

ESL Student Teachers' Contextual Learning Experience in Facilitating English Fun Camp*

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Abstract: This study seeks to investigate ESL student teachers' experience in facilitating an English Fun Camp (EFC) with learners from two secondary schools and one primary school. Their experiences are explored in ways which the EFC can contribute to the development of their self-fulfillment and pedagogical skills as prospective teachers. It also intends to look at the kinds of problems that student teachers have encountered while facilitating the EFC. The participants' feedback to the activities carried out by student teachers is explored to seek ways in which they can improve their organising abilities. Two sets of questionnaire were distributed to both student teachers as well as participants. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with a few participants and student teachers to gain further insights into the activities as well as the organisation of the EFC. The study implicates that organising an EFC by the student teachers can assist them in developing their potentials as prospective English Language teachers as they are able to interact with learners in a conducive and fun learning context.

Keywords: Contextual learning experience; English camp; ESL student teachers

Note:

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INTRODUCTION

Teacher preparation programmes aim to produce student teachers who are able to achieve academic excellence and competencies in teaching. Thus, teacher education universities and institutions throughout the world provide the essential theories, skills and knowledge about teaching and learning through the courses offered. However, it is a norm that courses often encompass lectures, both individual and group assignments, tests or quizzes, projects, and a final examination. The teaching practicum or teaching practice offered towards the end of the teacher preparation programmes would provide student teachers the setting to practice what they have learnt. Even though there is a wide range of quality in teacher education courses, not all classrooms and schools provide the richest context for student teachers to learn about engaging instruction (Zeichner, Payne & Brayko, 2014). This attests that student teachers lack opportunities to put into practice the theories and pedagogical knowledge they have acquired in the teacher preparation programmes.

In addition, before student teachers start their teaching career, it is found that most of them faced difficulties pertaining to classroom management and teaching. A study was conducted by Sandholtz (2011) on pre-service teachers to their descriptions of effective and ineffective teaching experiences near the end of their preparation programme. The study has found that pre-service teachers claimed that their instructional approaches did not work, they misjudged the students' ability and prior knowledge, failed to plan the lesson properly, failed to respond appropriately due to time pressure during the lesson, and lacked in subject matter knowledge. These difficulties are closely related to the lack of experience in teaching. It seems that teaching practice alone is not enough for the student teachers to function effectively in the classrooms. Therefore, the student teachers need as much exposure as possible in order to equip themselves with necessary strategies and to help them plan ahead before they start working.

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) is an established teacher education university in Malaysia. The duration of its teacher preparation programmes is four years which is made up of eight semesters. The programme structure for Bachelor of Education in UPSI includes university courses, professional education courses, major and teaching method courses, minor courses, and teaching practice. Student teachers undergo teaching practice during their seventh semester for 16 weeks in selected secondary schools. During the teaching practice, student teachers are observed and assessed in teaching their respective fields of specialisation in the classroom setting. Besides classroom teaching, student teachers need to participate in co-curricular activities and all activities organised by the school. Before undergoing teaching practice, university lecturers strive to provide “contextual knowledge” (Zeichner, Payne & Brayko, 2014) which cannot be learned in the university lecture rooms. In one of the professional education courses offered, student teachers are exposed to real experiences in schools to enable them to function in all learning situations. This study investigates how a group of English as a Second Language (ESL) student teachers in UPSI facilitated an English Fun Camp (EFC). The EFC provides the platform for the student teachers to acquire various aspects of management of learning which include organisation, leadership, discipline, technology, culture and ability.

This paper presents the problem that motivated the present study, language enrichment programmes that support teacher education, the literature related to contextual learning experiences in teacher education programmes, research questions posited, description of the methodology utilised, findings of the study and the discussion that concludes the report.

