INVESTIGATING STUDENT TEACHERS’ CONCERNS DURING TEACHING PRACTICUM: AN ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL REFLECTIONS

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan

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A. Introduction

In teacher education program, teaching practicum is seen as the most essential part (Farell, 2003; Gan, 2013; Tuli & File, 2009). This is a stage where someone could develop their knowledge, understanding and skills about teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). As stated by Volante (2006), teaching practicum allows a chance for student teachers to link their theories about teaching to the real practice. Besides, a study from Slick (1998) pointed out that the evidence in teaching practicum is beneficial because of the natural experience that student teachers obtain. Therefore, the obtaining experiences in teaching practicum would be important for their professional development as a teacher (Gan, 2013; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012).

In spite of the profound benefits of teaching practicum, studies have found that teaching practicum is perceived negatively by some student teachers (Kyriacou & Stephen, 1999). In this regard, some researchers also referred teaching practicum as a “nerve wrecking” (Jusoh, 2011, p.866) or “stress-generating” (Çelik, 2008, p. 97) experiences for student teachers. Moreover, Crookes’ (2003) study revealed that although practicum plays important roles in teacher education program, it has not been given attention as it should have.

These findings might imply that there are a lot needs to do in order to make teaching practicum enjoyable and less-frustrating experience knowing that it is the most critical period in teaching (Jusoh, 2011). In that case, one way to reduce those frustrating experiences during practicum is by examining student teachers’ concerns (Çelik, 2008). By investigating the concerns, it is expected that we can prevent the potential problems from happening in the future and also obtain the optimal benefits of teaching practicum (Goh & Matthews, 2011).
In my context of the study, there are still limited investigations about student teachers’ concerns during practicum period. Previously, Mambu’s (2014) inquiry found a problem experienced by his participant (a student teacher of ELE program in Faculty of Language and Literature at Satya Wacana Christian University) when dealing with her mentor teachers. In the same way, Ragawanti (2005) used this context of the study to examine the concerns of student teachers regarding to their classroom management skills. Unfortunately, these studies have not specifically addressed other concerns such as personal concern, lesson planning concern, communication concern, etc.

Therefore, I am interested to learn more about several concerns experienced by the student teachers in English Language Education (ELE) Program in Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL) at Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU). This study aims to answer ‘What are the concerns of student teachers at the ELE Program at SWCU during their practicum?’.

Hopefully, the findings of this study will be useful to bridge the knowledge gap in EFL context, especially in this context of the study. Besides, the results will help ELE Program in FLL at SWCU improve the understanding of student teachers’ concerns and also provide support for student teachers to deal with stressful experience in teaching so that the practicum can be beneficial as much as possible.

B. Literature Review

According to Merriam Webster’s Dictionary, the word “practicum” is defined as ‘a study designed especially for preparation of teachers that involves the supervised practical application of previously studied theory.’ In addition, Richards and Crookes (1998) highlighted that teaching practicum is a compulsory course for student teachers’ professional development. The
necessity of this course seems logical since it can serve as a medium for student teachers to link their theories about teaching to the real practice (Volante, 2006).

During teaching practicum, student teachers are responsible for several tasks. Johnson and Deprin (1971 as cited in Azeem, 2011) enumerated several tasks which should be accomplished by student teachers:

- Observing the teaching procedures followed by the cooperating teacher, taking note of the general routine.
- Becoming familiar with available instructional materials.
- Making a special effort to become acquainted with pupil’s learning.
- Identifying areas in which plans can be made for immediate participation with individual or small groups.
- Acquiring background information on the pupils with whom they will be working.
- Attaining an understanding of school situation, the school program, physical surrounding and facilities and the responsibilities of the teacher to the school, community and profession.
- Obtaining experience in performing satisfactorily the routine tasks, which are normally the responsibilities of classroom teacher.
- Engaging in a wide range of professional activities like using available instructional media, arranging bulletin board, classroom and management, keeping attendance register, etc.
- Making daily plans and unit plans. (p. 312)

Furthermore, some researchers have been investigating the benefits of teaching practicum to student teachers. Some of them are:
To offer a chance for novice teachers to apply their theories into practice (Akbar, 2002; Volante, 2006).

