

# Coping with Barriers on Teaching EFL Classroom by Pre-Service Teachers in Sorong Papua Barat

Hayat Marwan Ohorella\*

Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education  
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong

Sorong, Indonesia

\*hayatohorella@gmail.com

**Abstract**—In teaching English EFL classroom, pre-service teachers find it difficult to use the knowledge gained in their teacher education program and the practices they had been taught in that program and the practices of classroom teaching. Therefore, pre-service teacher often encounters barriers, especially in teaching English for the first time in the classroom. The study aimed to investigate barriers encountered by English pre-service teachers in Sorong, Papua Barat as well as their alternatives to cope with such barriers during their teaching practicum. The study was qualitative in nature, which involved ten pre-service teachers as participants. To gain the data, questionnaire containing 20 items was distributed. The result of study showed that the barriers cover technical (real situation at school) and non-technical factors (pre-service teachers' psychological situation), while the alternatives comprise the availability of teaching media, English reading and storybooks, preparing lesson plan, using the number of teaching methods such as role playing, Problem Based Learning, Picture and Picture, check Pair, etc. This study recommends the pre-service teachers to empower their pedagogical, affective and cognitive skills regarding the major they focus, which in turn will help them in transferring what they have learnt to the learners.

**Keywords**—barriers on teaching; EFL classroom; pre-service teachers

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching practicum period is one of the most important components of the teacher-training program. It is an opportunity for students and teachers to put their theoretical studies into practice. There will be undoubtedly some discrepancies between what we have learnt in college or university and the actual situation in the classroom. The teaching practicum should integrate theory and practice and amplify strengthen some of these apparent discrepancies. It is also the time of amplifying some of the ideas, which have been developed in college or university, and of doing experiment with the different approaches, strategies and techniques of teaching.

Vick noted that the teaching practicum has always been an integral part of teacher education programmed although it varies in intent and approach [1]. It also represents the time during which students are ideally provided opportunities to integrate theory and practice in the workplace. In one of the most in-depth national studies of teacher education in the USA,

Darling-Hammond identified a number of ways in which best practice can be achieved in linking theory and practice in the teaching practicum. These ways include strong involvement from school and university staff and well designed in-field experiences that make explicit links between theory and practice through, for example, action research and performance assessments [2]. Furlong and Maynard emphasized that previously pre-service teachers have been drilled with amount of skills, insight and knowledge toward English teachers' field and hoped the science could be applied well. It provides opportunity to beginning teachers to become socialized into the professions [3].

Acknowledging what Furlong and Maynard believe, however, some other researches have shown that knowledge of academic disciplines only supports teaching if it focuses on the actual situated activity of language teaching. Studies have also shown that teachers find that foreign language teacher education courses which are similar to the practice of language teaching (i.e., "practical" courses focusing specifically on teaching or teaching matters such as assessment) are much more helpful in learning to teach than courses which are similar to the practice of being an academic [4,5].

Regarding the present issues, there have been a number of researchers whose concern with how barriers in teaching English as Foreign Language could be overcome such as Azeem, Adams, and Macalister [6-8].

Seeing through the real situation, some problems might exist since the pre-service do not have experience teaching English directly to the students. Loughran, Brown and Doecke found that one of the reasons that these teachers found it difficult to use the knowledge gained in their teacher education program was the differences between the practices they had been taught in that program and the practices of classroom teaching [9]. Therefore, pre-service teacher often encounters barriers, especially in teaching English and barrier at the first time teaching in the classroom. The barriers are often found during teaching practicum activity. Pertaining to those reasons mentioned above, this research aims to investigate kinds of barrier which faced by English pre-service teachers in Sorong as well as their alternatives to cope with such barriers during their teaching practicum.

**II. RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN**

*A. Research Design*

This research refers to qualitative with using descriptive case study method that aims to investigate barriers on teaching English as Foreign Language by Pre-service teacher. This chapter deals with research method and design, population and sample, research procedure, research instrument, and data analysis.

