

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during online service learning from home program, particularly in the time of COVID-19. This chapter consists of the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research question, and the purposes of the study. This chapter also contains the significance of the study and the definition of key terms. The background of the study presents the reason to conduct the study. The chapter aims at explaining problems related to the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, the utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) has been growing and changing the way people engage in an activity (Sokhulu, 2020). It has been changed from the term ICT to the term digital (Ilomäki, Paavola, Lakkala, & Kantosalo, 2016). The trend of digital technology, including digital literacy and competence, has been increasingly discussed that focuses on what kinds of skills people should have learned and how they contribute to society (Ilomäki et al., 2016). The use of digital technology plays an important role in the 21st century. It is closely related to Eryansyah, Nurweni, Erlina, and Fiftinova's (2019) statement regarding competence skills that prospective EFL teachers need in the 21st century who was in the final year of their undergraduate program.

Likewise in the global event, the current COVID-19 outbreak requires students to adopt digital technology as facilitation of communication, data acquisition, research, and administration, to remain academically productive (Sokhulu, 2020). The cases of Covid-19 infection have been confirmed to emerge in early January 2020 (Tan, Zhao, Ma, Wang, Niu, Xu, Gao, & Wu, 2020) and WHO also has announced the outbreak of Covid-19 as a global pandemic (WHO, 2020). Therefore, enforcing infection control measures is important to avoid Covid-19 transmission to continue to spread (Lai, Shih, Ko, Tang, & Hsueh, 2020). However, these rapid changes are having a serious effect on global higher education because the COVID-19 pandemic has been forced significant challenges and transformations for global higher education (Crawford, Butler-henderson, Rudolph, Malkawi, Glowatz, Burton, Magni, & Lam, 2020). As a result, several educational institutions must remain closed temporarily, such as schools, colleges, and universities (Dhawan, 2020).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic universities are closed and locked down. Most teachers, students, faculty, and staff member have begun to learn and use online learning platforms (Shahzad, Hassan, Aremu, Hussain, & Lodhi, 2020). Based on the issue of Covid-19 transmission, Crawford et al., (2020) also analyzed COVID-19 response for several universities across 20 countries and found different responses, such as a group university opted of government's policy (e.g. reduce social gathering) and on the other side, some universities rapidly opted to discontinue face-to-face learning temporarily and switch to online learning. Some recent studies have examined the implementation of online

learning as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (cf. e.g. Bao, 2020). The study by Bao (2020) investigated how faculty implements more effective teaching to avoid the students' negative learning attitudes during online education the COVID-19 outbreak.

To date, starting from the COVID-19 outbreak in China, the world of educational institutions in the Indonesian context is entering an adjustment phase in the teaching and learning process to initiate online learning from home by utilizing digital technology as a facility (Pujilestari, 2020). Not only that, the COVID-19 outbreak also impacts on the implementation of community service activities as the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. More recently, Wijayanti, Yunita, and Dharmanto (2020), presented in their study that the implementation of community service activities were carried out virtually, such as socialization on social media (Prasetyo & Suherlan, 2020).

In previous study by Nurfaidah, Tambunan, Yonata, Kurniawati, and Lestariyana (2020) investigated two students' experiences during a virtual community service program during COVID-19. The study found that the students were able to adapt to the environment of the community service program even though they struggled from the terrible internet connection. Likewise, Hakim (2020) discussed the community service activities in preventing the COVID-19 transmission through the use of Android applications. Based on the researcher's experience, the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the implementation of community service activities is also currently being experienced by EFL pre-service teachers during the online service learning program in the time of COVID-

19 pandemic. They should conduct the program by online through the use of digital technology, so that they already involved with several platforms in the time of COVID-19 transmission indirectly. It is because the COVID-19 condition forced them in using digital tool during the online service learning from home program for completing the program smoothly.