Language Enrichment Programme

A language enrichment programme should be part of the curriculum of a teacher education programme. Generally,

activities of the language enrichment programme are extended beyond the walls of the classroom (Hussin, Maarof & D'Cruz, 2001) and also beyond the main course of study (The Further Education Funding Council, 1996). Students' motivation, achievements and retention of learning are enhanced through successful enrichment programmes. Within the enrichment programme, various activities and tasks are prepared which require the active participation of the learners. The activities may include extensive reading programme, language carnivals, field trips, and language camps.

An English language camp can create opportunities for student teachers to apply both their communication and language skills. The experience of conducting the camp enabled these student teachers to put into practice the theories and various language teaching methodologies they have learnt during lectures. The camp provides an environment that is filled with rich language input as a language must be experienced to complement and strengthen the development of language proficiency of both student teachers and camp participants (Hussin, Maarof & D'Cruz, 2001). A language camp organised in mid-December 2014 by Berjaya University College of Hospitality (Berjaya UCH) reported that there was a big improvement in the participants' behaviour and confidence level after attending the English Holiday Camp. It also affirms that the university practices a teaching paradigm whereby students 'learn by doing' ("Aspects of L.I.F.E.," 2015).

In the present study, the EFC was held in an integrated fully residential secondary school on a weekend. The venue was chosen as the dormitories in the school were utilised to accommodate the camp participants for two nights and all meals throughout the EFC were served in the dining hall. The activities of the EFC were prepared by the committee members who comprised of 12 teachers from all the participating schools and five language teachers from UPSI. The EFC is divided into eight sessions which included Ice Breaking and Group Dynamics, Flash Mob, Language Adventure, Fun English, Preparation for Talent Show, Talent

Show, Language Challenge and Prize Giving Ceremony. The EFC began on a Friday with the registration of participants beginning 3:00 p.m. and it was officially closed at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday after the Prize Giving Ceremony.

The activities are carefully planned and developed to suit the needs of the camp participants and to provide a fun learning environment that is non-threatening with rich language input.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Wright (2010), the pedagogy of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) encompasses two core elements of the teacher education curriculum which are the structured learning experiences and supervised practical experience for student teachers. Learning experiences in the pedagogy of teacher education is very crucial as they have a positive influence on student teachers' cognition and their practices as teachers.

Park and Dickey (2007) conducted a study on a Korea-Japan English camp held in South Korea to examine the effects of exposing students to a diverse contextual English language and culture in a natural, practical and exciting way. The camp was held on a university campus whereby 60 hours of English instruction were delivered in the two-week programme. 57 students who comprised of 44 Koreans and 13 Japanese participated in the camp. The majority of the students were beginners, with 15 intermediate and one near-native English speaker. The findings are grouped into four major areas which included: changes in the students' attitude toward learning English and toward the English camp; improvement in English skills; enhancement of intercultural understanding and competence; and students were motivated to further study English and other languages and cultures.

Another study conducted by Rugsaken and Harris (2009) focused on a summer English camp language immersion programme in Thailand to investigate whether the writing skills of participants were enhanced. There were three

participants led by a native English speaker teacher known as a camp leader for 15 consecutive days. Each day, the camp schedule included three hours of classroom instruction, lunch and an afternoon field trip. The participants were asked to write an essay for 20 minutes on the third day and fifteenth day after the field trip sessions. The essays were written based on different field trip experiences. Before the participants wrote the essays, the camp leader discussed with them to summarise the field trip experiences using semantic maps. Then, the essays were compared and the findings revealed that there was an increase of 116 % and 78 % for total words and number of sentences produced respectively for the second essay. The researchers also reported that the participants' second essays made more sense than the first ones.

The literature so far focused mainly on the effects of language camps towards language acquisition and communication skills among participants. There is limited research conducted on the learning experiences of student teachers in facilitating English camps particularly in Malaysia. The study reported in this paper contributes to this body of knowledge as the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the problems faced by student teachers when conducting the activities throughout the English Fun Camp and how do they overcome the problems?
2. What are the benefits gained by student teachers when conducting the English Fun Camp activities?
3. What are the participants' perceptions of the facilitators' roles in conducting the English Fun Camp activities?

