

Exploration of collaborative partnership models for sustainable teacher education in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Research has shown that the link between coursework preparation and field experience is strong when future teachers work collaboratively with mentor teachers in practicum settings. Collaborative teaching is much needed as future teachers navigate classroom challenges in both online and offline learning. Collaborative teaching is however often seen only as practicum school's responsibility and not a joint activity with shared goals between university and school that partner to prepare future English language teachers. This paper explores the perspectives of school and university based on the interviews with university supervisors and mentor teachers and related teaching documents. The data were gathered during a six-month practicum implementation in five public schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Guided by Cultural-Historical Activity Theory, a thematic analysis was done to identify points of differences and similarities in the belief and practice of the supervisors and mentor teachers. The results showed that (mis)alignments of the objects, tools, rules, values and roles hamper the goals of the university and school partnership for preparing future teachers. Following CHAT framework, the study recommends that school and university need to align their expectations (object) from practicum activities and set consistent teacher preparation programs (tools, rules) across university and schools.



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1. Introduction

Initial teacher education provides the foundation for future teachers' professional learning that spans from coursework activities to school-based experiences vital to getting them ready to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Hadi, 2019; Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006; Luciana, 2004; C. L. Ure, 2010). Tang, Wong & Cheng (2016) identified that the quality of theoretical learning influenced future teachers' practical experiences in schools. The set of pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills relevant to the immediate context of curriculum helps them perform better during school-based teaching practices. This underlines the

role of initial teacher education (ITE) providers to align their preparatory programs to the practicum requirements at schools.

The prominent role of ITE in Indonesia was marked by the study done by Luciana (2004) that criticized the misalignment between theories and practices of teaching portrayed in Bachelor of Education's teaching practicum program in Indonesia. A more recent report by OECD for Indonesia (Development, 2015) and Chang, Shaeffer, Al-Samarrai, Ragatz, De Ree, & Ritchie (2014) urged the demand to monitor and evaluate teacher training institutes and their effectiveness in producing quality teachers. In the most recent reviews of teacher education of English by Novita (2019) and (Hadi, 2019), as well as of Science and Math by Faisal & Martin (2019), it is argued that reform is urgently needed for improving future teacher readiness. In response to these needs, this study presents an analysis of the practice of ITE in Indonesia, informed by Cultural-Historical Activity Theory or CHAT (Engeström, 2001; Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamäki-Gitai, 1999). It focuses on practicum delivery within a setting of partnership between an ITE university providing English language teachers preparation and its associated practicum schools. It adopts CHAT and hence views practicum delivery as a system operated by two interacting communities of practice – schools and universities, whose perspectives of the personnels involved are the object of the examination. As such, this study extends on research investigating the perspectives of supervising and mentor teachers in practicum settings. Yet, it accentuates the analysis of the intersecting system components between school and university. Not only seeing practicum as an activity system, its analysis accounts for cultural and historical contexts as well as individual and collective motives of the key providers – universities and schools.

The idea of university – school partnership is therefore embedded in the nature of the joint provision of practicum experiences. Practicum delivery is therefore a partnership enterprise (Tsui & Law, 2007) that engages future teachers in various “learning spheres within and across both setting(s)”, such as student teaching (co-teaching or collaborative teaching), mentoring conversations, and lesson-planning. Ideally, practicum partnership warrants clear linkage between university-based learning and future teachers' experiences at schools. In practice, schools and universities often run on different rules and values shaping distinct communities of practice. These differences create boundaries, which can restrict or complement future teachers' learning. CHAT as a lens offers the concept of boundary crossing (Allen et al., 2011). Adopting CHAT, this study scrutinizes ITE activities happening at the boundary/ies and explores how subjects (supervisors, mentor teachers, future teachers) use available resources in their own community (lesson plans, curriculum, mentoring conversations) to work towards achieving the common goal – getting future teachers ready to teach. While CHAT as a framework has been abundant in the Global North, such studies remain limited in Indonesian contexts. This paper therefore presents the findings of a larger research project, based on a set of interview data analyzed following CHAT and examines the practices of practicum delivery for English language future teachers in an Indonesian setting.

2. Literature Review

While clear linkage is pertinent to successful ITE partnership, research (e.g. Furlong, Campbell, Howson, Lewis, & McNamara, 2006; Johnson & Golombek, 2003; Korthagen et al., 2006; Tang et al., 2016) has identified there is poor alignment between theoretical learning and school-related practices during placement or practicum period. The misalignment arises as learning process at universities is not directly relevant to practicum requirements. Coursework seems to be discontinued. Preservice teachers were reported having to confront different practices and cultures of teaching at schools, for which they are not prepared. Loughran & Hamilton (2016, p.6) confirmed that the dichotomy of theory and practice related to teaching has been an issue in ITE partnership. Schools have been seen as the ‘home’ of practice and universities as the ‘ivory towers’ of theory. Lack of communication between school and university personnels exacerbates the discontinuity. Field experience often fails to bridge the differences when pre-practicum courses do not explicate requirements for future teachers prior to placement.

