CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This chapter encompasses main theoretical frameworks underlying the current study. The theoretical foundations addressed in the study consist of theoretical frameworks regarding pre-service teachers, concepts of field practicum, summary of pre-service teachers' challenges in field practicum and findings from studies related to the current research.

2.1 Pre-service Teacher

There are two parts reviewing theoretical frameworks in relation with pre-service teachers. The sections include pre-service teacher education and standards of EFL teacher education.

2.1.1 Pre-service EFL teacher education.

Pre-service teachers are students who are educated in a teacher training institute or university to be a teacher in a school (Freeman, 2009, p. 12). Therefore, pre-service ESL/EFL teachers can be defined as students trained and prepared with English competence and knowledge of teaching methodology in order to teach English as second or foreign language (Thomas, 1987, p. 39; see also Freeman, 2009, p. 12).

ESL/EFL teacher education programs, as proposed by Shulman (1987, in Randall & Thornton, 2001), need to embed the following knowledge in their courses: (1) content knowledge referring to knowledge of English language, (2) general pedagogic knowledge, referring to knowledge of common issues in teaching, e.g. classroom management, (3) curriculum knowledge, referring to

insights as to materials development, (4) pedagogical-content knowledge, referring to knowledge of language acquisition and its relationship with teaching approaches, methods and techniques, (5) knowledge of learners and their characteristics, referring to knowledge of the importance of finding out students' needs and students' learning behavior, (6) knowledge of education context, referring to knowledge of different teaching contexts which are affected by sociocultural and institutional factors, and (7) knowledge of education ends, purposes and values and the philosophical and historical issues, referring to understanding of the history of English language teaching methodology (Shulman, 1987, as cited in Randall & Thornton, 2000, p. 27-29; cf. Ellis, 1990, p. 26)

Furthermore, it is indicated by Kamhi-Stein (2009) that the current ESL/EFL teacher education programs need to equip student teachers with professional development, communicative language teaching, understanding on English ownership, knowledge of numerous settings of ESL/EFL teaching practice, and awareness of ESL/EFL teachers' status (Kamhi-Stein, 2009, p. 96-97; see also Freeman, 2009, p. 14-5). Additionally, one of the criteria of a successful teaching education program in the context of field practicum is the establishment of "intensive and supportive interaction among practicum participants" (Tomaš, Farrelly, & Haslam, 2008, p. 663). Furthermore, teacher education programs need to plan and thus develop curriculum interweaving with "how [pre-service teachers] learn" (Graves, 2009, p. 120). This is in line with the focus of the current study which is to discover the learning experience of pre-service teachers and to further contribute to the improvement of teacher education programs (Farrel, 2003 in Gan, 2013, p. 104; see Chapter 1, Section 1.5).

2.1.2 Standards in EFL teacher education.

Standards underlying the university-based programs are basically based on national standards, consisting both content standards and performance standards (Katz & Snow, 2009, p. 67). The former refers to programs covering "essential

knowledge, skills, and dispositions" while the latter addresses "degree or quality of proficiency expected in relation to content standards" (Katz & Snow, 2009, p. 67).

Standards in EFL teacher education, which "[imply] a passion of excellence and habitual attention" (Madya, 2008, p. 4), are geared to prepare student teachers before going into the complex and intensive classroom teaching and to provide comprehensive understanding of English learner standards (Katz & Snow, 2009, p. 72). Specifically, the former objective outlines that teacher preparation programs need to provide insights for pre-service teachers as to the real situation of second language classroom whilst the latter objective describes that teacher preparation programs should enable student teachers to know the needs of the second language learners, to analyze the needs of the learners and to adopt the needs into the practice of teaching, in both planning instruction and administering assessment (Katz & Snow, 2009, p. 72).

It is necessary to pinpoint, as Madya (2008) suggests, that in order to plan and develop standards for EFL teacher education, the standards need to focus on the following objectives: (1) developing communicative competence and skills to use the competence, (2) developing communicative teaching competence and skills to use the teaching competence, and (3) developing positive attitudes to professional development (Madya, 2008, p. 6).

