

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Research

Teaching practicum is an essential activity for students in a teacher training program because it prepares them to be professional teachers. Teaching practicum allows students to apply their theoretical knowledge and skills to real classroom situations. Kadir and Aziz (2021) also define teaching practicum as a crucial part of the teacher education program that affects the quality of teachers. Furthermore, Koksall and Genc (2019) stated that “Teaching practicum has a fundamental mission of preparing the prospective teachers for the world of teaching since those teacher candidates are mainly expected to be involved in a reciprocal interaction with the learners” (p.1). Thus, teaching practicum is a significant program to prepare students to become professional teacher in the future.

Teaching Practicum is also a crucial stage where students transition from the learners to professional teachers because it is provide the students an experiential learning. In experiential learning, students can implement their acquired skills throughout learning in the classroom, so they will utilize it in the real classroom situation. As Roland (2017) mentioned “experiential learning provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply theory into practice through professional competence” (p.1). Thus, students can gain learning benefit through teaching practicum, such as; 1) enable students to critically and meaningfully comprehend theory outside of textbooks, 2) Offers mentorship to

effectively dealing with the realities of the workplace 3) allowing students to build a personal commitment to professionalism through reflective practice (p.6). Therefore, experiential learning can give some benefits to students especially in developing their professional competence.

Before conducting teaching practicum, students are required to build up preparation. This preparation includes a microteaching and theoretical course that help students develop their competence and necessary skills for effective teaching. As mentioned by Serdar and Çeçen (2016) “pre-service teachers also have a chance to gain some practical experience through microteaching simulations during their university courses” (p.128). Therefore, students develop their skills and competence before enrolled in teaching practicum to prepare them facing the real classroom setting.

However, actual classroom reality often presents a gap because the actual classroom practice does not reflect the theory and practice. The gap is mismatch between theoretical and practical application of skill acquired throughout studying at university. The gap between theory and practice existed in across different time and context, especially in educational setting (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005). In addition, Hascher et al. (2007) claimed that “a gap between theoretical and practical knowledge opens up as soon as students enter the real classroom situation” (p.5). Therefore, this gap presents challenges to students when conducting teaching practicum because they can not apply what they have learned.

Besides, the gap between theoretical and practical also affects students' preparation and implementation in teaching practicum. This gap becomes

challenges when teaching in the classroom because it affects their performance in teaching. Ulum (2020) stated that EFL students could not apply the theories they learned at the university because theoretical practices did not reflect classroom practices. This challenge leaves students unprepared for teaching, which can have an adverse effect on their confidence in teaching performance. In addition, students are unlikely to receive assistance and direction in teaching, thus, they are required to deal with the challenges of teaching in a classroom by themselves. As mentioned by Vo et al. (2018), the implementation of the teaching practicum without mentorship did not provide practicum-teachers with sufficient chances to develop their teaching skills efficiently. Without strong mentorship from an experienced teacher, practicum-teacher may struggle to bridge the gap between their theoretical preparation and practical implementation. Therefore, the gap in preparation and implementation in teaching practicum became challenges for students when fostering the theoretical and practical skills they acquired.

Although there are studies that address the gap and challenges in teaching practicum as mentioned earlier very few, those studies are not conducted in Indonesia. However, there are some studies on teaching practicum in PLP or PPL programs, these studies did not specifically mention the gap between theory and practice in teaching. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct a research focusing on the gap between students' preparation and implementation of teaching practicum. Thus, this paper aims to describe the gap in the preparation and implementation of teaching practicum.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the gap and the problem mentioned earlier, the researcher formulated three research questions:

1. How are the students in the English Education Study Program prepared academically prior to teaching practicum?
2. How do the students implement their knowledge and skills during their teaching practicum?
3. What are the gaps between the preparation and the implementation of teaching practicum?

## **1.3 Purposes of the Research**

Based on the research questions formulated earlier, the researcher set the objectives of this research as below:

1. To describe the academic preparation provided for students in English Education Study Program prior to teaching practicum and the implementation of students' knowledge and skills during their teaching practicum
2. To describe the implementation of students' knowledge and skills during their teaching practicum
3. To describe the gap between the preparation and the implementation

## **1.4 Limitations of the Research**

The researcher limits the scope of this research, it focuses on the EFL students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Jambi. Furthermore, the

student must be enrolled teaching practicum program, particularly the teaching practicum in the Magang Pendidikan Program. In addition, the focuses of this research are limited to the academic preparation that provided by university courses and implementation of teaching practicum in Magang Pendidikan.

### **1.5 Significance of Research**

Practically, this research is beneficial for the English Education Study Program in improving the preparation for the teaching practicum, it can be a recommendation to prepare future teachers. Additionally, the students can use this research as a reference in enhancing their academic preparation for effective teaching.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the literature in teaching preparation and implementation because there are only a few studies that discuss it in Indonesia, particularly in English Education programs. In addition, the researcher hopes this research can be used as a reference for future research.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

This section defines the key terms used in this research. These terms are defined by the researcher to fit the objective of this research and to avoid disambiguity. The key terms are defined as follows:

#### **1. Teacher Preparation**

According to Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) teacher preparation ensure that teacher candidates are well-prepared to be able to create engaging classroom environments, implement effective teaching practicums, and adapt to the

diverse needs of students' need. However, this research defines Teacher Preparation as the process of providing students academically with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experiences for effective teaching. This process consists of social competence, pedagogy competence, professional competence, and personal competence before conducting a teaching practicum. Therefore, teacher preparation is a process of providing an effective teaching for students.

## 2. Teaching Practicum

According to Permendikbud *No. 55 Tahun 2017* (Indonesia), teaching practicum is part of the process of developing teacher competence, and every student who studies in the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training (FKIP) is expected to enroll in PLP as a requirement for graduation. Teacher training program students are required to take a teaching practicum known as PLP (Pengenalan Lapangan Pendidikan). However, there are different variations in which the PLP can be implemented recently. For example, a program by Kemendikbudristek called Kampus Mengajar, and a local program run by Universitas Jambi called Magang Kependidikan can be converted into the PLP. In this research, teaching practicum refers to a teaching practicum supervised by a schoolteacher in an internship program of Magang Pendidikan to apply their skills and knowledge in a real-world teaching and learning environment. Thus, teaching practicum in this research is an internship program that supervised by professional teacher known as Magang Pendidikan Program.

### 3. Practicum-Teachers

The focus of this study is on students in the English Education Study Programme who have completed their teaching practicum in Magang Pendidikan. these students will be referred to as Practicum-Teachers. The term “Practicum-Teachers” will be used consistently throughout this study to denote students who have obtained their academic preparation in the English Education Study Programme and completed their teaching practicum in Magang Pendidikan. In conclusion, practicum-teacher refers to English education students who are assigned in Magang Pendidikan Program.

### 4. Gap

Darling et. al (2007) defined “gap as a barrier between a goal state and one’s present state” (p. 101). In this research, the gap refers to the distinction between the acquired skills students gain through their academic preparation and the actual demands and practices they encounter during their implementation of teaching practicum. Therefore, the gap is a barrier between students’ academic preparation and actual practices in real situations.