



## A Narrative Inquiry into Indonesian Pre-service Teachers' Cross-Cultural Teaching Experiences in Malaysia

Amanda Jasmine<sup>1\*</sup>; Dewi Kurniawati<sup>2</sup>; Nunun Indrasari<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>English Education Department, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia

<sup>1\*</sup>Corresponding Email: [mandajas199@gmail.com](mailto:mandajas199@gmail.com)

### Article History:

Received: Nov 24, 2025

Revised: Dec 28, 2025

Accepted: Dec 31, 2025

Online First: Jan 30, 2026

### Keywords:

Cross-cultural Teaching,  
Cultural Adaptation,  
International Service  
Learning Program,  
Narrative Inquiry,  
Pre-service Teachers.

### Kata Kunci:

Adaptasi Budaya,  
Calon Guru,  
Layanan Internasional,  
Pengajaran Antarbudaya,  
Penyelidikan Naratif,  
Program Pembelajaran.

### How to cite:

Jasmine, A., Kurniawati, D., & Indrasari, N. (2026). A Narrative Inquiry into Indonesian Pre-service Teachers' Cross-Cultural Teaching Experiences in Malaysia. *Edunesia : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 7(1), 752-774.

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-NC-ND license



**Abstract:** This study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of how Indonesian English Education students describe their teaching experiences during the 2024 International Service Learning Program in Malaysia. Employing a qualitative narrative inquiry design, data were collected through in-depth interviews and reflective narratives, then analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns within the participants' stories. The findings reveal three central themes: (1) cultural adjustment, reflected in students' efforts to navigate different classroom norms and communication styles; (2) pedagogical shift, demonstrated through their Adaptation of teaching strategies to meet Malaysian learners' expectations; and (3) professional identity formation, emerging through ongoing reflection on their roles as novice teachers in a cross-cultural context. These results contribute to the theoretical understanding of intercultural teacher education by highlighting the value of narrative Inquiry in capturing identity development within transnational teaching spaces. Practically, this study underscores the importance of structured intercultural preparation for pre-service teachers. At the same time, at the policy level, it emphasizes the need to expand international exposure programs to strengthen global teaching competencies.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperoleh pemahaman mendalam tentang bagaimana mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dari Indonesia menggambarkan pengalaman mengajar mereka selama Program Pembelajaran Layanan Internasional 2024 di Malaysia. Dengan menggunakan desain narrative inquiry, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan narasi reflektif, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik Braun dan Clarke untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola utama dalam pengalaman peserta. Temuan menunjukkan tiga tema sentral: (1) penyesuaian budaya, yang terlihat dari upaya mahasiswa menavigasi norma kelas dan gaya komunikasi yang berbeda; (2) pergeseran pedagogis, yang tercermin dari adaptasi strategi mengajar sesuai ekspektasi peserta didik di Malaysia; dan (3) pembentukan identitas profesional, yang berkembang melalui refleksi berkelanjutan mengenai peran mereka sebagai calon guru dalam konteks lintas budaya. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian pendidikan guru lintas budaya dengan menunjukkan nilai narrative inquiry dalam menangkap proses pembentukan identitas dalam ruang pengajaran transnasional. Secara praktis, penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya persiapan interkultural yang terstruktur bagi calon guru, sementara secara kebijakan penelitian ini menyoroti perlunya perluasan program pengalaman internasional untuk memperkuat kompetensi global pendidik masa depan.

## A. Introduction

International service learning has increasingly been recognized as an important pedagogical approach in higher education, particularly in preparing students to engage with global and multicultural contexts (Kearney et al., 2024), rather than functioning solely as community service, international service-learning programs provide experiential learning opportunities that allow students to apply disciplinary knowledge while negotiating cultural differences, institutional expectations, and social norms in unfamiliar environments. Recent studies have demonstrated that such programs significantly contribute to the academic and personal development of teacher candidates by exposing them to diverse educational practices and multicultural perspectives (Simsek, 2020). In teacher education, such experiences are especially significant, as cultural values, communication styles, and contextual conditions inherently shape teaching practices.

In the Indonesian higher education context, the Community Service Program, widely known as *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (KKN), has long been implemented as a form of experiential learning that integrates academic knowledge with community engagement. Previous studies have emphasized that KKN enables students to apply theoretical knowledge in real social contexts while developing social awareness and problem-solving skills (Aliyyah et al., 2021). Furthermore, KKN students play a significant role in supporting teaching and learning activities in rural schools, contributing to the educational process and community development (Najah et al., 2023). International teaching experiences have been shown to strengthen pre-service teachers' intercultural competence, which is increasingly essential for educators working in globalized educational settings (Hernández-López, 2024). More recently, the emergence of international KKN initiatives reflects universities' efforts to respond to the demands of globalization by providing students with cross-border learning experiences. Through international placements, students are exposed to diverse cultural settings that require them to adapt socially, pedagogically, and professionally while contributing to local educational and community development.

Culture plays a central role in shaping how individuals interpret experiences and adapt to new environments. Hofstede (2011) conceptualizes culture as the collective programming of the mind that differentiates one group from another, influencing communication styles, power relations, and educational practices. These cultural dimensions become particularly salient in international teaching contexts, where pre-service teachers must navigate differences between their own cultural backgrounds and those of host communities. Recent Research has highlighted that cross-cultural Adaptation in exchange programs involves complex communication challenges and requires effective coping strategies to ensure successful integration into the host community (Tanasy, 2024). In the context of the International Service Learning Program in Malaysia, Indonesian students originating from a collectivist society with relatively high power distance encounter educational norms and classroom practices that, while sharing certain similarities, also present distinct expectations and interactional patterns.

Beyond cultural differences, international service learning contexts often present structural and pedagogical challenges. Students are frequently placed in schools with limited technological resources and constrained educational facilities, conditions that require flexible teaching strategies and adaptive classroom management. Such constraints not only affect instructional effectiveness but also shape pre-service teachers' perceptions of their competence, confidence, and professional roles. Although international service learning programs are widely acknowledged for their potential to foster personal growth and professional development, empirical Research examining how Indonesian pre-service teachers adapt to cultural differences and pedagogical practices in international teaching contexts remains limited.