METHODOLOGY

The research design involved the use of the survey method. This study is designed to examine the problems that the student teachers faced and how they overcome the problems.

The benefits gained by student teachers in facilitating the EFC and the participants' perceptions of the facilitators' roles in conducting the EFC activities are also investigated. Two sets of questionnaire, facilitator's questionnaire and participant's questionnaire, were administered to student teachers and participants respectively to obtain the relevant data. The method of collecting data utilising questionnaire is unique as both qualitative and quantitative data could be obtained. Semi-structured interviews are also carried out with selected participants and student teachers to gain further insights on the activities as well as the organisation of the EFC.

Sampling

The EFC was facilitated by 20 student teachers who were 19 Semester Five TESL student teachers and one Semester Seven TESL student teacher. One Semester Five TESL student teacher was assigned as camp commandant. The facilitators were required to answer a questionnaire prepared to obtain their views regarding the facilitation of the EFC. 20 sets of questionnaire were distributed but only 19 were answered and returned by the facilitators. The facilitators were 10 males and nine females whose age ranged from 21 to 24 years old. These facilitators have the experience of facilitating between one to three language camps.

A total of 119 students aged between 10 to 15 years old from three schools which were School A (an integrated fully residential secondary school), School B (a national-type secondary school) and School C (a cluster primary school of excellence) participated in the EFC. These students answered the participant's questionnaire.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study involved administering the survey instruments directly to both the EFC facilitators and participants 'at the same point in time' (Fraenkel and

Wallen, 2000, p. 432). The main advantage of this method is the high rate of responses obtained within a short time frame.

The instruments used in this study are two sets of questionnaire. The first set of questionnaire is administered to the camp participants who were 119 students at the end of the EFC after the Prize Giving Ceremony. The questionnaire consists of four sections. Section A contains items to obtain the demographic details of the participants which are name of school, age, number of language camps attended, and the reasons they attend the EFC. Section B requires the participants to rate the 43 items listed using a 4-point scale: 1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - agree, and 4 - strongly agree. The items include statements regarding the facilitators and activities conducted. In Section C, the participants would indicate the activities and aspects of the EFC that they liked. Finally, Section D contains 5 open-ended questions to elicit reasons why the participants liked or disliked certain activities, and also to provide their comments or suggestions.

Similarly, there are four sections in the facilitator's questionnaire. The facilitators provided their demographic information in Section A. In Section B, they stated their level of agreement on the 30 items listed which cover the facilitation of the EFC and how the EFC has improved their skills using the same 4-point scale found in the participant's questionnaire. Section C contains a table that enables the facilitators to write the types of problems faced, description of problems and actions taken for each session of the EFC. Besides that, the facilitators had to write the best aspects of facilitating the camp and benefits gained throughout the camp. There are seven open-ended questions in Section D whereby the facilitators had to provide reasons why they liked or disliked certain activities and also the opportunity to provide their comments or suggestions. This questionnaire is administered to the facilitators after the participants were released to their respective school teachers.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with selected participants and facilitators to substantiate the data

collected through the questionnaire. The interviews would provide more in-depth data in a natural manner. Hence, the interviewees would feel at ease and provide additional information that might be left out in the questionnaire (Wilson, 1996). The interviews are tape-recorded for later analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Although the information collected through the two sets of questionnaire are extensive, only selected sections of the answers provided are used for the present study. Table 1 shows the instruments used in the study and type of data analysis to answer the three research questions posited.

Table 1 Instruments and Type of Data Analysis

Research Question	Instrument(s)	Type of Data Analysis
RQ1: What are the problems faced by student teachers when conducting the activities throughout the English Fun Camp and how do they overcome the problems?	Facilitator's Questionnaire	Qualitative
RQ2: What are the benefits gained by student teachers when conducting the English Fun Camp activities?	Facilitator's Questionnaire & Interviews	Quantitative & Qualitative
RQ3: What are the participants' perceptions of the facilitators' roles in conducting the English Fun Camp activities?	Participant's Questionnaire & Interviews	Quantitative & Qualitative

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are presented based on the responses given by the student teachers and camp participants. In order to answer the first and second research questions, responses provided by student teachers in Section C of the facilitator's questionnaire are tabulated. The participant's questionnaire provides the answers to the third research question.