Moreover, there are several characteristics of standards in teacher education programs. The characteristics, as identified by Katz and Snow (2009), are, as follows: (1) Standards are dynamic, meaning that personal reflection, beliefs, prior language learning may contribute to the implementation of standards; (2) Standards cover a range of performance levels, that is standards provide insights for teacher educators to comprehend and assess student teachers' levels; and (3) Standards are systemic, meaning that standards need to meet major procedures in order that teachers can effectively improve their professional development and their practice of teaching (Katz & Snow, 2009, p. 73). As further

indicated in the discussions section of the current study, Chapter 4, Section 4.2, the standards developed in teacher education programs have a correlation with the practical experience of student teachers in field practicum.

2.2 Field Practicum

Field practicum is a part of university coursework in teacher preparation programs in which student teachers are given the experience to observe teaching practice, to be familiar with teaching contexts, and to be guided in teaching (Richards, 1990, p. 14; Gebhard, 2009, p. 250). Field practicum, which is the natural setting of the current study, encompasses two broad concepts: field practicum as part of teacher training programs and field practicum as professional development (Gebhard, 2009, p. 250). The first concept typically refers to the view that field practicum is a component in teacher preparation programs (Richards, 1990, p. 14; Richards, & Farrell, 2005, p. 3-4). The second concept generally regards by what means student teachers build professional development and student teachers' reflection on teaching (Richards, & Farrell, 2005, p. 3-4). The concepts addressed in this section build theoretical background the current study is within.

2.2.1 Field practicum as part of teacher preparation programs.

Field practicum has been widely recognized as an important aspect in teacher training institutes, including but not limited to ESL/EFL education (Stoynoff, 1999, Farrel, 2007 in Gan, 2013, p. 2; Gebhard, 2009, p. 250). Field practicum is a component in teacher preparation programs which facilitate student teachers to experience the complexity of teaching practices (Tuli & File, 2009, p. 113-14). In addition, field experience, as pointed out by Richards & Crookes (1988), provide opportunities for student teachers to (1) experience teaching in a classroom setting, (2) integrate theories into practice, (3) observe mentor teachers,

(4) gain diverse opinions on teaching techniques, (5) improve self-awareness of personal teaching style, (6) develop skills in planning a lesson, (7) improve ability in selecting, evaluating and adapting materials, and (8) acquaint with particular existing techniques and methods (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p.11).

The theoretical frameworks of ESL/EFL field experience are partly credited to contributions of a research conducted by Stoynoff (1999 in Gan, 2013) in which he outlined the principles in conducting TESOL practicum; the principles as summarized by Gan (2013) are as follows: (1) The practicum is a part of an academic program; (2) The practicum involves a team work consisting mentor teachers, university supervising teachers, language program managers and student teachers; (3) The practicum offers rigorous modeling and coaching; (4) The practicum encompasses extensive, systematic observation; and (5) The practicum experience is evaluated using a portfolio (Stoynoff, 1999 in Gan, 2013, p. 93).

2.2.2 Field practicum as professional development.

Not only is field practicum built as an engine in teaching preparation programs, but it is also motorized to facilitate student teachers to build their professional expertise. With regard to this, student teachers begin the practicum by observing the teaching practice of mentor teachers (Wallace, 1991, p. 123). This suggests that observation over mentor teachers' teaching practice is a means for pre-service teachers to comprehend "what experienced teachers do and the professional discourses they use" in order to develop professional development (Gebhard, 2009, p. 252).

Historically, field experience was geared to encourage teachers to "isolate, practice, and master specific behavior" (Gebhard, 2009, p. 251) However, the focus has been shifted to an attempt to improve teacher development since more than two decades ago (Gebhard, 2009, p. 251). Hence, it is now likely to find the perception of teacher development progresses into reflecting upon beliefs and

theories incorporated in the practice done by teachers (loc cit). It is further indicated in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1 that the present day paradigm of field practicum helps student teachers to develop their professional development.

It is recognized that the notion of professional development, which is a widely-discussed topic in pre-service teacher education, generally is the building block to achieve numerous major goals. The goals, as Pennington (1990) puts forward, are as follows: (1) knowledge addressing theoretical foundation of language learning and classroom research, (2) knowledge of self and students, (3) attitudes of flexibility and openness to change, (4) decision-making skills and communication skills, (5) analytical skills for judging different teaching situations, (6) awareness of alternative teaching approaches, (7) confidence and skills to change teaching approach, and (8) practical experiences using different approaches (Pennington, 1990, p. 150). In regard to the present study, the concept of professional development is among the bases used to build critical interpretation of the data gathered in the present study which is closely related to the significance of the study, as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.5.

