

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher elaborates the background of the study, the identification of the problem, the research question, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, as well as the outline of the study.

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

Teaching a language has many different features. Teacher does not only teach and pay attention to students' language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but also help, facilitate, and encourage students to have enthusiasm, good attitude, and motivation towards English. Furthermore, teachers have to understand what students learn, how and why such learning influences them, how lessons could be beneficial for them in the future (Derakhshan, 2015). Hence, language teaching requires teachers to teach students to develop both academic and personal abilities.

However, teaching English becomes a crucial issue when it is taught as a foreign language. Teaching English as a foreign language is a demanding task when it comes to the places where English serves limited exposure (Khan, 2011). Khan also added that the lack of English purposes is likely to hinder students to practice and understand English due to students' insufficient background knowledge of the subject. Such problem was once experienced by the researcher when she taught English in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of SMA Muhammadiyah Kasihan. The

researcher found that the students, who were approximately sixteen up to eighteen years old, hardly knew English vocabulary of things around the classroom.

Consequently, this instance can be caused by the limited opportunities for students in using English in real-life context.

Another English teaching difficulty which was experienced by the researcher is when she taught in another school which was SMP Muhammadiyah Gamping 1. The classroom size became an issue when she taught there. Copland, Garton, and Burns (2014) stated “in many parts of the world, large classes are a common challenge causing teachers to believe it is difficult or impossible to introduce learner-centered teaching” (p. 741). Gaining attention and monitoring students were very tough since the classroom of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade that consisted of approximately 32 students was quite small. At that time, the researcher wanted to introduce a variety of profession through group work, yet it did not work really well due to noise and crowded situation. Classroom size makes it difficult for teachers to introduce pair work and group work (Hoque, 2009), and monitor students’ discipline (Butler, 2005; Littlewood, 2007).

Recently, the researcher did an informal observation in a primary school where English was taught by a Math teacher. It was admitted by the teacher that English teachers are not available in the school. That is why she was assigned by the headmistress to teach English. Such thing should not have happened since there is a great number of an English graduate in Indonesia, particularly in Yogyakarta. According to statistics which were taken from online database of

some universities in Yogyakarta, the researcher has found about 240 English education students graduate from five universities in a year.

These kinds of challenges existed in Yogyakarta, one of the developed areas in Indonesia, which likely has enough English graduates, competent teachers, and English exposures, such as books and other language learning facilities. Such unfortunate challenges are still encountered in several schools in such a developed area, let alone in schools in a rural area. Mishra (2015) asserted that “the rural areas lack good schools having proper ambiance and affordability which cater to the changing needs and expectations of the crass” (p. 38). For that reason, the researcher is interested to find a wider range of challenges in teaching English especially in a rural area that is Taliwang city of West Sumbawa, Indonesia.

Among four secondary schools in Taliwang city, the most accessible and located in the edge of the city is MTsN Taliwang. The researcher had done little observation in this school by conducting conversational interview with two English teachers regarding English teaching and learning. It was found that English teaching challenges does not only happen in classroom, but also outside the classroom, such as facilities provided, limited time to learn English, teachers' ability, etc.

To sum up, every school must face a variety of English teaching challenges. It was proven by the researcher's personal teaching experiences in different schools. Therefore, through selecting the title of challenges in teaching

English faced by the teachers at MTsN Taliwang, the researcher is able to explore more about English teaching challenges in a school located in a remote area.

### **Identification of the Problem**

According to the background of the study, there are several potential challenges which might be faced in teaching English process, particularly in remote areas:

**English exposure.** Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenging duty when it is taught in the places where English has inadequate exposure. Khan (2011) argued that the lack of English purposes demotivate students to practice and understand English due to students' insufficient background knowledge of English.

**Classroom size.** Classroom size determines whether teaching process is done enjoyably or not. The size of classroom makes it difficult for teachers to monitor students' discipline (Butler, 2005; Littlewood, 2007).

**Teachers' competence.** English teaching process tends to be challenging when it comes to the teachers' teaching qualification, language proficiency level, and training since these points can cause teachers' confidence (Emery, 2012). Teachers whose teaching training are not enough might strive to embody teaching methods effectively (Littlewood, 2007).

**Students' motivation.** Encouraging students in remote areas to learn English can be demanding since they may "struggle to understand the relationship

of learning English as they have little contact with speakers of the language” (Copland, Garton, & Burns, 2014, p. 741).

**Teaching facilities.** Limited resources and teaching language facilities has become a matter of concern since both teachers and students, in EFL context, are not familiar with early English learning (Copland, Garton, & Burns, 2014).

**Teaching methods and techniques.** Teachers have many duties upon their students, therefore deciding suitable teaching methods and techniques can be considered challenging since teachers do not only think of how to teach four language skills and grammar, but also encourage students to practice what they have learned (Ansari, 2012).

### **Limitation of the Problem**

In line with the identification of the problems, this research focuses on investigating the challenges in teaching English faced in the classroom. The researcher assumes that there should be some challenges take place in the classroom faced by the English teachers where the challenges can come from either teachers or students.

### **Research Questions**

According to the identification of the problem, the problem of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the challenges in teaching English faced by the teachers at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia?

2. What kinds of strategies are implemented by the teachers at MTsN Taliwang in facing challenges in teaching English?

### **Purpose of the Study**

Based on the research questions, the purposes of this study are below:

1. To explore challenges in teaching English faced by teachers at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia.
2. To understand strategies implemented by the teachers at MTsN Taliwang to overcome challenges in teaching English.

### **Significance of the Study**

The result of the study is expected to be useful for teachers, institution, and pre-service teachers.

**Teachers.** Teachers can obtain benefits from this study because the findings of the study inform them the potential teaching challenges. Knowing the challenges of teaching, the teacher can prepare activities to anticipate the problems that may happen.

**Institution.** Institution can gain benefits from this study since the findings of the study present the teaching challenges which frequently occur in English teaching process. Thereby, MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia is able to understand and fulfill the needs in teaching English in order to successfully embody effective teaching and learning process.

**Pre-service teachers.** Through this study, pre-service teachers can be familiar with English teaching challenges and once they encounter the same problems in their teaching practice, they have learned some alternatives to face them.

### **The Outline of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. Each chapter consists of several points. The first chapter explains the background of the study, the identification of the problem, the research questions, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, and followed by the outline of the study. The second chapter elaborates the literature review, review of related studies, and conceptual framework. The third chapter presents the research methodology which consists of research design, research setting and participants, instrument of the research, data collection technique, as well as data analysis. The fourth chapter describes research findings gathered by the researcher as well as its discussion. The last chapter presents the conclusion of the research and the recommendation.