

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to discuss the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

The research on the role of teacher education programs in producing reflective teachers would suggest a significant departure from current methods used to educate pre-service teachers for professional practice. In this regard, the objective of the teacher education program is to allow pre-service teachers to gain the fundamental knowledge of teaching theories by means of which they can observe and analyze practice in ways that can aid their actual teaching (Bobrakov, 2014). Currently, the development process of teaching pre-service teachers is involved in activities that require them to engage directly with the perception of their writing techniques through journal writing during the activities carried out. Thus, reflective thinking is particularly essential for pre-service teachers, since it will equip them with the abilities to make professional decisions (Cho, 2017) rather than simply follow along scripted lesson plans without improvising (Livingston & Borko 1989). Then the impact on the awareness of an EFL preservice teacher in developing skills and creativity indirectly provides benefits in their writing through the perception of teaching in journal writing.

Pre-service EFL teacher reflection is a contextual framework of perception writing through experience, collaboration, environment, and assumption of concrete events in situations directly involved in teaching and after teaching. (Peters, 2012, p. 18-42) suggests that “pre-service teachers need to develop the skills and attitudes that enable them to critically reflect on others and their practice”. The reflection process involves what is currently being done, why it is being done, and how well students are learning. By collecting, analyzing, and evaluating the information about what goes on in their classroom, teachers will identify and explore their practices and underlying beliefs, which may then lead to changes and improvements in their teaching. Schön (1983) explained that this reflection process, also known as “reflection in action” helps students take action based on the different classroom situations they may encounter while teaching.

Writing is perhaps the most important skill that learners must possess for it requires a certain level of linguistic competence and because students’ level of English proficiency is mainly evaluated based on how they could express their thoughts in written discourse (Erkan & Saban, 2011). For pre-service teachers, the purpose of the reflection is to evaluate what they have done to determine what changes might be made in the future. Hence, there are advantages to being a reflective practitioner (Leigh & Bailey, 2013; Nurmaulid, 2017). First, the teacher is aware of what the teacher does. Second, it promotes collegial sharing as a means to enhance teacher-collaborative learning. Then, the teacher could gain insights to progress their teaching. Next, doing reflection avoids burnout and saves time to prepare for teaching. Fifth, reflection is an affirmation of the current teaching practice. Finally, reflection is the bridging gap between theory and

practice. This is supported by Nurfaidah (2016) who finds that pre-service teachers have limited experience in teaching so they are not completely involved in reflective practice substance. For example, related to the levels of reflection, pre-service teachers achieve only at the second level of four levels. When the preservice teachers begin to view their students as learners, they can focus on more than the descriptiveness issues, such as classroom management, writing lessons, submitting course assignments, and supervisor evaluations (Weber, 2013).

Reflection is a threefold process comprising direct experience, analysis of our beliefs, values or knowledge about that experience, and consideration of the options which should lead to action as a result of the analysis. Several types of reflective journals have been described and studied in the literature – including nature journals, learning journals, research journals, shared journals, group journals and interactive journals (O'Connell & Dymont, 2013). In an assessment of teacher education in England, Meierdirk (2016) investigated reflective practice and its role in the education of student-teachers. The results indicated that reflective practice had played a partial role in a technical sense in the development new teaching standards but that critical reflection had not been employed. Following the study, Meierdrik claimed that reflection was supported by teaching standards, but the knowledge base for effective reflection was missing from school-based training.

The term reflective learning emphasises the intention to learn from current or prior experience. While various interpretations of reflective practice may exist, it is generally agreed that this practice involves ‘a process of learning through and from experience’ (Finlay, 2008, p. 1). Whatever form reflective practice may take, reflective practitioners should learn and grow during this process. As learning and growing is thought to be basis for the process of reflection, accordingly reflective practice is employed in teacher education to enable pre-service teachers to learn from their experiences. The act of journaling becomes a form of self-therapy that assists with personal growth and development, intuition and self-expression, problem solving, stress reduction, health benefits, reflection, and critical thinking (Hiemstra, 2001). Journaling is an exercise that is direct, productive, and profound in its use. It is easy to start, habitforming, and beneficial, capable of elevating your classroom writing practice and, furthermore, building a community of writers simply through its daily practice.

