FACILITATING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) TEACHER EDUCATORS' SELF-STUDY TO IDENTIFY PROBLEM SPACE IN TEACHING TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY OF BUILDING A SELF-STUDY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE IN A TEACHERS COLLEGE IN INDONESIA

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Curriculum and Instructions

by
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Abstract

The study in this dissertation examines the potential application of self-study research as a professional development platform for EFL teacher educators in an Indonesian context. Two major theories of human learning and development underpinned this study in gaining an in-depth understanding of how EFL teacher educators engaged in conversations about their practices: Mezirow’s (1991) transformative learning and Wenger’s (1990) the community of practice theory. Drawing on these theories, this study asks “how do teacher educators collaboratively identify shared problem spaces for inquiry through conducting self-study about their practices in teaching teachers?” more specifically, through this question, I sought to identify: a) what kind of reflection emerges from the group conversations? And b) what is the nature of the dialogues in the conversations that might lead and hinder the reflections? Moreover, this study also asks, “what challenges and opportunities do teacher educators identify for moving forward with self-study as a community of practice?”

In order to identify the answers to the questions, relying on the case study method, this study invites five teacher educators in an EFL teachers college in Indonesia. It collects the data through moderating the participants to engage in bi-monthly conversations about their practice through the platform of WhatsApp chatroom, interviewing them individually, and asking them to write a reflective essay about their experiences participating in the conversation group. Analyzing the datasets using thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis and approaching them through multiple analytical frameworks such as Kreber and Cranton's (2000) the scholarship of the teaching model, Mercer’s (2004) typologies of talks in conversation, and Wenger et al.
(2011) value creation in community, this study found that while the conversation group has facilitated the participants to reflect on their practice, the reflections they made are on the surface level of content and process reflection. Engaged in the dialogues in the conversation group did not provoke the participants to critically reflect on their practice because the collective knowledge they share about the context has encouraged them to immediately exchange advises to the problem they share. In consequence, the conversations develop into either disputational or cumulative and become less critical.

Moreover, the analysis also reveals that, as reported by the participants, the conversation group has provided the participants with a new experience of professional development practice. It has provided them with a relatively safe and open space for talking about problems in their class and seeking help from colleagues. However, time management and area of specialization are still the issues to deal with. In order to make this conversation group a self-study community and encourage critical reflection, this study suggests the importance of expert facilitator who can act as a mediator, instructor, and role model for the participants.
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Meraki Aksara Mikail Syaripudin

And

Bapak Ahnan
Ibu Elis
Bapak Abdurrachim (Alm)
Ibu Oyok Rukiyah

You have brains in your head
You have feet in your shoes
     You can steer yourself
     Any directions you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

--Dr. Seuss, in Oh, the Places You’ll Go!
Chapter One

Background and Rationale of the Study

“If you want to bring a fundamental change in people’s belief and behavior … you need to create a community around them, where those new beliefs can be practiced and nurtured.”

– (Gladwell, 2002) in
The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference

Guba and Lincoln in Creswell (2013) name researchers as “multicultural subjects” and view their history, traditions, and conceptions of self, ethics, and politics as a starting point for an inquiry. Therefore, the background, interest, and personal history of the researcher could become preliminary considerations to pursue a study (Creswell, 2013); and these are also powerful sources of motivation (Maxwell, 2013). In that spirit, this dissertation reports on an empirical study that was born out of the personal experience and examined the potential application of self-study community of practice as a professional development practice for teacher educators in an EFL teachers college in Indonesian. This study lays the groundwork for creating a self-study community in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers college in Indonesia.

