

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Teaching practicum or practical is an important component of becoming a teacher. It provides experiences to pre-service teachers in the actual teaching and learning environment. During teaching practice, a pre-service teacher is allowed to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession (Msangya et al., 2016). In most cases, pre-service teachers undertake their teaching practicum in a local setting or home country. However, many educational institutions are beginning to initiate networking and collaborations with institutions from other countries to provide a platform and opportunities for their pre-service teachers to experience learning and engaging in teaching in foreign educational settings and schools. Such an initiative is in the form of an International Teaching Practicum (ITP). ITP is a platform that provides opportunities and experiences for the pre-service teacher to grow both personally and professionally in the teaching profession (Ahmad et al., 2019). This practicum helps the pre-service teachers to apply their teaching skills in the international context.

Two English pre-service teachers from a public university in Indonesia have experienced joining an international teaching practicum which was organized by private schools' partnership association in Southern Thailand. They went to Thailand and were assigned to teach English in a secondary

school for five months. This program required them to plan and conduct the teaching and learning activities. In their teaching-learning activity, they having progress and changes. Two English pre-service teacher changes their beliefs after participating in an international teaching practicum.

Pre-service teacher beliefs play an important role in teaching. Teachers' beliefs affect what they accomplish in their classroom, and their attitudes and guide teachers to adapt their teaching strategies (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017) Beliefs guide pre-service teachers' behavior and inform them to practice by serving as a kind of interpretative framework through which they made sense of what they do in their classrooms (Larenas et al., 2015). Beliefs are the intermediary between what they thought and what they do; between individuals and their performance. Beliefs are anchored on knowledge or what they thought. They exhibit the knowledge that is worthy and has proven itself in action.

Previous research by Debreli (2016) explored teachers' belief changes over nine months using semi-structured interviews and diaries. He found that all pre-service teachers seemed to experience changes in the beliefs they had initially held. These changes, however, occurred in different ways and to differing degrees. When student teachers attempted to apply their initial beliefs in practice, they sometimes exhibited a lack of skill and flexibility in adapting the technique or approach to a given context and to the many complexities that exist in classrooms. For example, realize the difficulty of implementing certain

approaches in the classroom, but instead of removing these beliefs from their repertoire, they elaborate/polish them. Alternatively, when they realize that their initially held beliefs work successfully in practice, these beliefs become confirmed and stronger, indicating a development/change in belief.

This case study research aims to investigate the changes in pre-service teachers' beliefs in an international teaching practicum in Thailand. The result showed the pre-service teachers' belief in teaching practice, including their judgment about teaching approach, teacher roles, and teacher characteristics.

B. Formulation of the Problem

The research question of this study is “What changing beliefs do English pre-service teachers have after participating in the ITP in Thailand?”

C. Operational Definitions

To prevent misconception, the researcher affords some operational definitions interrelated to the study as shown below:

- 1. Pre-service teachers:** the student who trained from higher education institutions to become professional teachers and conducts international teaching practicum in Thailand.
- 2. Pre-service teachers' beliefs change:** two pre-service teachers change personal cognitive and affective judgments about teaching in the classroom resulting in their teaching experience.

3. International Teaching Practicum: a program that provides the pre-service teachers to practice, experience, and immerse themselves as future teachers. This program is conducted to fulfill academic courses. This ITP is implemented in Southern Thailand for five months.

D. Aim of the Research

This research aims to investigate the changing beliefs of English pre-service teachers after participating in the International Teaching Practicum in Thailand for five months.

E. Uses of the Research

1. Theoretical Use

This study will enrich the literature on English pre-service teachers' beliefs in initial teacher education, especially in international teaching.

2. Empirical Use

This study will show an empirical understanding of what pre-service teachers' beliefs changes in international teaching practicum and the contributions of teachers' beliefs in their teaching practice.

3. Practical Use

This study can be used as a reference for pre-service teachers to build and shaped their beliefs to become a teacher.