More importantly, existing studies on international service learning tend to focus primarily on program outcomes, effectiveness, and general skill development rather than on participants' lived experiences and personal narratives (Vu, 2024). This emphasis leaves a significant gap in understanding how cross-cultural teaching experiences contribute to the formation of teacher identity, particularly from the perspective of pre-service teachers who are still negotiating their professional selves. Understanding the complexities of professional identity construction among English teachers requires in-depth qualitative approaches that capture the nuances of teachers' lived experiences (Zhang & Kim, 2024). There is limited Research that captures how Indonesian pre-service teachers interpret, reflect upon, and make meaning of their cross-cultural teaching experiences through their own narratives, despite the critical role such experiences play in shaping global competence, pedagogical adaptability, and professional identity.

This gap highlights the need for Research that foregrounds participants' narrative accounts in order to explore the processes of cultural adjustment, pedagogical Adaptation, and identity construction in international teaching contexts. Understanding these processes is essential, as teacher identity is not formed solely through formal coursework but is continuously shaped through situated experiences that require individuals to reconcile personal beliefs, cultural values, and professional expectations. Studies on pre-service teachers have shown that identity transition occurs as they navigate between their imagined professional selves and the realities of teaching practice (Novrianti, 2024). Furthermore, international teaching experiences provide unique opportunities for teachers to reconstruct their professional identities through cross-cultural encounters and reflective meaning-making (Maulani, 2025; Alharbi, 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in its use of a narrative inquiry approach to examine Indonesian pre-service teachers' teaching experiences during an International Service Learning Program in Malaysia, with a specific focus on the formation of professional identity within a cross-cultural context. By prioritizing participants' stories and reflective narratives, this study offers an in-depth, contextually grounded understanding of how pre-service teachers construct meaning from their international teaching experiences, moving beyond outcome-based evaluations toward a process-oriented perspective.

Accordingly, this study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of Indonesian English Education pre-service teachers' experiences during the International Service Learning Program in Malaysia by examining how they navigate cultural differences, adapt pedagogical practices, and reflect on their emerging professional identities within a cross-cultural teaching context. This study is guided by the following Research question: How do Indonesian English Education pre-service teachers describe their teaching experiences during the 2024 International Service Learning Program in Malaysia?. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the literature on intercultural teacher education and teacher identity formation, and practically to the development of international service learning programs and experience-based curricula that better prepare future teachers for global and multicultural educational contexts.

## B. Method

This Research employed a qualitative method using a narrative inquiry design. In narrative Research, it is essential to recognize that participants' lived experiences are not only reflected in the events themselves but also in how they arrange and retell them to construct meaning (Riessman, 2005). Narrative Inquiry has been increasingly recognized as a powerful methodology for exploring pre-service teachers' professional development and identity construction (Farhani, 2024). This approach allows researchers to capture the complexity of teachers' experiences as they navigate the transition from student to professional educator. Using this narrative approach, the researcher conducted an in-depth investigation through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The sample in this study consisted of two participants. Interviews focus more on exploring the essence of personal experiences and prioritizing participants' expertise, and have become one of the most commonly used methods in qualitative Research (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021). Although the number is small, this is methodologically acceptable in narrative Inquiry because the focus lies on the depth, richness, and completeness of each participant's life story rather than on generalization. A small sample allows the researcher to explore each individual's narrative in detail and capture the complexity of their experiences. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique where respondents are chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the Research focus.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on specific criteria relevant to the study's focus. Participants were required to be officially enrolled in the International Service Learning Program and registered as students in the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Education. In addition, they had to be enrolled in the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung, ensuring that their academic background aligned with the focus on English language teaching. Participation in the study was voluntary, and only students who expressed a willingness to participate in the Research and share their experiences through interviews and reflective narratives were included.

**Table 1.** The Data of Participant

Participants' Code	Major	Gender	Semester
WU	English Education	F	8
AH	English Education	F	8

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the Research participants involved in this study. The participants were two pre-service teachers from the English Education Study Program at UIN Raden Intan Lampung, both female and in their eighth semester. These participants were actively enrolled in the International Service Learning Program, which ensured that they had direct experience teaching in a cross-cultural educational context in Malaysia. Their advanced semester status indicates they have already completed most of their pedagogical coursework, allowing them to reflect critically on their teaching practices and professional development throughout the program. Selecting participants with similar academic backgrounds and program involvement enabled a focused, in-depth exploration of narrative experiences relevant to the study's aim of understanding cultural Adaptation, pedagogical adjustment, and professional identity formation among Indonesian pre-service teachers. The Research flow is briefly shown in Figure 1.

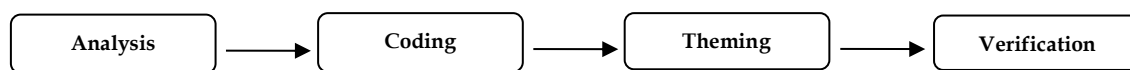
**Figure 1.** Research Flow Diagram

Figure 1 illustrates the Research flow diagram employed in this study, outlining the systematic stages of the narrative inquiry process. The Research began with data collection through in-depth interviews, during which participants shared their teaching experiences and reflections related to the International Service Learning Program in Malaysia. The collected narratives were then transcribed and subjected to an initial coding process to identify meaningful units of data. Following this stage, the codes were examined and organized into broader thematic categories through a theming process, allowing patterns related to cultural adjustment, pedagogical Adaptation, and professional identity development to emerge. The final stage involved verification, in which the themes were reviewed and refined to ensure consistency, credibility, and alignment with participants' narratives. This sequential process ensured a rigorous, transparent analysis of qualitative data, thereby supporting the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Data were obtained primarily through interviews, a common method, a qualitative Research method for capturing participants' rich perspectives (Nilamsari, 2014). In this study, each participant spent 30–45 minutes on the interview. Interviews were conducted in a quiet, comfortable place agreed upon by all participants and the researcher to ensure clarity and confidentiality.