In ELT in Indonesia, for example, poor standardization and inadequacy of knowledge base taught by various PETE providers has caused ‘poor language mastery and poor English teaching’ (Dardjowidjojo, 2000) which later affected students’ English learning in Indonesia (Koesoemo & Shore, 2015; Luciana, 2004; Sulistiyo, 2015; Zacharias, 2013). Consequently, Indonesian school students remains having low proficiency in English (EPI, 2018; Renandya, Hamied, & Nurkamto, 2018; Yuwono & Harbon, 2010). Such condition still continues as “nationally there are considerable number of English teachers who graduated from [ITE] programs with inadequate proficiency and pedagogy” (Hadi, 2019, p.1958) due to lack of standardization and monitoring (Chang et al., 2014; Development, 2015). Standardizing the practice of practicum assessment, for instance, has not been well-addressed. For long, a rubric-based, behaviouristic practicum assessment has been in use (Luciana, 2004), to observe whether the required teaching routines are performed during a lesson delivery, leaving out the elicitation of pedagogical rationales through future teachers’ self-reflection on their own teaching practices and their impact on students’ learning (Bloomfield, Taylor, & Maxwell, 2004). The practice of critical pedagogy during practicum is seemingly limited. Reports on collaborative teaching between future and mentor teachers revealed that mentor teachers tend to prescribe certain teaching methods to future teachers. This creates a superficial collaboration (Kuswando, 2014b) because future teachers do so for avoiding disagreement with mentor teachers. Likewise, Nurfaidah, Lengkanawati, & Sukyadi (2017) further observed that this impacts subsequently on the low ability of English language future teachers to engage in self-critiquing their own teaching and in reflecting on their practicum experiences for fear of breaking friendliness with their mentors.

Standard for ITE curriculum seems not strongly enforced. Indonesian scholars (e.g. Lie, 2007; Madya, 2003; Riesky, 2013) have long called reform of ITE curriculum by reducing overlapping content knowledge subjects and increasing opportunities for teaching practices. More recently, that Sulisty (2015, p. 252) recommended that “the content for teacher education should be about what is taught and how this is connected to how students learn”. This explicates that coursework must equip future teachers with the types of knowledge and skills relevant to schools’ instructional practices. To achieve this, universities and schools must communicate their expectations and set out clear criteria of assessment as a benchmark for providing learning to teach experiences at both settings (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; C. L. Ure, 2010; Zeichner, 2010). Without these, partnership between schools and ITE remains ineffective (e.g. Allen, Ambrosetti, & Turner, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2017), and not sustainable (e.g. Chang et al., 2014; Hadi, 2019; Novita, 2019).

2.1. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

Activity Theory is built on a view that any activity is a system. Each system consists of observable and non-observable components (Engeström, 1999). The observable includes subject (individual members), object (a common goal), and mediating artefacts/tools. The non-observable involves the rules (ITE regulations/practicum protocols), community (norms and cultural values) and division of labour (different roles between supervisors and mentor teachers). The diagram below describes the components of an activity system.

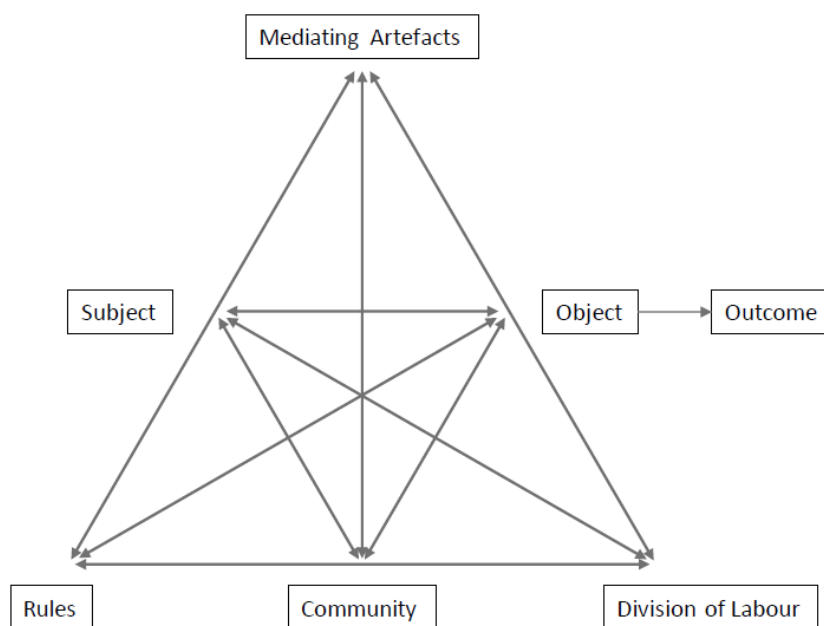


Fig 1. Third generation activity system components (Engeström et al., 1999; Wilson, 2014).