Collaboration and reflection are the defining characteristics of self-study research and have been present in self-study research since its inception (Kitchen & Parker, 2009; Lighthall, 2004). Therefore, the goal of this study is to examine the extent to which engaging in an online conversation group to collaboratively share stories from practice could lead participants to reflect on their practice critically. The more specific objectives of the study are presented later in this chapter.
In this introductory chapter, I elaborate on the background and rationale of the study based on the examination of literature and reflections of my personal and professional interest (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). To set the scene, I begin this chapter with a review of previous studies about teacher educators and an examination of studies about teacher education and teacher educators in Indonesia. I combine this examination with my reflections on personal and professional experiences working in the field. I conclude this section with my call to actions towards developing a programmatic professional development that can provide support for teacher educators to learn and develop their expertise in research that can improve their capacity in teaching.

**College-based Teacher Educators**

Broadly defined, teacher educators are people who teach and coach teachers with the purpose of supporting teachers professional development; this includes college-based and school-based teacher educators (Lunenberg, Dengerink, & Korthagen, 2014; Murray, Swennen, & Shagrir, 2008). This study focuses on college-based teacher educators who provide instruction, guidance, and support to prospective teachers enrolled in a college-level teacher education program (Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 2005; Loughran, 2014). They may include full and assistant professors, fixed-term and adjunct faculty, and graduate students who are assigned responsibility as teaching assistant (Zeichner, 2005). The term ‘teacher educators’ as I use it in this study is not a formal academic title, but a phrase that I use to denote all people who participate in the teacher education process at the college level. Although this definition includes some who may not have a formal affiliation with a teachers college and thus may refuse to be called
teacher educators, given that their line of work involves teaching teachers or preservice teachers, I will refer to them all as teacher educators.

**Tasks and quality Requirements**

In a system in which college-based teacher education is the primary pathway into the teaching profession, the role of teachers colleges is significant. Among many components within teachers colleges, teacher educators play a critical role in preparing quality teachers and contributing to the development of high-quality education (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013). Teacher educators directly influence the quality of (student) teachers, and therefore, although indirectly, student learning as a result (Ping, Schellings, & Beijaard, 2018). My review on the task and quality requirements of teacher educators focused on the following three main areas: teachers of teachers, working in the third space between college and schools, and developing a pedagogy of teacher education. Lunenberg et al. (2014) synopsize that in addition to teaching and research, teacher educators also participate in curriculum development and serve as gatekeepers who introduce preservice teachers to the world of teaching and build bridges to connect teachers colleges to schools.

**Teachers of Teachers**

Teaching teachers is the most prominent role of teacher educators identified in the literature. As the teachers of teachers, teacher educators assume two primary responsibilities: teaching teacher education courses and supervising students in teaching practice. Teacher educators design, implement, and evaluate teacher education courses. Murray & Male (2005) characterize the role of teachers of teachers as second-order teaching. While first-order teaching refers to the teaching of school students, they explain
second-order teaching as the teaching of preservice teachers. In second-order teaching, they suggest teacher educators have the ability to work with adult learners in a higher education setting, to articulate tacit knowledge and the underlying theory, and to promote active learning.

As the teachers of teachers, teacher educators also act as role models for preservice teachers (Goodwin et al., 2014; Koster et al., 2005; Lunenberg et al., 2014; Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007; Williams, 2014). Serving as role models has been identified as crucial with regard to meeting preservice teachers expectations that lecturers not only tell them how to teach but also show them and provide feedback (Edge, 2011). Lunenberg et al. (2007) identify two levels of modeling. While the first level of modeling is concerned with demonstrating exemplary behaviors – walking the talk or practicing what you preach, the second level of modeling refers to making the theoretical base of this modeling explicit to preservice teachers. The authors suggest a variety of strategies for teacher educators to implement these levels of modeling, including thinking aloud, journaling, and having discussions during and after class with groups and individual student teachers.

