

# Professional Development Guideline for Instruction Professional Practice of English Pre-Service Teachers in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

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**Abstract**—With the start of ASEAN awareness, Thai educational system is engaged in serious and promising reforms. One of the crucial elements in most of these educational reforms is the teacher professional development. Teachers today are under growing pressure to perform. However, most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the expectation. This paper focuses attention on professional development guideline in practicum placement of English pre-service teachers in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in Thailand. Using a framework of partnership between the head of the department of English, mentor teachers and English pre-service teachers is the way that leads improvement in the pre-service teachers' performance. The research concludes by showing that learning management plan is the most important factor affecting the professional development of the English pre-service teacher; next are the factor of classroom management, passion for teaching and classroom action research performance. In addition, learning management and classroom management concerns instructional design, teaching technique, instructional media, measurement and evaluation, classroom management technique and student behavior management plan.

**Index Terms**—Partnership, Pre-Service Teacher, Professional Development, Teaching Professional Practicum.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is defined as fundamental to national development and growth. Education is also a process and tool of which is to construct sustainable development. Teachers are crucial component in the educational process. In this respect, efficiency teacher is as a pioneer valuable leading to the successful educational process. The competencies required for effective teaching must include being knowledgeable in content and skill in methods; as well as having positive attitude toward teaching profession. In order to achieve effective professional teachers, teachers must possess knowledge and skills in practicum, learning content, educational psychology, communication, teaching methods, technology and innovation in teaching, classroom management, and measurement and evaluation [1]-[5].

With the spread of English as an international language, the roles of English teachers have changed and professional

development for English teachers is undoubtedly important in English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts. English teachers in the era of globalization must have competency in grammar, sociolinguistics, discursively and strategically proficient in English language [6]. Moreover, those teachers need to have awareness about language learners, processes of learning, classroom teaching strategies, and adequate experience and practice in English language [6].

The practicum is considered as an integral component of teacher education program. Richard and Crooker stated that the teaching professional practicum facilitates and enhances student teachers' knowledge, skills and experiences and, more importantly, it is an opportunity to continue academic and professional growth [7]. Farrell added during the teaching professional practicum, the student teachers are able to gather actual teaching experience [8]. Although the English teacher education program provides a practicum and teaching professional internship for all teacher candidates, it is found that the English teacher candidates still lack of professional knowledge and skills [6], [9]. In regard to this matter, professional development has been the focus of educational researchers, with the purpose of understanding the obstacles that exist during the practicum. Accepted method of Educational and practicum research is to study student teachers' opinions [8]. Recent researchers have investigated pre-service teachers' opinion about their authentic teaching performance. For example, Chan and Leung found that examining students' voice while performing their teaching professional practicum is the key to develop teaching profession [8].

The partnership between teacher candidates, mentor teacher, and university supervisor is able to support students' effective professional development. Studying the voice of these three partners can possibly lead to a clear understanding on problems and barriers effecting pre-service teachers' effective professional development and problem solving guideline and strategy to prepare pre-service teachers for effective professional teacher in the future [10].

English Department of Faculty of Education, Suan Sunanda Rajabhat University makes a great effort to produce effective English teachers who are professional and skillful in teaching. However, it is found that the English teacher candidates still lack professional knowledge and skills of English teacher such as classroom management, learning management plan, and performing classroom action research. Considering the problems and barriers that exist in English teacher candidates' performance, professional development for English teacher candidates of Suan Sunanda Rajabhat

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University need to be examined carefully and redefined. Specific areas of examination and redefinition and the objectives of this research are to:

- 1) Investigate problems, weaknesses and obstacles of practicum placement of English teacher candidates in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
- 2) Set up professional development guidelines for partnership in practicum placement of English teacher candidates in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

## II. PARTICIPANTS AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

This study was an exploratory conducted in Faculty of Education of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in Thailand. Selection of participants was purposive. According to Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen [11] purposive sampling is central to naturalistic research. Participants were 7 English teacher candidates, 7 mentor teachers and 1 university supervisor. Small samples are used in this qualitative research. Indeed, small group characterizes single-subject designs, which are routinely utilized in quantitative approaches [12]. Data were collected through interviews with English teacher candidates, mentor teachers and the university supervisor. The interview questions were based on the competency base for professional teachers that was categorized into 4 main issues including of learning management, classroom management, passion for teaching, and classroom action research competency. The research tool was approved as

content validity (The index of item objective congruence of each item ranged 1.00, IOC=1.00).

