

**PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING TEACHING
MATERIALS DURING TEACHING PRACTICUM IN SOUTHERN THAILAND**

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ABSTRAK

Praktikum mengajar adalah kesempatan penting bagi calon guru EFL untuk mempraktikkan apa yang telah mereka pelajari di perguruan tinggi. Ini menunjukkan kemampuan calon guru EFL dalam menerapkan pengetahuan yang telah mereka pelajari dari perguruan tinggi ke sekolah dan lingkungan sosial yang sebenarnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki tantangan calon guru EFL dalam mengembangkan bahan ajar selama praktikum mengajar di sekolah Thailand Selatan dan bagaimana mereka mengatasi masalah tersebut. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah dua calon guru EFL yang terdaftar dalam pengajaran praktikum pada semester ketujuh tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam terkait pengalaman mengajar siswa guru dalam mengembangkan bahan ajar di sekolah Thailand Selatan. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa tantangan yang dihadapi mahasiswa calon guru dalam mengembangkan materi antara lain (1) kurangnya pemahaman bahasa, (2) kurangnya manajemen kelas, (3) kurangnya komunikasi dengan guru tutor.

Kata Kunci : *calon guru EFL, developing teaching materials, teaching practicum, challenges*

ABSTRACT

Teaching practicum is a critical opportunity the pre-service EFL teachers practice what they have learned in college. It shows the pre-service EFL teachers ability in applying the knowledge that they have learned from the college to the real school and social environments. This study aimed to investigate the pre-service EFL teachers challenges in developing teaching materials during teaching practicum in Southern Thailand school and how they overcome the problems. The participants of this study were two pre-service EFL teachers enrolled in teaching practicum in the seventh semester of the academic year 2020/2021. The data were collected through in-depth interview related to student teachers teaching experience in developing teaching materials in Southern Thailand school. The findings of the study revealed that the challenges faced by student teachers in developing material include (1) the lack of understanding of language, (2) the lack of classroom management, (3) lack of communication with the tutor teacher.

Keywords: *pre-service EFL teachers, developing teaching materials, teaching practicum, challenges*

INTRODUCTION

Guskey, (as cited in Mudra, 2018) EFL teachers are not only expected to be professional in term of teaching abilities, characteristics, and skills. The EFL teacher needs practicum teaching to realize their abilities in education, they also need to learn how to adjust the balance of learning in classroom experience. The teaching practicum is an important time for a EFL teacher to practice his teaching skills. To shows the ability of prospective pre-service EFL teachers to apply the knowledge they have learned from college to the actual school and social environment. The teaching practicum is considered to be one of the core and central elements of the Pre-service teacher education program which provides pre-service EFL teachers the opportunity to test the knowledge they acquire during theoretical studies and apply this knowledge into action. Moreover, Hamaidi 2014, stated practicum is a real chance for the student to experience the real environments of teaching process, its complexity, and challenges that may impede the process of implementing the school curriculum. Therefore, teaching practicum is an important component in early teacher education because in schools there may be obstacles so a teacher must be ready to deal with any possible problems.

During the learning practicum, the material is an essential thing that affects the learning process in the classroom. Teaching materials help to teach and learn the process, teaching materials must be in accordance with the needs of students. In many cases, teaching materials are central to teaching and one of the most important influences on what goes on classroom. Curriculum can be seen as a means of achieving specific educational goals and objectives. In this sense, a curriculum can be regarded as a

checklist of desired outcomes (Wen Su, 2012). Therefore, pre-service EFL teachers need to be creative in developing teaching materials to make materials related to students needs. On the other hand the selection of materials for use in the classroom is a challenging task for a language teacher as it provides a platform on which students learn English.

Thus Dudley-Evans, (as cited in Rahayuningsih 2016) explained, outline the same and reiterate that materials play a crucial role in exposing learners to the language. Selection of materials for use in the classroom is a challenging task for a language teacher as it provides a platform on which students learn English. Moreover the material should be designed precisely which can meet students' need. As it is claimed by Paltridge and Starfield (as cited Wulanjani, 2018) that ESP focuses on learners' needs, and promotes their critical thinking.