Teaching practice in schools is the most critical stage of the preservice teacher education program. It provides preservice teachers with a “sheltered opportunity” to connect theoretical concepts learned in college to actual realities in school classrooms through a clinical practicum (Zeichner & Bier, 2015). As faculty supervisors, teacher educators must model effective teaching, give feedback and support about teaching, encourage inquiry and reflection, and challenge the teacher to grow as a professional (Nolan & Hoover, 2011). Teacher educators are responsible for guiding preservice
teachers “toward more theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices and
greater levels of professional expertise” (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). Therefore, having
the ability to provide useful and encouraging feedback that can function as mediation
tools for learning is essential for teacher educators in supervising teaching practice.
Sergiovanni and Starrat (2007) suggest that teacher educators collect observable teaching
data and use it as the basis for providing feedback. Furthermore, as the teachers of
teachers, Zeichner (2005) and Hammerness et al. (2005) remind teacher educators that
while it is crucial to provide preservice teachers with practical skills in teaching,
equipping them with abilities to make judgments about when to use particular practices
and adapt them to particular circumstances is also critical. Hammerness et al. (2005) also
emphasize the critical role of teacher educators in preparing teachers for a changing
world.

*Working in the third space*

Teacher educators are responsible for building a bridge that connects two learning
environments – teachers colleges and schools (Williams, 2014). The partnerships
between teachers colleges and schools are essential for improving educational
experiences of all learners, ensuring high-quality induction into the profession for new
teachers, facilitating professional development for teachers and teacher educators, and
preparing the next generation of teacher educators (Nolan et al., 2009). Martin et al.
(2011) in Lunenberg et al. (2014) characterize their work in bridging teachers colleges
and schools as brokers who are responsible for fostering interactions between the two
environments to support teacher education programs.
Working in the third space provides teacher educators with opportunities for professional development. Through working with teachers, administrators, and preservice teachers, teacher educators learn about current trends happening in schools. They also have opportunities to learn about teacher educators from two different perspectives. However, working in the third space is not easy because of the nature of organization, regulations, norms, and expectations between colleges and schools are different. Therefore, Koster et al. (2005), Lunenberg et al. (2014) and Zeichner (2005) suggest that teacher educators need to have excellent communication and negotiation skills and knowledgeable about the school system and its curriculum. Teacher educators also need to keep themselves updated about the current trends happening in the schools. This way, they would be able to better respond to the trend and build a mutually beneficial partnership between the college and the schools.

**Developing pedagogy of teacher education**

Teacher educators are mature and autonomous professionals (Smith, 2005) who are considered capable of looking after their own professional development and contributing to the development of teacher education (Koster et al., 2005). Research, for teacher educators, is not only a means for developing their competence and fulfilling requirements for academic rank promotion but also a vehicle for contributing to the scholarly conversations about teacher education and its pedagogical development. Therefore, Smith (2005) urges teacher educators to know about creating new knowledge, to have a comprehensive understanding of the education system, and to have strong foundational knowledge about the theory of education. Supporting Smith, Loughran (2014) emphasizes the importance of teacher educators conducting research and
becoming highly reflective practitioners and smart consumers of research. Through research, teacher educators may critically examine their practices and other issues related to their practice to generate knowledge. They use this knowledge to inform practices and policies in teacher education.

**Challenges and Tensions**

There is a taken-for-granted notion that good schoolteachers will make good teacher educators (Zeichner, 2005). Teacher educators come to the profession with extensive experience as schoolteachers. They use experience-based knowledge as the foundation for their work in teaching preservice teachers. The literature describes the transition from schoolteacher to teacher educator as one of unease because of the change in roles and expectations. Loughran (2014) explains that being a teacher educator involves more than applying the skills of school teaching. It is a work that cannot be predicted and fully controllable (Berry, 2008 & Koster et al., 2005) because it requires specific knowledge, experience, and understanding in specific situations.

In their self-study, for example, Morberg & Eisenschmidt (2009) recount that their transition process took place in two phases. The first phase was characterized by the process of identity development, where they still maintained their previous identity as schoolteachers and used their experiences as the basis for teaching. Furthermore, they explain that it was in the second phase that they began to socialize as a university faculty and accepted the norms, values, manner, knowledge, expectations, and skills of academia. The transition and transformation process from schoolteachers to teacher educators requires an understanding that the work of teacher educators is complex and multi-layered (Swennen, Shagrir, & Cooper, 2009). Transitional issues are the first
tensions teacher educators deal with as they move from being schoolteachers to becoming
college faculty.