To build up a deeper understanding of educational principles and methodologies in teaching and see its implications for learning (Akbar, 2002; Barry & King, 2002).

To develop personal teaching style and discover own strength and weaknesses (Akbar, 2002; Richards & Crookes, 1988)

To provide the future teacher with practical experience in school to overcome the problems of discipline and enable him/her to develop method of control (Akbar, 2002).

To provide opportunities to observe professional teachers (Richards & Crookes, 1988).

Above all, one agreed idea upon teaching practicum is that teaching practicum plays major roles of the professional education and development of pre-service teachers before they experience teaching in actual teaching profession (Çelik, 2008, Jusoh, 2011). Since the practicum serves as an important part in someone’s teaching professional development, it is necessary to identify “stress-generating aspects” of the practicum and minimize those aspects (Çelik, 2008). By understanding those aspects, student teachers will be helped navigate to the right direction to reduce the stress and improve their success so that the benefits of practicum could be maximized (Çelik, 2008; Goh & Matthews, 2011). Basically, the effectiveness of teacher education is important to provide effective and meaningful experiences for future English language teachers (Kabilan, 2007). In this respect, several studies have discovered findings about student teachers’ concerns that can improve and enrich the effectiveness of teacher education program.

Recently, some studies have been investigating the student teachers’ concern during their teaching practicum. In Çelik’s study (2008, p.100), there were mentioned several student teachers’ concern:
• Personal concern (i.e., the student teachers’ own concerns);
• Communication-centered concerns (i.e., the concerns related to communication with supervisor, principal/vice principal, class teachers and their students);
• Evaluation-based concerns (i.e., the concerns related to supervisor or mentor teacher’s evaluation);
• External concerns (i.e., the concerns due to external factors such as parents or mentor teachers’ high expectations, technical problems, peer teacher observation, etc.);
• Concerns for lesson preparation (i.e., the concerns related to planning of lesson activities);
• Teaching-related concern (i.e., the concerns related to in-class teaching experiences).

Likewise, Goh and Matthews (2011) also discovered four types of student teachers’ concern: classroom management and student discipline, institutional and personal adjustment, classroom teaching, and student learning. In addition, another study conducted by Youn (2000) found that beginning teachers commonly face the problems in terms of classroom discipline, motivating students, organization of class work, and insufficient teaching materials. Ong, Ros, Alian, Sharnti and Ho (2004) also found that during teaching practicum, the student teachers have to struggle for supervision, workload other than teaching pedagogical and content knowledge. Besides, in Feiman-Nemser’s study (2001), the student teachers are also burdened by a variety of classroom realities and students’ high expectation for being helpful during learning process.

In order to understand those concerns faced by student teachers, one way which is proposed by many researchers recently is by including reflective practice in teaching practicum (Goh & Matthews, 2011). As defined by Richards and Lockhart (1997), reflective practice refers to an approach in which “teachers and student teachers collect data about teaching, examine
their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching” (p. 1). In the same way, Dewey (1933 as cited in Goh and Matthews, 2011) explained that reflective thinking is a conscious self-examination process to recognize the events that have occurred and give meaning to feelings, thought, and action by questioning motives and attitudes.

As proposed by Loughran (1996), those experiences and thought from reflective thinking can be recorded by using reflective journals. Loughran (1996) pointed out that by writing reflective journals, student teachers will reflect on and learn from their experiences, actions and events in teaching. The reflective journal is also believed to assist someone in reflecting on issues in teaching that student teachers would not usually be aware of (Hall & Bowman, 1989). In Maarof’s (2007) study, it was explained that some researchers use the term “reflective journal” interchangeably with learning logs, diaries, dialogue journal or personal narratives. Additionally, Maarof (2007) stated that one agreed characteristic of reflective journal is that it can allow student teachers to think critically and deeply about what they have done in teaching and what corrective steps they need to take to improve teaching practice.

