AL-QURAN

"DARUL FALAH"

NO. PENDAFTARAN MAIS: 13S (7) 5 / 40

Jalan Masjid Peket 100 Simpang Lima Sungai Besar 45300 Selangor Darul Ehsan

No. Tel: 03-32140016 / 010-8012957 / 013-3031989. Websitc: www.darulalah.my

SURAT KETERANGAN

Yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Ustaz Mastor Bin Mohd Tohir

Jabatan : Kepala Sekolah

Unit : Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia

Menerangkan dengan sesungguhnya bahwa:

NO	Nama	NIM	Perguruan Tinggi
1.	Muflika Nurul Hadi	2103046161	UIN Walisongo Semarang

Telah melaksanakan Penelitian pada tanggal 26 Agustus – 15 September 2024 di lingkungan Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia, dengan judul:

"International Teaching Practicum: Challenges Encountered by Pre-Service EFL Teachers in Malaysian ESL Classrooms"

Demikian Surat Keterangan ini dibuat dengan sebenarnya dan untuk dipergunakan sebagaimana mestinya.

Selangor, 15 Agustus 2024

Kepala Sekolah



(Ustaz Mastor Bin Mohd Tohir), Kepala Sekolah
Head of Maahad Tahfiz Darul Falah, Selangor, Malaysia

Appendix 2. Table Observation Results

Category	Indicators	Observation Notes
1. Language Barriers		
- Clarity of teacher instructions	Are instructions clear and easy to follow for students from different language backgrounds?	- Students often do not understand instructions due to vocabulary differences. Teachers try to explain with visual aids. - Teachers have difficulty conveying concepts because the meaning of words in Malay is different from Indonesian. - Students often re-question because the terms in the material are not familiar to them.
- Teacher's language proficiency	Does the teacher adjust language effectively to suit the classroom context?	- Teachers have difficulty translating English to Malay terms accurately, such as in simple sentences. - The teacher often mixes Indonesian, Malay, and

		English terms to explain the material. - The teacher is able to convey some terms well, but struggles with technical vocabulary.
- Student understanding	Are there noticeable instances of students struggling to understand instructions or content?	- Teachers seem to have to explain repeatedly because students are not familiar with some keywords. - The use of visual aids helped, but low-ability students still had difficulty understanding. Students showed better understanding after the teacher used gestures and illustrations.
2. Difficulty in Cultural Adaptation		
- Cultural Awareness	Does the teacher use gestures or facial expressions	- Teachers are still adapting to cultural differences,

	effectively to support understanding?	including different language intonations and meanings between Indonesian and Malay. Adaptation to local habits is also a challenge
- Flexibility	Does the teacher adjust teaching methods to align with cultural expectations?	- Adjustments are made by changing teaching methods based on the needs of students in the classroom. Teachers are quite flexible, although sometimes it takes time to understand students' cultural needs.
- Handling Cultural Misunderstandings	How effectively does the teacher resolve cultural or linguistic misunderstandings in the classroom?	- Teachers use visual examples to explain concepts that are difficult for students to understand due to cultural differences. - The time needed to resolve misunderstanding

		s is quite long as the teacher is still searching for the best approach. - Group discussions are guided by the teacher to ease misunderstandings, although they are not always effective.
3. Multicultural Class Management		
- Inclusivity	Are students from all cultural backgrounds equally encouraged in classroom activities?	- The teacher tries to involve all students with low language skills appear less active - Teachers use effective questioning strategies to engage students more evenly
- Fairness	Does the teacher manage the class without showing cultural bias?	- The teacher managed to maintain a balance of attention between students from different backgrounds

- Conflict Resolution	How effectively does the teacher mediate cultural conflicts or tensions in the classroom?	- Teachers use open explanation to address differences in perception due to culture or language - Conflicts are often resolved through group discussions with teacher guidance
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Appendix 3: Interview Transcript

1. Participant 1

Interviewer : Muflikha Nurul Hadi

Participant : P1

Q: What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language backgrounds? Can you give specific examples?

A: “The main challenge I face is the language barrier. As a teacher, my job is to explain the material to the students. However, sometimes I have trouble translating from English to Malay. For example, when translating the phrase “the uncle goes to the market,” I have to explain it in a more precise way, like “pakcik is going to the market.”

Q: What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?

A: “The language difference is the main challenge. The intonation and teaching style here are also different, so I need to adapt. The learning facilities here are inadequate, so I have to be more creative in teaching”

Q: What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia? What adjustments did you make?

A: “I honestly prefer the ESL environment because the vocabulary used here is much more advanced than in Indonesia. For example, when students are asked to make example sentences about grammar, they often come up with very interesting examples with more complex vocabulary. This is very different from Indonesia, where the examples tend to be very basic, such as 'I go to the market' or 'Mom goes to the store'. Here, students use more varied and unfamiliar vocabulary, which makes it more challenging and interesting”

Q: How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students? Give examples of real situations.

A: “I always make sure if they really understand what I mean. For example, when I give an example like 'the lecturer gives me advice', I will ask, 'What is 'lecturer' here?' For example, I said 'dosen', so I need to make sure they know what a lecturer is. I find it important to confirm their understanding of vocabulary that they might not understand. I'll ask, 'Do you understand what this means?' If they do, I move on, but if not, I'll explain again.