The process of data analysis in this study followed a thematic analysis approach. Qualitative data analysis involves interpreting interview data to identify meaningful patterns and recurring meanings within participants' narratives (Patton, 2015). In accordance with the framework proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006), the analysis began with

a familiarization stage, in which the interview transcripts were read and reread to gain an in-depth understanding of the data. This approach aligns with the reflexive thematic analysis methodology, which emphasizes the researcher's active role in knowledge production and the iterative nature of theme development (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Braun & Clarke, 2022). The generation of initial codes followed this by identifying and labeling significant statements relevant to the Research focus. This systematic process ensured that the analysis adhered to good practice in thematic analysis, avoiding common methodological pitfalls while maintaining analytical rigor (Christou, 2023).

Through this process, narrative data were organized into thematic categories that revealed the deeper meanings of participants' experiences during the International Service Learning Program in Malaysia. To enhance trustworthiness, the researchers applied member checking, a strategy that allows participants to review interview transcripts and preliminary interpretations to ensure data accuracy and consistency of meaning (Birt et al., 2016; Motulsky, 2021). These steps helped confirm the findings' credibility. Ethical considerations were strictly followed throughout the study. Participants provided informed consent, were assured of confidentiality, and were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. All data were handled securely, and pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities.

## C. Result

### Overview of Thematic Findings

The results of the thematic analysis revealed three main themes that capture participants' experiences throughout the learning and adaptation process in the International Service Learning Program. These themes encompass cultural adjustment, pedagogical Adaptation, and professional and identity growth. Each theme comprises several sub-themes that were developed through a layered coding process, reflecting the complexity and depth of participants' narratives. Together, these themes provide a comprehensive portrayal of how pre-service teachers navigated cross-cultural contexts, adjusted their teaching practices, and constructed their emerging professional identities.

#### 1. Cultural Adjustment

In the early stages of departure and the first week of implementation, participants reported confusion, mainly due to differences in language, social customs, and expectations in the new environment. As time went on (from week 2 onwards), participants began to develop adaptation strategies and social support that helped them navigate the situation. In the final stage (program completion), participants experienced a shift in perspective and became more confident in cross-cultural settings.

##### a) Initial Culture Shock

In the first week of the program, participants consistently reported experiencing culture shock as they encountered differences in manners, social expressions, interpersonal

distance, and the overall rhythm of communication within the host community. This finding aligns with recent studies on international pre-service teachers, which highlight that anxiety and culture shock are common initial experiences requiring effective coping strategies (Apriliawati et al., 2024). These differences required participants to recalibrate their usual ways of interacting, as familiar verbal and nonverbal cues did not always function as they did in their home context. These differences required participants to recalibrate their usual ways of interacting, as familiar verbal and nonverbal cues did not always function as they did in their home context. As a result, participants experienced not only situational confusion but also psychological pressure stemming from concerns about misinterpreting meanings or unintentionally conveying inappropriate messages. The fear of miscommunication led some participants to become more cautious in their interactions, highlighting how early cultural encounters can affect emotional comfort and communicative confidence in cross-cultural teaching environments.

*"I understand the learning context, but some specific terms often make me hesitate. I have to ask again so that I do not misunderstand."* (P1)

Culture shock emerged largely because language use and social gestures functioned as key indicators of politeness and social acceptance within the host community. Participants became increasingly aware that appropriate interaction was not determined solely by grammatical accuracy or vocabulary knowledge, but also by the ability to interpret and employ culturally embedded nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and interpersonal distance. This condition demonstrates that difficulties in Adaptation cannot be attributed merely to limitations in language proficiency; rather, they extend to deeper issues related to participants' self-identity and perceived competence as prospective educators. When participants felt uncertain about whether their actions or expressions aligned with local norms, their confidence was affected, underscoring the close intertwining of cultural adjustment with professional self-concept in cross-cultural teaching contexts.

#### **b) Language Barriers**

Language barriers occur in two areas: academic learning contexts, such as conveying instructions and learning objectives; and informal contexts, such as responding to local jokes or spontaneous conversations. Participants reported that their inability to understand everyday expressions lowered their confidence, so that at first, they preferred to remain silent rather than respond spontaneously. Language was a determining factor in their social and professional engagement. Language was a factor that affected participants' comfort and confidence in carrying out their roles as educators.

*"In addition, sometimes I feel insecure because I do not understand the students' everyday language."* (P2)

It is widely recognized that one of the key sources of comfort and effectiveness in classroom interaction lies in teachers' ability to understand and connect with students' everyday language use. Such linguistic familiarity enables teachers to build rapport, interpret students' responses accurately, and create a supportive learning environment. This principle applies not only in regular classroom settings but also becomes even more critical when participants assume teaching roles in international contexts, where linguistic nuances and informal expressions often differ from those in their home culture. Consequently, adapting to students' everyday language and communicative practices is an essential aspect of teaching, as it enables teachers to navigate cross-cultural classrooms more confidently and engage learners in meaningful, culturally responsive ways.

### c) Communication Styles

The results indicate that participants need to adapt to a communication style that tends to be high-context, where meaning is conveyed more through subtle gestures, facial expressions, and shared understanding. This form of communication is very different from that in low-context cultures, which prioritize direct verbal communication, so participants need to relearn how to interact with students and the community.

*"Communication style is greatly influenced by culture. In high-context cultures, people rely more on nonverbal cues and implied understanding. This can be seen when KKN students use subtle gestures, body language, or facial expressions to guide student behavior." (P2)*

Initial misinterpretation of this communication style led to minor misunderstandings, such as when a smile was misread as agreement, even though it was not. This changed the way participants processed everyday communication. Participants also needed time to adapt.

### d) Coping Strategies and Social Support

Over time, participants developed gradual adaptation strategies, such as imitating how local teachers greeted students, asking questions directly of accompanying teachers, sharing experiences with fellow participants, and seeking emotional support from the surrounding community.