C. **The Study**

1. **Research Question**

‘What are the concerns of student teachers at ELE Program at Satya Wacana Christian University during teaching practicum?’

2. **Context of The Study**

This qualitative study took place in Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL) at Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU). Specifically, the study was conducted in the
English Language Education (ELE) program. This department was chosen because it has the teaching practicum program which requires student teachers to reflect their teaching experience through individual reflection (reflective journal).

3. Participants

The participants were 40 student teachers from ELE program who had recently taken teaching practicum in the first academic year 2015/2016. Those participants were assured that the results would be kept strictly confidential. Pseudonyms were used to preserve anonymity. Furthermore, this kind of sampling was categorized as purposive sampling because the participants were selected to represent each school which cooperated with the Faculty of Language and Literature (FLL) at Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU).

4. Data Collection Instrument

A content analysis technique was developed in this study through student teachers’ reflective journal during their teaching practicum. In ELE program at Satya Wacana Christian University, the reflective journal was referred to as “individual reflection.” Basically, reflective journal and individual reflection have the same characteristic in that both allow someone to think critically and deeply about what they have done in teaching and what corrective steps they need to take to improve teaching practice (Maarof, 2007). In individual reflection, student teachers were required to write down their thoughts and feelings, problems, fears and worries about teaching and also their corrective steps that need to be taken in the next teaching.
5. Data Collection Procedure

Data were obtained by collecting student teachers’ individual reflections in the first semester academic year 2015/2016. Forty student teachers were contacted and asked to share their individual reflections for the purpose of data collection. The individual reflections were preferred to be soft file and sent through E-mail or Facebook.

6. Data Analysis Procedure

This study purposively adapted and developed Goh and Matthews’ (2011) data analysis procedure. One major reason for adapting and developing Goh and Matthews’ (2011) study is because of the similarities to the topic. Besides, the steps in their study were explained clearly. Thus, the steps were easy to follow.

The first step is by re-reading and using “free” and “open” method to obtain common themes which emerge from student teachers’ challenges during their teaching practicum. The second step is conducting more careful analysis where each text was compared using an iterative reading to preserve consistency in categorizing the findings into certain themes. Next step is re-reading each finding to obtain general picture that had been documented by the participants. The last step is dividing those themes into several sub-themes (i.e., sources of concerns).

In addition, to retain the originality of the sources, this study did not correct all mechanical errors which were done by the participants. The majority of the findings were quoted as it were in individual reflections. Hence, there will be some mechanical errors found in the findings.
D. Findings and Discussion

This study set out with the aim of investigating concerns experienced by student teachers of ELE program, Faculty of Language at Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga during teaching practicum. The study employed five main themes which were adapted and developed from Celik’s (2008) study. These themes are: teaching related concern, personal concern, lesson-planning concern, external concern, and communication concern.

FIGURE 1
Student Teachers’ Concerns

[Diagram showing the distribution of concerns: Teaching related 72%, Personal 13%, Lesson Planning 5%, External 4%, Communication 6%]
As indicated from Figure 1, teaching-related concerns came as the most articulated concern expressed by participants. This result may confirm the findings in the previous study that a lot of student teachers perceived complexities of establishing and managing classroom as the most difficult and worrisome aspect in their first year of teaching (Ragawanti, 2015). As shown in individual reflections, most participants acknowledged that they were not really prepared to face these responsibilities. Therefore, it is logical that teaching-related concerns were stated frequently in their reflections. Another possible explanation for this might be that the participants had to accomplish compelling tasks to integrate the understanding and knowledge of teaching from theoretical into practical viewpoints. (Goh & Matthews, 2011). In other words, some participants seemed worried about their way to execute the knowledge in teaching into practical action in the real classroom.