Most of the recent studies have focused on the students' experiences in using digital technologies based on their personal research needs in time of the COVID-19 outbreak (Sokhulu, 2020); and the use of digital technology in the student's activity program during the community service activities to overcome the transmission of COVID-19 (Prasetyo & Suherlan, 2020; Wijayanti et al., 2020). Indirectly, the students have been involved and experienced the community service activities virtually (KKN-V) including EFL pre-service teachers at a university in Southeast Sulawesi (Nurfaidah et al., 2020). So, little is known about the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during online service learning from home. It was evidenced on the study by Nurfaidah et al. (2020) which focused on students' perception (emotion) of virtual service learning. Hence, to fill this gap, this study focused on to what extent the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints of their experience in using digital tools as reflected in their digital footprints during service learning program amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

These experiences are taken from five pre-service teachers' participation while conducting the online service learning from home program in a time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher involved the participants since they have

conducted the online service learning from home program (KKN-DR) about a month and engaged with digital technology amidst the COVID-19 lockdown. This study can shed light on the EFL pre-service teachers' digital technology development during online service learning. Thus, researcher argued that the COVID-19 pandemic has been beneficial to those of the five pre-service teachers who enjoy the process of completing an activity program during a pandemic situation that involves digital technology. The findings in this study are expected to create prospective EFL teachers who have digital abilities.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study focused on the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital technologies in conducting online service learning from home program during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data in this study was drawn from five EFL pre-service teachers' photovoices that they have narrated on their daily basis while conducting the service learning program during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study focused on the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints based on their engagement with the digital tools of online service learning from home program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is attended to answer the research question: To what extent the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during online service learning from home program in time of COVID-19 pandemic?"

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research questions, the major objective of this present study is to what extent the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during online service learning from home program during COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study offers two kinds of significance, theoretical and practical insights. The significances of this study are:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This study can be used as a useful reference to reveal to what extent the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during online service learning from home program, especially in time of COVID-19 pandemic as a critical situation. In short, it will be a reference for another researcher who wants to conduct the study related to the EFL pre-service teachers' narratives of experience.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The significance of this study is to help the teacher to expose the EFL pre-service teachers' digital footprints in using digital tools during the online service learning from home program. Moreover, this study expected not only the researcher but is expected to help students in developing their digital skill through creating video content during online service learning from home program, such as educational video in learning English. Therefore, it can give a positive impact for an institution to develop and improve the pre-service teachers' digital skills in the demands of the 21st century. Indirectly, it can be the method or strategy in creating

prospective EFL teachers in the 21st century who has digital literacy and digital skill.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Based on the objectives of this study, this part defines several of the great importance terms used in this study which are listed as in the following;

Our Digital Footprints: this study defines that the participants of this study from five EFL pre-service teachers including the researcher of this study. Hence, the term of our focus on involvement of the researcher as one of participants of this study. It is because four participants and the researcher have conducted the online service learning from home program together. Moreover, they have collaborated in implementing the online service learning from home both of individually and collaboratively. The researcher had the same the field supervisor with four participants in this study.

Moreover, this study defines as all information related to participants' (EFL pre-services teachers) that was on the internet as their online activities in conducting the online service learning from home program amidst the COVID-19 transmission. It focused on their series of digital activities or actions in operating various technologies that is left behind they use the internet, especially content editor applications, social media (like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram), and also several online platforms they used during creating content as their program virtually.

Online Service Learning from Home Program (KKN-DR): the term online service learning from home is the relatively new term for community service activities, commonly referred to as one of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. In this study defines online service learning from home program as new program of service community which refers to service community program virtually. The program aimed of avoiding the spread of COVID-19, but still carrying out institutional obligations as a condition completing pre-service teachers' study. In short, it is a new form of community service activities in time of the COVID-19 pandemic through utilizing digital technology.

EFL Pre-service Teachers: this study defines as the students who have carried out an internship for 2 times (the real environments of the teaching process, particularly specialized training and teaching experiences for those who choose to teach as a vocation to last a lifetime (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020)). At the same time, they as students who majoring English education were conducting the online service community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photovoice: in this study defines as a design that utilizes photography in curing memory, sharing stories, and capturing meaning on pre-service teachers' daily basis. It is pre-services teachers' story or narrative through photographs and descriptions or short caption based on their activity while conducting the online service-learning from home, such as creating, uploading, and sharing content.