*"I also really appreciate the support I received from the local community and teachers during my community service program." (P1)*

Social support emerged as a key factor. Participants reported that being accepted by the local community helped them gain confidence more quickly and not feel isolated. Overall, this adaptation process proves that cross-cultural competence is not only cognitive but also influenced by a supportive social ecosystem.

## 2. Pedagogical Adaptation

The second theme highlights changes in participants' teaching strategies, which initially were theoretical and teacher-centered but later evolved into a collaborative, responsive approach grounded in student needs. The pedagogical adjustment process took place gradually. Pedagogical adjustments occurred after participants realized that the methods they brought from campus were not always appropriate for the field context. After several meetings and receiving feedback from classroom situations, participants changed their approach to be more collaborative, flexible, and responsive to student needs.

### a) Collaborative Learning

During the first week of instruction, participants primarily relied on a one-way, lecture-based teaching approach, reflecting the methods with which they were most familiar. However, through classroom observation and ongoing interaction with students, participants became aware of low levels of student engagement and participation. This realization prompted a gradual shift in their instructional strategies toward more interactive approaches, including group discussions, collaborative teamwork, and problem-solving activities. The transition marked an important stage in participants' pedagogical Adaptation, as they began to respond more sensitively to students' learning behaviors and classroom dynamics in the cross-cultural context.

*"It was difficult at first because they were used to listening to my explanations. Here, we have to discuss and come up with solutions together actively." (P1)*

This pedagogical shift also contributed to the emergence of a new relational dynamic between teachers and students. Participants began to recognize that educators' roles extended beyond the mere transmission of knowledge to include facilitating interaction, collaboration, and shared learning experiences. By positioning students as active contributors rather than passive recipients, participants redefined their teaching roles as guides and facilitators who supported collective meaning-making within the classroom. This realization reflects a deeper pedagogical transformation in which teaching was understood as a relational and dialogic process, particularly important in cross-cultural learning environments.

### b) Differentiated Instruction

Participants gradually became aware that students varied in their learning capacities, interests, and levels of engagement. In response to this diversity, they began implementing differentiated instructional strategies to accommodate individual needs and classroom dynamics. These strategies included educational games to enhance students' focus, small-group simulations to promote interaction and peer collaboration, and light, participatory tasks that encouraged active involvement. Through these adjustments, participants demonstrated increasing pedagogical sensitivity and adaptability, recognizing

that effective teaching in a cross-cultural context requires flexibility and responsiveness to students' diverse learning profiles.

*"The students' response to this strategy was very positive. They seemed more willing to participate when working in small groups than when answering questions alone in front of the class."* (P1)

The students' positive responses indicate that adapting teaching methods serves not only as an instructional necessity but also as an effective strategy for fostering social closeness and rapport between teachers and learners. When participants adjusted their approaches to better align with students' preferences and classroom dynamics, students became more engaged, responsive, and willing to participate. This interactional improvement suggests that pedagogical Adaptation plays a dual role, enhancing learning effectiveness while simultaneously strengthening interpersonal relationships, particularly in cross-cultural teaching contexts where trust and mutual understanding are essential.

### **c) Classroom Management Adaptation**

At first, participants felt overwhelmed in managing the dynamics among students, especially when some students were difficult to control. After several sessions, participants began to apply positive reinforcement, seating arrangements, and step-by-step instructions. Classroom management was the most challenging aspect, as participants lacked experience managing large classes.

*"In class, I observed first. I imitated the way the teacher started the class, the soft tone of voice, and the pause before answering. It was awkward at first, but it made me feel more accepted."* (P1)

*"In a high-context culture, people rely on subtle cues. We, the KKN seniors, had to use facial expressions or hand gestures to reprimand. We could not just say "do not be noisy" directly, as that would be rude."* (P2)

Both participants demonstrated distinct approaches to classroom management adaptation in response to the cross-cultural teaching context. P1 tended to rely on careful observation and gradually adjusted classroom practices by imitating local teachers' instructional styles, communication patterns, and methods for managing student behavior. In contrast, P2 adopted a more direct communication approach, actively engaging with students to establish classroom norms and address behavioral challenges. These differing strategies illustrate that classroom management adaptation is a flexible, individualized process shaped by personal teaching styles, cultural sensitivity, and situational demands within the learning environment.

### **d) Teacher-Student Communication and Evaluation Challenges**

Gentler communication, pausing before speaking, and praise have been shown to boost students' confidence. However, participants faced obstacles in evaluating learning

outcomes because formal exams were difficult to conduct. Therefore, evaluation was carried out through observation of behavior, student engagement, and willingness to ask questions.

In addition to teaching methods, participants also adjusted their communication styles, such as lowering their voice intonation, pausing before responding, and giving praise to boost students' confidence. Learning evaluation was conducted through observation and informal assessment, as formal tests were difficult to administer in a cross-cultural context and time-constrained.

*"When they dared to raise their hands and ask questions, I felt successful. That small moment was a big victory for me." (P1)*

When students demonstrated increased courage to participate, ask questions, or express their ideas, these moments became a significant source of pride for the participants. Such responses were interpreted as tangible indicators of successful Adaptation and effective teaching practices. Participants expressed feelings of happiness and personal satisfaction, viewing students' growing confidence as validation of their efforts to adjust pedagogically and culturally. These experiences reinforced participants' motivation and strengthened their belief that Adaptation and persistence in cross-cultural teaching contexts can lead to positive educational and relational outcomes.

### **3. Professional and Identity Growth**

The third theme shows how participants' identities transform from hesitant student teachers to more reflective educators with a global perspective. Participants' professional transformation was the most significant aspect of this experience. This change is evident in how they assess themselves and in their understanding of the role of teachers in education.

#### **a) Confidence Building**

Cultural barriers initially contributed to a decline in participants' self-confidence, as unfamiliar norms, communication styles, and classroom expectations created uncertainty in their teaching roles. However, as participants gradually developed the ability to manage the classroom, gain a deeper understanding of local cultural practices, and observe students' academic and behavioral progress, a noticeable shift in self-confidence emerged. This growth did not occur instantaneously but evolved through continuous practice, reflection, and Adaptation. The gradual strengthening of self-confidence reflects the participants' developing sense of professional competence and highlights the dynamic nature of identity formation within cross-cultural teaching experiences.