While it has been a widely recognized analytical framework elsewhere internationally see for example (Clarke, Fournillier, & Education, 2012; Feryok, 2009; Song & Kim, 2016), Activity Theory is not much done in Indonesia particularly in English language teacher education. Activity Theory focused on individual activity, but CHAT allows the analysis to include immediate and surrounding contexts of the activity being examined. To recognize collective activities and attribution of rules, roles and communities to the process of mediation (Leont'ev, 1981), the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), the third generation of Activity Theory, emerged (Engeström, 2001). Engeström (2001) explained that CHAT examines collective activities (Leont'ev, 1981) as in a practicum delivery, bound by a shared object or goal, to promote collective changes and development (Engeström, 2001). Though collective effort is the foundation for a system to operate, CHAT analysis allows the examination to account for “inner contradictions” or conflicts arising from the interaction amongst different personnels, different practices and possibly contrasting expectations (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009, p. 509).

3. Method

3.1. Setting

This exploratory study examines the practices and experiences of practicum participants and providers within a joint practicum setting between a public ITE university and its affiliated partner schools. Schools were purposively selected for being associated practicum partners, whose list was issued in the beginning of the effective year of practicum implementation. Choosing a few among the list is based on convenience for ease of communication and coordination as contacts for schools' gatekeepers have been made available to academics involved in practicum delivery.

3.2. Participants

Four schools from different districts in Yogyakarta were semi-purposively chosen and confirmed to have English language-based practicum students. Next sampling was done for student participants. Call for student research participants was circulated through the WhatsApp groups in the Department of English Language Education of the ITE university. A set of inclusion criteria such as being a first-timer practicum participant in those pre-selected schools, having passed practicum requirement

courses with minimum of grade ‘Good’, and willing to participate in data collection processes (interview, online observation, document collection and vignettes collections) was informed. As Informed Consent Statement was sent out to mentor teachers, there was one teacher declining her participation so that her affiliated school was dropped from the research. After all participants signed their informed consent statement, a total of 4 mentor teachers, 4 school practicum coordinators, 4 school principals, 3 university supervisors, and 8 practicum students were involved.

This paper particularly reports on the analysis of interview data collection with a limited reference to practicum documents or records referred by the interview participants, to produce “a rich, ‘thick’ description of the phenomenon under the study” (Merriam, 2009, p. 43). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interview transcripts were organised following practicum phases in this study and were labelled INT1 for interview 1 or preparatory phase interview, and INT2, INT3, INT4 for interviews 2, 3 and 4 (early-, mid-, and late-phase), respectively. Documents data comprised practicum dialogues or screen-captured conversations in WhatsApp messaging used for online delivery during practicum teaching and conversations, regulation documents both at the university and schools, teaching vignettes or lesson-plans. The findings reported in this paper are however taken mainly from the interview data. Data analysis was done thematically, with codes derived from activity system components, namely subject, mediating artefacts (tools), object, rules, community and roles.

Since the data collection spanned from June 8, 2020, to Januari 2021 during COVID-19 restrictions were in place in the region, the data collection followed the guidelines and requirements of the local government’s policy on COVID-19 mitigation and the schools’ local regulations for distance learning during the pandemic. Schools and universities were shifting to online learning provision and student teaching, and practicum dialogues were delivered online, following the Work from Home policy enforced at the participating schools, the university, and the Offices of Education, in Yogyakarta Special Province.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

The study adopts Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to examine practicum delivery and experiences based on multi perspectives of the supervising and mentor teachers of an ITE university and four associated practicum schools. Interviews with two groups of participants - university supervisors and mentor teachers are the specific focus for the study’s analysis. Thematic analysis on interviews showed two main themes and nine sub-themes.

Table 1. Categories of Themes

	Themes	Subthemes
A	Developed communities of practice	The University’s System The Practicum Associate Schools’ System Duality of roles of Future Teachers as a boundary crosser Object of Activity
B	Dynamics of the Systems: Mediation, Boundary Crossing	Mediation Boundary crossing

a) *Theme 1: Separate communities of practice*

The first theme suggests that the ITE university and associated schools are characterized as separate communities of practices, having developed a separate set of rules, norms and distributed roles differently into those of academics and management/leadership, in both settings, and additionally of researchers in university. Within the practicum delivery, subjects, tools utilized by subjects and the share object or goal build the practicum partnership system, described in Figure 2. Figure 2 illustrates the partnership model for joint practicum delivery whose primary goal is to get future teachers ready for teaching.

