

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background

Over the past few decades, the International Teaching Practicum programs have taken considerable attention both for the in-service and pre-service teachers in various fields. Kabilan (2013), argued that when it comes to an international teaching practicum, "... teachers and learners have the opportunity to learn from and about each other, and understand the different ideas and philosophies of diverse groups of individuals" (p. 198). Therefore, such opportunities might significantly contribute to extending learning either through a range of new or different experiences in which impacted the sense of initial teachers' identity (Fitzgerald et al., 2017).

To understand the tendency of learning to teach in an international context experience, the representations of border-crossing are certainly required. It is more than simply delivering language materials or curriculum as there are numerous of borders that the language teachers need to deal with including the cognitive, disciplinary and/or socio-cultural (Phelan et al., 1991; Sumadic, 2015). Consequently, those experiences of teaching in an international context might become not only rewarding but also more complex (Assunção Flores, 2017).

Based on the above initiatives and vision in mind, to extend the pre-service teachers' experiences, an English Education Department of a university in Indonesia embarked an international teaching practicum with

some schools located in the south of Thailand, in collaboration with Private School at Special Zone Association of Songkhla, Thailand. This program is an integration of education and instruction, research and community service by students in a pragmatic, broad dimension through an interdisciplinary, comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach. Generally, this initiative is aimed at improving the quality of students' knowledge and skills in order to develop institutions towards world-class institutes through Islamic studies and cross-cultural studies, and establishing bilateral cooperation in the fields of education, social, and culture with countries in the Southeast Asian region. Since Nilsson (2003) in Kabilan (2013) argued that through an internationalized curriculum, increased students mobility and exchange during their tertiary education the students might develop their global perspectives, and other related critical knowledge and skills.

Many previous researchers discussed the border-crossing existed among the science teachers that revealed every school institution has their own varieties of contextual factors and pressures influencing and impacting what they do in the science classroom so that "... it is important to grow the awareness of equipping the pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills required to enact culturally-responsive pedagogies" (Fitzgerald, p. 103, 2019). Apart from the focuses in science teaching as an exact science in which provides an absolute answer to the result, there is still limited research discussed the border crossing among the language teaching as an inexact

science, more specifically, the border crossing among the language pre-service teacher in an international context.

In this regard, the researcher seeks to investigate how the pre-service teachers navigate and negotiate their experiences during their International Teaching Practicum (ITP) in Songkhla, Thailand. Furthermore, this research aims to identify and investigate how the recognition of the border-crossing experiences influences the pre-service teachers' professional development as a result of their international teaching practicum. Also, the ways how the pre-service teachers navigate and negotiate their own border-crossing experiences toward their professional development and find ways to further improve the recent practices of teaching practicum that hopefully, it might enhance the teacher education program.

## **2. Formulation of the Problems**

The pre-service teachers' experience of border-crossing is captured in the research questions:

- 2.1 What are the border-crossing experiences of Indonesian pre-service teachers' teaching English in an International Teaching Practicum (ITP)?
- 2.2 How do those borders influence the pre-service teachers' professional development?

## **3. Operational Definitions**

- 3.1 Border-crossing : A metaphor used to describe the struggle and issues faced by the one of Indonesian universities English education pre-service

teachers during their international teaching practicum in Thailand, as: contextual, pedagogical, cultural and behavioral border-crossing.

- 3.2 Pre-service teachers : Two students of English Education Department of Indonesian University who took part in an international teaching practicum in Thailand, as period of guided and supervised teaching.
- 3.3 Professional development : Activities in which the English language pre-service teachers engaged to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching, with a view to improve the teaching and learning process quality during their international teaching practicum including teaching competency, classroom research competency, and self management for professional development.
- 3.4 International teaching practicum : It is such programs to equip future teachers with lived experiences of culturally diverse contexts and classrooms that conducted in Songkhala

Province, Thailand, from May up to October 2019.

#### **4. Aims of the Research**

This current study aims to identify and investigate how the pre-service teachers navigate and negotiate their border-crossing experiences during the international teaching practicum and there will be an opportunity to explore in which how those experiences influence their professional development as the initial teachers.

#### **5. Uses of the Research**

##### 5.1 Theoretical

This research aims to identify the pre-service teachers' professional development experiences through the border-crossing frame and find ways to further improve the current practices of teaching practicum and hopefully, it might enhance the teacher education programme.

##### 5.2 Empirical

This research will give empirical inside how the teachers' professional development is developed through the lense of border-crossing recognition so that they gain a better professional development in ELT context.

##### 5.3 Practical

Practically, this research will serve the readers an insight on how the border-crossing recognition influences the pre-service teacher professional development in ELT context.