RQ1: What are the problems faced by student teachers when conducting the activities throughout the English Fun Camp and how do they overcome the problems?

Table 2 Problems Faced by the Facilitators and the Actions Taken during the EFC

No.	Activity	Problems	Actions taken
1.	Ice breaking & Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were shy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used questions to prompt discussion. • Demonstrated a conversation. • Grouped the participants from different schools and races.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time constraint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only selected activities were conducted.
2.	Flash Mob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were shy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged the participants to talk to each other.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time constraint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were taught simple dance steps. • Conducted group practice instead of individual practice.

cont. **Table 2**

3.	Language Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content/ materials were not suitable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some facilitators helped the participants.
4.	Fun English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time allocated was too long for the activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators helped the participants.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants did not hear clearly the words given in the spelling relay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers who conducted the activity had to repeat the words.
5.	Preparation for Talent Show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of time to practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators helped the participants to practice including during break time.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants did not cooperate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators intervened during the group discussion.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear instructions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators explained again the task for the Talent Show.
6.	Talent show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time constraint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were forced to practice during break time.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were absent during practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took out one character from the drama.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the equipment were not enough (microphones). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared the microphones and trained the participants to project their voice.

cont. **Table 2**

7.	Language Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students took some time to complete the activity and some did not contribute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No action provided.
8.	Prize Giving Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some facilitators helped to overcome the problems.

Table 2 summarises the problems faced by student teachers and how they overcome these problems when conducting the EFC. Generally, most of the respondents agreed that the participants were shy at the beginning of the camp. In the first two activities which are Ice Breaking and Flash Mob, participants were at the stage of adjusting themselves with new friends they met during the camp. The respondents, who were the student teachers, posed questions to prompt the participants to get involved in the discussion, provided topics for the participants, and demonstrated a conversation. Facilitator 9 explained,

'The participants are very passive and some of them are very shy. We as facilitators forced them to speak by approaching each of them with questions.'[sic]

Besides shyness, the respondents also stated that one of the main problems that they faced was time constraint. For activities such as Ice breaking and Team Building, Flash Mob, Preparation for Talent Show and Talent Show, participants needed longer time. Hence, only certain activities were conducted, facilitators helped the participants when necessary and they opted for other alternatives such as asking the participants to practice for Talent Show during break time. Facilitator 3 reflected,

'There was not enough time to finish all activities. Only certain activities were carried out.'

During the EFC, the participants were trained to present the Flash Mob as a highlight for the Prize Giving Ceremony. Only two hours are allocated for the practice. Therefore, the facilitators had to find ways to overcome the time constraint. This is found in the response provided by Facilitator 19,

'We were only given two hours to train the participants. We just proceeded and carried out the plan although some of the students have not mastered the dance.'

However, to address this problem, Facilitator 6 provided the solution,

'Well, we carry out the Flash Mob practice with small groups instead of guiding individuals who are a bit slow in getting the steps. We also created simple dance steps that are easy to master in the short time frame.'

As for the fifth activity which is Preparation for Talent Show, Facilitator 9 responded,

The participants have to come up with drama and they have few hours only. Therefore, the participants only prepare a short drama and they prepare during the break time. [sic]

Apart from that, some participants did not cooperate well with their group members. During the preparation for the Talent Show, some participants were left out. Facilitator 18 reported,

'Hard to give assistance to the students on how to organise and plan and do work together. Some are left out. Therefore, just give them instruction and go according to their dynamics. If order them, afraid they might be just following us. Just maximising the effort.'

