

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study has attempted to investigate reflection and reflective practice of four EFL pre-service teachers (PSTs) who were conducting field teaching practice in Indonesian primary and secondary schools contexts. Based on each PST's data, the findings of this study indicated the deployment of elements of reflection, the development of PSTs' level of reflection towards deeper reflection, and some issues informing the PSTs' concerns throughout their reflection process.

5.1 Conclusions

In terms of elements of reflection, the findings of this study indicated that the participants' reflections demonstrated the reflective phases or reflection elements as proposed by Dewey (1933) and Loughran (1996). All elements of reflection in the first reflective phase, as argued by Loughran (1996), i.e. *suggestions*, *problem*, and *hypothesis*, featured the PSTs' reflective process, as well as the second reflective phase, i.e. *reasoning* and *testing*. However, not all phases of elements were revealed in every reflection. Such a variation and number of phases employed over time might indicate the development of an individual's reflective process.

From both data, teaching journals and interviews during stimulated protocol session, only few of the cycles reached to *testing* the *hypothesis*. It is probably closely related to the PSTs' limited experience and knowledge on teaching world, so that commonly they have *suggestions* in mind, or *problem* to be solved and come with the *hypothesis* and/or *reasoning* but could not figure out what to do in the future time. Also there is not much they could say in their reflection due to their exposure to the real teaching experience.

With reference to level of reflectivity, PSTs' level of reflection is mostly within the range of *dialogic reflection* (*Level 3* and *Level 4*) indicating their ability to mentally evaluate their instructional activities during their field teaching experience using qualities of judgement, analysis, evaluation, posing alternatives,

and raising awareness through self-evaluation or metacognition. Descriptive writing, the non-reflection one, however, also commonly featured the pre-service teachers' reflections as it was moderately used as the point of departure in their reflections before they came into descriptive reflection or dialogic reflection.

Later in their reflective journals, as the field teaching program went on, the PSTs' level of reflection clearly showed development. As the PSTs experienced more engagement with the students and the instructional activities, their ability to develop thinking capacity to attend more complex and problematic matters in their instructional settings was revealed through their dialogic reflective deliberations. Some parts of their journal entries demonstrated the way they evaluated the actions and phenomena, raising awareness to what was going on around them, leading to reframing and exploring the phenomena using qualities of judgement and possible alternatives for explaining and hypothesizing. However, as regards critical reflection, there was no proof of this deepest level in the participants' reflections. It is because they were still in their very initial phase of real teaching experience limited by the program schedule which may prevent them from reflecting their instructional practices critically, regarding critical reflection requires time to progress.

In terms of issues or concerns in the PSTs reflection, with reference to and framed by theories of teacher knowledge and language teacher knowledge, the findings of this study indicated that the participants' focus in their reflections was mostly about Learning Management (*Procedure Check, Progress Check/Review*), Language Management (*Input Students Received and Output Students Produced*), and Knowledge Management (*Teacher emotion, Self-reflect*).

Among all abovementioned most frequently occurring issues in PSTs' reflections, *Teacher Emotion* was one of the most explored issues in their reflections especially during the first week of the field teaching program commencement. PSTs revealed some problems such as facing ethical issue in their first day at the host school, misunderstanding with their mentor teachers, overwhelming anxiety during the first teaching time, managing classroom, and dealing with low level students in English classroom. The findings indicated the characteristics of novice teachers in dealing with new situation.

As the field teaching program went on, the PSTs' issues in reflection clearly showed changes because they have experienced more engagement with the students and the instructional activities. In so doing, they have attended more complex and problematic matters in their teaching contexts and impacted upon the way they perceived themselves as language teachers, students and language learners. Mostly, parts of their journal entries reflected their focus on self-reflect and self-critique as well as the way they dealt with the learning situation.

