CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the background of the study, the research questions, and the purpose of the study as well as the significance and the scope of it. The clarification of the term used and the outline for the organization of this thesis are also highlighted.

1.1. Background

Mentoring has been used in most of teacher education programs especially when students are having teaching practice in real schools (Roberts, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Richards, 1998; Musthafa, 1995; Randall and Thornton, 2001; Bailey, 2006; Blasé, 2009; Malderez, 2009; Gebhart, 2009). Literatures reflect various responses of how mentoring process can help student teachers adjust their life as teachers and gradually develop their teaching skills. Some studies have been conducted which either finds that mentoring process is not influential to student teachers' teaching skills (see Andersen, 2009; Carpenter, 2009; and Egal, 2006;) or very important to student teachers' teaching skills development (see Tudge, 1990; Bailey, 2006; Blasé, 2009; Malderez, 2009; Randall and Thornton, 2001; Gagne, 1992; and Fetherston, 2007).

Some authors stress how influential mentoring process to student teachers' teaching skills development is depends on what mentor teachers and student teacher do in the process and in what circumstances mentoring process is conducted (Bailey, 2006, Randall and Thornton, 2001; Tudge, 1990; and Malderez, 2007). Randall and Thornton (2006) say that there are three steps that mentor teachers and student teachers should do in mentoring process, namely pre-observation conference, observation, and feedback session. They believe that if mentor teachers and student teachers do the steps frequently during teaching practice, student teachers' basic teaching skills will be developed. However, Malderez (2007) proposed that to make mentoring process effective is not only depend on the how often it is conducted but also in what circumstances that it is conducted. He emphasizes effective mentoring process should be conducted in a supportive condition. He defines supportive is not only the matter of the situation but also the mentors themselves; only teachers who are willing to spend their time to mentor should be chosen to be mentor teachers.

The problem with mentor teachers is that they don't always have time to mentor. Some mentor teachers are very busy so that they do not have enough time to conduct mentoring process as Randall and Thornton (2001) have proposed (Bailey, 2006). Another problem with mentoring process is that teachers who are chosen as mentors do not always capable to mentor. In constructivist perspective, Vygotsky in Tudge (1992) states that mentoring process is effective only if a less capable person is guided by a more capable peer or adult. If the adult is less capable, learning will not

happen and the result most likely will be a drawback (Tudge, 1992; Hadegaard, 1992; Gagne, 1992)

In Indonesian context, where teacher as profession is being developed, teaching practice is consider important especially to develop student teachers' teaching skills so that they are ready to be professional teachers. However, based on researcher's observation, not all teachers have ability and capability to conduct effective mentoring. As a consequence, not all student teachers are able to develop their teaching skills even though they have been through teaching practice.

Some studies indicate that mentoring process can help student teachers develop their teaching skills as long as it is conducted frequently and mentors are capable to guide student teachers (Tudge, 1992; Bailey, 2006; Malderez, 2009; Blasé, 2009). Mentoring is also an important process to help student teachers grow as teachers, adjust the school context, and learn how to improve their teaching skills from the feedback from their mentor teachers.

Even though experts sets various condition to make effective mentoring, research about mentoring process and its connection to student teachers' basic teaching skills still doesn't get enough attention. Thus, the present study focuses on investigating what happens in mentoring process and how this process can help student teachers' basic teaching skills. The findings are hoped to be a great

contribution to enlighten how mentoring to conduct effective mentoring process so it can help student teachers' basic teaching skils.

1.2. Research Questions

In relation to above background, this study attempted to address the following questions:

1. What do mentor teachers and student teachers do on mentoring process?
2. How can mentoring process help develop student teachers' basic teaching skill?

1. 3. Purposes of the Study

Referring to the questions formulated above, the investigation was intended to meet the following purposes:

1. To find out what mentor teachers and student teacher do in mentoring process.
2. To investigate how the mentoring process can help develop student teachers' basic teaching skill.

1. 4. Significance of the Studies

The result of this study will be of great contributions to three crucial aspects: theoretical, practical, and professional aspects. First, for the theoretical aspect, the

results of the study are hoped to enrich the literature of mentoring process and its later to give perspective about effective mentoring process so it can help student teachers develop their teaching skills especially in Indonesian context where professional teachers are being developed. Second, from the practical aspects, the result of finding out what happened in mentoring process can also provide some information regarding actual condition of how it can help student teachers develop their teaching skills. Last, from professional aspects, the result of this study are expectedly beneficial for mentor teachers and student teachers who are directly involved in mentoring process. The information can be used by mentor teachers as basic for guiding student teachers effectively so they can help student teachers teaching skills as well as by student teacher as basic for improving their teaching skills through mentoring process that has been conducted with their mentor teachers.

1. 5.   Scope of the Study

This study, is like any other case studies, is concerned with a certain case that happens in certain context. The study dealt with the investigation of what mentor teachers and student teachers do in mentoring process and how this process can help student teachers' basic teaching skills development.

1. 6.   Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is an introductory one giving the background discussion and overview of the study. It also introduces the research questions and considers the significance of the particular research. Meanwhile the literature review to understanding perceptions and the use of Bahasa Indonesia is presented in chapter two. Chapter three describes the research methodology and research design used in this study. In chapter four, data presentation and discussion are presented based on the research questions outlined in chapter 1. This thesis is concluded in chapter five in which it provides the conclusion of the thesis as well as recommendation for further research.