CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I introduces the background of the research, the research questions, the purpose of the research, the significance of the study, the limitations of the research, and the definition of the key terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of Research

In a country where English is a foreign language, there are some significant challenges in teaching English (Rahmanita & Mukmaenin, 2019). Therefore, future English teachers must be prepared as much as possible. English education in universities plays an essential role in this preparation by providing students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and practical experience to navigate English teaching challenges effectively. It helps them to develop the skills needed to become professional English teachers(Mufidah, 2019). However, to truly equip future English teachers, they must also be offered practical experiences through student-teacher training programs.

Student-teacher training programs allow students to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to real-world teaching scenarios and observe experienced teachers, which then gain valuable insights into the complexities in the real classroom (Mufidah, 2019). During the programs, students often face challenges in teaching English. Pre-service teachers encountered some challenges during the teaching practice program (Nababan & Amalia, 2021).

Therefore, it is important to understand the challenges of teaching English in such teaching-training programs in contributing to the professional readiness of the students as future English teachers for anticipating or addressing similar challenges. Among the student-teacher training programs, there is a familiar program provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture; KEMENDIKBUD called the *Kampus Mengajar* program. A similar initiative is the *Magang Kependidikan* program, which also aims to equip students with practical experience in real classroom settings.

Kampus Mengajar is one of the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* programs that allow students to study outs11qide the campus (Iriawan and Saefudin, 2021). According to *Buku Saku Kampus Mengajar 2021*, *Kampus Mengajar* involves students from various study programs in each university to support teaching and learning in schools. For one semester, students enhance their problem-solving skills by becoming partners with teachers to innovate in teaching. They then collaborate to develop strategies, and learning models that are creative, innovative, and fun.

Magang Kependidikan on the other hand, is adapted from the *Kampus Mengajar* program and a form implementation of the MBKM programs. According to *Buku Panduan Ringkas Magang Kependidikan Berbasis Pengabdian di Sekolah 2024*, students participating in *Magang Kependidikan* are placed in real-life situations; schools to obtain practical teaching experience, with a focused approach to apply the theories and methodologies learned in class.

Since *Magang Kependidikan* is an adaptation of the *Kampus Mengajar* program, there are similarities between these two programs. Both programs are the implementation of MBKM (Merdeka Belajar- Kampus Merdeka) and allow students to prepare themselves as future teachers with practical teaching experiences. Both *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* programs carry 20 credits (SKS) and are each conducted over one semester. However, there are also differences between the programs.

The first one is the program's objectives. *Kampus Mengajar* is to improve the school's literacy, numeracy, and quality of education. (Kemendikbudristek, 2023, p.1). On the other hand, *Magang Kependidikan* emphasizes professional development, pedagogical skills, and the practical application of education. The second differences rely on the programs' governance. *Kampus Mengajar* is governed by the Ministry initiative, offering flexibility in learning and practical experiences. Meanwhile, *Magang Kependidikan* is more regulated by individual universities or teaching education programs, aligning with the specific needs of the curriculum and competency of the teaching degree (Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, 2024, p.2).

Moreover, the programs' types of school placements are different as well. School placements in the *Kampus Mengajar* program are the schools that are in rural areas and categorized as *Sekolah 3T (tertinggal, terdepan, terluar).* (Kemendikbud, 2021). Meanwhile, in Magang Kependidikan, the school placements are in urban areas and more adequate from the educators, facilities, and technological adaption. Meaning that the challenges are magnified in programs

such as *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan*, which have these distinct objectives and contexts. Therefore, with these similarities and differences, there are similar and different challenges students faced in joining *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* as well, especially in teaching English.

Having personally participated in *Kampus Mengajar* 6 in a junior high school, the researcher faced many challenges in teaching English. This prompted the researcher's interest in finding out the challenges faced by students who joined *Magang Kependidikan* in junior high schools and see if the challenges are the same or not, and how they differ. Additionally, regarding the previous studies which have explored students' experiences and challenges in each program, the existing researches related to *Kampus Mengajar* tend to focus on broad experiences during the program in elementary schools, meanwhile, studies on the *Magang Kependidikan* program mostly explore the program's roles and effectiveness. However, there remains a notable gap in a study that specifically explores students' challenges in both *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* programs, especially with the focus on challenges in teaching English with the placement schools in junior high schools.

Junior high schools bring unique challenges for educators, as students at this stage have different abilities and levels of motivation and are going through an important phase of social and academic development (Schunk et al., 2014). Many students also come to junior high school with very different levels of English skills, from basic vocabulary to more advanced understanding, which makes teaching even more complex, especially for student-teachers (Marcellino, 2018).

By focusing on junior high schools, this study aims to offer useful insights into the challenges student teachers face in this setting, helping address the research gap by employing a qualitative approach with multiple case studies and thematic analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain comprehensive insights from the participants, aiming to uncover the teaching challenges faced by English Education students in either program.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, the research question was formulated into the question:

What are the challenges faced by English Education Students in the *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* programs when teaching English in Junior High Schools?

1.3 The Purpose of the Research

Based on the research question above, the purpose of this research was:

to find out the challenges faced by English Education Students in the *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* programs when teaching English in Junior High Schools.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The results of this study were expected to be beneficial in the field of education, particularly for students, the English Education Study Program, the programs, and other researchers.

1. For the students

The research is expected to be useful in providing insights into the challenges of joining *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* in junior high school, especially in the context of teaching English. It will benefit students who will participate in the *Kampus Mengajar* or *Magang Kependidikan* programs in the next batches. Additionally, the insights would also be beneficial for the student teachers as future English teachers.

2. For English Education Programs

The research is expected to be useful in providing information to refine and improve the structure, content, and support mechanisms of English education programs to prepare students for the next *Kampus Mengajar* and *Magang Kependidikan* programs.

3. For the programs

The research may inform the program administrators and educators to improve and enhance the programs, ultimately leading to better preparation for future English language teachers.

4. For other researchers

The research may serve as a foundation for future research in the field of English language education and teacher training programs. The researcher hopes that other researchers can build upon the findings to explore other aspects of teaching experiences, program effectiveness, and student outcomes.

1.5 Limitations of the Research

The researcher limited the subject of the research to four English Education students of batch 2021 of Jambi University who joined the *Kampus Mengajar* program in batch 6 and four students who joined *Magang Kependidikan* in their sixth semester. This study explored their teaching experiences in junior high schools, specifically focusing on the challenges they faced while teaching English in these programs.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

a. *Kampus Mengajar* Program

Is one of the *Merdeka Belajar- Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) programs. It is designed to involve university students in assisting the learning process in elementary and secondary schools (Kemendikbud, 2021). This program aims to improve the quality of education in underserved areas while providing students with valuable teaching experiences.

b. *Magang Kependidikan* Program

Is a practical training program for education students, designed to provide direct teaching experience in schools as part of the teacher education curriculum. It is a part of the MBKM program implemented by FKIP Jambi University which is an extension of the *Pengenalan Praktik Persekolahan* (PLP) course. It is an adaptation program of *Kampus Mengajar*, but the specific needs are on each teacher's education program.