This study implied that English language teacher education program should equip and encourage the pre-service teachers with more exposure to teaching learning activities which may trigger them to shape their reflective process through wider exploration on the elements of reflection. Moreover, teacher educator should provide opportunities and activities which could reinforce the pre-service teachers to engage in a higher level of reflection. Above all, English language teacher education programs should consider developing sound curriculum that could facilitate the future teachers to reflect on wider aspects relative to teacher knowledge by proportionally distributing the instructional materials and activities throughout the program, not only focusing on the third and fourth year, but from the start of the student teachers' life at the university.

In summary, this study suggested some crucial points. First, pre-service teachers or student teachers should be exposed to and engaged with reflective practices as early as possible during their teacher education program. Second, teacher educators should provide instructional activities which could systematically make pre-service teachers use all elements of reflection in their reflective process, especially engaging them with activities which could stimulate their reasonings to develop more and their courage to test their hypothesis overtly or covertly (which could be done through gradual engagement in critical thinking). Facilitating into such activities, therefore, could facilitate and foster their quality of reflection into deeper level, aiming to becoming critical reflective teachers. Last, teacher knowledge, assumption, beliefs, apprenticeship of observation, and social and cultural background should be proportionally informed to the student teachers as aspects informing their reflection and reflective practices.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted not without limitations. Some limitations unfolded involving the researcher herself, the participants, the instruments as well as the time constraints. As regard the researcher's lack of experience in conducting research, there were times that doubt about her ability to modify experts' analytical framework, such as Hatton and Smith's (1995) as well as Moradkhani, et al.'s (2013), and generate adapted framework appropriate to the data collected from pre-service teachers, was an issue. Such attitudes prevented her for some time from making sound analysis during the reiteration process of data analysis. Nonetheless, through rigorous attempt, two modified frameworks, i.e. frameworks in analyzing levels of reflection of pre-service teachers and issues in pre-service teachers' reflection were generated from this study.

With regard to the participants of this study, initially, there were eight PSTs (four males and four females) who agreed to participate in this study. As the field teaching program went and the PSTs should have started submitting their reflective teaching journals, three of male PSTs withdrew due to various reasons. The remaining one still wanted to participate, but a few weeks later he also withdrew because of medical issue. Meanwhile, in terms of reflective journal submission, entries yielded varied among the PSTs even though they were asked to submit on regular basis (every week). There was only one participant (PST 1) who submitted her teaching journal comprising the whole program (total eight journals), while other varied because, as they complained, they were busy with school and teaching adaptation as well as with weekly teaching preparation. This phenomenon implies that the future studies should consider about building the pre-service teachers' commitment to keep their reflective teaching journal on a regular basis. The future researchers should maintain closer contact with the participants in order to understand more about their problems during the field teaching program that might affect their willingness to write their reflections.

As the field teaching program was only conducted for only 45 school-days, it was not long enough to see the participants' development of reflection in light of their reflective process in applying elements of reflection, their development of level of reflection, and the shift of issues revealed in their reflections. It is

therefore suggested that the future researchers consider longitudinal study in order to see proper development of the pre-service teachers' reflection. In other words, their reflective practices should be captured earlier, for example, since they are involved with teaching practices in the Microteaching course.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Study

The present study has unfolded some findings regarding the elements of reflection, levels of reflection, and issues in the pre-service teachers' reflections mainly through reflective teaching journals and stimulated recall. The researcher would suggest that future researchers consider implementing collaborative reflection versus individual reflection, and written versus oral reflection in revealing the pre-service teachers' reflection and reflective practices. Such variations in reflectivity mode are needed to be investigated further because they could accommodate the pre-service teachers' preferences in doing reflection, as some previous study revealed, that some people tend to choose oral reflection (through self-audio recording, discussion, dialogue) over written reflection and vice versa.

Moreover, further studies could compare the experienced teachers' versus the expert teachers' reflection relative to their level of reflection and their concerns portrayed in their reflective activities. In so doing, the future research could contribute to the improvement of teachers' quality on national level in particular.

As regards research and development context, the future researchers could consider modeling a program involving critical reflection within reflective activities in the teacher education program curriculum. The critical reflection activities could be integrated within courses offered as part of the assignments or tasks given to the student teachers.