Teacher educators also experience tensions about the relation between theory and
practice. Having previous experience as schoolteachers provides teacher educators with a
sense of credibility for having authentic knowledge in teaching (Brandenburg, 2008;
Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Williams, 2014; Zeichner, 2005). However, as Williams
(2014) recounts, teacher educators are often anxious as to whether their previous
experiences as schoolteachers are still relevant to the current development in school
classrooms. Goodwin et al., (2014) interviewed 293 college-based teacher educators and
found that they often felt unprepared to teach teachers because of lacking teaching skills
and pedagogy of educating teachers. The authors suggested that teachers colleges design
intentional professional development programs for improving teacher educators’
preparedness in teaching preservice teachers. They also call for a collective conversation
across the professional about what it means to be a quality teacher educator, to articulate
the specific and unique work/knowledge/skills/commitment of those who teach teachers.
They finally suggested that professional development programs for teacher educators
need to consider teacher education as a labor-intensive and demanding work. Therefore,
teacher educators need to learn how to blend their teaching and research agenda to
facilitate them to learn in and of their practice.

There is also friction between the role of teachers and the demands of research
and publication. Goodwin et al. (2014) found that while teacher educators came to the
profession with a terminal degree, they claimed that their doctoral training put a heavy
emphasis on preparing them to become educational researchers, not teachers of teachers.
Moreover, when they eventually landed a job as a teacher educator, they struggled in their transition and socialization process and in finding a balance between fulfilling the demand of improving their teaching skills and research and publication to stay in the job. Mayer, Mitchell, Santoro, & White (2011) argue that the demand for research and publication to stay in the job undermines the importance of their roles as teachers of teachers. As academics, teacher educators are demanded to conduct research and participate in the scholarly conversations about their fields through publications. In large research universities, research and publication are components of tenure requirements. However, lack of time, resources, and support are some of the challenges that teacher educators encounter when dealing with research (Murray & Male, 2005, & Lunenberg et al., 2014). Teacher educators engage in a variety of professional development activities to improve their personal and professional experiences and deal with these tensions and challenges.

**Professional development and support system**

The literature indicates that research has been the most prominent professional development activity conducted by teacher educators. As mature and autonomous professionals (Smith, 2005), teacher educators should be able to look after their own professional development and contribute to the development of teacher education (Koster et al., 2005). The literature identifies that teacher educators engage in a genre of practitioner inquiry named self-study to critically examine their own practices (Berry & Loughran, 2002; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Zeichner, 2005 and Lunenberg et al., 2014). For example, Swennen et al. (2009) conducted a self-study and learned about their work in teaching teachers that is multi-layered and complex.
Meanwhile, in other self-studies, teacher educators acknowledge that they can improve their understanding about preservice teachers learning and lead to better practice in teaching and supervising them, becoming more effective role models, and developing healthier relationships with them (Berry & Forgasz, 2016; Bullock, 2016; Davey, Ham, Stopford, Calender, & Mackay, 2011; Elliot-Johns, 2016; Russell, 2016). Conducting self-study has facilitated teacher educators to inspect their own practice with the purposes of not only improving the quality of their practices but also generating knowledge about teacher education.

Teacher educators also engage in professional development through learning from and with each other. In a narrative study, Baskerville (2011) recounts how having critical friends provided her with a support system for learning. She acknowledges that the conversations she had with colleagues stimulated her to reflect on her practice and led to improvement. Similarly, Mcgee (2011) and Lamont (2011) claim that the collaborative learning they have with colleagues helped them in identifying shared questions for inquiry, constructing ways of conducting an inquiry, using pieces of evidence to inform practices, exchanging feedback to strengthen a sense of collegiality among them, and providing a support system. For teacher educators, conducting research in collaboration has provided them not only a platform for professional development but also a support system for that platform.