It is worth pointing out that the concept of professional development is closely tied with the concept on reflective teaching. The relationship between these two concepts is that reflective teaching is a process in building professional development (Ferraro, 2000, http://searcheric.org/digests/ed449120.html; Crookes, 2003, p. 180; AMEP, 2006, p. 1). That is to say, reflective teaching is a means for pre-service teachers, alongside in-service teachers, to build professional development. The concept of reflective teaching refers to the practice of teachers to "reflect on aspects of their practice in order to understand it better and then to try out improvements" (AMEP, 2006, p. 1; see also Cruikshank & Applegate, 1981; Barlett, 1990; in Crookes, 2003, p. 181). With regard to field practicum, it has been indicated by Ferraro (2000) that there are two frequent aspect of reflective teaching in the practicum: (1) coaching or mentoring and (2) peer involvement (Ferraro, 2000, http://searcheric.org/digests/ed449120.html). The former refers to a means used by teacher educators in teacher preparation

programs in helping pre-service teachers to "reflect upon and improve their practices" (Ferraro, 2000, http://searcheric.org/digests/ed449120.html). The latter refers to a means of building student teachers' professional development by discussing teaching practices with other pre-service teachers (Ferraro, 2000, http://searcheric.org/digests/ed449120.html; cf. Crookes, 2003, p. 183). As will be indicated in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3, pre-service teachers used the second aspect of reflective teaching that is peer involvement by means of discussing the causes of the challenges they faced in the practicum to further devise a solution(s) to the challenges.

2.3 Pre-service Teachers' Challenges in Field Practicum

Description of pre-service challenges is presented in three main declarative questions: what challenges pre-service teachers experience, why they encounter such challenges, and how they triumph over the challenges.

2.3.1 Pre-service teachers' challenges.

Challenges of pre-service teachers have been discussed by several studies. The challenges encountered can be broken down into three main themes: challenges related to lesson planning, challenges related to classroom management, and challenges related to communication breakdown (Çelik, 2008, p. 100-05; Viafara, 2011, p. 69; Yang, 2011, p. 99-100; Gan, 2013, p. 99-102). As one of the aims of the study is to find out the challenges experienced in field practicum, the challenges presented in the preceding studies will be used to justify the findings of the current study, meaning that the findings of this study use the challenges found in the previous studies as the bases in collecting the data and analyzing the data.

2.3.1.1 Challenges related to lesson planning.

Lesson planning refers to schemes to build a lesson (Brown, 2001, p. 129; Senior, 2006; p. 160; see also Harmer, 1998, p. 121). The schemes, as put forward by Brown (2001), cover the following components: (1) comprehension of various teaching techniques, (2) evaluation and judgment on teaching materials, (3) selection of suitable teaching aids, and (4) composition of a lesson plan (Brown, 2001, p. 149; cf. Crookes, 2003, p. 100).

In designing a lesson, teachers need to understand when to use particular teaching techniques (Brown, 2001, p. 129-36). This suggests each teaching technique or teaching method has its own benefits and drawback (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, as cited in Nunan, 1991, p. 213). Furthermore, teachers need to decide whether they will design their own materials or to adapt the existing materials. Teachers are advised to design their own materials providing that the existing materials are not suitable with students' language proficiency (Nunan, 1991, p. 214-15; Harmer, 1998, p. 111). Furthermore, teachers are recommended to adapt the existing materials to suit the needs of the students (Nunan, 1991, p. 219; Harmer, 1998, p. 112). In addition, teachers need to consider the relevance of the materials with students' lives (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 63).

It is also important to consider that teachers should select the best equipment to support the lesson. The equipment ranges from old-school teaching aids, such as posters, classroom objects (desk, chair, etc.) to state-of-the-art teaching aids, such as audiotapes, video clips, etc. (Brown, 2001, p. 141-46). Furthermore, teachers are recommended to compose a written series of plan comprising goal of the lesson, materials and equipment, teaching procedures, evaluation, and additional tasks for the students (Brown, 2001, p. 149-51). Regarding this, teachers, both more experienced and less experienced, need to bear in mind that planning a lesson "gives the lesson, an overall shape" (Harmer, 1998, p. 121). In addition, it is important to note that student teachers are advised to compose a detailed lesson plan (Harmer, 1998, p. 121-24).