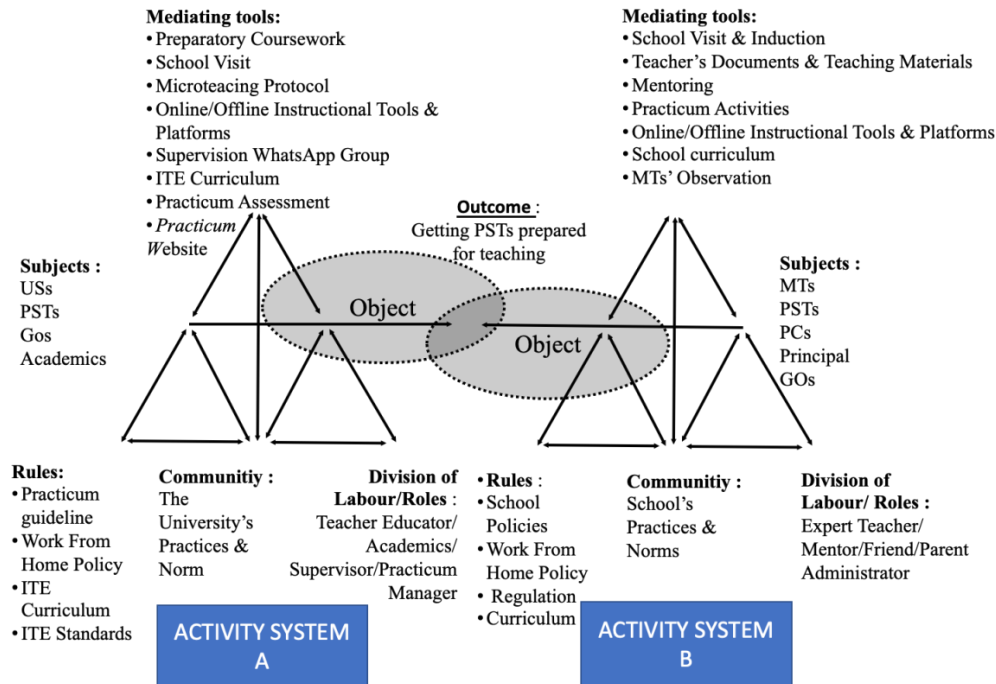


Fig 2. Model for practicum partnerships between ITE university and schools.

The above model presents the interaction between two sub-activity systems (of university and schools) informed by CHAT. The Figure depicts two subsystems A (university) and B (schools) characterized by sharing a common goal or object, i.e. getting future teachers (PSTs) prepared for teaching through delivering practicum experiences. The subsystem A portrays the initial stage of practicum. This comprises of university coursework and the early-phase of practicum, henceforth, school induction. The subsystem B pictures the practicum experiences from the end of induction stage to the end of practicum delivery and assessment period. The upper part of the triangle shows the relationship amongst the subject, tools, and object. The lower part of the triangle represents the roles of the subjects, the rules and norms in each of the settings. In addition to subjects housed in each setting, external personnel such as teacher supervisors from the respective District Office of Education indicates GO roles in each subsystem. Having this model outlined based on CHAT's system analysis, the study found that the interaction between components within or across subsystem(s) influenced the perspectives of individual and governed the collective practices within each and across subsystem(s).

1) The university's system

The first theme discusses participants' perspectives on the structure of the ITE university within the practicum partnership system. In the lower part of the CHAT triangle, the subjects within the university subsystem include the university supervisors (USs), the future teachers or preservice teachers (PSTs), government officials (GOs) as in the accreditation staff that conduct university accreditation processes nationally, and academics involved (in)directly in coursework delivery. Some tangible artefacts are housed in the university that included the coursework components i.e., Microteaching and IT-TEFL courses, teaching artefacts (e.g., lesson-plans) and all resources and equipment for coursework delivery. In the lower part of the CHAT diagram, rules, roles and community equally contribute to the effectiveness of the community to operate within each setting. The rule(s) are derived from the university's curriculum, the national laws related to ITE practices and teacher's competencies, and the local government's policy on Work from Home for mitigating COVID-19 applied to universities and schools. As a community, the university holds specific culture or norms that inform their practices and distributes divisions of labors (roles) that support the PSTs to become a professional teacher.

2) *The practicum associate schools' system*

Like that of the university subsystem, the school activity system delineates the subjects, tools and object of the school subsystem. The subjects involve future teachers or PSTs, mentor teachers (MTs), practicum coordinators (PCs) and government officials (GOs) as in their roles of school superintendent. Despite having to deliver instructions for all subjects mandated by the national curriculum, the MTs and PCs shared a common goal i.e. to provide school-based practicum experiences with PCs and GOs serving as supervising staff for school personnels in general. The tools housed in the school subsystem include teaching instruments, and school-based curriculum, while rules encompass the Work from Home policies that affected staff support and teaching delivery, as well as school online facilities.

3) *Duality of roles of future teachers as a boundary crosser*

As the student participants are hosted in both settings, they occupied both the subject and the object in the partnership system, as they are the subject of the sum of the activities and it is their learning, or preparedness for teaching that is the shared object of the two interacting activity systems. The students shift roles as subject and object for two reasons. First, they participated actively in activities afforded in university and school settings, and to some degree took ownership of their actions. As a subject, they have personal goals or motives to learn, and it is their experiences and view regarding learning available in both systems that became the object of this study's investigation. Secondly, they operated their agency influenced by their past observation as a learner in the similar education systems. Their agency shaped the types of learning afforded to them and was likely to reflect the kind of engagement they had with other subjects in the school system. Their prior experiences might also influence the kinds of experience that they preferred and tried to negotiate, and perceptions of the impact of their learning experiences on their preparedness for teaching.

