Voicing the Unvoiced Indonesian SEA Teacher Teaching in the Philippines: A Phenomenological Study

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Teaching abroad in an internship is a new program for enhancing the teaching skills of student teachers. The development of education requires a teacher to have the best experience in teaching practice. In the modern era, there are many incredible programs for teaching practice, one of which is the SEA Teacher program held by SEAMEO. The aim of this article is to describe the difficulties between SEA teachers and students due to a language barrier while teaching public speaking. The data was collected by interviewing student teachers who teach public speaking in grade 11 of PSU Integrated High School, Philippines. The subjects consist of four student teachers who teach public speaking. Data is analysed using a phenomenological approach. The results show that student teachers have difficulty in communicating as due to varies languages, especially when they forget about vocabularies. In addition, it identifies some problems in accents and dialects used by students to the point that sometimes they do not understand the teachers' communication. As a result, the study points to the fact that student teachers should have good English skills. By knowing that language is one of the challenges, the study suggests that student teachers should improve their English speaking skills when they want to obtain an overseas internship .

Key words: *SEA Teacher, Difficulties, Language Barrier, Phenomenological Study.*

Introduction

Skills are needed in this technological era as people should compete with each other to show that they have good capacity. It also influences the education system to improve the quality of teaching . Unfortunately, the status of teachers has now degenerated according to society

(Anita, 2011). Society underestimates a teacher's low profession. However, talking about a teacher's quality, an educator should be competent in order that they can deliver lessons .

Teaching is not only about understanding teaching theory but also about practise. Tabachnick (1982) states that teaching practise allows student teachers to understand about different perspectives on teaching. In preparing to be a competent teacher, teaching practise through local and international internship. SEA Teacher Program is one of the prestigious programs for overseas teaching practise for teacher candidates / student teachers. Lortie (1975) argues that teachers' perspective regarding teaching would improve by having a number of hours of observation in the classroom and teaching practice, which can improve the quality of student teacher practise by implementing their knowledge about education such as lesson plans, curriculum, teaching media etc. This program also interests researchers to collect data by finding problems and perspectives received through the SEA Teacher program students in teaching overseas. The researcher focuses on student teachers who teach English public speaking.

SEA Teacher Project is the internship program handled by SEAMEO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation). This program offers overseas internship with the destination being a country that is a SEAMEO member. Based on SEAMEO (2016), the aims of this project are to enhance teaching skills, motivate student teachers, improve speaking skill while the last is to help student teachers gain diverse experience about the situation and teaching condition . Not everyone can join the SEA Teacher program. There is a selection for joining for SEA teachers. The selection process consists of an interview in the English language. Therefore, it requires student teachers to speak fluent English . In addition, it provides many opportunities for student teachers to improve their skills such as class observation, curriculum comparison, language exposure, teaching practice and culture sharing. The SEA student teacher can learn many things from this SEA Teacher project based on the information below.

Table 1: Program Benefits

Field	Program	Explanation
Education	Teaching Practice	The SEA Teacher student will explore the education syster in Philippines.
Culture	Weekend Trip	SEA Teacher program will provide students with a weekend trip to introduce cultures.
Language	Campus Activities	Some campus activities will enable students to learn the language with friends or other students.

However, teaching abroad has many challenges faced by student teachers. One of these include language barrier. The student teacher and students speak a different language. Each

country has its own mother tongue that is used as a communication tool for asking, declaring or expressing a feeling. Therefore, student teachers use English as a universal language that helps people to communicate with others around the world. As an international language, English is used in almost all countries to communicate (Abdel-Rahman Al-Eiadeh, et. al., 2016). Lucena and Jose (2016) states that English is a necessary language during globalization. People can learn English language through many avenues . Learning English in school is one of the ways in which English can be learned and it has been a compulsory subject in school. Xu Liu (2010) shows that English is important for gaining worldwide information. Several countries use English as a second official language such as the Philippines.

English includes two major skills to be mastered as stated by Hakan Aydogan (2014). It incorporates **'macro-skills'** which include Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing (LRSW) and **'micro-skills'** which consist of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, phonetics, etc. All these skills are important to be mastered, especially speaking. Speaking reflects a person's language proficiency including their ability to speak fluently and clearly. Speaking can be improved through learning English in the classroom with teachers, friends or other media such as videos.

Here, student teachers are subjects who can provide a perception about language difficulties when they are teaching in the classroom based on experience. A phenomenological perspective is commonly used in gaining perspective about experience . It is an approach that is used for deep interviewing and observation without any personal perspective or judgment from the researcher. In his articles, Giorgi (2006) states that a phenomenological approach is elaborate, extensive and cannot be done halfway.