*B. Research Site and Participants*

As a part of larger study which was to describe and understand the kinds of barriers on teaching English as foreign language and the alternatives they take to cope with such barriers, this paper was to report some findings from the qualitative data either from questionnaire or interview. The participants involved in this study were 10 pre-service teachers in English Education Program of Sorong Muhammadiyah University.

*C. Data Collection and Analysis*

To collect data, the researcher used a questionnaire containing twenty items in which items 1-10 are showing the barriers on teaching English and item eleven until twenty are alternatives taken by pre-service teachers to overcome the barriers. The data obtained from the questionnaire was then triangulated with the interview data.

To analyses the data, firstly, the data from the questionnaire was tabulated into percentile scale by using formula [10]:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

In which:

P: Percentage

F: The cumulative frequency

N: Total number of subjects

Secondly, the collected data from questionnaire was analyzed descriptively and enriched by interview.

**III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

*A. Findings*

This study was intended to report kinds of barriers which faced by English pre-service teachers in Sorong and the alternatives they take to cope with such barriers during teaching practicum.

The researcher did the collection of data through questionnaires which is dealt with result of investigation toward barriers on teaching English as foreign language and alternative ways to overcome them by pre-service teachers. The following table shows the barriers in teaching EFL classroom.

**TABLE I. BARRIERS ON TEACHING EFL CLASSROOM**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	8	80
2	8	80
3	8	80
4	8	80
5	9	90
6	8	80
7	8	80
8	8	80
9	9	90
10	8	80

Table 1 illustrates those 10 items in questionnaires represent a number of barriers pre-service teachers encountered on teaching English as foreign language. Those barriers are such as:

- Feeling nervous in teaching English for the first time
- Feeling lack self-confidence when appeared to teach in front of the class
- Feeling anxious in speaking English
- Not fluent in speaking English
- Less motivated to teach English because their English skills are still less.
- Feeling anxious if students comment about the instructional materials, they taught
- Fear for being not understood by the students while teaching EFL classroom.
- Feeling spiritless in teaching EFL because of unwell-prepared learning equipment.
- Feeling a bit anxious in teaching English for the first time.
- Difficult to teach a large EFL classroom

Along with the exposure of such barriers, pre-service teachers had also considered some alternatives to take into granted and to cope with those barriers.

**TABLE II. ALTERNATIVES IN COPING WITH BARRIERS ON TEACHING EFL CLASSROOM**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
11	7	70
12	10	100
13	8	80
14	7	70
15	9	90
16	10	100
17	9	90
18	9	90
19	8	80
20	8	80

Table 2 implies that 10 items in questionnaires represent amounted of alternative ways in overcoming barriers. Those alternative ways are such as:

- Practice to speak with friends to increase English speaking ability.
- Listen to English songs to improve English listening skill.
- The availability of In focus/LCD is really supporting English learning process
- Reading story books, articles, and even English novels to improve reading skill.
- Join an English course to increase English skills.
- Writing free composition frequently and translating some texts from Indonesian to English
- Preparing teaching media which is relevant with instructional materials
- To start English learning process, they have prepared lesson planning
- To create a pleasing atmosphere for learning English, so that they use amount of learning methods as Role playing, Problem Based Learning, Picture and Picture, Pair Check, Group Investigation, Complete Sentence, etc.
- Watching movie and English news frequently to enhance pronunciation skill.

#### B. Discussion

As mentioned in introduction section, this research aims to investigate the barriers on teaching EFL during pre-service teachers' teaching practicum and the alternatives they take to overcome such barriers, the researcher has obtained the results of the analysis of data by using descriptive statistic. Through data processing by using statistical analysis that the researcher obtained the percentage of the number of pre-service teachers who found the barriers on teaching English in schools along with the alternative ways of the barriers on teaching English by pre-service teacher.

*1) Barriers on teaching EFL classroom:* Based on the table (1) on the finding above, it is essential to state that 10 of English pre-service teacher who undertook teaching practicum in senior high schools who encountered barriers on teaching English was about 82% of whole total of English pre-service teacher of Senior High Schools. The barriers derived from both technical (real situation at school) and non-technical factors (pre-service teachers' psychological situation).