4) *Object of activity*

The interview data and documents analyses further highlight that the partnership system operates to achieve one common object that aims at delivering professional learning for PSTs to become ready for teaching. The university's practicum guideline and descriptions of teaching practicum requirements revised in 2020 (pp. 2 – 10), detailed that “student teachers must attend a teaching practicum program within a school setting” and that “students must meet the practicum requirement subjects – microteaching and IT-TEFL and register for teaching practicum during the given period”. Similarly, excerpts from MTs' interview below revealed that the school personnels also expected that the university would have prepared PSTs for practicum teaching at schools by ensuring clear linkage between their preparatory course and practicum requirements. MT1 from school A asserted that “[...] coursework is essential for them [PSTs] to get ready for practicum. Theories are needed so students know what to teach [but] maybe how to teach, it is to be learned at school” (INT1/MT1/30-46). While MT1's statement seemed to support the significance of coursework for practicum preparation, she also emphasized that practices for teaching are indeed reserved until students begin their practicum program. This underscores that university and school jointly provide teacher preparation, during which future teachers shift roles from university students to teacher apprentice while at school. The provision of coursework must therefore be aligned and create a continuity of learning with practicum learning. Since to MT1, university learning is not expected to teach practical, instructional skills will be acquired when practices of teaching at real settings such as in schools become available to the future teachers. This posits the urgency of practicum activities and responsibilities to be communicated across partners and arises questions to whether practicum experiences provided by universities and schools in Indonesia create aligned and integrated learning for future teachers to get ready for teaching.

b) *Theme 2: Dynamics of the systems: mediation, boundary crossing and contradictions*

Theme 2 discusses interactions of components (subject, tool, object, rule, role, community) within and between the subsystem(s). As the components interact, different tools utilized within

subsystem possibly conform or contradict (cultural and historical) with the values, practice, and expectations across the subsystems of university and school. Using CHAT as a lens, the thematic analysis started with examining the imperative component in the upper part of the CHAT diagram – the mediating artefacts. The mediation works in service of the subjects' activities for achieving the goal(s). The following sub-themes describe the characteristics of the dynamics within the partnership system, characterized by the role of individual and collective mediation, and the potential for boundary crossing and contradictions.

1) *What - tool mediators*

The mediating tools in the practicum partnership varied from initial/first to later phase of practicum. The thematic analysis identified that some tools were prevalent and found in both university and school during the first phase (school induction and thus attributed as collective tools vital for getting future teachers sufficiently inducted to school's practices. Figure 3 below presents the variety of tools available exclusively in the university and school settings, and those common in both settings. These included physical artefacts such as sample documents of lesson-plan modelled by cooperating teachers or written by PSTs and non-physical mediators as in school induction engagement between PSTs and mentor teachers. The discussions around school curriculum were mostly mediated by artefacts such as curriculum documents, observation forms, and cognitive tools such as discussion or reflection following classroom observations.

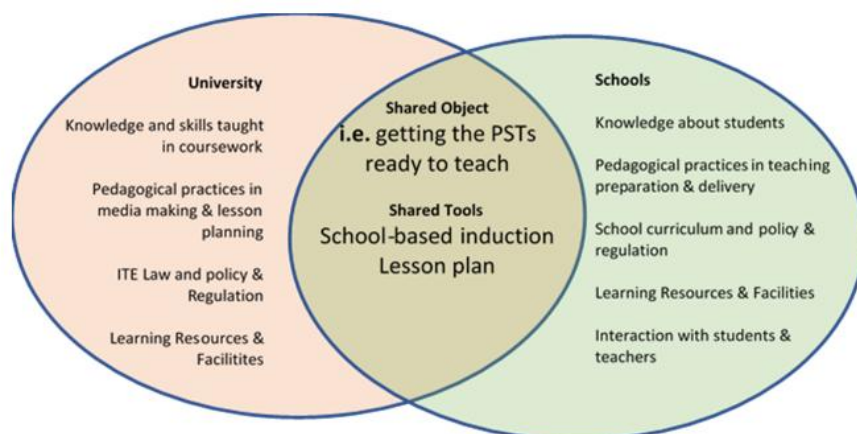


Fig 3. Tool use in university and school activity systems during coursework and early phase of practicum.

2) *How - tool mediation*

Since these tools were afforded at both settings and impacted engagement during beginning of practicum learning within both systems, they are attributed as collective mediating tools. The documents influenced PST learning in the university for introducing them to the structure and organisation of a lesson-plan. This provided PSTs with declarative knowledge about lesson-planning. It was also used to show steps of writing a lesson-plan and therefore afforded PSTs procedural learning for lesson-planning. These types of knowledge embodied the learning through disciplinary theories of what lesson-plan and lesson-planning entailed, and practical principles of the doing of lesson-planning. In short, the prevalence of document-based artefacts in coursework implies that PSTs' IT-TEFL learning concerned mostly identifying the structure and organisation of lesson-plan documents associated with theoretical or conceptual understanding, or henceforth, the declarative knowledge.