With regard to the current study, field practicum is steered into providing student teachers an opportunity to develop skills in planning a lesson (Richards &

Lockhart, 1988, p. 11). However, numerous studies have pointed out that student teachers may struggle with planning a lesson in the practicum. The existing studies identify that pre-service teachers frequently struggle with evaluating and judging materials. Specifically, pre-service teachers find it difficult to prepare a lesson that can address diverse students' needs (Numrich, 1996, p. 142-43).

2.3.1.2 Challenges related to classroom management.

One captivating yet concerning challenge encountered by ESL/EFL pre-service teachers in field practicum revolves around classroom management. The topic of classroom management, as stated by Brown (2001), covers five aspects as follows: (1) physical appearance of classrooms, which refers to visual and audial appearance of the classroom; (2) teachers' voices and body languages, which cover clear verbal communication and appropriate nonverbal communication e.g. appropriate gestures; (3) unexpected circumstances in the classroom, which are mostly to do with managing students' disruptive behavior, being asked questions that are difficult to answer and coping with disagreement between time allocation in the lesson plan and the actual time in the instructions; (4) adverse circumstances in teaching, which cover institution influences, e.g. the placement of students with various levels of English proficiency in the same class; and (5) teachers' roles and styles, which refer to teachers' preference of particular roles or personalities in teaching (Brown, 2001, p. 191-202). This suggests that all five aspects construct good operation of teaching practices (Brown, 2001, p. 191).

Discussions of classroom management in the context of field practicum point out that student teachers experience unexpected circumstances in the practicum. It has been indicated that the aspect of unexpected circumstances may be in the form of controlling disruptive behavior, which is a matter of great concern for pre-service teachers (Brown, 2001, p. 195-96; Crookes, 2003, p. 141; Çelik, 2008, p. 104; Viafara, 2011, p. 62; Gan, 2013, p. 99-100). This phenomenon is referred by Veenman (1984) as 'reality shock' in field practicum (Veenman, 1984, p. 143). That is, pre-service teachers find controlling disruptive students is harder than what they have ever imagined (Veenman, 1984, p. 143;

Farrell, 2007, p. 193). In addition, student teachers also experience the discrepancy between time allocated in their lesson plans and the actual time needed to conduct ESL/EFL lessons (Numrich, 1996, p. 142-43). That is, there is a tendency that a lesson does not progress due to an unexpected event(s) in the classroom.

2.3.1.3 Challenges related to communication breakdown.

In the practicum, student teachers are required to interact with all supporting individuals, which include university supervisors, school management system or school staff, and mentor teachers (Malderez, 2009, p. 261). Having a good relationship with the aforementioned individuals may shape good development for pre-service teachers (Malderez, 2009, p. 261). In the practicum, however, there is a regular problem. This problem relates to pre-service teachers' interaction with their mentor teachers. This happens in the form of student teachers are not given enough guidance from mentor teachers (Yang, 2011, p. 99). In other words, student teachers occasionally cannot communicate their problems and needs with their mentor teachers, who are supposed to provide time for discussing problems that student teachers face in the practicum (Malderez, 2009, p. 264). Regarding this, it has been revealed that mentor teachers are "usually untrained in supervision and *formally* unqualified to do the job" (Furlong, et.al, 1988, in Wallace, 1991, 123). It is further suggested by Wallace (1991) that teacher preparation programs need to consider the following solutions: (1) establishing sufficient communication with mentor teachers and (2) providing training and, if possible, formal qualification for mentor teachers (Wallace, 1991, p. 123).

With regard to student teachers' relationship with their mentor teachers, there are nine roles of mentor teachers in the practicum (Randall & Thornton, 2013, p. 13). The roles, as stated by Randall & Thornton (2013), are as follows: (1) helping student teachers to develop classroom-based skills, (2) enlightening student teachers on curriculum issues, (3) helping student teachers to create

teaching goals, (4) assessing student teachers' teaching practice, (5) boosting student teachers' confidence, (6) motivating student teachers, (7) providing time to listen to student teachers' problems, (8) helping student teachers to adapt to school environment, and (9) solving student teachers' problems (Randall & Thornton, 2001, p. 13).