In order to develop more in-depth discussion, this teaching-related concern and other concerns are elaborated in the following sections. These concerns are discussed in five sections which are teaching-related concern, personal concern, lesson-planning concern, external concern, and communication concern.

1. Teaching-Related Concern

As mentioned in the literature review section above, a teaching-related concern is derived from many factors which bothered the participants during in-class
teaching. Those factors might be varied ranging from the participants’ classroom management skills, English proficiency, lesson delivery skills, etc.

Like what is shown in Table 1, it is apparent that as many as five sub-themes were generated within this theme. These sub-themes are the triggering factors of teaching–related concerns, such as classroom management and enforcing discipline, promoting an engaging teaching and learning process, using English as a medium of instruction, dealing with students with learning difficulties, and delivering the lesson.

The first sub-theme theme within teaching-related concern is ‘classroom management and enforcing discipline’. Based on individual reflections, managing a class and imposing student discipline were perceived as a compelling task for participants. As experienced by Participant 9 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teaching-related concern</td>
<td>Classroom management and enforcing discipline</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting an engaging teaching and learning process.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using English as a medium of instruction.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dealing with students’ learning difficulties</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delivering the lesson.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This may sounds exaggerating but they didn’t pay any attention to us, as the student-teachers. Ibu Ani [pseudonym] was not there with us in the first 75 minutes. The students did everything they loved to do without considering our presence such as playing playstation in the class, shouting, wandering around the class, playing with their gadgets, eating, and even some of them were out of the class. (Participant 9)

Likewise, Participant 33 wrote her difficulties in imposing discipline in classroom.

...It happened in my last teaching when there are two students fighting each other, then one of the students throwing his books everywhere. I tried to warn him at first, but he was still ignored my warning. Then, I picked his stick reward and told him to go to the office room to alert him to stop throwing his belongings.... (Participant 33)

These findings might occur by the reason that some participants got shocked of variety of students’ problematic behavior. That is to say that in the midst of their shocking circumstances, they did not know how to respond that problematic behaviors (Peters, 2012). The most obvious example of that problematic behavior is students’ disruptive manner which made it difficult for the participants difficult to maintain a favorable classroom situation. This finding supports the finding from Faizah (2008) where all of her participants had a problem in controlling the class and implementing discipline.

Secondly, some participants were also concerned about their skills to promote engaging teaching and learning process. Based on some participants’ explanations, this concern has something to do with their capacity to provide appropriate materials according to students’ competency level. For example, Participants 2 and 19 stated:

Another problematic task to do as a teacher, for me, was to design the activities that will be compatible for different classroom circumstances. In my opinion, the activities should be suitable to fulfil the teaching objectives, as well as to make the students engage to the learning process. (Participant 2)

This is very challenging to find a material that appropriate with students’ competence. It would be better if we find the material which is not so difficult for them. (Participant 19)

In this regard, it is clear that this concern appeared due to participants’ incapability to project and design the appropriate materials in accordance to their students’ competency level. If
the material is too difficult or even too easy, the more learning experience possibly becomes unpleasant for students (Hirvonen, 2010). Therefore, we can see the link that if this condition occurs there might be a little chance for the participants and their students to develop engaging classroom atmosphere.

The third biggest cause of concerns in teaching-related concern is the use of English as a medium of instruction. The majority of the participants revealed that using full English during their teaching process has led them to stress.

It was fine to use English too often, but I had to ensure that my students understood with what I was talking about. I often used English many times and forgot to translate in Indonesia. The students seemed [to be] confused to respond my instruction. (Participant 20)

This concern presumably appeared when student teachers were required by mentor teachers or supervisor to use English most of the time but they were not able to do that because of inadequate competencies of their students. Besides, this study also found that the participants’ concern in terms of using English as medium of instruction was also generated by their incapability to meet the high standards which have been set by the school.