Therefore material can help both for teachers and students to achieve their teaching and learning goals. It also have an important role in helping the success of learning process. Material is an important need for teaching and learning process. Thus as a pre-service EFL teachers, the learning material should be well prepared, as well as the way of delivering the material according to student needs. In-depth interviews were conducted with two pre-service EFL teachers who completed their practicum in Southern Thailand. The results showed that pre-service EFL teachers faced various challenges, some personal challenges related to the students themselves, while other challenges related to teaching. Therefore, this study aims to focus on investigating pre-service EFL teachers challenges in developing teaching materials in Southern Thailand schools during teaching practicums and

how pre-service EFL teachers deal with the problems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Developing Materials

According to Brown (1995) in Rahayuningsih (2016) stated that materials can be defined as any systematic description of the techniques and exercises to be used in classroom teaching. Developing materials consist of three phases which are: developing, teaching and evaluating the materials. At the development stage, the first stage the teacher needs to work on the material including material selection, then the second stage, namely the teaching stage of the material then tested and discussed in terms of its effectiveness. In the evaluation stage, then the material is evaluated and revised into good material.

Research conducted by Riesky (2013) reports that there are several challenges faced by prospective teacher students during the teaching practicum, this study evaluates all aspects of practicum learning including supervisors, students, and the teacher itself.

Teaching and Teaching Practice (TP)

Before going further on discussing TP, it is necessary to define the concept of teaching. According to Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986 in Mudra 2018, stated that teaching is a set of procedures undertaken by a teacher to enable learners to get valuable output.

The purpose of teaching is to ensure that learners know what they do not know and understand what they already know deeply. Teaching builds information that learners have and takes them to a situation in which they strive to find some possible solution to the subject under discussion and presentation. Great teaching is an

option for any teacher to do so, including pre-service EFL teachers. Brophy, 1986 in Mudra 2018, good classroom management results in effective classroom climate because it directs the classroom to a better teaching and learning process. They have more chances to be involved and succeed in the engagement of the classroom.

Moreover, according to Hamalik (as cited in Mudra, 2018) pointed out that TP, is an academic activity in which pre-service EFL teachers put teaching theory into practice. In Indonesian context, TP is one amongst many curricular activities that must be undertaken by every pre-service teacher including EFL teachers under Teacher Training Faculty. As a compulsory course, TP is conducted by the end of final semester or after all courses are successfully completed. On the other hand, the pre-service EFL teachers are entitled to take TP as a course if they pass the examination of all courses., a specific objective of TP is to enhance pre-service teachers' "knowledge, value, character, good behavior" for their successful future teaching.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative case study approach. Qualitative case study is a research methodology that helps in exploration of a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration through variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). According to Yin (as cited in Zainal 2007) defines the case study research method "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used."

Participant of The Study

Participants in this study were two pre-service EFL teachers at IBN Khladun Bogor University in teaching practicum during the seventh semester of the 2020/2021 academic year in Southern Thailand.

Data Collection

Labert and Loiselle, (as cited in Frances et al 2009). Sated that interviews are widely used as data collection tool in qualitative research. They are typically used as research strategy to gather information about participants' experiences, views and beliefs, concerning a specific research question or phenomenon of interest. The interview was intended to gain the data about the participants' experiences, views and beliefs, concerning a specific to their challenges in developing materials and how they overcome the problems. The interview consists of 3 main questions related to the participant experience and challenges during teaching practicum in developing teaching material. Each interview took around 10 minutes.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through codifications and themes. The researcher transcribed the data from the phone interview, and then analyzed it to become several themes. Then, the challenges of pre-service EFL teachers were elaborated, and continued with the way pre-service EFL teacher overcome the problem.

Data Presentation and Discussion

The interview was performed between the two participants in a separate location in order to collect personal and relevant data from two different perspectives. Based on the interview there are several challenges faced by pre-service EFL teacher in developing materials. Those are

including the lack of understanding of language, the lack of classroom management, lack of communication with the tutor teacher.

1. Student teachers consideration in selecting teaching materiall

Before we discussed how the pre-service EFL teacher develop the teaching materials, it is important to discover how pre-service EFL teacher select the materials. From the interview, it is stated that the student teachers select the teaching material mostly from the module books provided by the respective schools.

"karena sudah disediakan modul, dari situ saya mengambil bahan ajar yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan pemahaman siswa"

("because a module from the school has been provided, from the module I took teaching materials that were tailored to the students' understanding needs")

The materials were chosen in the form module. Then the materials were developed in order to be a good material, which can be understood by the student.

"Saya mengambil materi dari buku modul yang telah diseediakan oleh pihak sekolah, dan di bantu untuk mentafsirkan isi buku tersebut oeh guru pamong dan dirangkum menjadi bahan ajar sesuai dengan kebutuhan siswa."