In addition, technical problems were one of the minor problems faced by the facilitators during the camp. For instance, during the Talent Show the number of microphones

provided was not enough to accommodate the number of participants on stage. Hence, the facilitators guided the participants to project their voice instead of relying on the use of microphones. During the Prize Giving Ceremony too, there were technical problems such as the incompatibility of the laptop used to connect to the liquid-crystal display (LCD). However, some of the facilitators with knowledge on certain technology helped to overcome the problems.

Even though the problems faced by the student teachers were not serious or those that dealt with their competencies as prospective teachers, the actions taken imply that the student teachers were quick and efficient in handling those problems.

RQ2: What are the benefits gained by student teachers when conducting the English Fun Camp activities?

Table 3 Aspects of the Activities and the Benefits Gained during the EFC

No.	Activity	Aspects of activities	Benefits gained
1.	Ice breaking & Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to know the participants from different schools and background.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote creativity.
2.	Flash Mob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and participation.
3.	Language adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudoku 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge. • Teamwork.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve knowledge.
4.	Fun English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling relay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New idea. • Participants' readiness. • Improve vocabulary.

cont. **Table 3**

5.	Preparation for Talent Show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork. • Creativity. • Leadership.
6.	Talent Show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity. • Discipline. • Voice projection.
7.	Language Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One word • Chain message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust and teamwork. • Able to guide participants.
8.	Prize Giving Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flash Mob 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a success even though time allocated for practice was too short.

Table 3 highlights the benefits gained by the student teachers when facilitating the EFC activities. Overall, most of the facilitators agreed that the introduction session during Ice Breaking slot was the most beneficial. During the introduction session, the facilitators had the opportunity to get to know the participants who came from different schools and background. In addition, they had to deal with participants who were nervous and shy. Thus, the student teachers were able to apply the interpersonal skills they have learnt in this situation. For the second activity, team building, the facilitators found that it was a good exposure for them to cultivate creativity among the participants. Throughout the camp, the facilitators also learned about teamwork, leadership, trust and discipline. Since most of the activities carried out involved group work, all participants were required to work with each other, contribute in all activities conducted and be punctual. All these needed to be made clear and the facilitators played important role in determining that the participants worked well in their respective groups. For instance, Facilitator 3 felt happy that the Flash Mob was a success as he stated,

'I am impressed by the participants' willingness to practice as a team and their willingness to struggle until the end of the practice.'

Not only had the participants displayed good teamwork spirit but the facilitators as well. Facilitator 19 responded,

'We, the facilitators helped each other to ensure that students are able to master the steps within the two-hour practice.'

Besides that, some of the activities carried out also helped in improving their knowledge. For activities in the Language Challenge and Fun English slots, the facilitators were able to share their knowledge in Sudoku with the participants and some gained experience and knowledge about that game. Another benefit that they gained during the Fun English activities was they had the chance to learn new words to add to their vocabulary list. Facilitator 14 responded,

'Able to share knowledge and strategies with the participants. And know a few new words.'

Five statements in Section B of the facilitator's questionnaire provide additional information on the benefits of the EFC. Out of the 19 participants' questionnaires returned, one participant did not indicate his responses to Statements 1 to 4 in this section as shown in Table 4. All 18 participants agreed that the EFC improved their leadership qualities, 15 participants agreed that the EFC improved their English skills and confidence in using English, and 17 participants agreed that the EFC taught them to be responsible people. For statement 5, all 19 participants agreed that they would be able to use and apply what they have learnt in the EFC when they graduate.

These statements are important as the responses given by the student teachers reveal their self-esteem and certainty about their own abilities. According to Prince, Snowden and Matthews (2010), this awareness would help student teachers become reflective practitioners and further enhance their skills attributes in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. The responses provided by the student teachers reflect that they were capable of handling problems, active, positive, and enthusiastic in facilitating the EFC.

In summary, all student teachers indicated that they gained a lot of benefits while conducting the activities as facilitators. This experience will benefit them when they become teachers later on after they have completed their studies.