They [students] must speak English every day since grade one, even they should speak English outside the class with their friends. It made them use English habitually. If I did some mispronunciations, they will not understand what I said and they will not obey my class rule. (Participant 33)

Correspondingly, this finding accords with Goh & Matthews’ (2011) study which stated that English as a medium of instruction caused the worries to student teachers during practicum. In this case, inadequate competencies of students and high standard set by school had resulted in the participants’ stress.

The fourth sub-theme is dealing with students’ learning difficulties. Some participants confessed that assisting their students to understand certain subject matters had required them to
give extra efforts in teaching. Occasionally, this situation made it difficult for them to achieve learning objectives because they only focused on one subject matter and neglected the others.

For instance, Participant 21 said:

…when I taught about grammar especially we discussed to be, the students did not understand and some students still confused to determine which the sentence included in positive sentence, negative sentence, or interrogative sentence. So, I taught them till they understood the material and it made my teaching not appropriate with my lesson plan.(Participant 21)

Another interesting finding in dealing with student learning difficulties was that the problem might be caused by their experiences of encountering mixed-ability class. As stated Participant 17 put it:

The issues or the problem that I got in that class is when some of my students have already mastered the materials and some don’t. In this case my students who have already mastered the materials always finish the exercise given by the teacher faster than the others. They also catch all of my explanation easily rather than the other.(Participant 17)

The last finding under the umbrella of teacher-related concern is delivering the lesson. Some participants mentioned some lesson delivery problems ranging from speaking pace, volume, clarity and etc.

I also admit that my voice [speaking pace] is too fast; I had a comment from my mentor teacher that I have to pay attention to it, so the students can understand and follow the material. (Participant 6)

Next is related to the volume of my voice, even I try so hard and I have feel like I am yelling, somehow my mentor teacher said that it is too soft.(Participant 11)

Not only that, but also I think my explanation was not in depth, because my teacher who asses me told that I should clarify the structure of the discussion text more. I should have describe it longer, simpler, and easier to remember.(Participant 13)

Above all, a number of participants tend to believe that lesson delivery is one important aspect during teaching process. This finding is also found in Çelik’s (2008) study. He stated that some of the participants felt worried about lesson delivery. In this regard, having not enough ability to deliver the lesson would be a catastrophe for the students.
2. Personal Concern

TABLE 2  
*Personal concern*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Sub-theme</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal concern</td>
<td>Adjustment to the role as teacher</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal concern</td>
<td>Fear of failing the practicum</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

This following section discusses participants’ concern which arouse from their private opinions about themselves as a student teacher. Those opinions were comprehensively stated and identified as their concerns towards adjustment of the role as teacher and fear of failing the practicum.

It is apparent from the Table 2 that adjustment of the role as teacher was mentioned more frequently than fear of failing the practicum. It seems that the participants were more bothered once they had to adjust with schools’ settings. One example of that adjustment was coping with many teachers’ responsibilities simultaneously. This situation was seen burdening for them. One supporting fact was found in Participant 7’s reflective journal which stated that:

> Being a teacher is not a simple matter. We have to design appropriate and interesting activities, provide exercises, teach the students, and manage the classroom. It is a combination of various skills. That’s why I found it difficult to fulfill all of those responsibility and skills and finally realize that being a teacher is more than just standing in front of the class and give instructions or assignments… (Participant 7)

This concern was normally generated by a process where participants had to deal with a transition from being students to being teachers (Goh and Matthews, 2011). Participants had to encounter the shocking experience the first time they got in touch with all realities in school.
The second cause of personal concern is fear of failing the practicum. This kind of state mostly happened prior to practicum. The participants acknowledged that this fear might occur when they were not able to figure out the schools’ setting. As a result, they created their own perceptions about the schools and then commonly those perceptions turned out to be negative judgments about their teaching practicum.

When I came to the school at the first time, I have to adapt with the school’s environment, with the teachers, staffs, and the students there. First I am afraid and I thought it will be difficult to adapt with that situation because I heard many bad things about this school from some of my friends. (Participant 5)

This shows that the negative presumptions somehow stir up the feeling of inferiority before they actually had their teaching experience. This condition corroborates Pinder (2008) who found that some of his participants had to encounter a number of negative preconceptions prior to the practicum.