"I took material from the module book that had been provided by the school, and was helped to interpret the contents of the book by the tutor teacher and summarized it into teaching materials according to the students' needs."

It makes the student background of knowledge as prior reasons in developing teaching materials

2. The challenges in selecting teaching materials

There are several challenges in developing teaching material. Those are: (1) the lack of understanding of language, (2) the lack of classroom management, (3) lack of communication with the tutor teacher.

2.1 The lack of understanding of language.

Nevertheless, students generally are weak in English language learning were found in many parts of the world, especially for the countries that English is not spoken as the mother tongue. Hashemi (2011) in Souriyavongsa (2013) identified that students' weakness in English language learning is due to the differences of social contexts, cultural environments; for example, in the environments where the first and second or foreign languages learning take place such as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and others.

"Tantangan terberatnya pada saat itu ketika berhadapan dengan murid yang kurang paham dengan bahasa inggris, seperti kita kita ketahui Thailand itu negara yang tidak memprioritaskan bahasa inggris sebagai bahasa utama . Jadi sebagai apapun materi saat itu yang saya ajarkan, tapi para siswa na tidak paham dengan bahasa saya, materi tersebut tidak gampang untuk di pahami"

"The toughest challenge at that time was when dealing with students who did not understand English, as we know that Thailand is a country that does not prioritize English as the main language. So no matter how good the material at that time I taught, but the students did not understand my language, the material was not easy to understand"

2.2 The Lack of Classroom Management

To ensure the classroom is effectively managed, teachers must be confident of their ability to set clear expectations and goals, model positive behaviors, and enforce consequences when needed. In this case, the goal of classroom management is to build a respectful learning community where children can feel safe to learn, explore, share, and express their views and feelings in positive ways.

However, it is a challenge for the pre-service EFL teacher to understand the issue on that field because one class of students ranges from 30-40 students so it is not easy to manage the class.

"manajemen kelas saya terbilang kurang karena satu kelas itu ada ynag sampai 40 siswa, sehingga tidak mudah untuk dikondisikan"

("My class management used to be lacking because there were up to 40 students in one class, so it was not easy to be conditioned")

From the interview above the pre-service EFL teachers feel less good in managing class management because 30-40 students are not conducive to delivering material. Thus Liu & Meyer, (as cited in Lew & Nelson 2016) reported that in Classroom management issues are a leading cause of job dissatisfaction and work against retention among teachers. Therefore, the management class is important for pre-service EFL in order to develop the teaching materials and activities in the classroom.

2.3 Lack Of Communication With The Tutor Teacher

In almost all school activities, communication an important role, and the manner in which the principal interacts with the educators can determine

the organizational culture and organizational expectations whereas, Crowther et al. (2009) in Kheswa, (2015). Defined that principals should communicate immediately with the staff to avoid unnecessary conflicts as research indicates that the success of any organization lies in effective communication of its strategic management and planning. However, it is a challenge for the pre-service EFL teacher to understand because lack of communication with the tutor teacher.

“Tantangannya ketika dikasih buku modul, tetapi tidak diberi arahan yang maksimal.”

(“The challenge was when given the module book, but they were not given maximum direction”.)

Based on the interview, it was stated that the pre-service EFL teachers did not communicate well with the teacher tutor at these school.

4. Ways To Overcome The Problem

Based on the interview, there are several ways to overcome the challenges in selecting teaching materials. Those are: (1) learn Thai language, using google translate as media for translating English into Thai or opposite that, asking for help from students who understand English language to explain to other students using Thai but more often use body language; (2) Communicate cooperate with with tutor teachers or partner teachers to manage the class well. (3) Communicate and cooperate with tutor teachers to to prepare teaching materials and suitable materials for the students.

CONCLUSION

Teaching practicum is a critical opportunity the pre-service EFL teachers practice what they have

learned in college. In practicum the pre-service EFL teachers learn a lot of things to be a good teacher. In developing teaching materials, the pre-service EFL teachers have to focus on the students needs.

The challenges of pre-service EFL teachers in developing teaching material are : (1) the lack of understanding of language, (2) the lack of classroom management, (3) lack of communication with the tutor teacher.

In order to overcome the problem, pre-service EFL teachers need to: (1) learn Thai language, using google translate as media for translating English into Thai or opposite that, asking for help from students who understand English language to explain to other students using Thai but more often use body language; (2) Communicate cooperate with with tutor teachers or partner teachers to manage the class well; (3) Communicate and cooperate with tutor teachers to to prepare teaching materials and suitable materials for the students.

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