*"As a result, the classroom atmosphere became more lively, students were more enthusiastic, dared to express their opinions, and learned to work together and help each other." (P2)*

After participants adjusted to the classroom environment and refined their teaching styles in response to the local context, noticeable positive changes became evident in the classroom atmosphere. Students appeared more engaged, communicative, and willing to participate in learning activities, indicating improved interaction between teachers and learners. These changes suggest that participants' adaptive efforts to manage classroom dynamics and align instructional practices with students' cultural and learning needs contributed to a more supportive and effective learning environment.

### **b) Shift in Professional Values**

Through their field experiences, participants realized that the role of teachers extends beyond merely conveying instructional content. They gradually reconceptualized teaching as a relational, facilitative practice in which teachers serve as facilitators, mentors, and partners in the learning process. This reflective shift was particularly evident when students demonstrated enthusiasm and active involvement during classroom activities. Observing students' engagement encouraged participants to reassess their professional roles, reinforcing the understanding that effective teaching involves guiding learning, fostering interaction, and supporting students' growth rather than solely transmitting knowledge.

*"I was afraid of being seen as incompetent. But when I started to be able to manage the class, I began to believe... maybe I do belong here." (P2)*

This excerpt illustrates the participant's internal struggle with professional self-doubt during the initial phase of teaching in a cross-cultural context. The fear of being perceived as incompetent reflects a lack of confidence commonly experienced by pre-service teachers when confronting unfamiliar classroom environments and cultural expectations. However, as the participant gradually developed classroom management skills, a noticeable shift in self-perception occurred. The statement *"maybe I do belong here"* signifies a critical moment of professional affirmation, indicating that successful classroom engagement contributed to the participant's emerging sense of legitimacy and belonging as a teacher. This narrative highlights how practical teaching experiences function as catalysts for identity construction, enabling pre-service teachers to move from uncertainty toward professional confidence.

### **c) Change in Self-Perception as a Future Teacher**

Participants' professional identities shifted from "academic task executors" to educators capable of making independent decisions. Participants reported that after the program, they felt more capable of assessing classroom conditions and determining their own teaching methods without waiting for instructions.

*"After the community service program, I feel more capable of assessing the condition of the class and adjusting the learning methods." (P1)*

The implementation of the teaching and learning process within the International Service Learning Program played a significant role in fostering participants' professional growth and encouraging them to become more reflective and competent teachers. Through direct engagement in cross-cultural classrooms, participants were challenged to adapt pedagogically, respond to diverse learner needs, and critically reflect on their instructional practices. These experiences contributed to greater self-awareness, adaptability, and professional responsibility, indicating that international service learning serves as a meaningful space for nurturing more effective, context-sensitive future educators.

#### 4. Reflective Practice toward Becoming a "Global Teacher."

In the final stage, participants demonstrated more advanced reflective skills, including understanding their own emotions, reevaluating the strategies they used, and imagining themselves as prospective educators ready to work in a global context. This process shows that cross-cultural experiences contribute to the formation of global competencies in prospective teachers. With this, participants demonstrate changes in how they reflect more critically and analytically, as well as in how they interpret their emotions.

*"I began to understand why I felt anxious at the beginning, and from there I was able to improve the way I communicate and learn."* (P2)

Gradually, the participants' identities evolved from simply being teachers completing assignments to individuals who recognized their potential role in the global context.

**Table 2.** Thematic Analysis Table

Theme	Subtheme	Bullet Points	Keywords from the interview (P1 & P2)
<b>Theme 1: Cultural Adjustment</b>	<b>Initial Culture Shock</b>	Participants were shocked by the difference in terminology.	<b>P1:</b> I understand the learning context, but some specific terms often make me hesitate. I have to ask again so that I do not misunderstand.
	<b>Language Barrier</b>	Participants had difficulty understanding Malay, including its dialects, due to differences in word meanings, which led them to worry about saying the wrong thing and causing miscommunication.	<b>P2:</b> I was confused by the Malay dialect and the meaning of certain words, such as "budak" (enslaved person), which is different from its meaning in Indonesia, so I was afraid of saying the wrong thing and chose to be careful not to offend or misinterpret when teaching.

Theme	Subtheme	Bullet Points	Keywords from the interview (P1 & P2)
	<b>Communication Style</b>	Participants adapt communication and culture during teaching	<b>P2:</b> Communication style is greatly influenced by culture. In high-context cultures, people rely more on nonverbal cues and implied understanding. This can be seen when KKN students use subtle gestures, body language, or facial expressions to guide student behavior.
	<b>Coping Strategies and Social Support</b>	Adaptation was achieved by observing local teachers, adopting a gentle and polite communication style, and receiving emotional and Material support from family.	<b>P2:</b> I first observed how teachers started classes and spoke so that I could imitate a gentler, more polite style. I also felt calm because my family always supported me emotionally and financially, even though the university did not fully support this community service program.
<b>Theme 2: Pedagogical Adaptation</b>	<b>Collaborative Learning</b>	Participants experienced a shift from teacher-led to group-based teaching methods.	<b>P1:</b> It was difficult at first because I was used to listening to the teacher's explanations. Here, we need to discuss and develop solutions together actively.
	<b>Differentiated Instruction</b>	Participants tailor their teaching by using examples from students' daily lives.	<b>P1:</b> The students' response to this strategy was very positive. They seemed more willing to participate when working in small groups than when answering questions alone in front of the class.
	<b>Classroom Management Adaptation</b>	Participants adapted classroom management with collaborative strategies and simple methods due to limited school facilities.	<b>P2:</b> When I saw the cramped classroom conditions, limited electricity, and only one teacher teaching three classes, I realized I had to teach simply as it was and use group learning so the lessons could continue even with very minimal resources.
	<b>Teacher-Student Communication and Evaluation Challenges</b>	Obstacles arise because students are passive, lack confidence, and are lowly motivated to learn.	<b>P1:</b> I find it difficult to assess their abilities because many students remain silent, and sometimes I myself lack confidence because I am not