3. Lesson-Planning Concern

Next, in terms of lesson planning, the participants’ uttered their concerns which were originated from their worries to prepare plans for their teaching performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Sub Theme</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lesson plan concern</td>
<td>composing lesson plans</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

This kind of concern includes preparation of classroom activities, provision needed equipment for the lesson, time management, etc. However, interestingly, this study found that composing lesson plans was seen relatively burdening for the participants. For instance, as
reflected by Participant 33: “However, I am still made some mistakes in making lesson plan, [it is] because the lesson plan should be detailed…” (Participant 33).

Participant 33 explained that composing lesson plan was a meticulous process. This explanation is probably sensible since the participants had to write down every single need in their plan for one teaching performance. Moreover this issue may seem more burdening for certain participants knowing that they were asked to teach more than what have been regulated by the department. For example, Participant 31 confessed that: “I was teaching 17 times…” This condition implied that they were also asked to write many lesson plans in somewhat short periods. Thus, it is normal that this exhausted process might lead to stress to some participants (Çelik’s, 2008).

In terms of lesson plan form, one surprising finding showed that lesson plans which they had learned in university somehow were different from the schools’ custom. This inevitably triggered participants’ worries towards lesson plan. Particularly, this matter bothered Participant 5 as she wrote in her individual reflection.

When I do lesson planning I had some difficulties because [the] lesson plan that I learned in my teaching classes is different with the one which used in this school. Besides, when I made lesson plan for the assignment it used English, but the lesson plan that I should make in [my] teaching practicum were using Bahasa Indonesia, and I think it made me confuse[d] with the wording …. (Participant 5)

4. External Concern

The fourth concern which was revealed by the participants is external concern. External concern itself was resulted from factors beyond participants’ control. Particularly, fulfilling high expectation of mentor teachers was seen as an influential factor to this concern (see Table 4).
Several participants admitted that their concern came from mentor teachers’ expectations to do several things beyond participants’ capacity. For instance, Participant 14 felt burdened when her mentor teacher enforced her and her friends to spend some money to make a video.

### TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Sub-theme</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>External concern</td>
<td>fulfilling high expectation of mentor teachers</td>
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The mentor teachers ask too many things from us. They ask us to make a video which covers English course materials and involve them and their students in the video. Instead of helping us on budgeting and running the shooting or script writing, they just “always” asking more and more and more. (Participant 14)

The findings showed that the participants were required physically and sometimes financially to fulfill certain people’s expectations. Moreover, it somewhat burdening for the participants since this mentor teacher’s command was not compulsory tasks assigned by the department. Thus, it seems logical that this situation triggers participants’ concern. With regard to this, mentioned finding confirms Goh and Matthews’ (2011) finding which showed that their participants were also concerned about high expectation of school-based mentor teacher.

### 5. Communication Concern

In terms of communication, the participants pointed out two factors which contribute to their communication concerns. These factors are establishing rapport with students and communicating with, and relating to, the mentor teachers.
The first one is establishing rapport with my students. One proof can be found in Participant 34’s individual reflection. She admitted that she had done her best to build good relationship with her students. However, it seems that the students were difficult to approach.

However, I tried another way to be close to the students. When they were doing an exercise, I turned around the class and tried to create a communication with them in order to know their interests. Unfortunately, the class was still noisy and some students were playing with their gadgets. (Participant 34)

In this regard, Çakmak’s (2008) study shares the same finding with this study. In his study, he discovered that establishing communication with students can be deemed as demanding tasks for student teachers.

Besides, a number of participants also expressed their worries to communicate with and to mentor teacher. Occasionally, ineffective communication with their mentor teachers sparked off participants’ problem during teaching practicum. In Participants 14’s reflection, it might be inferred that the failure of building effective communication with mentor teachers somehow could ignite certain confusion among student teachers during practicum.

