

Keywords:

Teaching practicum, mentors, mentoring, qualitative research, multiple case study

Abstract

The teaching practicum is an integral part of teacher education and a key role is played by teacher trainers – mentors. The aim of this thesis is to determine their perception of the practicum, evaluation of their own degree of preparedness, and attitude to the tasks which the role of the mentor involves. The theoretical part describes the roles of the mentor, models of mentoring, concrete mentoring tasks, and also mentors' motivation as well as important skills. It further discusses selected issues in the EFL practicum, namely feedback and self-reflection, observations, preparedness of mentors, and the length of the practicum. The empirical part is comprised of the results of qualitative research in the form of a multiple case study. Five case studies have been carried out in total and data have been processed through the process of coding. The paper then goes on to analyse the findings with regard to the theoretical concepts discussed earlier in the study, and outlines potential research and pedagogical implications. The main findings of the study include mentors' high motivation for their roles and friendly attitude to teacher trainees, as well as their lack of specialised education for teacher trainee supervision and no perceived need for such training. Additionally, the study established mentors' evaluation of the current length of the practicum as insufficient. It is hoped that the present study should raise awareness of circumstances facing mentors as well as the process and quality of practicums as such.

The thesis is written in English.