In addition to the challenge revolving around pre-service teacher's interaction with mentor teachers, pre-service teachers may experience communication breakdown with the school staff. This particular case is frequently found in the form of student teachers are not given enough time to conduct teaching practice in the practicum (Yang, 2011, p. 99).

2.3.2 Causes of the challenges.

The existing research has exemplified a quantity of challenges that student teachers experience in field practicum. Most of the studies pertinent to pre-service teachers' challenges in field experience shine lights on providing sources of the challenges. One should note, nonetheless, that the causes presented in this section may be generated from the researchers' opinion or recommendation on the issue. That is, few attempts have been done to directly ask the student teachers to reflect on why they might encounter such obstacles. This might be due to the fact that finding out the causes is not the objective of the research. The sources of challenges in this section are presented based on their main theme.

2.3.2.1 Causes of the challenges related to lesson planning.

It has been stated in the previous section that student teachers have difficulties in evaluating and judging materials. In relation to this, several studies have identified one possible cause which inflicts such challenge. As far as the existing studies are concerned, there is one prominent cause of such a challenge. The cause is pre-service teachers' inability to adopt learners' needs, meaning that

student teachers might not know how to integrate leaners needs into the learning materials (Numrich, 1996, p. 144; cf. Viafara, 2011, p. 56). This topic relates to the discussion of lesson planning in Section 2.3.1.1 that student teachers need to adopt student teachers in planning a lesson.

2.3.2.2 Causes of the challenges related to classroom management.

As indicated in Section 2.3.1.2, pre-service teachers may find it daunting to deal with disruptive students. This issue is acknowledged by the literature on English language teaching as the biggest problem student teachers face in the practicum (Crookes, 2003, p. 141). In addition, student teachers find it difficult to manage class time. Regarding these two difficulties, research pertinent to pre-service teachers' challenges in field practicum identifies five causes of such issues: (1) learners' low motivation to learn English, which refer to students' negative perspective toward English that can determine the success and the failure of an instruction (Viafara, 2001, p. 62-3; Richards & Schmidt; 2002, p. 343-44); (2) poor learner-learner relationships, which refer to circumstances where some students do not want to work with other students (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 42); (3) institutions' decision-makings, which refer to the influence of institutions, particularly placement schools, on the practicum such as the placement of students with multi-level language competence in the same class (Harmer, 1998, p. 127); (4) pre-service teachers' anxiety in imposing rules, which refers to student teachers' lack of confidence in the practicum (Çelik, 2009, p. 103); and (5) pre-service teachers' poor knowledge of English language, which refers to knowledge barrier of student teachers in the context of teaching English as second or foreign language (Gan, 2013, p. 102).

With regard to the first cause above, discussions of learners' motivation is intertwined with learners' perception to learn English as second or foreign language (Crookes, 2003,p. 136-38). That is, most, if not many, students consider learning second or foreign language is "one of the most face threatening school subjects because of the pressure of having to operate using a rather limite language code" ((Dörnyei, 2001, p. 40).

In relation to the second cause above, poor learner-learner rapports is related to the topic of group cohesiveness. In order to address such cause, as suggested by Dörnyei (2001), teachers need to bear in mind the following components: (1) a group consists of 3-6 students; (2) materials need to create learners' dependency; and (3) *training of group skills* e.g. listening to members' comments, among others, need to be undertaken (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 101-102; see also Murray & Christison, 2001; p. 191). Poor learner-learner rapports may arise due to the fact that students do not know the benefits of working in a group; one of which is to "provide students with more complex input and opportunities for interaction" (McGarty, 1992, as cited in Murray & Christison, 2011, p. 190).

As indicated in Section 2.3.1.2 that placement schools can foster problems to student teachers. Regarding this, it is put forward by Brown (2001) that such an issue is "a byproduct of institutional placement procedures and budgetary limits" (Brown, 2001, p. 197-98).

Regarding the fourth cause above, problems in classroom management may arise due to student teachers' lack of confidence in imposing rules. This has been identified by Çelik's study which found out that pre-service teachers may not impose classroom rules owing to their anxiety in giving the rules (Çelik, 2009, p. 103).