Although not widely documented in the literature, teacher educators also engage in other professional development practices such as mentoring and participating in the discipline-based community. Mayer et al. (2011) acknowledge the support they received from a mentor in their induction into the world of academia. Meanwhile, LeComru &
Ewing (2008) in Lunenberg et al. (2014) show that participation in a community of learners stimulated their professional learning. However, Lunenberg et al. (2014) summarize that there is no programmatic mentoring or induction program identified in the literature. They also claim that the mentoring and induction take place sporadically and incidentally.

**Teacher educators in Indonesian teachers colleges:**

**So much demand, so little support**

As this study examines an issue related to EFL teacher educators in Indonesian contexts, I will begin this section with a brief introduction to the preservice teacher education in Indonesia along with the issues currently facing teacher education in this context. I will then proceed to explain the roles, responsibilities, and academic ranks of teacher educators in Indonesian teachers colleges. I will also elaborate on the nature of their work and the challenges they encounter to fulfill their responsibilities. It is important to note that while the literature cited in this study comes from a broader context of teacher education in Indonesia, the issues and themes identified in this review are also applicable to the field of EFL teacher education.

**Preservice teacher education in Indonesian: a brief overview**

The college-based teacher education program is the only pathway into the teaching profession in Indonesia. Law Number 14, passed in 2005, requires that to become a teacher, one needs to have a bachelors degree from an accredited higher education institution. As of 2015, there are 421 teacher training institutes in Indonesia: 41 public and 380 private, which operate largely independently, with little co-ordination between them over materials and approaches (MoRTECH, 2015). Teachers colleges in
Indonesia are managed under two ministries: the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education (MoRTECH) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA). Although teachers colleges under the MoRA mostly prepare religious studies teachers, they also offer regular teacher education programs such as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and STEM teacher education program. Below, I provide a more detailed explanation of teacher education within each of these ministries.

![Diagram of teachers colleges in Indonesia]

**Figure 1-1: Teachers colleges in Indonesia**

There are two types of public teachers colleges managed under the MoRTECH. The first is universities of education; these are all former public teacher training institutes that, in 1999, had their names and statuses changed into universities. With this new status, although still maintaining their primary academic focus on teaching teachers, these universities are also able to offer non-teacher education majors. For example, a department of English in these universities may offer two types of undergraduate degree programs: Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in EFL teacher education and Bachelor of Arts (BA) in English Language and Arts. The second type of public teachers colleges managed under the MoRTECH is colleges of education, commonly referred to in Indonesia as Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences (FKIP). These are teachers colleges within regular public universities. These public teachers colleges receive funding from the government and the lecturers working in these universities are
public officials whose salaries and benefits are paid by the government. These public teachers colleges are considered to have a better quality of education than privately running teachers colleges because they enjoy a much better support system, funding, and human resources. Lecturers in EFL teachers colleges in these universities mostly have a terminal degree from overseas universities in the US, UK, New Zealand, or Australia.

In addition to these public teacher training institutes, there are also privately-run teacher training institutes that must comply with the MoRTECH. These are teacher training institutes established by private entities whose funding relies primarily on the financial capacities of the private entities and tuition. The lecturers working in these private colleges are usually full-time employees of the universities, and their salaries and benefits are paid for by the colleges. The salary range varies depending on the financial capacity of the college but is usually much lower than that of lecturers in public teachers colleges. There are two types of private teachers college: the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences (FKIP) within regular universities and four-year liberal arts teachers colleges. Unlike FKIP, liberal arts teachers colleges are not allowed to offer doctoral degree programs; they are only allowed to offer bachelor and master’s degrees.