I also try to provide clarification at the beginning, such as an introduction to how we teach in Indonesia. Maybe I can explain, 'Usually in Indonesia, the way of teaching is like this...' This helps students understand the context of the learning that I apply in the classroom.”

Q: What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom?

A: “I make a few statements and clarifications at the beginning of the lesson, such as explaining that we are from Indonesia and explaining the teaching methods that are commonly used there. I emphasize that although we use Malay, our understanding is still limited. Therefore, I often make clarifications. If students understand, we move on; if not, I will explain further. I also encourage students to ask questions if there is something they do not understand. In this way, I implement classroom management strategies that encourage inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel comfortable to contribute and ask questions”

Q: How would you adapt teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for students here? Explain why.

A: “Before teaching, I often join an assistance session to ask students what material they have learned before. I ask if there is anything they have learned, and if not, I will teach it. I also ask about their experiences in primary school in Malaysia to find out which materials they may not have understood. In the assignments, I try to adjust the difficulty level of the questions to their abilities, so that my teaching is relevant to the students' needs. Regarding teaching methods, I am not too worried because the students here are not very demanding of

certain methods. The most important thing for them is understanding the material. I strive to develop their critical thinking and ensure they can discover new knowledge. Students often feel that I teach too fast, so I try to reduce the speed and explain the material gradually and slowly. With this approach, I use material that is relevant and familiar to them, making the learning process more effective”

2. Participant 2

Interviewer : Muflikha Nurul Hadi

Participant : P2

Q: What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language backgrounds? Can you give specific examples?

A: “My challenge is the difference in language usage which can have different meanings. For example, the word “jar” in English means “jar” in Indonesian, but students don't always understand the term”. Sometimes, even though the words look similar, the context in which they are used can be very different. I feel it is important to make sure that they really understand what I mean. To that end, I often provide clearer and more relevant examples.

Q: What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?

A: “Although the language used is similar, there are significant differences in meaning. I was also surprised by the cultural differences that exist here, which shows the importance of adjustment.”

Q: What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia? What adjustments did you make?

A: “The difference in managing a class in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia is that I pay more attention to the use of different languages in ESL. While yes, like when I teach English in Malay, sometimes there is vocabulary that I do not know. Whereas in Indonesia, we can do more direct teaching, which is certainly easier because we have the same mother tongue. Then for the adjustment, I use lesson methods that may be interactive to support students' understanding as well.”

Q: How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students? Give examples of real situations.

A: As for how to overcome language and cultural barriers in interaction, it is enough to show visuals as I gave an example earlier when in English the vocabulary is jar which means jar. However, in Malay they don't know what jar is in English. The meaning of jar and also the meaning of jar. So, in the end we show a visual that resembles a jar.

Q: What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom?

A: “To deal with differences in student behavior and expectations, I use an approach based on open communication and understanding. The main issue we faced was the language difference, as I used Indonesian while they were speaking Malay. Therefore, I prioritize open communication through discussions and providing relevant visual examples. This approach helps to create a harmonious and balanced classroom atmosphere where every student feels cared for and can contribute without feeling marginalized. In this way, I balance attention and nurture harmony in the classroom.”

Q: How would you adapt teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for students here? Explain why.

A: “In customizing the materials, I consider the age factor of the students, as we have two classes: one for students under 15 years old and another for students over 15 years old. I try to determine which materials are most suitable and relevant to their daily lives and experiences. In addition, I also integrate interactive and simplified teaching methods so that students can more easily understand the material. With this approach, I ensure that my teaching matches the students' needs and level of understanding”

3. Participant 3

Interviewer : Muflikha Nurul Hadi

Participant : P3

Q: What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language backgrounds? Can you give specific examples?

A: “Challenges often relate to differences in language ability and misunderstanding instructions. Students with low language skills may struggle to understand explanations, requiring a more individualized approach, such as using visual aids”

Q: What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?

A: “The main challenge is the cultural differences. In Indonesia, group work is more collaborative, whereas in Malaysia, students often divide tasks, so I need to direct them to interact more”

Q: What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia? What adjustments did you make?

A: In an ESL (English as a Second Language) environment, students focus more on language acquisition, while in Indonesia the approach is more academic and curriculum-driven. I adjust by adding

interactive elements such as language games or casual discussions to increase student engagement in the ESL classroom.

Q: How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students? Give examples of real situations.

A: Using visual aids, simple language, or even translation (if needed) is very helpful. For example, when teaching students with a background completely unfamiliar with the Latin alphabet, I use picture flashcards to help them understand basic vocabulary.

Q: What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom?

A: “Understanding that behavior and expectations are influenced by culture is key in classroom management. I set class rules with students so that they feel involved in the process. If there are behavioral differences, such as students who are too passive, I motivate them by giving small rewards to encourage active participation. With this approach, I implement classroom management strategies that encourage inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel valued and motivated to contribute to learning”

Q: How would you adapt teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for students here? Explain why.

