

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Peer feedback is currently used as a tool to exchange information to support the learning process. Besides, peer feedback is defined as the use of students as sources of information and interaction with each other so that students take on the roles and responsibilities that are usually taken by a teacher or tutor in the work of other students (Liu and Hansen, 2002). In sociocultural theory, Vygotsky (1978) claims that thoughts develop through the interaction of a person with the world around him. He stressed that learning is not an individual activity; rather it is a cognitive activity that in turn shifts the focus of learning from individuals to interactions in social contexts. Thus, peer feedback helps form peer interactions where it is a process for enhancing students' learning because it allows students to build knowledge through sharing and social interaction with other students.

In the EFL context, an EFL student-teacher is expected to be able to have a good characterization as a teacher. According to Borg (2006), the characterizations of a good teacher tend to contain nations related to the areas of knowledge, skill, and attitudes towards learners. Within these areas, he offers a number of prevalent characteristics of EFL teachers, such as creating interesting classes, good pronunciations offering clear explanations, and speaking good English. But in fact, to achieve that expectation is not easy because it was a first-time experience for the student-teacher to teach. Therefore, the student-teacher needs the peer to give feedback to help the teaching-learning process in teaching practicum. Concrete feedback would help the student-teachers to “visualize their evolving style, clarify what they need to work on, and concretize their own vision of good teaching” (Moody, 2009, p. 163 cited in Ali and Al-Adawi, 2013, p. 25). Therefore, it requires peer feedback to help student-teachers in the teaching-learning process during teaching practicum.

As the researcher has experienced being a student-teacher, the researcher participated in teaching practicum for two months in one of the Junior High Schools in Tasikmalaya. This program required the researcher to plan and do teaching and learning activities. The researcher met several issues related to teaching practicum that were beyond expectation and affected her practical life, such as different perspectives between the researcher and her mentors in teaching, lesson planning, managing the classroom, understanding the students' characteristics, and learning methods. Then, the researcher witnessed that feedback from her colleagues has contributed a lot to help, such as making her as a student-teacher become more confident. Since the researcher witnessed and experienced peer feedback during teaching practicum, the researcher intended to investigate the peer feedback obtained during the teaching process for reflection. Therefore, the researcher can identify her weaknesses or strengths in teaching and decide what plans for the next teaching to make better improvement.

However, peer feedback has many benefits such as in writing class has shown development in students' performance and willingness to be better in writing based on the feedback they received (Huisman, Saab, Driel, & Broek, 2018). When the students read their peer feedback, they reflect, then a process of comparison happens where students learn something from peer's writing and they analyze the feedback, then realize the strengths and weaknesses of their writing. However, in the realm of student-teachers it is still limited. Therefore, this study will explore the benefits of the process of reflection through peer feedback experienced by the researcher as a student-teacher during teaching practicum. In the end, this study contributes to facilitating the student-teachers development regarding their reflection to help their professional betterment.

## 1.2 Research Question

The research question addressed in the present study is: “What are the benefits of the reflection process through peer feedback experienced by the student-teacher during teaching practicum?”

## 1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation of this research, here are the operational definitions of each keyword:

- Student-teacher** : It is an undergraduate student who studies in an Educational Sciences and Teachers’ Training Faculty who should join teaching practicum as one of the course requirements.
- Teaching practicum** : It is a program for the student-teachers from one of the universities in Indonesia which is carried out for two months at a Junior High School in Tasikmalaya.
- Reflection** : It is a process of evaluating student-teacher teaching performance obtained through peer feedback to improve their performance and to help their professional betterment. Which uses the reflection on feedback framework by Cotrell 2003. The reflection consisted of what she felt about the peer feedback, what she thought about peer feedback, and what action she could take for future improvement, especially in the aspect of teaching.
- Peer feedback** : It is a process of sharing knowledge between peers during teaching practicum to discuss and give feedback for the class practices performance.

## 1.4 Aims of the Research

This research aims to explore the benefits of the process of reflection through peer feedback experienced by the student-teacher during teaching practicum programs.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

### **1.5.1 Empirical Contribution**

This study will offer empirical insight into how peer feedback can support the student-teachers reflection to help their professional betterment.

### **1.5.2 Theoretical Contribution**

This study will enrich the literature of reflection through peer feedback in initial teacher education in a teaching practicum context.

### **1.5.3 Practical Contribution**

This study can help the student-teachers to recognize their weaknesses and strengths of their teaching and the way how to make a better future teaching by reflecting through peer feedback.