In a centralistic system, MoRTECH is responsible for overseeing the quality of education in private teachers colleges. Therefore, the ministry established an agency named Private Higher Learning Institutions Coordination Bodies (Kopertis) to manage private colleges and universities. The country is divided into twelve regions, each overseen by a Kopertis. In 2015, the ministry abolished the Kopertis and replaced it with a new agency named the Nation Higher Learning Institutions Service Body (LL Dikti)
that is responsible for managing both public and private universities including teachers colleges.

Meanwhile, teachers colleges under the MoRA include, first, faculties of education within large public Islamic universities or public institutes of Islamic studies. These are similar to the faculties of education in universities under MoRTECH. Although their primary academic programs are preparing future religious teachers, they also offer non-religious teacher education programs. Second, teachers colleges under the MoRA also include Islamic colleges of education in regular private universities. These are religious-based teachers colleges that are part of regular religious or non-religious based universities. For example, my undergraduate university is a non-religious private university which has two teachers colleges: a faculty of education which complies with MoRTECH, and a faculty of Islamic studies which complies with MoRA. Within the faculty of Islamic studies is a department of Islamic teacher education.

The third type of teachers college under the MoRA is religion-based liberal arts colleges. These are small public or private Islamic colleges that offer not only Islamic teaching departments, but also teacher training programs for other subjects.

Despite being managed under two different ministries, teachers colleges in Indonesia, private and public, are all the same in offering subject-based teacher education programs. For example, a department of English education mainly prepares future English teachers for pre-K to high school level; the same is true of a department of STEM, a department of social studies, a department of geography, and so forth. However, there is an exception for elementary and early childhood education in which teachers colleges have a specific department offering a teacher education program for those
schooling levels. While there is significant institutional variation, the structure of college-based teacher education programs in Indonesia typically consists of the following components (Evans, Tate, Navarro, & Nicolls, 2009):

1. *Theories*; these are coursework presented by lecturers in college classrooms.

2. *Practice*; these components include:
   a. *Field observation*; usually part of a coursework assignment; Students are assigned to do field-observation in school classrooms, write a report, and present it in classroom discussion;
   b. *Microteaching*; a prerequisite course before students go to school for teaching practice. Teachers colleges usually have a microteaching lab for conducting the teaching simulation;
   c. *School teaching practice*; students conduct school teaching practice at the second-half of their junior year. It usually lasts for about three to four months in school;
   d. *Community service*; during their senior year, students are required to conduct a community service for about one month. Students in teachers colleges usually do teaching in schools in rural and remote areas as a part of the community service; and
   e. *Classroom research*; preservice teacher education culminates with students conducting research. Usually, the research takes the form of quantitative experimental, survey-based, or action research.
Until 2013, the graduates of teachers colleges were automatically granted a teaching license in addition to a diploma and bachelor’s degree. However, in 2013, in order to improve the quality of future teachers, the Ministry of National Education and Culture (MoNEC) passed the regulation Number 87 to establish a new teacher preparation system. With this new regulation, teachers college graduates are no longer automatically granted a teaching license; instead, they need to take an additional one-year postgraduate professional training in order to obtain licensure. This new regulation also provides an opportunity for people who are not graduates of a teachers college to enter the teaching profession. However, they are required to take the postgraduate professional training for roughly two years.

The literature identifies two primary issues in preservice teacher education in Indonesia: recruitment issues and teaching and learning issues. Getting the right people to become teachers and developing them into competent instructors are two of the critical characteristics that differentiate high- and low-performing education systems (Barber & Mourshed, 2007 in OECD/ADB, 2015). Indonesian teachers colleges have an issue with these critical characteristics. There are different mechanisms of preservice teacher recruitment between public and private teachers college in Indonesia. While public teachers colleges employ a highly-selective recruitment process, private teachers colleges tend to recruit as many candidates as possible for fulfilling their budgeting needs. Most private teachers colleges rely on tuition for their operating budget. Therefore, the more students they recruit, the healthier their financial budget will become. Usually, preservice teacher candidates will apply to public teachers colleges first and take the entrance exam. Those who failed in the exam often go to private teachers colleges.
In addition, there is a recently changing trend in teachers college admission. In the past, only students who had been rejected by other colleges would go to a teachers college. However, thanks to the new teacher certification policy that increases teachers allowances, recently, there has been a significant number of high school graduates applying to teachers colleges (OECD/Asian Development Bank, 2015). For private teachers colleges, this trend provides opportunities to recruit more preservice teachers, but as a consequence, led to an oversupply of preservice teachers with wide variations in quality (OECD/Asian Development Bank, 2015). For example, the EFL teachers college, where the current study was conducted recruited around 400 students each year from 2011 to 2016 and grouped them into sixteen classes. This large number of students enrolled in the program has created issues in the teaching and learning process; namely, it has given lecturers heavy teaching loads that leave them with no time for research.