A: “I often adapt the teaching materials to the local cultural context to make it easier for students to understand. For example, in vocabulary lessons, I use examples relevant to their daily lives, such as local food or cultural customs. This helps students feel connected to the material”

4. Participant 4

Interviewer : Muflikha Nurul Hadi

Participant : P4

Q: What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language backgrounds? Can you give specific examples?

A: “The main challenge is the difference in intonation and pronunciation which is often confusing. There are also differences in meaning between Indonesian and Malay, which requires me to be more sensitive when communicating”

Q: What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?

A: “I often struggle because they speak fast and there is a different vocabulary between Indonesia and Malaysia, which makes me confused”

Q: What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia? What adjustments did you make?

A: So far, I have not experienced any major problems in classroom management. However, I feel hindered by the language difference. I struggle more to adjust to the language used by the students. For example, when I give instructions or explain material, there is often vocabulary that they do not understand. This requires me to be more creative in finding ways to explain concepts in a simpler way or using more relevant examples. I also try to make sure they really understand what I mean by asking directly, for example, 'Do you understand this term?' If they don't, I will explain further or use visual aids to help their understanding."

Q: How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students? Give examples of real situations.

A: I've honestly forgotten some of the details, but I remember when we were playing, I used the term "gabut." I also asked students, "Are you fishing? What kind of fish did you catch? Catfish?" However, they didn't understand the term. Apparently, in Malaysia, catfish is called "keli." In these situations, I use non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and gestures, to show curiosity and help students understand the context of

my question, so they feel more comfortable answering.

Q: What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom?

A: “To handle the differences in student behavior and expectations in the classroom, I use several methods, including Direct Method and Project-Based Learning (PBL). With Direct Method, we speak directly in English, which helps students become more confident when interacting. PBL allows students to engage in projects relevant to their lives, where they work in groups, so that the more active students can lead and the quieter ones can contribute in a comfortable way. This approach creates a dynamic classroom atmosphere and encourages inclusive participation, ensuring that all students feel valued and involved in the learning process”

Q: How would you adapt teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for students here? Explain why.

A: “I adjust it to the abilities and needs of students. when teaching I ask have you learned this? then I look closely and observe if something is not understood by students then I will discuss what they do not understand”

5. Participant 5

Interviewer : Muflikha Nurul Hadi

Participant : P5

Q: What are the main challenges you face in managing a class with students from different language backgrounds? Can you give specific examples?

A: “The main challenge is the difference in cultural background. I have to adapt the learning to the age of the students and understand that they may need non-verbal help to understand explanations”

Q: What are the main challenges you face in adjusting to cultural differences in the teaching environment?

A: “A major challenge is that it requires greater effort to adjust to cultural differences. This includes trying to understand the student's intentions as well as adjusting to the new culture. For example, the two-hour time difference from Indonesia can change the whole day and cause jetlag. In addition, there are differences in religious traditions; in Indonesia, after dawn, we usually have an hour-long assembly with various activities. All of this requires additional effort to adapt.

Q: What are the main differences in managing a classroom in an ESL environment compared to Indonesia? What adjustments did you make?

A: “In dealing with differences in student behavior or expectations, I tend to reprimand in a subtle and friendly way. I try to always be this way as students are in the teenage age range, which can be a difficult time to approach. This approach helps to create a more supportive and open environment for students.”

Q: How do you overcome language and cultural barriers in interacting with students? Give examples of real situations.

A: “By using intensive two-way communication and the method of introducing vocabulary through description and definition, I can help students understand the material. For example, when I mentioned the word “plate,” they did not understand it, even though I knew that it was a tool for serving food. After explaining, they finally realized that “plate” in their language is “dish.” In these situations, I simplify and adjust the language I use to make it easier for students to understand, such as translating terms directly when necessary”

Q: What methods do you use to handle differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom?

A: “When I encounter differences in student behavior or expectations in the classroom, I usually reprimand them in a gentle and friendly manner. I try to always be that way, especially since they are in the teenage age range which can be difficult to

approach. This approach helps me maintain a balance of attention and create a harmonious classroom atmosphere where all students feel valued and comfortable contributing”

Q: How would you adapt teaching materials or methods to make them more suitable for students here? Explain why.

A: “The material adjustments and teaching methods that I apply are based on the students' daily habits. Their main program is tahfidz, so the methods they use focus a lot on memorization. Therefore, I emphasize teaching methods that support memorization. However, I also realize that remembering alone is not enough to ensure deep understanding. Therefore, I emphasize the importance of understanding by using more informal language in the classroom to make it easier for students to understand the material. In addition, I increase the use of gestures and movements, so that students get a more dynamic learning experience that is different from their daily routine”

Appendix 4: Documentation of Interview Session



Figure 1 Interview with Participant 1



Figure 2 Interview with Participant 2



Figure 3 Interview with Participant 3



Figure 4 Interview with Participant 4



Figure 5 Interview with Participant 5

Appendix 5: Documentation of Observation Session



Figure 1. observation by the researcher



Figure 2 observation of participant 1



Figure 3 observation of participant 2



Figure 4 observation of participant 3



Figure 5 observation of participant 4



Figure 6 observation of participant 5

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