Considering journal writing as a tool to promote reflective practice, pre-service teacher education courses besides classroom teaching addition need the use of reflective journal writing with applicable focusing areas of reflection in entries that can be adapted and easily applied to other course subjects. This support by Spalding and Wilson (2002), outline the significant role of journal writing which promotes not only for reflective thinking but also critical thinking. First, journals serve as a permanent record of thoughts and experiences. This means that teachers could have a chance to review their performance as records are available to them. Then, through journal writing, it is argued that pre-service teachers could establish academic relationship with their supervisor/teacher, and

thus help them through the process of teaching. Lastly, journal writing would also help pre-service teachers to realize their existence in the community of teaching.

Journal writing activities helped the pre-service teachers' reflective practice while they described events such as classroom observation, explored classes based on various types of knowledge such as English Language Teaching related subject knowledge, and further applied whole knowledge into their teaching approaches. In other words, the pre-service teachers reflected on their day, thus practicing reflective thinking skills (Otienoh, 2011). As learning and growing are thought to be the basis for the process of reflection, accordingly reflective practice is employed in teacher education to enable pre-service teachers to learn from their experiences. Reflection is believed to be a significant component of professional practice (Beauchamp, 2015). Lee (2007) explored how dialogue and response journals could be used to guide pre-service language teachers during reflection. He found that the use of two different kinds of journals was valuable in nurturing reflective thinking. Moreover, it was claimed that journal writing might facilitate the relationship between teacher educators and teacher trainees. In addition, it was inferred that by reading and rereading their journals, student teachers might trace their teacher development, including changes in their values and development.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on student preservice teachers' perception of reflective teaching journal writing, the researcher to know how the Preservice teachers perceptions of reflective teaching process about journal writing experience. This research is conducted at one of higher institutions in Kendari, South East Sulawesi in the 6th semester English Education Department by involving 10 students who agreed to be involved in this research.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background above the research formulates research as follows: How EFL preservice teachers perceived the use of reflective teaching about journal writing during field teaching practice?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question, the purpose of this research is Identify how EFL pre-service teachers perceived the use of reflective teaching journal writing during their field teaching practice.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Based on the purpose of the study, it is hoped that this research can help and can contribute to everyone. Towards the perception of teaching journal writing, the benefits that the researchers intend will be distinguished into two benefits as follows:

The use of reflective writing enables students to write unrestrictedly on interesting topics related to the texts they cover in a course or any other personal experiences they have experienced. Students are not hindered by fear of grades, are more motivated and confident in their writing skills, and can acquire good writing skills. This approach helps students improve their writing skills. This study chose reflective writing to show that it has the potential to maximize student participation and motivation. Moreover, students can express their thoughts and feelings through such diaries without worrying about spelling and grammar.

Allowing future English teachers to reflect on their performance will help them determine the strengths and weaknesses of what they are doing or learning. Identifying the positive and negative aspects is the first step in implementing any required modifications. Training future English teachers in journal writing in the manner in this study helps them use the same skills as students in school; something that can help these students develop writing skills and start thinking critically at a young age.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For the study, the researcher defined the definition of the terms used in the study are defined:

EFL Pre-service Teachers: are students who are undergoing teaching training in educational training institutions, or whom the academic success of a nation's next generation depends. Yung (2020) emphasized that one of the most important points recognized by teacher education students is teaching practicum. Therefore, they suggest that teaching practicums provide beginning teachers with

the necessary knowledge and professional experience to become in-service teachers.

Perception: Perception is the ability of someone to feel, see, hear, taste, or touch in interpreting something that is derived from own's experience in life. In short, perception refers to someone's experience in interpreting something. These definitions lead us to define a concrete and definite definition of perception from the experts. According to Atkinson (as cited in Wena, 2015), Perception is a process by which people organize and interpret the patterns of stimuli in the environment.

Reflective Journal Writing: this is a model for a teacher to reflect on their teaching that is mostly used in the classroom activity. This is categorized as the term of reflection that has a significant impact on the teacher to develop their professionalism. Clarke (2006) argued that pre-service teacher is involved approximately their teaching exercise and whether their teaching exercise is effective. In the university, the pre-service teacher counts on friends and the lecturer to present remarks or reflections on their teaching exercises.