

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborated the background of the study, purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms and the organization of the research paper.

1.1. Background of the Study

Teaching practicum is an indispensable component of student education programs (Paker, 2011). It is positioned at the peak level of the university-school cooperation in the teacher education programs (Tang, 2002). It means that in the fourth year of higher education, students of education departments work in schools for their teaching practicum as student teachers.

Ogonor and Badmus (2006) define teaching practicum as the period when student teachers are aided to put into practice the theories and principles of education which they have learnt in the classroom as they teach students in the partnership schools. The purposes of the teaching practicum are to understand, experience the practical realities of the school environment, and make use of different teaching techniques and materials to gain experience as many as possible under the supervision of their mentors and university supervisors (Richards & Crookes, 1988).

The student teachers find the period of teaching practicum was very demanding and challenging because it represents the range of experiences to which student teachers are exposed to when they work in classrooms and schools (Killen & Steyn, 2001; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Marais & Meier, 2004). During the teaching practicum they are encouraged to behave like a member of the teaching staff by preparing lesson plans before each teaching session and taking part in all school events together with their mentors. It is not unusual during this period for the student teachers to experience a number of worries and anxieties which sometimes result in high levels of stress (Broadhead et al, 1996; Morton,et al, 1997).

Perry (2004) asserts that teaching practicum can be very exciting and challenging and as a result creates a mixture of anticipation, anxiety, excitement and apprehension. He stressed further that this excitement can be elaborated into two folds. Firstly, student teachers could be excited of being part of a real classroom setting, getting to know students, planning and organizing classroom tasks. Secondly, student teachers could have doubts about their ability to cope with unfamiliar situations such as; controlling and managing learners or establishing a working relationship with field-based and faculty-based supervisor. Such mixed feeling can lead to anxiety as anxiety is a human reaction to any unknown situation (Banner, 2014).

In the previous study by Merç's (2011) identified that anxiety was one of the most frequently reported problems of student teachers completing their teaching practicum at Anadolu University Faculty of Education. The sources of anxiety reported by the student teachers were: unfamiliarity with the classroom situation and classroom management, students' low proficiency, students' disinterest, students' lack of participation that results in failure to the objectives of the lesson, students' disruptiveness, anxiety about student teachers' classroom language, observation and evaluation from the supervisors caused anxiety to student teachers, anxiety because of the previous experience, anxiety caused by first-day class, anxiety caused by feeling of incompetence in teaching, anxiety caused by being observed and recorded by the cooperating teacher, anxiety due to using the time effectively, anxiety of being unfamiliar with students, and anxiety of using a new device.

By looking at those sources of anxiety reported by Merç's (2011), this study aims to explore what anxieties the student teachers encountered during teaching practicum by looking at the sources that contribute to the student teachers anxiety as well as the strategies to overcome their anxiety. The participants in this study were the student teachers from Indonesia University of Education who did their teaching practicum in one junior high school in Bandung.

1.2. Research Question

This study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What anxieties did the student teachers encounter related to the teaching practicum?
2. What strategies did the student teachers use to overcome their anxiety during teaching practicum?

1.3. Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions formulated above, the study aims to:

1. Explore the student teachers' anxieties related to the teaching practicum.
2. Investigate the student teachers' strategies in overcoming their anxiety during teaching practicum.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on anxieties the student teachers encountered during teaching practicum by looking at the sources that contributed to their anxiety as well as the strategies to overcome their anxiety. This study belongs to a case study in one junior high school in Bandung. There were three student teachers participated in this research. They did the teaching practicum from February to June 2016.

1.5. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical perspective

This study will enrich the literature about student teachers' anxiety. It also can be used as the contribution toward the research about student teachers' anxiety during teaching practicum in EFL classroom.

2. Practical significance

The result of the study will give information about the exploration student teachers' anxiety in EFL classroom. It is hoped that the result of the study can help the student teachers be aware of anxieties that could happen as well as the strategies in overcoming the anxieties during the teaching practicum.

3. Professional significance

The research will contribute to professional development. Student teachers of languages should be aware of anxiety that may arise during the teaching practicum. It is hoped that student teachers can complete the teaching practicum successfully by knowing and preparing themselves to the anxieties that may rise during the teaching practicum.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

1. Anxiety

Anxiety can be defined as "an unpleasant affective state or condition similar to dread or nervousness, with physiological and behavioral manifestations" (Spielberger, 1966, p. 9).

In EFL classroom context, anxiety can be defined as the fear or the worry when using the second or foreign language in the classroom (Gardner & McIntyre, 1993).

In this study, anxiety refers to an unpleasant affective state or condition similar to dread or nervousness, fear or worry experienced by student teachers when they taught in EFL classroom during the teaching practicum.

1.7. The Organization of Research Paper

The research study is organized into five chapters. The chapters are arranged as follows:

Chapter I is introduction. It includes the background of the study, the research questions, scope of the study, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, clarification of terms, and the organization of the research paper.

Chapter II is theoretical foundations of the topic. It provides theoretical foundations of the study which is relevant to be used in conducting research.

Chapter III focuses on research methodology. It includes research design, research site and participants, steps of data collection and data analysis.

Chapter IV elaborates findings and their discussions. It provides answer of the research problems. It also supplies the result of the research which consists of findings.

Chapter V is conclusion and recommendations. It summarizes the findings and the discussions. In addition, recommendation for further researchers is offered.

1.8. Concluding Remark

This chapter has discussed the background of the study, research question, purpose of the study, scope of the study, clarification of related terms, and organization of the paper. In the next chapter, this paper will discuss the literature review of the study.