Excerpts from Amal and Lara present the results of thematic analysis that underline the separation between theoretical and procedural learning related to teaching that the student participants received, in the first phase. Amal, for instance, shared lines about the short-timed activities with lesson-planning. 'We had a brief discussion on components of lesson-plan in TEFL Methodology. I made lesson plans with groups, I think I did not work individually in EIT but (I) made materials with (my) friends' (Amal/INT1/69-90). Similar remarks came from Lara, on lack of practical relevance of

lesson-planning activities. 'I remember having to follow a method – GBA – but not teaching [applying] in (teaching) practices. No practice.' (Lara/INT1/45-66).

The declarative knowledge about the format and organization of lesson-plan document was guided by a particular method of teaching within the university. In both students' interview, it is found that the declarative and procedural knowledge about lesson-plan format and organization was not put into actual practices for implementing the method into teaching practices. Not only this supports MT1's claim for separation of learning between university and school, this also limits the university learning to knowledge acquisition about lesson planning. The assumed goal of knowledge getting from university learning in fact contradicts the requirement for doing a school visit prior to Microteaching, as prescribed in the university's curriculum. Within the university's curriculum, the future teachers are required to participate in school induction by visiting and observing a teacher's classroom practices. This school induction program attributes to a mediating tool that enabled them to link theoretical knowledge about lesson-planning into curriculum requirements at schools. While school induction is housed in school setting through classroom observations, the microteaching is offered by the university. The expectations are clear that future teachers can relate their knowledge to real practices of teaching at schools, or between planning and direct practice of teaching (Wallace, 1991). US2's remarks below described how the collective tools afforded contextual learning about teaching for PSTs. The following excerpts from US2 support the role of school induction as mediating tool for creating linkage between theoretical learning of lesson-planning and practices of teaching at school contexts.

[...] They (PSTs) met teachers at the school where they would be placed and consulted to whom about lesson-plans used in the school. Ideally PSTs would become informed about the school where they would undertake their practicum so any lesson-planning done in Microteaching would be useful for them during their Practicum. They were even expected to consult [the lesson-plan] with the teachers too. (INT1/US2/179-185)

Correspondingly, MTs concurred that lesson-plan samples and lesson-planning were made available for PSTs during SVs. MT1 for example provided an initiative example as a cooperating teacher in extending PSTs' learning through the simulation to write a lesson-plan for the students in her setting. Before the simulation, PSTs were given the access to her teaching documents and then to her class, allowing them to create direct connection between planning and teaching delivery. Her view of the engagement is reported below.

Yes, PSTs did observations, for several times, in my class. They saw me teaching from the start till end and then borrowed my lesson-plan for reference. During the observations, I also asked them to write a lesson-plan like doing a simulation of lesson-planning but not teaching it. I hoped, doing that, they were returning to university with knowing how lesson-plans in schools look like, particularly the one used in my school as sometimes different teachers may have developed lesson-plans in their own way. (INT1/MT1/82-92)

MT1 expected that the engagement would inform the learning and practices of lesson-planning in the university to be better linked with school realities. Using collective tool (i.e. lesson-plans), MT1 appeared to attempt to overcome the boundary of different lesson-design practices across the subsystems. Her action can be attributed as potential boundary crossing, discussed below.

3) *Boundary crossing*

In CHAT, a boundary constitutes differences rooted in social, cultural and historical contexts surrounding distinct systems or communities. A boundary could hold back the systems from interacting better if not resolved. MT1 recognized the potential learning tension arising from different lesson-plan formats due to different pedagogical approach adopted in both systems. She "then asked PSTs to write the same type of lesson-plan but for different sets of knowledge and skills" (INT1/MT1/96). She therefore created a space for future teachers to travel through the boundary as in asking them to simulate writing a lesson-plan in the school environment and taking the

consideration of school context into their planning. As future teachers engaged in lesson-planning simulation, they did boundary crossing (Figure 4).

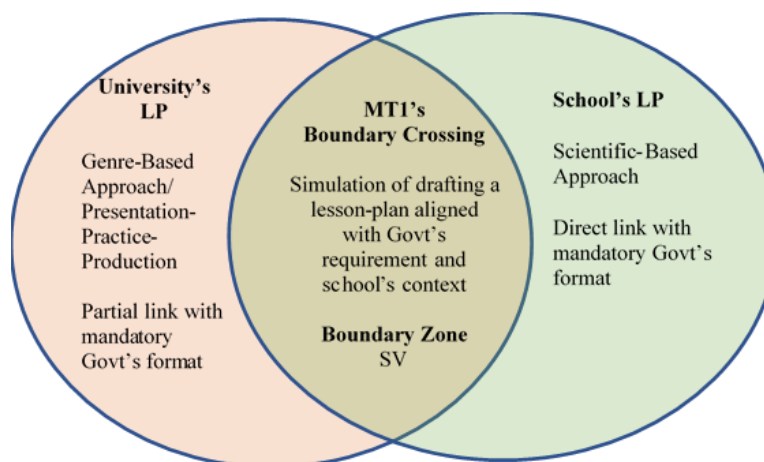


Fig 4. Boundary zone and boundary crossing during school visit.