With regard to the fifth cause, pre-service teachers need to have vast knowledge of English and good English competence in order to teach well. However, several studies covering pre-service teachers' challenges in field practicum discovered that student teachers do not have the adequate skills, in terms knowledge of English, to teach. Such a study is that of Gan's which identified student teachers' lack of knowledge of content, by some means, inflict problems in managing a class (Gan, 2013, p. 102).

2.3.3.3 Causes of the challenges related to communication breakdown.

Section 2.3.1.3 has covered the common miscommunication in field experience. In what follows is the description of possible causes of such challenges. It is found out that the miscommunication between pre-service teachers with mentor teacher arises because school management system cannot provide the best experienced teachers to guide student teachers (Brown, 2001, in Malderez, 2009, p. 261). That is, mentor teachers may not know what good teaching is, e.g. they do not know how to evaluate materials well, how to use particular teaching techniques effectively, etc. In addition, this may be stimulated because both mentor teachers and school staff have little guidance on their roles and responsibilities in the practicum (Crookes, 2003, p. 223, Elmajdob, 2004, in Malderez, 2008, p. 261).

2.3.3 Pre-service teachers' strategies to overcome the challenges.

Collectively, literature pertinent to pre-service teachers' challenges in the practicum have yet to provide a wealth of information regarding the strategies used by pre-service teachers to overcome the challenges. However, as far the existing research is concerned, there are several techniques employed by student teachers to overcome the challenges. The strategies reported in this section are presented based on their theme.

2.3.3.1 Strategies to overcome the challenges related to lesson planning.

It has been indicated in Section 2.3.1 that pre-service teachers face problem in evaluating and judging teaching materials. In relation to this, literature on English language teaching pinpoints that pre-service teachers who encountered such a problem will turn to fellow pre-service teachers for advice (Numrich, 1996, p. 143; Gan, 2013, p. 100). In other words, student teachers discuss the problem with their peers in order to come up with a solution to the challenge. As indicated in Section 2.2.2, such a liaison refers to the act of reflective teaching.

2.3.3.2 Strategies to overcome the challenges related to classroom management.

A number of studies have indicated that building good teacher-students rapports is a useful tactic to deal with the challenges related to classroom management (Harmer, 1998, p. 130; Crookes, 2003, p. 163). Regarding this, it is pointed out by Crookes (2003) that building good rapports with the students can be done by carrying out the following strategies: (1) showing interest in the students and the progress they make, (2) asking for students' feedback on teaching practice, (3) showing proper manners, and (4) knowing student names (Crookes, 2003, p. 163). Through the above-mentioned strategies, teachers can build the knowledge of students, which is one of the goals of field practicum (Pennington, 1990, p. 150; see Section 2.2.2).

With regard to above-mentioned strategies, there are five basic principles which teachers need to consider in dealing with disruptive behavior. The principles, as suggested by Armstrong & Savage (1990), are as follows: (1) respecting students' identities, meaning that teachers need to address the misbehavior and not to address the disruptive students; (2) using private correction instead of public correction, which refer to communicating with disruptive students in person; (3) figuring out the cause of such disruptive behavior, meaning that teachers need to find the root of misbehavior; (4) establishing confident and fair punishing, meaning that teachers need to give the extent to which a particular action is considered as misconduct; and (5) helping students to recognize the consequences of their misconduct, referring to the suggestion that teachers should give rewards for good behavior (Armstrong & Savage, 1990, p. 166-68).

Moreover, it is also acknowledged that designing an engaging instruction may lead to good classroom management. One case in designing an engaging lesson is that of Numrich's instance in which a novice teacher who realized that she did not create many engaging classroom activities found that interacting with students outside of class made her discover students' needs and therefore use this

knowledge to deal with problems related to classroom management (Numrich, 1996, p. 141).

Furthermore, there is one other strategy which can be used to deal with classroom management problems, that is by improving verbal and nonverbal communication. As indicated in Section 2.3.1.2 classroom management covers the aspect of teachers' voices and body language, it is therefore worth pointing out that student teachers need to improve both verbal and nonverbal communication. That is, student teachers are required to use clear voice which is "one of the first requirements of good teaching" (Brown, 2000, p. 194) and to show proper body languages, such as using appropriate gestures, which is a sign of helping students learn better (Brown, 2000, p. 195). In addition, it is pinpointed by Brown (2000) that poise i.e. being calm and controlled may help beginning teachers in dealing with problems related to classroom management, particularly the unexpected problems (Brown, 2000, p. 196). All above-mentioned strategies are in line with Brookfield's view that pre-service teachers need to have strong personal qualities (Brookfield, 1990, as cited in Crookes, 2003, p. 166).