## III. RESULTS

The findings have been summarized and presented in the tables as follows:

TABLE I: AN OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS' BASIC DATA

Participants	Gender		Total	Teaching Experience
	Male	Female		
English teacher candidates	1	6	7	Primary and Secondary classroom teaching experience
Mentor teachers	2	5	7	4-12 years
University supervisors	-	1	1	12 years
Total	3	12	15	

TABLE I shows 1 male and 6 female English teacher candidates who were assigned to teach primary and secondary students; 2 males and 6 females mentor teachers who have been teaching for 4-12 years or approximately 6 years, and 1 female university supervisor with 12 years teaching experience.

TABLE II: INVESTIGATING OF THE DIFFICULTIES AFFECTING ENGLISH TEACHER CANDIDATES

Main Issues	Participants			Total	Related Sub-issues
	English Teacher Candidates	Mentor Teachers	University Supervisor		
Learning Management	7	6	1	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate teaching strategy</li> <li>▪ Communicative language teaching approach</li> <li>▪ Content expertise</li> <li>▪ Appropriate use of teaching material</li> <li>▪ Content related curriculum and indicator</li> <li>▪ Motivation enhancement in English learning</li> </ul>
Classroom Management	7	4	1	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student behavior problem</li> <li>▪ Lack of appropriate classroom management approach</li> </ul>
Passion for Teaching	7	3	1	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teacher demeanor</li> <li>▪ Teacher responsibility</li> </ul>
Classroom Action Research Performance	7	-	1	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stating research problem</li> <li>▪ Research writing skill</li> </ul>

TABLE II classifies the professional development difficulties, and it shows that (1) Learning management plan is the most important factor affecting the professional development followed by (2) the factor of classroom management, (3) passion for teaching and (4) classroom action research performance.

An overview of the professional development guidelines for partnership in practicum placement of English teacher candidates in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University was presented in TABLE III.

In an attempt to set up professional development guidelines for Partnership in Practicum Placement of English teacher candidates, the paper explored the difficulties

affecting English teacher candidates' professional development. Based on the findings, it can be concluded as follow:

- 1) Learning management is essential skill for professional English teacher. English language teacher need to have a clear understanding in the nature of second language acquisition or second language learning process of learners as well as language teaching methodology and instructional strategy. Additionally, it is inevitable for professional English language teachers to possess the ability in developing their own teaching style, managing learning activity, and performance, and adjusting their role to correspond with different kinds of student.

TABLE III: OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINE FOR PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICUM PLACEMENT OF ENGLISH TEACHER CANDIDATES

Main Issues	Related Sub-issues	Professional Development Guidelines for Partnership in Practicum Placement of English Teacher Candidates	Expected Outcome
Learning Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate teaching strategy</li> <li>▪ Motivation enhancement in English learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Addressing learning management by covering English teaching techniques and student motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidates gain knowledge about the variety of teaching technique such as, Interactive and Direct instruction, Story Mapping, Bottom-up Total Physical Response (TPR), and Card game or Flashcard approach, in order to select appropriate techniques for different teaching context.</li> </ul>
Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student behavior problem</li> <li>▪ Lack of appropriate classroom management approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing courses relating to English classroom management skill enhancement and student behavior problem solving strategies.</li> <li>▪ Supporting the preparation of pre-service teachers through mentoring system                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offering advice for classroom behavior management by using open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking, idea and opinion expression.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidates are able to develop their classroom management skill effectively.</li> <li>▪ Candidates are able to select the most appropriate strategy to cope with student behavior problem</li> <li>▪ Candidates are able to learn from the mentor’s direct experiences in classroom management strategy.</li> </ul>
Passion for Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teacher demeanor</li> <li>▪ Teacher responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasize the importance of a mentor in terms of offering both formal and informal advice</li> <li>▪ Establishing mentoring system</li> <li>▪ Organizing activities about developing candidates’ academic skills and personality development</li> <li>▪ Encouraging candidates to inquire and think about problems of English learning that their students may have</li> <li>▪ Instigating the candidates to be a role model for their students in terms of ethic and morality, dress code, and good behavior and discipline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The candidates are able to learn from their mentor’s direct experience and apply the mentor’s advice in learning activities management, and classroom control strategies.</li> <li>▪ Candidates are able to establish and foster positive relationship with the student</li> </ul>
Classroom Action Research Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stating research problem</li> <li>▪ Research writing skill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasize problem identification, research methodology and writing strategy for classroom action research</li> <li>▪ Organizing follow-up action research training for candidates</li> <li>▪ Supporting teacher candidates’ action research by establishing center for classroom action research or “Action Research Clinic” that provides the support advice and resources</li> <li>▪ Emphasizing the importance of the role of a mentor and university supervisor in classroom action research to offering advice and guidelines</li> <li>▪ Creating classroom action research award to encourage the candidates to conduct high-quality classroom action research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidates’ action research meets high standard and expectation of the English teacher preparation program.</li> <li>▪ Candidates are able to establish a community for assisting and exchanging ideas about conducting classroom action research</li> </ul>