Theme	Subtheme	Bullet Points	Keywords from the interview (P1 & P2)
			familiar with their language; I feel that some students may lose motivation due to unsupportive learning conditions.
<b>Theme 3: Professional &amp; Identity Growth</b>	<b>Confidence Building</b>	Participants feel better prepared for the professional world of teaching.	<b>P2:</b> I made these adjustments to respect the local students' learning culture, increase their participation, and achieve learning objectives more effectively. As a result, the classroom atmosphere became more lively, students were more enthusiastic, dared to express their opinions, and learned to work together and help each other.
	<b>Shift in Professional Values</b>	This experience changed the participants' perspective that teachers are not merely conveyors of Material but facilitators and companions in the learning process.	<b>P1:</b> Seeing local teachers teach several classes at once made me realize how noble this profession is, and I learned that my job is not only to deliver Material but also to accompany, listen to, and adapt to students' needs.
	<b>Change in Self-Perception as a Future Teacher</b>	This program boosts confidence and strengthens participants' commitment as future educators.	<b>P1:</b> At first, I was afraid of being seen as incompetent, but after I successfully managed the class and saw the students becoming enthusiastic, I felt confident that I was indeed worthy of being a teacher, and I wanted to repeat this experience so that I could develop further.
	<b>Reflective Practice toward Becoming a "Global Teacher"</b>	Cultural Adaptation strengthens participants' empathy and reflective awareness.	<b>P2:</b> I began to understand why I felt anxious at the beginning, and from there, I was able to improve the way I communicate and learn.

Table 2 presents the results of the thematic analysis derived from participants' interview data. The table summarizes three overarching themes that emerged from the analysis, namely cultural adjustment, pedagogical Adaptation, and professional and identity growth, along with their corresponding sub-themes. Each theme reflects a distinct

yet interconnected dimension of participants' experiences during the International Service Learning Program. The theme of cultural adjustment captures participants' initial encounters with cultural differences, including experiences of culture shock, communication challenges, and gradual social Adaptation. Pedagogical Adaptation highlighted changes in instructional strategies, classroom management, and responsiveness to students' learning needs as participants adjusted to the cross-cultural teaching context. The final theme, professional and identity growth, illustrates participants' reflective processes, increased self-confidence, and evolving perceptions of their roles as future educators. Overall, the thematic structure presented in Table 2 demonstrates how participants' narratives reveal a progressive learning trajectory from initial adjustment challenges toward pedagogical competence and emerging professional identity.

#### D. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that participants' teaching experiences in Malaysia are shaped by an interrelated process involving pedagogical preparation, cultural Adaptation, classroom interaction, self-reflection, and professional identity development. These experiences do not begin when participants enter the classroom; rather, they begin during the stages of administrative preparation, lesson planning, and institutional support. This aligns with [Lai et al \(2016\)](#), who emphasize that global mobility in education requires procedural readiness and strong institutional support to enable participants to adapt effectively to new environments. Support from family and university also serves as social capital, strengthening participants' self-confidence ([Bourdieu, 1986](#)), especially for novice teachers entering a cross-cultural context. Thus, preparation is understood not only as a logistical aspect but also as the initial stage in the formation of transnational teachers' professional identity.

In practice, participants' teaching experiences are greatly influenced by Malaysian cultural norms and values. Based on [Hofstede's \(2011\)](#) cultural dimensions, Malaysia tends to exhibit high power distance and collectivism, reflected in attitudes of respect for teachers, politeness, and a tendency to work together in class. These conditions are perceived as supporting the learning process, although they differ from participants' experiences in Indonesia. In addition, classroom interactions are also influenced by the characteristics of high-context communication as described by [Hall \(1976\)](#), in which meaning is often conveyed implicitly through social cues and shared understanding. Linguistic challenges, such as differences in word meanings between Malay and Indonesian, further emphasize that successful cross-cultural teaching requires a high degree of cultural and linguistic sensitivity. These factors influence how participants deliver Material, manage the classroom, and interpret student responses.

Adjustments to the cultural context encouraged participants to adapt their learning strategies. Participants reported using group discussions, role plays, and collaborative activities in line with constructivist learning theory, in which knowledge is constructed through social interaction and active learning experiences ([Bruner, 1996](#); [Vygotsky, 1978](#)).

Limited access to technology in some schools, particularly in Sabah, encouraged participants to implement simple but culturally relevant learning strategies. These findings support Gay (2010) view that culturally responsive learning can increase student engagement even in resource-limited conditions. Thus, the participants' teaching experiences can be understood as a layered pedagogical adaptation process that requires a balance among curriculum demands, cultural expectations, and the realities of school infrastructure.

Self-reflection is a key component in making sense of these experiences. Participants reflect on their teaching experiences through the stages of experiential learning described by Kolb (1984): concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. Recent scholarship has emphasized that reflective practice is fundamental to pre-service teachers' professional development, enabling them to critically analyze their teaching decisions and improve their pedagogical competence (Li, 2025). Through this process, participants develop a new understanding of themselves as educators, which is reflected in increased self-confidence, adaptability, and professional awareness. Through this process, participants develop a new understanding of themselves as educators, which is reflected in increased self-confidence, adaptability, and professional awareness. Collaboration with fellow participants also forms a community of practice that enables social learning and professional identity negotiation (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Research has demonstrated that teachers' professional identity is a multifactorial construct influenced by contextual experiences, social interactions, and reflective processes (Nguyen, 2024). These findings suggest that international service learning, despite its short-term nature, can be a significant space for the formation of novice teachers' identities. Studies examining narratives of international teaching practicum have similarly found that cross-cultural experiences significantly shape pre-service teachers' understanding of their professional roles and responsibilities (Akbar, 2023). This aspect has been relatively unexplored in previous Research. Participants also compared the Indonesian and Malaysian education systems based on their teaching experiences. Similarities in values regarding discipline and character education facilitated the initial adaptation process, while differences in student motivation, resource availability, and class participation required adjustments to learning strategies. This comparative perspective reflects the growing recognition that cross-cultural instructors must develop 21st-century skills to navigate diverse educational contexts effectively (Alharbi, 2024). These differences can be understood through Hofstede (2011) uncertainty avoidance dimension, in which participants interpreted Malaysian students' openness to interactive activities as a cultural characteristic that influenced classroom dynamics. Perceptions of similarities and differences in these education systems influenced how participants planned their teaching, managed their classrooms, and set expectations for student engagement.

