

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of study, the problems of the study, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

English is as an international language used as a tool for communication in daily life and in academics, functioned as a first, second, or foreign language. As international language, people are demanded to master English, because most people all over the world communicate each other in English. English is useful for establishing and maintaining the relationship with the people. Furthermore, the people have to be ready to face global competition in understanding and developing the scientific and technological knowledge in this modern era.

In the world of globalization era, English has increasingly become the medium in every domain of communication, both in local and global contexts. As a result, the demand for speakers using English effectively is necessary in every country. Teaching and learning English, except for the native language, is thus crucial for communicative purposes to meet the demands of global economics and to cope with the growing local, national and international demands for English skills.

In Indonesia there are many universities which provides English department program to create the candidate of teachers who teach English as foreign language in the future. In last stage of English educational department there is teaching practice which will be done by English student - teachers. According to Richards & Crookes, will have a chance to experience many valuable things, such as getting practical classroom experience, putting theories into practices, gaining insight from observing experienced teachers, improving lesson planning ability, improving ability in designing and developing materials, sharpening their teaching ability, strengthening their understanding of teaching in terms of theory and practice, and improving decision-making ability in teaching by looking at and exploring into themselves and other's teaching practices¹.

In Thailand, English is considered as a foreign language, and it is used for the purposes of academic advancement, career advancement, and traveling abroad. To cope with the growing local and international demand, a number of efforts from all parties involved have been made to the Thai educational system to help boost Thai learners' English performance. However, the National survey conducted by the Office of Educational Testing of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, the Ministry of Education during the years of 1997 and 1998, showed that Thai learners, being assessed against

¹J. C. Richards, Competence and performance in language teaching. *RELJ Journal* 2010, 41(2), 101-122. (DOAJ.org access on March 18th)

standardized benchmarks of achievement, had unsatisfactory proficiency in the four skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking².

Thai students spend twelve years studying English in primary and secondary schools, but the results are questionable. When compared to people in neighboring countries, Thais' English proficiency is relatively low. The 2010 Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) showed that Thailand ranked 116th out of 163 countries. The Netherlands topped the list with an average score of 100 out of 120, followed by Denmark and Singapore with the average scores of 99 and 98 respectively. The international average score was 80 but the Thai average score was 75, which was a little higher than the average scores of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar, but was trailing far behind other ASEAN countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. On the 2011 report, the Thai average score was still the same, 75 (Test and Score Data Summary for TOEFL, 2011-2012)³.

The researchers before have shown that the English instruction in Thailand has developed continually, catching up with the other countries' standard. Many schools have tried to improve their English curriculum in every level sequence. Although English has been taught in Thailand for a long time, the problems of teaching and learning the English language in Thailand are still recurring shown. As English learners, teaching practicum in another

²Wiriyaichitra, A. *Thai TESOL Newsletter*, (A Thai university scenario in the coming decade: 2001), p. 4

³SripathumNoom-ura,. Language Institute, Thammasat University, Thailand. *English Language Teaching*; International Journal. Vol. 6, No. 11; 2013, Canadian Center of Science and Education. (DOAJ.com access on 21st January 2015)

country is good chance to spread the knowledge. But, student-teachers that practice teaching of course will find some difficulties.

From the study above, the researcher is interested in to observe and find some difficulties in teaching English in Thailand, especially in Southern border province of Thailand faced by Indonesian student - teachers who practice to teach English in some provinces in South Thailand by the title **"The Problems Faced by Indonesian Student - Teachers in Practice Teaching English in Southern Thailand Year 2014-2015"**.

B. Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the researcher has the conclusion that there are some problems in teaching English in South Thailand. Therefore, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What are the problems in teaching English in South Thailand that faced by English student - teachers of Indonesian Universities?
2. What are the efforts which used by English student - teachers of Indonesian Universities to overcome the teaching difficulties?

C. Objectives of the Study

Considering the problems of the study above, this study is directed to answer and also to get the description about:

1. The difficulties or the problems faced by English student – teachers of Indonesia in teaching English in South Thailand

2. The efforts and solution which are used by English student – teachers of Indonesia to overcome their problems in their teaching practicum.

D. Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected can give contribution and give more knowledge to some people, as follows:

1. For the next student teachers

The result of the study is expected to give more knowledge about the problems or difficulties in teaching English in South Thailand. Therefore, by knowing the problems, the next student teachers who will practice teaching English in some secondary schools in South Thailand can prepare themselves to decrease the problems that they will face. They can get more preparation by knowing the problems before.

2. The other researchers

Hopefully, this study can give some information or inputs concerning the difficulties in teaching English in another country, Thailand.

E. Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on the difficulties or problems in teaching English in South Thailand which faced by the English student- teacher of 8 Islamic Universities of Indonesia in East Java in 2014 - 2015. They are STAIN Kediri, IAIN Tulungagung, UNMUH Ponorogo, UIN Sunan Ampel

Surabaya, STAIN Ponorogo, UNMUH Gresik, UNMUH Jember, IAIN Jember, when they are doing teaching practicum in some secondary schools.

This research is also to look for what are the efforts that have been done by them to overcome their problems in their teaching practicum. Actually, the researcher wants to do the research more than it because limited time and opportunity, researcher only focused on English student- teacher from some Universities in East Java.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misconception of some terms used in this study, the researcher defines some the key terms as follows:

1. Teaching Practicum

Teaching practicum is a place and time for practicing and reflecting. As a part of many teacher education programs, teaching practicum is also known in a variety of terms, such as "practice teaching, field experience, apprenticeship, practical experience, and internship"⁴. Teaching practicum is a task for university students who take educational department. The university students have to take this course so that they can stand in the real situation to be a teacher. And the university students who do teaching practicum is called student-teacher.

⁴Gebhard, J. G. The practicum. In Burns, A. & Richards, J.C. (Eds.), *TheCambridge guide to second languageteacher education* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). p.250

2. Student-Teacher

Student - teacher is the student in university who take educational programme as teacher in the next day who had passed at least six semesters of lecturing lesson from university. Teaching practicum or (PPL) in the obligation programme which must be taken by them to fulfil requirement of strata one from educational faculty. Most student teachers in their practicum can be seen as new comers in profession of teaching. In terms of level, they can be regarded as novice teachers, who are still in the process of finding their ways to become more professional in teaching that will give them cost experience how to be professional teacher in future life.

Student teacher must apply their knowledge not only in their university but also in the school. It is important thing that student teachers need to improve and give their experience as the next teacher in the future. Teaching practice is the opportunity that gives many experiences and knowledge as the teacher.