2) To accomplish effective professional development, it is important for English language teacher candidates to have expertise in content and teaching techniques. Particularly, teachers need to use experience-learning technique and interactive instruction strategy, as well as the strategy for enhancing students’ motivation in classroom.

3) Selecting appropriate teaching material, such as study multimedia. Fursternberg and Morgenstern insisted that the progression of English language teaching and learning depends on technology and innovation [13].

According to the result of this study, English teacher candidates are still lack of classroom management skill. Candidates are unable to control classroom by themselves. The students tend to take advantage of any situation to demonstrate power over the teacher candidates. Therefore, courses relating to classroom management and student behavior problem solving strategy should be established

The English teacher candidates should always behave as a role model for the students. Positive demeanor of a teacher in terms of ethic and morality, dress code, and good behavior can bring about earning respect and acceptance from the students.

The English teacher candidates should be skillful in

classroom action research. This research reflects thinking, innovative creativity and knowledge in learning management.

In summation, professional development in the practicum should emphasize developing learning management skill, classroom management skills, passion for teaching, and classroom action research performance.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

According to the participants, learning management is the key factor in effective professional development of English language teachers. This notion has been elaborated by Bumrorracha [14] that the evaluation of practicum placement should focus on the issue of learning management skill.

Classroom management skill relates to the issue of student problem behavior and classroom management approach. Classroom management skill tends to be another important component of effective professional development since lacking of this skill is able to impact on the English language teacher candidates’ performance and discourage the English language teacher candidates. According to the study of Hudson and Nguyen [15], mentor teachers play a significant role in teaching professional practicum. In the other words, in English teacher education, mentor seems to be those of

motivator, role model, supporter, advisor, demonstrator, guide companion and coach. The English language pre-service teachers, thus, learn from their mentor and develop their English teaching practice and overcoming context specific difficulties. Sempowicz and Hudson [16] also proved that in order to understand the difficulties in classroom management and enhance teacher candidates' problem-solving skill in classroom management, mentor teachers should support the teacher candidates through using open-ended questions technique to encourage the teacher candidates to think critically and express ideas and opinions.

English as a foreign language teaching should emphasize communicative language teaching rather than context in textbook. Additionally, creating natural classroom environment can stimulate student's language learning.

In teaching practice, the English teacher candidates' roles and functions should include those of teacher, advisor and companion to the students. Moreover, the English teacher candidates should be a life-long learner and stay up to date on new technology for teaching and learning.

Interactive instruction strategy should be taken into consideration in creating positive English learning environment. The teachers perform as the facilitator in the classroom. In the other words, the teacher moves the responsibility for learning from the instructor to the student. Interactive instruction strategy allows the students to create an explicit list of learning objectives and establish a framework, which fits their knowledge. Furthermore, stimulating the students to participate in classroom activities lower student behavior problem, according to Richard [17].

Establishing the positive relationship with the students is a challenge for the English teacher candidates because it is an effective way to indirectly motivate students. The current study found the English language teacher candidates had an advantage in creating positive relationship with the students because of the small age gap between them. Nieto indicates that a professional teacher needs to understand their students and be able to meet different students' expectations [18]. The teacher candidates tend to have particular mentoring needs that may assist their development. In this light, feedback and advice from mentor teacher and university supervisor can improve the candidates' weakness. Darling-Hammond and Snyder [19], proved that in teacher education, it is necessary to offer various kinds of experience and difficulty in order to prepare them for the real world of teaching.

Establishing a community for English teacher candidates is a way to support their professional development. The community will assist in exchanging ideas. Furthermore, the community should strengthen mental health.

Allowing English teacher candidates to express their opinion and attitude is an effective way to understand their difficulties, weaknesses, and strengths. Besides, it is a way to collect information in order to create a curriculum that meets the needs and expectations.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the current study might not be inadequate for

professional development. However, the findings of the study can be integrated into teacher preparation programs as a problem-solving guideline.

The current study is merely based on the data from the English teacher candidates of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Therefore, in order to gain more accurate picture, a boarder study should be conducted.

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