Table 4 Benefits Obtained by Conducting the EFC Activities

No	Statement	Disagree		Agree		Mean
		SD	D	A	SA	
1.	The camp improved my leadership qualities.	-	-	6	12	3.66
		0		94.7%		
2.	The camp improved my English skills	1	2	5	10	3.33
		11.1%		83.6%		
3.	The camp improved my confidence in using English	-	3	6	9	3.33
		16.7%		78.0%		
4.	The activities taught me to be a responsible person	1	-	6	11	3.5
		5.5%		89.4%		
5.	I would be able to use and apply what I learned in this English Fun Camp when I graduate	-	-	5	14	3.73
		0		100.0%		

RQ3: What are the participants’ perceptions of the facilitators’ roles in conducting the English Fun Camp activities?

The participants of the EFC were 119 students from one primary school and two secondary schools. The profile of the participants is shown in Table 5. There are 41 students from School A which is a secondary residential school, 39 students from School A which is a national-type secondary school, and 39 students from a cluster primary school of excellence. All the participants are female students. These students were able to communicate meaningfully in English and possessed a good command of the language. This information is provided by their teachers. However, 104 of the participants (87.4 %)

indicated that they joined the EFC to improve their English. On the other hand, 84 of them (71.4 %) expressed that they just wanted to have fun and meet new friends.

Table 5 Profile of Participants

		Participants	
		n	Percentage (%)
School	A	41	34.5
	B	39	32.8
	C	39	32.8
	Total	119	100.0
Age	10 years old	27	22.7
	11 years old	12	10.1
	13 years old	16	13.4
	14 years old	22	18.5
	15 years old	42	35.3
	Total	119	100.0
Number of Language Camps Attended	Never	47	39.5
	1 - 2	50	42
	3 - 4	19	16.0
	More than 5	3	2.5
	Total	119	100.0
Reasons for Attending the EFC (multiple responses are accepted)	My parents said I should go	10	8.4
	My teacher said I should go	17	14.3
	I want to improve my English	104	87.4
	I have finished my PMR/ UPSR and I want to do something useful	44	37.0
	I just want to have fun and meet new friends	85	71.4

The participants' views regarding the facilitators' roles in conducting the EFC are divided into three categories which included the participants' general perception, the qualities of the facilitators and the abilities of the facilitators in carrying the EFC activities. Table 6 contains 4 statements which describe the participants' general perception of the facilitators.

Table 6 Participants' General Perception of Facilitators

No	Statement	Disagree		Agree		Mean
		SD	D	A	SA	
1.	My facilitators are well prepared to facilitate the activities.	1	2	43	73	3.57
		2.5%		97.5%		
2.	My facilitators are fun to be with.	1	4	25	89	3.69
		4.2%		95.8%		
3.	My facilitators are good leaders.	-	1	34	84	3.69
		0.8%		99.2%		
4.	My facilitators were great	-	1	17	101	3.84
		0.8%		99.2%		

Based on Table 6, 97.5 % participants agreed that the facilitators were well prepared to facilitate the activities, 95.8 % agreed that the facilitators were fun to be with, and 99.2 % agreed that the facilitators were both good leaders and great. These characteristics are part and parcel of the characteristics essential in ensuring the success of any programmes which would be conducted by the student teachers when they join schools upon graduation.

Table 7 illustrates the four qualities possessed by the facilitators as perceived by the participants. The qualities include knowledgeable, friendly, helpful and caring. These qualities are some of the good qualities that future teachers should possess.