Overall, this study's findings confirm that international community service programs play an important role in developing intercultural competence, adaptive pedagogy, and reflective professionalism among prospective teachers. This study contributes to the global teacher education literature by emphasizing that successful cross-

cultural teaching is determined not only by language skills but also by cultural empathy, pedagogical flexibility, and reflective awareness (Hofstede, 2011; Kolb, 1984). Therefore, this study recommends that universities integrate structured intercultural training and systematic reflection into future international service-learning programs to strengthen prospective teachers' readiness to navigate the global education context and foster a more holistic understanding of global citizenship in education.

## **E. Implication**

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on intercultural teacher education by demonstrating the value of narrative Inquiry in capturing the nuanced, lived experiences of pre-service teachers. Through narrative accounts, this Research reveals how students construct meaning from their cross-cultural encounters, negotiate unfamiliar classroom norms, and develop emerging professional identities. Narrative Inquiry thus proves to be an effective methodological approach for understanding how intercultural competence, pedagogical adaptability, and teacher identity formation evolve through real-world immersion. This provides a theoretical foundation for positioning storytelling, reflective narration, and experience-based meaning-making as core components in intercultural teacher education Research.

The findings highlight several practical considerations for teacher education programs. First, the experiences of Indonesian students in Malaysia underline the importance of systematic preparation, including pre-departure cultural orientation, exposure to cross-cultural communication strategies, and training in adaptive pedagogy. Universities can strengthen their curricula by integrating modules on culturally responsive teaching, reflective practice, and context-sensitive classroom management. Second, the study suggests that pre-service teachers benefit greatly from guided mentoring and structured reflection during and after international placement. This support helps them translate their experiences into stable professional competencies. As such, teacher education institutions should design programs that scaffold students' experiential learning and prepare them for the realities of teaching in diverse global contexts.

At the policy level, this study emphasizes the importance of providing international exposure for pre-service teachers as part of national strategies for improving teacher quality. Preparing intercultural competence through structured teacher education programs has been identified as essential for developing globally competent educators (Nguyen, 2024). Cross-border teaching programs have been shown to enhance global awareness, intercultural communication, and pedagogical flexibility—competencies that are increasingly essential in a globalized education landscape. Research on humanizing intercultural pedagogy further suggests that pre-service teachers benefit from learning experiences that emphasize cultural empathy and responsive teaching practices (Marx & Moss, 2011). Cross-border teaching programs have been shown to enhance global awareness, intercultural communication, and pedagogical flexibility—competencies that are increasingly essential in a globalized education landscape. Therefore, policymakers should

encourage and fund international service-learning initiatives, strengthen bilateral educational partnerships, and institutionalize student mobility programs as part of teacher education standards. In doing so, governments and universities can support the creation of a future teaching workforce that is globally minded, culturally literate, and capable of navigating diverse educational settings.

## **F. Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research**

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the small sample size limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to broader populations of pre-service teachers. Second, the Research relies heavily on self-reported narratives, which are susceptible to subjective bias, selective memory, and the tendency of participants to present their experiences in a positive light, an inherent limitation of narrative inquiry approaches. Third, the study was conducted exclusively within the Malaysian context, which may not fully represent cross-cultural teaching dynamics in other countries; thus, the cultural insights drawn here cannot be assumed to apply universally. Fourth, the program's relatively short duration limits the depth of insight into the long-term processes of identity formation and pedagogical transformation.

Given these limitations, several directions for future Research are recommended. Researchers should consider employing methodological triangulation, such as incorporating video-based classroom observations, focus group discussions (FGDs), or mixed-method designs that combine narrative data with quantitative measures of intercultural competence or teaching performance. Longitudinal studies would also be valuable for examining how cross-cultural teaching experiences shape teacher identity and professional growth over time. Additionally, comparative studies across multiple countries or institutional models could provide broader insights into best practices for international service-learning programs. Finally, future Research may explore how policy-level support and institutional structures influence the sustainability, scalability, and effectiveness of international community service initiatives.

## **G. Conclusion**

Based on the study's findings, this Research concludes that participation in the International Community Service Program (KKN Internasional) significantly contributes to the professional and personal development of pre-service teachers. The program serves as an effective medium for developing intercultural competence, pedagogical adaptability, and reflective awareness through direct teaching experiences in multicultural classrooms. Participants reported increased confidence in navigating unfamiliar cultural norms, adapting instructional strategies, and implementing culturally responsive teaching practices aligned with local learners' needs. These findings confirm that international service-learning strengthens global competence and fosters teachers who are more open-minded, adaptable, and responsive to cultural diversity in education.

This study also underscores the essential role of institutional and familial support in facilitating successful international placements, particularly in addressing administrative and logistical challenges. Participants' reflections highlight that structured preparation, ongoing observation, and systematic documentation are integral to maximizing the effectiveness of international teaching experiences.

In light of these findings, three recommendations are proposed. First, higher education institutions should enhance pre-departure training and mentorship with a stronger emphasis on intercultural communication, classroom management, and reflective practice. Second, collaboration between universities and international schools needs to be expanded and sustained to ensure broader access to high-quality international learning opportunities. Finally, future programs should emphasize long-term evaluation of participants' professional growth to ensure that international service-learning contributes not only to individual competence but also to the broader goal of fostering globally minded and culturally responsive educators.

