

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the basic aspect of this recent study such as the background of the study, the scope of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Pre-service research on teaching practice has generated an insightful set of phenomena in the field of teacher education. The issue proved to be very relevant and was seen as an important factor in preparing prospective teachers to enter practice (Gan, 2013, p. 1). In this regard, that's generally accepted that the concept of incorporating fieldwork into teacher education programs is an important part of the groundwork for student teachers. Numerous studies have confirmed the importance of integrating practically relevant experience into the university curriculum. One of the most important initiatives of the education department's preparation of its students to become teachers is the teaching practicum. (Novitasari & Murtafi'ah, 2022). Teaching practicum is seen as the first opportunity to prepare future teachers for real-world classroom situations, where students may put the knowledge, information, and theories they learn from their studies into practice (Alshammari, Edayat, and Ebrahim, 2017). Hudson and Hudson, (2012) argue that classroom practice is beneficial to future teachers as it allows them to put into practice the theories learned in teacher education institutions. However, (Hamaidi, Al-Shara, Arouri, and Abu-Awwad, 2014) reported that student teachers emphasized several common difficulties they had in

their teaching practicum. It is also worth noting that the field experience not only helps trainee teachers integrate theory and practice but also enables them to "generate new insights and understanding of the problems they face in society today" (Piedra, Munter, and Giron, 2006, p. 75).

In fact, despite lengthy training and preparation, and extensive practical experience in the classroom, EFL student teachers still experience challenges or difficulties in the internship program, which may prevent them from getting the most out of their practice. Therefore, the difficulties that student teachers have when practicing their teaching at practice schools have been the subject of several previous research. In research, Hamasaid & Saheb (2020) found that dealing with children with special needs, classroom management, the use of L1 in the classroom, huge classrooms, and dealing with students' challenging questions are some of the issues faced by Kurdish EFL students teachers in teaching practice. While, Ganal, Andaya, and Guiab (2015) conducted research about the challenges experienced by aspiring EFL student teachers at the Philippine Normal University during teaching practice included personal issues, issues with teacher preparation, issues with class participation, issues with instruction, issues with evaluation, emotional issues, and issues with adjusting to students or pupils. Saricoban (2010) reported that difficulties with course books, students, and content, as well as issues with the classroom atmosphere, were some of the challenges Turkish State University's EFL student instructors encountered during their teaching practicum.

Additionally, Al-Momani's (2016) research at KSA examines the challenges of teaching practice in the Faculty of Education from the perspectives of supervisors and future teachers. The result suggests that these practical challenges for teachers of the future are related to fear of teaching, communication skills, and linking theory to practice. The other study also revealed that classroom management posed significant challenges during fieldwork, indicating that English classes for aspiring teachers need to be improved (Gan, 2013, p.105). Concerning the aforementioned research, various studies have managed to make a strong effect on the difficulties that ESL and EFL student teachers face when giving real-life teaching experiences.

In the Indonesian context, (Maharani and Fithriani, 2023) explored the problems that EFL pre-service teachers face during their teaching practicum. A well-planned internship is an important part of the professional training of trainee teachers and can also help them grow as individuals. However, it turns out that during the internship, there will be challenges such as listening to lectures, class management, and lack of supervision. However, it demonstrates that difficulties might arise throughout the practicum time along with lectures, classroom management, and a lack of supervision. (Riesky, 2013) shown that throughout their teaching practicum, EFL student teachers encounter challenges. These issues are divided into three categories: student, self, and supervision teacher. Moreover, Nababan and Amalia (2021) discovered that the teaching practice program presented certain difficulties for pre-service teachers. The obstacles were obtaining appropriate teaching materials and getting pupils motivated. Additionally, Rizkiyana (2015) produced research findings demonstrating that

English student teachers at Muria Kudus University ran into a few problems related to soft skills, management skills, teaching skills, and relationships with cooperating teachers, supervisors, and teams during their internship program.

Hence, because of the above facts, it is necessary to investigate the issues or challenges faced by student teachers in the English Teaching Department of the Islamic Institute of Kendari (IAIN). This is because the Teacher Training Program at Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Kendari is the main source of future EFL teachers for Kendari. Furthermore, very little research has been done at this specific location. Thus, this study aims to analyze the difficulties faced by Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Kendari EFL during the teaching process of student teachers. The study of the issues and challenges that aspiring student teachers face in their teaching is important and necessary, as reported by Foncha et al. (2015, p. 129). Moreover, it is necessary to conduct this research as it will help EFL student teachers' preparation institutions like a university to design such a program that covers this issue of challenges in teaching practicum to guarantee that EFL student teachers are well prepared before tackling their teaching practicum in the future.

1.2 Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher focused on challenges faced by EFL student teachers during the teaching practicum. Teaching practicum is an exercise included in the education program of all teacher-producing institutions. It, therefore, means that what is obtained in one case is applicable in other cases as far as challenges student teachers face during teaching practicum are concerned. Also, in obtaining the necessary data for this research study. Only final-year students who did the teaching practice exercise from English Education Department in the sixth semester (2020/2021 period) were the focus of the research.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher focused on the following questions: What are the challenges faced by EFL student teachers during the teaching practicum?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the explanation of the background above, the purpose of this study was to investigate and explore the challenges faced by EFL student teachers during the teaching practicum.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Based on the purpose of the study, the significance of the study is as follows:

1. Theoretical significance

It is assumed that the results of the investigation of the student teachers' challenges faced during field teaching practicum if disseminated, will be useful to supplement the underlying theoretical framework adopted in teacher education programs.

2. Practical Significance

On the practical ground, This research will be beneficial since other student teachers will be aware of the difficulties encountered during teaching practicum, allowing them to better prepare themselves and they can get a description of what and how they do the teaching practice.

Meanwhile, for the Institution, this research supports the institution with how to better conduct internship programs, and how to solve the problems normally found in student teachers' tenure.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For the study, the researcher defined the definition of the term used in this study as follows:

EFL Student Teachers: EFL student teachers are students who were in a course of training or education before they started the language teaching profession. EFL students are individuals who study English in a nation where English is not the major language of communication (Jackson, 2015). EFL pre-service teachers are students from countries where English is spoken as an extra language who are trained to study and utilize the language, teach in the classroom, and prepare to become teachers.

Challenges: In the current study refers to the difficulties student-teachers face during the teaching practice exercise in education programs. Some of the challenges in the classroom that are commonly faced by teachers, such as; lack of student motivation, classroom management, difficulties with developing lesson plans and materials, student misbehavior, student arguments, and reasons, etc

Teaching Practicum: Teaching practicum is one of the education department's essential programs for preparing students to become teachers. Teaching practicum is preparation for pre-service teachers before they apply what they have learned in their studies in the real world. It indicates the ability of the student teachers to apply what they learned in college to real-world educational and social circumstances (Goh, Wong, Choy, & Tan, 2009).