

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Internationalization and globalization have affected many sectors in this 21st century, including the education sector (Heriansyah, 2014; Mantel et al., 2022). The movement and widespread presence of international students pursuing education in other countries worldwide due to various academic and personal reasons is one of the clear effects of internationalization and globalization on education (Heriansyah, 2014; Mantel et al., 2022; Melati et al., 2021). As stated by Heriansyah (2014), this phenomenon occurs due to global transformation in which people can travel from one country to another easily and quickly. Therefore, classrooms nowadays are filled with students with diverse backgrounds such as differences in race, religion, language, etc. (Naz & Murad, 2017). Due to such diversity, students' learning needs are also becoming increasingly diverse (Naz & Murad, 2017).

The new demands in the education market are teachers and teaching ways that can address the needs of classroom with diverse students (Naz & Murad, 2017). With that being said, the demand for competent and integrated teachers has arisen to fulfil this need (Sahlberg, 2004). Researchers and educators generally agree that pre-service teachers (PSTs) need to be given the opportunity to explore their own cultural identities, learn about and experience other cultural groups, reflect on their beliefs about racial and cultural differences, and critically examine the sociocultural aspects of learning and teaching in order to teach culturally diverse students (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, as cited in DeVillar & Jiang, 2012). In response to the rising need for teachers that are culturally competent, many institutions have

redesigned their education policies so that their education system can be in line with what they perceive to be the current international practice (Sahlberg, 2004). Some of them have initiated to put their future teachers in international exchange programs (Mantel et al., 2022). It is believed that international internship exchange programs are thought to be intensive, broadening one's horizon and developing one's competence (Mantel et al., 2022). International teaching practicum (ITP) gives the PSTs the chance to learn and learn how to teach in a global setting with real students, real curricula, real classrooms, and in real situations (Kabilan et al., 2017).

The efforts of institutions and governments in placing their PSTs in ITP programs to enhance their future teachers' skills show significant results as revealed in some studies. A study by Kabilan (2013) reported 5 benefits of ITP including increasing speaking confidence, interpersonal skills, teaching skills, confidence, and a new world view about education and culture. Another study by Kabilan et al. (2017) reported almost similar results regarding ITP benefits. They found that ITP helped the PSTs to gain confidence in teaching and communicating in English, developed new perspective regarding education and culture, and increased their interpersonal skills (Kabilan et al., 2017). DeVillar and Jiang (2012) stated that the benefits of ITP include the developing creativeness in creating teaching material, new teaching styles, and developing classroom management skill. A study by Auni et al. (2022) also revealed that ITP helped PSTs to gain personal and professional development, and also improved their cultural awareness.

Alongside the benefits, it is reported that PSTs experienced several challenges during ITP as stated in some studies. So far, four studies have

specifically explored PSTs' challenges during ITP and also investigated the strategies the PSTs applied to cope with the challenges (Kabilan et al., 2020; Khusniyah et al., 2023; Ratih et al., 2021; Setyaningsih et al., 2023). The findings revealed that PSTs experienced challenges related to school curriculum, lesson planning, managing students' behaviour, language barrier, managing time, lack of school facilities, mixed-ability students, dealing with students with high critical thinking, cultural differences, and education system differences (Kabilan et al., 2020; Khusniyah et al., 2023; Ratih et al., 2021; Setyaningsih et al., 2023). Besides the challenges, they also revealed the strategies used by the PSTs. The strategies mentioned include asking for help to the mentor teachers, student buddies, other teachers, and peers, utilized the internet, included games and creating positive atmosphere during lesson, mixing local language and English as the language of instruction, developing positive psychology, setting priorities, applied learning strategies, and utilizing the existing teaching resources (Kabilan et al., 2020; Khusniyah et al., 2023; Ratih et al., 2021; Setyaningsih et al., 2023).

Previous studies concerning ITP challenges experienced by pre-service English teachers (PSETs), especially during the SEA-Teacher Project are still underexplored. And there are only a few research works that specifically investigated PSETs' challenges during their ITP in junior high school level in the Philippines. Addressing the gaps, the researcher of this study was interested in exploring the challenges faced by Indonesian pre-service English teachers (PSETs) during their ITP specifically during the "teaching in classroom" stage of SEA-Teacher Project in President Ramon Magsaysay State University (PRMSU)

Laboratory Junior High School in the Philippines, along with the strategies they applied to surmount the challenges.

1.2. Formulations of the Problem

1. What are the challenges experienced by Indonesian pre-service English teachers during the “teaching in classroom” stage of SEA-Teacher Project at PRMSU Laboratory Junior High School?
2. How did the Indonesian pre-service English teachers overcome the challenges during the “teaching in classroom” stage of SEA-Teacher Project at PRMSU Laboratory Junior High School?

1.3. Purposes of the Research

1. To explore Indonesian pre-service English teachers’ challenges during the “teaching in classroom” stage of SEA-Teacher Project at PRMSU Laboratory Junior High School.
2. To investigate Indonesian pre-service English teachers’ strategies to overcome the challenges they had during the “teaching in classroom” stage of SEA-Teacher Project at PRMSU Laboratory Junior High School.

1.4. Limitation of the Research

This research focused on exploring the challenges perceived by Indonesian PSETs during SEA-Teacher Project followed by the strategies they applied to deal with the challenges. The challenges being explored were the challenges the PSETs had during the 3rd stage of SEA-Teacher Project which is the “teaching in classroom” stage. The participants of this study were Indonesian students majoring in English education alumnus of SEA-Teacher Project batch 9 2023 who taught

English subject during their ITP at President Ramon Magsaysay State University Laboratory Junior High School in the Philippines. They were all in their 7th semester during the program.

1.5. Significances of the Research

1. The finding of this research is expected to be useful as a reference for future pre-service teachers who wish to participate in international teaching practicum programs.
2. The finding of this research is expected to be useful as a reference for future researchers to conduct more related studies.
3. The finding of this research is expected to be useful as a reference for teacher education institutions to make a better change in terms of pre-service teachers' preparation for ITP programs.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

1. SEA-Teacher Project

SEA-Teacher Project is an exchange program held by the South ASEAN Minister Education Organization (SEAMEO) where students around the ASEAN countries can experience teaching practicum in an international context.

2. International Teaching Practicum

International teaching practicum or ITP is a program that allows pre-service teachers to practice their teaching skills outside of their home country (Kabilan et al., 2017).

3. Pre-Service English Teacher

The term pre-service teacher or PST refers to education students enrolled in a teaching program held by institutions at the university level (Ardiyansah, 2021). The participant of this study were PSTs enrolled in English education major. Therefore, the researcher referred the participants of this study with the term "pre-service English teachers" or "PSETs".

4. Challenge

Cambridge Dictionary defines the term “challenge” as a circumstance or condition that tests a person’s ability and requires them to face it with attempts both physically and mentally to accomplish or to go through the situation successfully (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

5. Strategy

Strategy is defined as a method or plan to be applied in order to successfully achieve a particular goal in a certain situation (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.; Oxford Dictionary, n.d.).