These barriers as mental barriers include feeling nervous when he or she taught English for the first time, feeling less confident when performing teaching the class, anxiety speaks English, not fluent in English, feeling less motivated to teach English because they feel English skills were still less, feeling anxious if there are students who commented on the material they taught.

Regarding those cases above which affected their mental condition, in this term, we are dealing with affective factors proposed by Dulay and Burt, and Krashen in Second Language Acquisition Study (SLA) which are linked to anxiety,

motivation, self-confidence, and attitude. Those conditions can influence a few people that they feel not confident toward their abilities [11,12].

Beside the psychological barriers, pre-service teachers also face some difficulties in teaching EFL classroom due to the students' low motivation in learning English that influence them in responding the teacher's questions, most of the students' prior knowledge in English also contributed to teaching and learning process. Some students who have good ability in English tend to dominate the class, while others who do not tend to keep silent. The other barriers such as the lack of teaching media and the class size also became the problems.

*2) Alternatives to cope with barriers on teaching EFL classroom:* Based on the table (2) above, it is obviously to state that each item served alternative ways to overcome such barriers by English pre-service teacher.

The alternatives pre-service teachers take into granted to overcome such barriers vary according to kinds of skill being taught. The availability of teaching media, such as InFocus or the LCD, picture, English reading and storybooks, articles and novels in English reveal the solution to improve English skills. Joining an English course, practicing essay writing freely and translate a text/stories from Indonesian into English with the aim of improving the writing skills, preparing appropriate teaching media, preparing lesson plan, using the number of teaching methods such as role playing, Problem Based Learning, Picture and Picture, check Pair, Group Investigation, completing sentence and other interesting teaching methods to make learning English fun, watching western movies, English TV programs are such the alternatives that they can take in order to overcome the barriers during their teaching practicum.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

As the persons in charge to lead pre-service teachers in teaching practicum, the involvement of experienced teachers plays a pivotal role. The barriers in teaching EFL classroom might differ in accordance with which schools they are assigned, along with its infrastructure and students characteristics.

However, empowering pre-service teachers' cognitive and pedagogical as well as affective skills should be prioritized through time and time, which in turn will help them in transferring to the learners what they have learnt. Once these skills are mastered, whatever the barrier are, pre-subservice teachers have been steady to cope with.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Vick, M. "It's a difficult matter: Historical perspectives on the enduring problem of the practicum in teacher preparation". *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, vol. 34, pp. 181-198, 2006.
- [2] Darling-Hammond, L. *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006.
- [3] Furlong, J. and Maynard, T. *Mentoring students teachers: the growth of professional knowledge*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- [4] Richards, J., and Hino, N. *Training ESOL teachers: The need for needs assessment*. In J. Alatis, H. Stern & P. Stevens (Eds.) *Applied*

- Linguistics and the Preparation of Second Language Teachers. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1983.
- [5] Hedgcock, J. "Evaluating the knowledge base in teacher education". Paper presented on April 1, 2005 at annual TESOL conference, San Antonio, Texas, USA, 2005.
- [6] Azeem, M.I. "Problems of pre-service teacher during teaching practicum: Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) Education Department, Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan". Academic Research International. Volume 1, Issue 2, 2011.
- [7] Adams, and Terry R. Overcoming barriers to teaching action-based environmental education: A multiple case study of teachers in the public school classroom. Western Kentucky University, 2013.
- [8] Widodo, H.P. and Zacharias, N.T. Recent issues in English language education: Challenges and directions. UNS Press, 2014.
- [9] Loughran, J., Brown, J., and Doecke, B. "Continuities and discontinuities: The transition from pre-service to first-year teaching". *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, vol. 7(1), pp. 7-23, 2001.
- [10] Hatch, E., and Farhady, H. *Research design and statistics for applied linguistics*, 1982.
- [11] Dulay, H., and Burt, H. Remarks on creativity in language acquisition. In M. Burt, H. Dulay & M. Finocchiaro (eds) *Viewpoints on English as a Second Language*. New York: Regents, 1977.
- [12] Krashen, S. *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981.