2.3.3.3 Strategies to overcome the challenges related to communication breakdown.

There has been little literature pertinent to strategies used by student teachers in coping with miscommunication which happen in field practicum. However, when such miscommunication happens, student teachers will turn to fellow student teachers for advices on how to solve the communication problem (Gan, 2013, p. 100). In other words, student teachers communicate the miscommunication with their peers and together they come up with a solution to the problem.

Despite the small amount of literature regarding strategies employed to overcome the challenges, it is implied that the student teachers have progressed into becoming good ESL/EFL teachers. This is evidenced by their needs to

improve themselves and their willingness to show more endeavors when it comes to dealing with different students' needs and diverse teaching contexts (Allen, 1990, in Brown, 2004, p. 429).

2.4 Findings from Previous Studies

Several narrative-approach and survey-based studies have addressed pre-service teachers' challenges when conducting field practicum. One prominent study is that of Numrich's which explored insights on novice ESL teachers during teaching practicum. Using narrative inquiry method to collect the data, Numrich identified student teachers' unsuccessful attempts to evaluate materials, to manage time, balance teacher-centered activities with student-centered activities, to address students' needs are among aspects contributing to student teachers' challenges in the field practicum (Numrich, 1996, p. 131-153). In relation to this, a study of Çelik whose aim was to examine concerns and stress of pre-service EFL teachers regarding field-based experience in Turkey found out that personal concerns, such as difficulties to balance the practicum and personal commitments, concerns that they might fail the practicum, among others, played the major role in causing anxiety for student teachers during field practicum whereas evaluation-based concerns, for instance being observed by supervisor insufficiently, took the minor role. The study, further, claimed that the concerns and stress experienced during field practicum were in the medium level, meaning that they can result in ineffective teaching practice (Çelik, 2008, p. 100-06). Furthermore, the study realized that as the items of the survey were not geared to dig deeper on the challenges, one may find it difficult to determine the accurate causes of the concerns (Çelik, 2008, p. 105).

In addition to the aforementioned concerns, other main challenges mostly found in field experience are those of regarding limited English skills and big number of students in a classroom (Phairee, Sanitchon, Suphanangthong, Graham, Prompruang, De Groot, & Hopkin, 2008, p. 657). These cases were the findings

of a study conducted by Phairee, et.al, to investigate teaching practicums done by seven pre-service teachers in three settings in Thailand (Phairee, et.al, p. 656).

It is also important to note that when ESL student teachers carry out field practicum overseas, challenges experienced can revolve around lack of communications between partnership universities and placement schools, lack of supports from cooperating teachers and different boundaries of cultures (Yang, 2011, p. 99-100). Furthermore, a study of Viafara which examined pre-service teachers' challenges of using English in Columbian public school classroom pinpointed that student teachers' personal experiences such as being exposed to more Spanish when they took English classes, students' perception toward English as being irrelevant to their lives, students' fear of being ridiculed when using English were the challenges encountered by pre-service teachers in the study (Viafara, 2011, p. 62). Another main issue found in Viafara's study was low-controlled classroom (Viafara, 2011, p. 63). Likewise, a study conducted by Gan to find out non-native pre-service ESL teachers' challenges when taking field practicum in Hong Kong, identified difficulties to implement pedagogical practice major issue and language barriers e.g. lack of English skills, are the major issues experienced by the pre-service teachers (Gan, 2013, p. 98-99; p.101). In addition, interestingly, low-controlled classroom management also played a significant role in the last mentioned setting (Gan, 2013, p. 99-101).

2.5 Concluding Remark

This chapter has covered theoretical frameworks underlying the current study. It has been discussed that there have been quite a few studies that have addressed challenges posed in field practicum; each was threaded to its particular method and context i.e. the setting of the research. Among the few numbers, one can find that most of the studies essentially described the challenges encountered, both description of the challenges and causes of the challenges. However, little has been done to put forward the actual strategies employed to triumph over the

challenges. Thus, this is relevant to the one objective of the present study which is to explore pre-service EFL teachers' strategies in handling the challenges.

The forthcoming chapters will present the design of the study and relay the findings of the current study.