Figure 4 illustrates the emergence of boundary zone and boundary crossing during school induction during the beginning of the practicum period. Boundary zone is featured with having boundary tools. In the study, the existence of different pedagogies underpinning the practice of lesson-planning – Genre-based Approach and Scientific-based Approach, with the latter being the recommended method by government and enforced as schools denote the border of between differing aspirations. The act of boundary crossing encompasses however, motive of subjects to compensate with possibly contradicting rules, as in the school guidelines for lesson-plan formats or school requirements for certain method of teaching. The dynamics of boundary crossing in the study is therefore identified as a unique feature critical to future teachers learning to balance between (lack of) university preparation and school practices.

4) Rules and community mediator and mediation

In term of rules mediation, the university and associate schools' curriculum and their adaptation to COVID-19 measures influenced learning to teach experiences afforded to PSTs. First, the curriculum in both settings mandated a shift from face-to-face to online instruction which demanded new sets of practices and thus knowledge and skills for learning and teaching. This created negative impacts on PSTs as they had limited opportunities for learning to teach in both settings.

In the university's system, the curriculum response, which required new sets of pedagogical skills for on-campus teaching, did not focus on preparing PSTs for online teaching in schools. Its recent adaptation with health protocols requirement *only* directed the *Merdeka-Belajar* Curriculum adoption that created immediate and apparent shift to PSTs' practicum allocation. These disrupted sequences of learning that had commenced in the IT-TEFL and continued through the Microteaching course, and induction during SVs to teaching in the practicum. PSTs were not able to relate their learning in coursework and induction activities to practices of lesson-planning in a school whose learning environment and norms were new to half of the PSTs.

In the practicum associate school system, government's requirement forced schools to also adapt curriculum practice to a fewer number of topics, shorter teaching duration and simpler, non-intrusive learning activities. In view of their role in practicum, schools set up their own set of norms for delivering instruction to their students during the pandemic which influenced the learning afforded to PSTs. Schools as community adopted practices that restricted learning to teach experience

afforded to PSTs while at school. Thus, the changes made by the university and schools in response to government regulations impacted all three phases of the practicum examined in this study.

In addition, rules and norms of both systems did not always coincide. The USs perceived the university's requirements for sole reliance on the practicum website for supervision of and communication with PSTs less practical and thus giving them more workload. The USs turned to relying on an asynchronous WhatsApp-based supervision. PSTs however viewed the use of WhatsApp reducing their interaction with their US to exchanges of documents only. Further, the absence of direct communication between US and MT did not conform to schools' value concerning partnership. The schools' norm in lesson-planning gives an obvious example of conflicting practice that put PSTs in dilemma. Schools' emphasis on scoring and attendance for the sake of reaching given minimum standard aggravated the rigidity of teacher's administrative responsibilities and contrasted PSTs' belief about good practice of assessment for learning. In short, policy and custom in each subsystem directed the design and implementation of practicum and the learning support and affordances available to PSTs.

5) *Role mediators and mediation*

As for roles of subjects involved in the collective activity systems, MTs' task releasing mechanism suggests that MTs viewed PSTs as a materials developer for releasing them to do teaching as soon as MTs received the teaching materials from them. Culturally, PSTs were expected to consult their teaching instruments with their MTs and/or USs and to revise as required before teaching. WhatsApp was the tool used to mediate MTs and USs' role whereby PSTs submitted their lesson-plan or teaching materials and received approval on the documents being used for teaching. However, USs failed to respond while MTs provided only cursory feedback. WhatsApp was by schools' rule made to media PSTs' role as teacher, which was challenged by norms commonly accepted in schools. For example, Mida faced challenges in navigating her instructional role. She found herself having to adjust to the new norms of online interaction within school's WhatsApp Group and was confronted when she received negative comments about not conforming to these norms. This impacted her self-identity as a teacher and caused her to develop negative feelings about her learning experience in practicum.

Mentorship role was enacted by MTs separately from US's role. No meeting, online or face-to-face was held amongst PSTs, USs, and MTs or other school personnel during mid-and late-phase. These showed the separation of roles between MTs and University teacher educators in this study. Labour division was restricted to each system and setting, without the two partners communicating their expectations for delivering the actions and operations needed to support the learning to teach for the PSTs. In sum, mediation by tools, rules and roles was shaped by the interaction of systems' components, most importantly by the subjects whose agency directed the actions and operations of the activity system. The study demonstrates a marked separation occurred between the university and schools throughout all stages of the practicum. As a consequence, PSTs struggled with problems they faced and tended to resort to finding solutions independently or amongst their peer group, rather than in consultation with more expert teachers and academics.