[There] are some mentor-teachers’ aspects which influence our efforts and works during two-month teaching practicum. Actually, there are three mentor teachers in the school, but each of them has different goals and expectation, and even different standard for the student-teachers. It might cause confusion among the student-teachers. (Participant 14)
This last source of concern confirms Jusoh’s (2011) finding about student teachers’ concern which was caused by communication with their mentor teachers. In his study, he explained that this condition might appear when the communication between mentor teachers and student teachers was not maintained effectively.

E. Conclusion

This study has been undertaken to investigate the concerns experienced by student teachers of ELE program Faculty of Language and Literature at Satya Wacana Christian University. In order to recognize the student teachers’ concerns, participants’ reflective journals were collected and analyzed. The results of this investigation showed that the participants indicated five main concerns during teaching practicum. Those concerns were teaching related concern, personal concern, lesson-planning concern, external concern and communication concern. In this regard, teaching related concern was the most frequent concern stated by the participants.

Furthermore, the findings of this study have a number of important implications for student teachers, mentor teachers, supervisor and department to make better practicum in the future. Firstly, for the student teachers, it is necessary for them to prepare themselves physically, mentally and financially before teaching practicum. This should be understood because teaching practicum is not a process which merely requires student teachers’ knowledge. Beyond that, mental and sometimes financial matters serve as influential factors in student teachers’ successful experience in practicum. Secondly, for mentor teachers and supervisors, helping the student teachers to improve better communication with them is somehow crucial. This is intended for making student teachers feel comfortable to share any problem related to practicum. The last implication is for the department to examine the student teachers’ concerns prior to
practicum. In other words, it is hoped that this initial investigation can help student teachers to address potential problems which may arise during teaching practicum.

After all, a number of important limitations need to be considered. First, the findings in this study are very contextual. They cannot be generalized to other contexts. Moreover, the instrument used individual reflection provided a space for the participants to write everything about their experience in teaching practicum. Thus, sometimes it was difficult for me to recognize right away their concerns which appeared in their individual reflections. Besides, the current study has only examined the student teachers’ concerns without further investigation about the strategies to encounter any potential problems. Therefore, it is recommended that further research should address student teachers’ strategies to prevent or overcome several problems during teaching practicum. Further investigation in this field regarding the strategies would be of great help in improving teaching practicum program in the future.

F. Acknowledgement

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to:

1. Allah SWT for His abundant blessings given to me. Only by His gracefulness and mercy, I had a chance to learn a lot of things and obtain my bachelor’s degree in this university.

2. My family, especially to my father and mother. I am really thankful to have them to support my study (mentally and financially). Besides, their limitless prayers for my success are so encouraging for me to pursue better future career.

3. Ibu Victoria Usadya Palupi, M.A-ELT (my thesis supervisor) and Bapak Joseph Ernest Mambu, Ph.D. (my thesis examiner), for their guidance throughout my thesis completion. Their insightful ideas, comments, and suggestions had helped me a lot.
4. Ibu Anita Kurniawati, M.Hum (My academic advisor) for her enlightening directions during 4 years of study. I also would express my sincere indebtedness to Ibu Debora Tri Ragawanti, M.A.-ELT for her assistance during my data collection. My gratefulness is also addressed to Bapak Yustinus Calvin Gai Mali, M.Hum upon his willingness to share his experience in producing better research writing.

5. Virna Margetan for becoming my best partner during college life and even my ‘third reader’ of my thesis writing. Thank you for your countless inspiring examples given to me. It unconsciously motivates me to be a better person.

6. Jojo ‘oppa’, Bang Rendi, Mario, Amel, Cik Grace, Ulfa, and Sandra for their happiness shared to me. They indeed have helped me to ease my difficulties in very entertaining ways.

7. All of Twelvers family members. Thank you for all memorable experience in this four-year-meeting. I hope that we will meet again and see each other on top!

8. Everyone who has not been mentioned in this page. Thank you for all your supports and encouragements.

G. References


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