Many previous studies have conducted research through a phenomenological study, such as Barbara and Lois (1996) who have analysed the guest's perspective after visiting a heritage site using a phenomenological approach. The second study Olivia Halic, et. al. (2009) who have conducted research through a phenomenological study about the experience of non-native English speaking international students. Kabilan (2013) has completed an analysis of the teaching practicum of pre-service teachers in the experience of professional development through a phenomenological study. Nee Nee Chan, et. al. (2014) analysed students' lived experiences by a smartphone using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

Subsequently, Lucena and Jose (2016) have observed co-operative learning in enhancing student-speaking skills through a phenomenological study. Salcedo (2017) has conducted research about the experience of Asian student teachers in the SEA consisting of a teacher project through a phenomenological method. Purwaningsih (2019) analysed the perceptions 11th grade students of SMK Sakti Gemolong about the English subject in the classroom by

using a phenomenological study. Lastly, Kurniawan (2013) successfully researched the experiences of Indonesian International students at Aberdeen University, Scotland. Even though many previous studies have been conducted using a phenomenological approach, no research has been undertaken about teachers' perception of speaking classes, especially those student teachers who undertake teaching practice in senior high school in the Pangasinan State University, Philippines.

Although a number of investigations have been completed about phenomenological study, none of them have included language challenges of student teachers while teaching abroad. This study will analyse whether SEA Teacher students encounter any challenges in terms of language differences while they are teaching public speaking in PSU. Data will be gathered from SEA student teachers who teach in the 11th grade of Senior High School in PSU Integrated High School (PSU IS-HS).

Literature Review

a.   Speaking Theory

Almost all languages include Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing skills (LRSW) including English . Amongst these skills, speaking is the most important to be learned as communication begins with speaking. By practicing speaking regularly, humans can master language faster. However, students who learn to speak in the classroom also face many difficulties or demotivation in practising speaking. Some of these factors include (Heidari and Riahipour, 2012):

1)   Teacher expects too much from students such effectiveness in speaking without any mistakes in grammar or pronunciation.
2)   Orienting teaching towards students obtaining a good score can cause students to only think getting a good score. This can lead to imbalance for students which may cause cheating.
3)   Teacher tends to focus those students who have good speaking skills while neglecting those who do not .

b.   Factors in Improving English Speaking Skills

Most people aspire to being a fluent and effective English speaker is des is everybody's dream. Many people try to speak English by imitating native speakers. However, according to Madhavi and Ramesh,)2013): improving English speaking skills is also affected by factors such as:

1)   Listening Comprehension

Listening is the most basic step to learn English in order to learn, understand, and enrich pronunciation .

2)   Grammatical Accuracy

In creating a sentence, one should learn about language structure , also known as grammar, which is key to understanding the correct structure of language .

3)   Pronunciation

Pronunciation is also an important aspect of language. It helps to communicate easily so that the receiver can understand what is meant by the speaker. If a word is pronounced incorrectly, it will change the meaning of that word.

4)   Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning a language. By knowing vocabulary, we can also know how to construct a sentence.

5)   Enthusiasm

Learning requires enthusiasm to make talks interesting for the audience.

6)   Learning Inhibition

Inhibition usually comes from the learners themselves, if they are ashamed to talk in front of the class, or may be introverted and prefer to be silent while their friends speak up.

7)   Lack of Motivation

Motivation is the first factor that should be developed. It can foster a learning spirit and develop students' skills in improving speaking .

8)   Strong and Weak Learners Dominating in the Class

There needs to be stronger and weaker students in the classroom, which depends on how the teacher facilitates learning so that less able students have the confidence to speak up.

c.   *Understanding Hermeneutic Phenomenology*

There are a range of theories about phenomenological studies proposed by some scientists including Colaizzi, Hycner, Moustakas, Van Manen, and Carlsson. This research uses Van Manen's theory about hermeneutic phenomenological study.

Van Manen's theory of Hermeneutic phenomenology originates from both hermeneutics and phenomenology (Kurniawan, 2013). Phenomenology is an approach or method which aims to discover people's perception about their experiences (Arthur & Brian, 2014). Subsequently, in this context hermeneutics is a type of meaningful feeling felt by someone going through an experience. In the interview, the people who want to show their experience of a meaningful perspective will describe their feelings without judgment .

Hermeneutic phenomenology focused on how things appear and aim to enable make a phenomenon to speak and describe itself without any judgment. This is why this method is called an *interpretive* (hermeneutic) methodology as (Van Manen, 1990, p.180). There are

six-research activities proposed by Van Manen (1990) including making the question interesting, in-depth research of a person's experience , conducting an in-depth interview, interpreting interview results, confirming results with some theories and data analysis .

