

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study explores the problems that occurred to students at school based on the pre-service teachers' experiences while observing the teaching and learning process of English in the classroom where they conducted the first field teaching practice (PLP I). The study focuses on data collected from 12 EFL pre-service teachers. The data was collected using FGD reflection and interviews that were analyzed qualitatively. This section presents the research background, questions, scope, and objective. In addition, it also measures the significance of the study and the definition of key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In several countries, English has been integrated in terms of EFL education, especially in middle and high schools (Akbari, 2015). Even though English has been studied from junior to senior high school, as EFL students, it is not easy to master English even though it has been learned from the lowest level to university (Riadil, 2020). It is not surprising that in English classes, there are still students who are ignorant of lessons from the way of learning in class which causes it, or the students' motivation is still shallow.

In addition, not only EFL learners have difficulties dealing with English but also ESL learners experience the same thing (Pabro-Maquidato, 2020). Several studies identified struggles for learners who try to deal with English as a second language. They face lots of problems, for example unable to communicate

effectively and they are reluctant to speak (Ali et.al, 2020), errors in writing (Manan et.al, 2020), and listening comprehension problem (Sadmir et.al, 2018). Frequently, learners face many obstacles when trying to become more proficient in English. However, this is not easy to overcome considering that English is not the mother tongue of EFL or ESL students (Yang, 2019).

Several studies are related to the problems EFL learners face, especially in Indonesia (Husin & Nurbayani, 2017). Putra (2021) studied that there are several challenges faced by students while learning English in class. They lack concentration during the learning process, have difficulty mastering speaking skills, lack of attitude, boredom, and lack of vocabulary. This argument is also supported by Krisnayanti and Winarta (2021), who stated that students have considered that English has many vocabularies that must be owned, the English pronunciation is difficult and the spelling is still confusing. These become the obstacle experienced by students during the learning process.

Besides, many students fail to improve their language skills due to negative responses from their surroundings (Hanifa, 2018). They were given a dropping response like being ridiculed when they tried to speak English. Therefore, they tend choosing be quiet and not actively participating in the lesson (Liu & Jackson, 2011). Thus, their learning and achievement are also hampered (Abdullah, 2015). Difficulty in speaking also be a problem for students because their inability to speak English will affect their motivation (Erdem, 2016). Students' failure in English, naturally affects their motivation toward the English course (Song & Kim, 2017). Something like this can cause them to accept failure and develop a negative attitude toward it.

However, despite many studies that have been done to discuss student problems, there are still limited studies related to students' difficulties in learning English at the school level (See for example Unal & Ilham, 2017). On average, several researches had examined in the context of higher education and, more specifically, on receptive and productive skills such as reading difficulties (Jarrah & Ismail, 2018), listening comprehension (Syadiah, 2016), speaking issues (Riadil, 2020), and problem in writing (Derakshan & Karimian, 2020). Those researches have a different point of view or even more complicated from students who are still at the secondary or senior high school level. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the problems that occur among students in English learning. The problems that arise in this study are based on the pre-service teacher experiences during the first field teaching practice (PLP I).

1.2 Research Question

This study attempted to find the answer of the following research question “What are students’ problems in English classrooms that might hinder the learning process?”

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the results of pre-service teachers' observation related to the problems experienced by students that hindered learning in English class. It is limited to identifying students' problems in English classroom and their causes according to the experiences of the EFL pre-service teacher's observations at the school where they conducted the first field teaching practice (PLP I). In

addition, this study only focuses on identifying and describing the problematic area experienced by students in English classes in terms of receptive skills, productive skills, vocabulary mastery, students' attention, along with students' motivation, and students' confidence.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question, this study explores the students' problems in English classrooms that might hinder the learning process based on EFL pre-service teachers' experiences during their first field teaching practice (PLP I).

1.5 Significance of the Study

Through this study, the researcher provides an overview relevant to the problems experienced by students when studying in English class. The results of this study is hoped to contribute to further research to continue and develop new research related to student problems hindering English language learning. Besides, in the future, this study is also hoped to be a resource for people who will carry out teaching practices in schools, especially identifying problems in English learning. At least, they will already get the ideas what they will find in English class later and can think about what to do if they have to deal with these problems.

In addition, this research will create awareness for EFL teachers when teaching English classes. They will understand who they are dealing with and what is experienced by students during language learning. They will be aware of what is hindering students during the English learning process. Teachers will know what is behind it all and what they have to do to overcome students'

problems. Furthermore, this research can be a guide and a breakthrough for English teachers to find solutions according to the problems in their classrooms. They can analyze what is needed for their students and help them with their problems. They also can reconstruct their learning model, which has not been effective in the classroom.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For this study, there are some terms need to be defined as listed in the following.

Students' problems in English learning: in this study, students' problems in English learning is a condition that inhabits students during the process of English learning that can adversely affect students' achievement in learning. It also can make students unable to study well, so they become less optimal when studying in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher finds out students' problems when learning English, both macro and micro skills, or whether the problem comes from inside or outside of the students. For example, students' internal factors, such as motivation and self-confidence, or the other factors, such as a class atmosphere that is not conducive to learning.

EFL pre-service teachers: it is called for the students who run the training as teachers. In this study, the term refers to students who are already finishing the first field teaching practice program. This is one of the college programs that must be followed by students majoring in education which in this context are students majoring English education. The program that followed by the pre-service teacher take place in junior or senior high school. In addition, the field teaching practice

as known as Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan (PLP) divided into two stages: PLP I as the observation stage, and PLP II as teaching practice stage. This study focuses on EFL pre-service teachers who have passed PLP I. They have conducted observations about the world of schooling, including what they found during English classes. Their observation can be in the form of learning models applied in the classroom or even problems they encountered both in teachers and students, as described in this study.

Receptive skills: in this study, receptive skills are the ability to understand language. They are related to students' ability to understand reading and listening skills. This study believes that the challenges experienced by students when learning English cannot be separated from their ability in receptive skills. Each student has a different level of proficiency in receptive skill whether in listening or reading. Some students feel more inclined to reading skills which they think are easier when dealing with reading, such as texts, than listening. It will be challenging for listening skills unfamiliar with English pronunciations that they rarely hear, especially those spoken by native speakers, or vice versa. Further, this problem will be identified by the author of this study.

Productive skills: as a continuation of receptive skills, productive skills are language that can be produced both in writing and speaking. It is undeniable that productive skill is a reasonably tricky part at this stage. It will be seen how proficient we are in using English, whether it is in writing, such as an essay which there will be many steps that need to be passed to produce a complete paper that is good and correct, as well as in speaking such as conversation and public speaking.

It is a problematic area usually encountered by students as a difficulty that hinders them when learning English.