Table 7 Qualities of the Facilitators

No	Statement	Disagree		Agree		Mean
		SD	D	A	SA	
1.	My facilitators are knowledgeable	1	5	33	80	3.61
		5.0%		95.0%		
2.	My facilitators are friendly	-	-	24	98	3.79
		0		100.0%		
3.	My facilitators are helpful	-	1	25	93	3.77
		0.8%		99.2%		
4.	My facilitators are caring	1	4	23	91	3.71
		4.2%		95.8%		

Table 8 consists of 11 statements that describe the abilities of facilitators in conducting the EFC activities. 98.3 % of the participants agreed that the facilitators were able to guide them to complete the tasks given, 99.2 % agreed that the facilitators were able to give clear and simple instructions, and helped them understand the tasks given, 84.9 % agreed that the facilitators motivated them to complete the tasks given on their own, and 97.5 % agreed that the facilitators were confident. Besides that, 99.2 % agreed that the facilitators were able to communicate well in English, 95.0 % agreed that the facilitators were able to manage the group well, and 96.0 % agreed that the facilitators encouraged their groups to participate actively in all the activities. 96.6 % agreed that the facilitators spoke English fluently and were able to help them overcome the problems faced in the activities conducted. Finally, 93.3 % perceived the facilitators as able to develop their creative and critical thinking in all the activities conducted.

The high level of agreement given by the participants regarding the student teachers' abilities in conducting the EFC proves that the student teachers had managed the activities efficiently and were sensitive to the needs of the participants.

Table 8 Abilities of the Facilitators

No	Statement	Disagree		Agree		Mean
		SD	D	A	SA	
1.	My facilitators are able to guide me to complete the tasks given.	-	2	41	76	3.62
		1.7%		98.3%		
2.	My facilitators give simple and clear instructions.	-	1	36	82	3.68
		0.8%		99.2%		
3.	My facilitators help me to understand the tasks given.	-	1	31	87	3.72
		0.8%		99.2%		
4.	My facilitators motivate me to complete the tasks on my own.	7	11	54	47	3.18
		15.1%		84.9%		
5.	My facilitators are confident when facilitating the activities.	1	2	29	87	3.69
		2.5%		97.5%		
6.	My facilitators are able to communicate well in English.	-	1	22	96	3.79
		0.8%		99.2%		
7.	My facilitators are able to manage the group well.	2	4	29	84	3.63
		5.0%		95.0%		
8.	My facilitators encourage my group to participate actively in all the activities.	1	3	34	81	3.63
		3.4%		96.6%		
9.	My facilitators speak English fluently.	1	3	30	85	3.67
		3.4%		96.6%		
10.	My facilitators are able to help us overcome the problems we face in the activities conducted.	-	4	43	72	3.57
		3.4%		96.6%		
11.	My facilitators are able to develop my creative and critical thinking in all the activities conducted.	-	8	62	49	3.34
		6.7%		93.3%		

CONCLUSION

The EFC conducted by the student teachers have provided the natural and meaningful setting for them to put into practice the theories and skills acquired throughout the teacher education programme. The student teachers played the role as facilitators during the camp and such experience will be a meaningful one for them before they embark on their teaching career. Indirectly, this opportunity has given them a new outlook and will guide them on how to plan and conduct their lessons in the future. This is because it is of utmost importance that teachers in this era possess practical and meaningful skills that are applicable in the classroom (Abdul Rahman, Abdullah & Abd Rashid, 2011).

In addition, Nunan (2005) asserts that well-structured task-based activities conducted outside the classroom develop independent learning skills and provide the accessibility to communicative English in a natural environment. All the activities conducted during the camp were carefully planned and tried out by the facilitators before they carried out with the participants at the camp. Such experience will definitely help the student teachers in planning their lessons before they implement the lessons in the classrooms. The experiences gained through the activities conducted in the EFC would mould the student teachers to become dynamic teachers to comply with the Malaysian Teacher Standards where teachers are required to have three valued aspects of practices namely teaching professionalism; knowledge; and high teaching and learning skills.

The findings in this study address the concerns voiced by Cumming (2010) regarding graduates who are not able to participate effectively in the workplace due to the lack of appropriate skills, attitudes and dispositions. The EFC has provided student teachers the opportunity to engage, explore and experience an authentic and overwhelming adventure in their teacher education programme that enhances their communication, human relations and problem solving skills.

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