## References

- Akbar, R. A. (2023). Narratives of Experiences in International Teaching Practicum: Lessons from an EFL Pre-Service Teacher. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, 7(4), 1156–1176. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.7.4.1156-1176>
- Alharbi, N. S. (2024). Exploring the Perspectives of Cross-Cultural Instructors on Integrating 21st Century Skills into EFL University Courses. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, 1302608. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1302608>
- Aliyyah, R. R., Rahmawati, R., Sepriyani, W., Safitri, J., & Ramadhan, S. N. P. (2021). Kuliah Kerja Nyata: Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat Melalui Kegiatan Pendampingan Pendidikan. *JMM (Jurnal Masyarakat Mandiri)*, 5(2), 663–676. <https://doi.org/10.31764/jmm.v5i2.4122>
- Apriliawati, R., Salam, U., & Maulana, I. (2024). International Pre-Service Teachers' Anxiety and Coping Strategies: Perspectives of a Geographically Disadvantaged Islamic Boarding School. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education and Humanities*, 11(2), 185–204. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v11i2.22505>
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member Checking: A Tool to Enhance Trustworthiness or Merely a Nod to Validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802–1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870>
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on Reflexive Thematic Analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Toward Good Practice in Thematic Analysis: Avoiding Common Problems and Be(com)ing a Knowing Researcher. *International Journal of Transgender Health*, 24(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26895269.2022.2129597>
- Bruner, J. (1996). *The Culture of Education*. Harvard University Press.
- Christou, P. A. (2023). How to Use Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Tourism*, 3(2), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.4337/jqrt.2023.0006>
- Farhani, L. F. (2024). A Narrative Inquiry of EFL Pre-Service Teacher's Strategies to Engage Silent Students. *JP3: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris*, 13(2), 112–125.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond Culture*. Doubleday.
- Hernández-López, E. M. (2024). Assessing Intercultural Competence: The Case of EFL Pre-Service Teachers in the Mexican Context. *Intercultural Communication Education*, 7(4), 45–62. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ice.v7n4.1077>
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>
- Kearney, S. P., Maakrun, J., Thai, T., & Athota, V. S. (2024). A Cross-Sectional, Decade-Long Examination of International Service-Learning in Teacher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 28(3), 412–430. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10538259231193730>
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice Hall.
- Lai, C., Li, Z., & Gong, Y. (2016). Teacher Agency and Professional Learning in Cross-Cultural Teaching Contexts: Accounts of Chinese Teachers from International Schools in Hong Kong. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 54, 12–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.11.007>
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Li, H. (2025). Reflective Practice for Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Development. *SAGE Open*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251363136>













- Marx, H., & Moss, D. M. (2011). Please Mind the Culture Gap: Intercultural Development during a Teacher Education Study Abroad Program. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 62(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487110381998>
- Maulani, H., Erihadiana, M., & Ruswandi, U. (2025). Cross-Cultural Education Model through Multicultural Classrooms: An Ethnographic Study in Secondary Schools. *Jurnal Paedagogy*, 12(1), 59–68. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jp.v12i1.14050>
- Motulsky, S. L. (2021). Is Member Checking the Gold Standard of Quality in Qualitative Research? *Qualitative Psychology*, 8(3), 389–406. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000215>
- Najah, T. S., Pebrianti, I., Rifaat, H., Kamaliah, U., & Irawan, R. (2023). Peran Mahasiswa KKN dalam Membantu Kegiatan Proses Belajar Mengajar di Sekolah Desa Tahai Baru. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling*, 4(4), 4193–4200.
- Nguyen, T. P. L. (2024). Preparing Intercultural Competence for English Language Teacher Education. *TECONF Proceedings, 2024*, 234–248.
- Nilamsari, N. (2014). Memahami Studi Dokumen dalam Penelitian Kualitatif. *Wacana: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi*, 8(2), 177–181.
- Novrianti, B., Mirizon, S., & Eryansyah, E. (2024). Identity Transition of English Pre-Service Teachers Studying at Teacher Profession Education Program. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia (JPI)*, 13(1), 83–92. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpiundiksha.v13i1.69253>
- Osborne, N., & Grant-Smith, D. (2021). In-Depth Interviewing. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences* (pp. 619–636). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-1677-8\\_39](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-1677-8_39)
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Riessman, C. K. (2005). Narrative Analysis. In N. Kelly, C. Horrocks, K. Milnes, B. Roberts, & D. Robinson (Eds.), *Narrative, Memory & Everyday Life* (pp. 1–7). University of Huddersfield Press.
- Simsek, M. R. (2020). The Impact of Service-Learning on EFL Teacher Candidates' Academic and Personal Development. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 9(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.9.1.1>
- Tanasy, N., & Nuraeni, N. (2024). Cross-Cultural Adaptation in Exchange Programs: Sociocultural Challenges for Students and How to Deal with Them. *UTAMAX: Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education*, 6(3), 178–188. <https://doi.org/10.31849/utamax.v6i3.21875>
- Vu, N. T. (2024). Teacher Returnees from Overseas Programs in the West: Experiences of Two Vietnamese Teacher Returnees under the Lenses of Teacher Identity and

Intercultural Communication. *Frontiers in Communication*, 9, 1311179. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1311179>

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.

Zhang, Y., & Kim, J. (2024). Exploring the Complexities of Professional Identity Formation among English Teachers. *SAGE Open*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241253569>

### Author's Biography

	<p><b>Amanda Jasmine.</b>    She was born in Lampung on September 19, 2003. She is an undergraduate student in the English Education Program at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia. She is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree and developing academic interests in English language education, particularly in English language teaching from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Email: <a href="mailto:mandajas199@gmail.com">mandajas199@gmail.com</a></p>
	<p><b>Dewi Kurniawati.</b>    She is a lecturer in the English Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia. She holds a master's degree in English Language Teaching, with expertise in ELT methodology, technology-enhanced language learning, and teacher professional development. Email: <a href="mailto:dewikurniawati@radenintan.ac.id">dewikurniawati@radenintan.ac.id</a></p>
	<p><b>Nunun Indrasari.</b>    She is a lecturer in the English Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Raden Intan Lampung. She holds a master's degree in English Language Education, with research interests in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English Language Teaching (ELT), character education, curriculum development, textbook analysis, and hospitality education. Email: <a href="mailto:nununindrasari@radenintan.ac.id">nununindrasari@radenintan.ac.id</a></p>