Research Methodology

This research combines descriptive and phenomenological methods. According to Maxwell (1992:279), qualitative research is focused on describing, explaining and interpreting a phenomena of interest. It is categorised as qualitative as this research aims to describe, analyse, and interpret the interviewees' perspective about their experience in teaching English public speaking in PSU IS-HS, Philippines. It analyses the perception of student teachers' experience in teaching public speaking by conducting a semi-structured interview. The object of this research is targeted to four student teachers who teach in grade 11, within PSU Integrated High Schools, Bayambang Campus. The interview is conducted after student teachers have completed their teaching practice in grade 11.

Results and Discussion

The results are gathered by applying the interview method and summarised for discussion. Teaching practice abroad is enjoyable as student teachers can gain many different cultures experiences and languages while also learning about the education system from other countries. Even though many benefits can be gained by student teachers, this teaching program also contains challenges . One of the problems faced by s students teachers is the language barrier. Language is the key to communicating between the speaker and listener. However, each region or country has its own language which means that people should use a lingua franca. English is the worldwide language used to communicate with people from different countries , therefore it's a very important language . Unfortunately, although most people can speak English, accents and dialects vary , which can be a contributing factor to misunderstanding.

The results show that student teachers who practice their teaching abroad encountered difficulties due to language barrier. in the Phillipines through the SEA Teacher program. The Philippines uses English as a second language and almost all citizens are able to speak it. However, at times student teachers find it difficult to understand their dialects and accents . . In addition, , vocabulary is one of the challenges of student teachers in communicating.

Filipino varies from Indonesian. Indonesian and Melayu are related and Indonesians will still understand Melayu . Therefore, student teachers use English through daily communication. Thai student teachers also maintain that they find it difficult to understand

when students talk too fast or if the accent / intonation is not clear because Thailand does not use English as a second language.

This is illustrated by some statements from interviewees :
"*So, sometimes like…when I didn't find the word especially in public speaking. Because sometimes we want to explain; For example, when I want to talk in terms of public speaking and oh my God, I don't know the word. How should I say it? Because they only know my English and like I want to translate it to Tagalog but, I don't speak Tagalog. So, sometimes that is my obstacle. But, besides that, everything was run well.*" *Interviewee 1*

Based on the statement, we can conclude that language barrier occurs while the speaker forgets about vocabulary. In this case, student teachers had some difficulties in delivering the topic to students. The other interviewee also said:
"*I think I have difficulty in language because I cannot speak English very well and in Thailand, English is just one subject and here English is the second language. Then, Thais cannot speak English very well. But, here everyone can speak English. Because using English in teaching is difficult for me.*" *Iinterviewee 2* .

Student teachers from Thailand sometimes find it difficult to use English to communicate, as Thais rarely use English as a second language though they should use it to communicate. The next interview participant made the following comment:

"*Because sometimes I cannot understand the vocabularies. The first time I asked them to speak in front of the class, they used an accent or dialect and I didn't understand. It is hard to remember their speech because they speak monotone like they have no difficulties in speaking English. I tried to listen but I cannot repeat what they said.*" *Interviewee 3* .

Dialect and accent are two aspects of language barriers. Not all people can understand someone who speaks English, such as student teachers delivering a presentation in the classroom. They sometimes cannot understand what students talk about because they talk too fast and use accents or dialects. The table below further explains the study results:

Table 2: Study results

Name	Problem	Explicative Theme
Jetsada	*"I think I have a difficulty in language because I cannot speak English very well and in Thailand, English is just one subject and here English is the second language. Thais cannot speak English very well. However, here everyone can speak English. Using English in teaching is difficult for me."*	Student teachers have a problem related to language barrier.
Hasan	*"...sometimes like…when I didn't find the word especially in public speaking. As sometimes we want to explain; For example, when I want to talk about public speaking and oh my God, I don't know the word. How should I say it? As they only know my English and like I want to translate it to Tagalog but I don't speak it. So, sometimes that is my obstacle. But, besides that, everything was run well."*	Student teachers have a problem related to language barrier.
Natthawut	*"The first time I asked them to speak in front of the class, they had an accent or dialect and I didn't understand. It's hard to remember their speech because they speak monotone as though they have no difficulty in speaking English. I tried to listen but I cannot repeat what they said."*	Student teachers have a problem related to language barrier.

Conclusion

Through the analysis of results, the research can be concluded as follows:

a. Practising English is needed by everyone to be able to speak English clearly. It also can help people to enrich their vocabularies. For those student teachers who want to experience teaching practice abroad, practising is the most important preparation before going to teach.

b. Dialects and accents are some of the problems faced while talking to someone from a different country, because everyone has his or her own way of pronouncing a word through their accent and dialect which can make it difficult for listeners to understand.

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