

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Pre-service teachers are individuals who are training to become teachers in a school. In teaching practicum, pre-service teachers faced challenges in the teaching process. According to Khalifa et al. (2016), common issues in the classroom that pre-service teachers face when teaching English as a foreign language include students who become overly dependent on teachers, students who are not ready, students who lack motivation, students who are opposed, students who are constantly silent, bored students, lack attention, and students who disrupt other students. One of the challenges that pre-service teachers can face is students' silence. Zhouyuan (2016) explained that Asian EFL learners have been arguably conveyed as silent and inactive learners. Silence is not merely the absence of sound, but it can also be a result of a lack of courage to express ideas for various reasons. It is indicated by Bosacki (2005, as cited in Hanh, 2020) describes that a common understanding of silence is a lack of audible verbalization and that the concept of silence may be expanded to encompass a student failing to deliver a specific subject matter or to say what is requested. Meanwhile, pre-service teachers often feel it is hard to handle students' silence, especially with a short teaching practice time.

In line with the study, some pre-service teachers have carried out teaching practicum in one of the secondary schools in Tasikmalaya. They taught ninth grade and experienced the phenomenon of students' silence in their class. They found that some of their students remained silent when asked to explain something or respond to pre-service teachers' questions. Due to the short duration of the teaching practicum, which is only about one month, pre-service teachers may not be able to instantly recognize students' behaviors and habits. However, handling students' silence is essential to build an active and effective teaching and learning process. Therefore, a strategies is needed to handle student silence.

The teaching strategies is designed to make the learning process more active. According to David (1976 as cited in Peggy, 2018) a teaching strategy is a plan, a technique, or a set of actions intended to accomplish a certain educational goal. A teacher must understand the material matter and how to turn students into active participants. Li and Jia (2006) stated that the teacher may encourage students to participate more in class by choosing topics that interest students. Additionally, the teacher should learn about their interests and needs. Therefore, using appropriate strategies is important in handling students' silence. Peggy (2018) claims that teaching strategy helps pre-service teachers in the teaching and learning process, achieves learning goals, helps students understand the material, and controls the class.

The study of students' silence has existed in some research. However, the previous research mostly focused on the phenomenon of students' silence in the EFL-speaking classroom (Juniati et al., 2018), silence is gold?: a study on students' silence in EFL classroom (Hanh, 2020), and teacher power use and student silence in an EFL classroom evidence from Indonesia (Bahar et al., 2022). There is no sufficient research specifically on how pre-service teachers strategies to handle students' silence in EFL classrooms. Hence, this study explored how pre-service teachers' strategies to handle silence junior high school students in learning. The researcher hopes this study can helps pre-service teachers to create inclusive and dynamic classroom environments where all students feel comfortable and motivated to participate actively in the learning process.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

The question of the research is, "How are pre-service teachers' strategies to handle students' silence in EFL classrooms?"

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

The researcher provides four definitions related to this study to avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study as follows;

### **1) Pre-Service Teacher**

A pre-service teacher is referred to as a person who is attending a training program or teaching practicum and has not yet fulfilled the prerequisites to become a fully trained or certified teacher.

### **2) Students' Silence**

Students' silence is a nonverbal communicative behavior when a student fails to present a certain subject matter or to communicate what is required throughout the English learning process in the classroom at the junior high school level.

### **3) Teaching Strategies**

The teaching strategies is an arrangement made by pre-service teachers to deal with the students' silence in junior high school English classes.

## **1.4 Aim of the Research**

According to the research question, this research aimed to explore how pre-service teachers' strategies to handle students' silence in EFL classrooms.

## **1.5 Significances of the Research**

### **1) Theoretical Uses**

Theoretically, the result of this study may give valuable information and enrich the knowledge of pre-service teachers specifically focusing on pre-service teachers who experience students' silence phenomenon.

### **2) Practical Uses**

This study provides pre-service teachers who experience students' silence phenomenon with references for using the strategies to handle students' silence in EFL classrooms.

### **3) Empirical Uses**

This research will provide empirical insights into the phenomenon of pre-service who experience students' silence in their classrooms and the strategies to handle it.