4.2. Discussions

The study primarily found that misalignment between university and school's expectations and practices of teaching remains in place in practicum setting under research. This resonates with earlier studies and supports Allen, Ambrosetti, & Turner (2013) who claimed that the continuing segregation of roles and tasks between schools and universities has perpetuated the theory-practice divide. Lack of standard-based teaching performance continues to exist and confirms the findings of the study by Ure, Gough, & Newton (2009). The mismatch between pedagogical knowledge taught at coursework and knowledge base future teachers needed to draw on during practicum, indicates the practicum partnership system does not function optimally. The main findings underscored the misalignment between partners' expectations and practices as well as between the university-based knowledge and school-based practicum requirements.

In their review of Indonesia education system, Chang et al. (2014) positioned ITE as the gatekeeper for quality education. The imperative role of ITE requires more than increasing teacher's salary which is found not having direct link to better student's achievement. Supporting, Novita (2019) argued that Indonesian teaching force is less selective, compared to countries like Singapore and Finland (Development, 2015). Since teacher certification began in 2007, ITE programs has slightly attracted more high achievers who consider teaching as a promising profession. Yet, the input of Indonesian teacher force unfortunately is not exclusively reserved for ITE graduates (Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education, 2017b). Accordingly, Novita argued that ITE needs to work harder to prepare their graduates to compete with non-ITE ones, which therefore puts pressure on the quality of the process of learning to teach in both university and students. The duality of roles of future teachers as subject in both settings also reflects the concept of ITE delivery as a continuum.

de Vries et al. (2015) explained that as a continuum, ITE delivery requires collaboration of two communities of practice, working together to achieve a shared goal i.e. to provide learning teaching experiences that get preservice teachers ready to teach. Community is created by a number of people sharing the same interest, issues and concerns, discussing and exchanging ideas while interacting with one another (El Masry & Saad, 2018). In the partnership system, the practicum is not a mere object but also mediates the future teachers' developing sets of skills and practices acceptable to the given communities. MT1's act of providing lesson-planning engagement early during school visit and collective expectations of USs for linkage between lesson-plan knowledge and school application further confirm the partnership system has leveraged the university and its associated schools as 'a community of practice. The community carries the practice(s) not only as "a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language and documents that community members share" but also as the extended goal of delivering practicum activities and experiences particular to the system's tradition and values. In this goal, the university and schools can create practicum as an avenue for 'situated learning' (Wenger et al., 2002, p.29 cited in El Masry & Saad, 2018).

The two themes outline above are in line with the idea of ITE partnership being "inherently collective, something to be developed with such colleagues who are partners in learning and problem solving" (Linda Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 109). The collective, academic, and pedagogical practices at schools and universities, therefore, serve as the mediating tools. The tools are directed to achieving the common goal of getting future teacher ready to teach.

5. Conclusion

The paper has presented the results of the analyses of the partnership system between a university and its associated practicum schools. The analyses showed that the structure of the systems comprised of the university and practicum associate school subsystems, each of which encompassed subject, tool, object, rule, community and labour division components. Analysis on the mediation of these components further indicates that the two subsystems shared certain tools that constituted the collective tools available to subjects in both communities. The utilisation of these tools afforded future teachers learning engagement relevant to the norms in the university and associate schools' settings and therefore allows them to cross the boundaries of distinct pedagogical norm and practice in the two communities. In addition, this study has demonstrated when expectations were not communicated, shared learning expectations were not met and the coursework did not provide a continuum of professional learning that intentionally prepared them for teaching practicum and after graduation.

The analysis demonstrated a separatist partnership caused by a pertinent separation between values of theory and practice of teaching. Practicum preparatory coursework in the university is theory-oriented, while schools demand PSTs come to school ready to implement the theory into practices of practicum teaching. In the university setting, PSTs learned to develop practical tools for teaching and had an opportunity to visit a school. This suggests the partnership was less collaborative

as partners did not share the tool (curriculum) and labour (teacher as a partner) in the preparation of future teachers.

The conceptual framework of the professional learning continuum (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016; Wallace, 1991) guided this study. Responses to interviews, documents and teaching vignettes were analysed in response to RQ1 and have provided insight into PSTs' perceptions and experiences during the pre-practicum and practicum phases. These data collated and analysed from a series of interviews over the 6 months period of preparation for practicum in the university and doing practicum in schools, demonstrated a consistency in views and experiences of PSTs. At the conclusion of their studies in the university and in schools, PSTs' felt *unprepared to teach*. Consistent with international research, this study demonstrates the importance of universities and schools to work together to develop a learning trajectory for PSTs that helps them to link theories of learning of teaching with the practises of teaching. The findings of this study further show that unless these links are specifically and functionally directly linked with the knowledge of the practices of teaching, PSTs will make their own interpretations and adaptations of what it is to be teacher. The PSTs in this study were unable to identify and articulate clear theory-practice connections throughout their practicum.

The theoretical framework of CHAT provides a practical contribution to research on work of practice of preparing future teachers through focusing on the work of boundaries. This study also contribute to identifying the types of challenges that occur in practicum settings particularly during the transition from face-to-face to online instruction. It further highlights that practicum experiences should allow for more boundary crossing potentials, which enable future teachers to identify clear linkage between theoretical learning and school requirements, yet with critical understanding of the knowledge base on which they develop further practical skills in real settings.

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