There are also critics claiming that inadequate preservice teacher education is the primary cause of the low quality of teaching forces in Indonesia (Weston, 2008 & Dall, 2012 in Bjork, 2013; Evans, Tate, Navarro, & Nicolls, 2009; Logli, 2016). The research literature on teacher education in Indonesia has identified a considerable gap between theory and practice in preservice teacher education there (Evans et al., 2009; Raihani & Sumintono, 2010). The primary cause of this gap is the process of teaching and learning that put more emphasis on theoretical concepts rather than instructional practice (Evans et al., 2009; Raihani & Sumintono, 2010). Similarly, Weston (2008) and Dall (2012) cited in (Bjork, 2013) identified this gap and added that preservice teacher education in Indonesia is in dire need of improvement.
Many factors contribute to the gap between theory and practice. Evans et al. (2009) noted that the quality of lecturers is one such factor. While the literature acknowledges that becoming a role model is one of the primary roles of teacher educators (Goodwin et al., 2014; Koster et al., 2005; Lunenberg et al., 2014, 2007; Williams, 2014), the study conducted by Evans et al. (2009) found that although teacher educators in Indonesian teachers colleges were knowledgeable in their subject area, they were not able to become role models of creative, imaginative, innovative teaching methodologies that would prepare potential teachers to be able to transfer skills to the classroom. Bjork's (2013) research is in line with this finding and claims that in addition to lacking research, teacher educators also rarely have experience of teaching in primary or secondary schools, which may prevent them from becoming role models for their students. Moreover, Evans et al. (2009) also claim that teacher educators need additional training in a range of innovative teaching methodologies, new technologies, classroom observation techniques, and practitioner research.

**Teacher educators: academic ranks and responsibilities**

Indonesia has no set of standards for teacher educators that defines who teacher educators are and outline their roles, responsibilities, and quality requirements. The only formal document that outlines the definition, roles, and requirements of teacher educators is the Law Number 14, from 2005, which concerns teachers and university lecturers. The law defines university lecturers as professional educators who assume responsibilities in transforming, developing and disseminating science, technology, and arts through teaching, research, and service (Law Number 1, 2005). Further, the law requires at least a master’s degree to teach at the undergraduate level and a doctoral degree to teach at the
graduate level. College-based teacher educators are university lecturers; thus, they are included in this definition. Similar to many other parts of the world, university faculty in Indonesia also have three primary responsibilities, which are called Tridharma – the Three Righteous Duties of university faculties: teaching, research, and service.

There are four tiers of academic rankings in Indonesian universities: Asisten Ahli (Associate Lecturer), Lektor (Lecturer), Lektor Kepala (Senior Lecturer), and Guru Besar (Professor) which has two sub-ranks – Associate Professor and Professor. Newly-hired faculty do not yet have a rank; they are usually called tenaga pendidik (instructor). New instructors have to work for at least a year before being eligible to submit a promotion proposal to become an associate lecturer. Then, in intervals of every two years, university faculty are allowed to submit a promotion proposal to gradually rise to the higher academic ranks.

Different from the system in Western Countries such as in the US where universities have the authority to appoint academic ranks to their faculty, the procedures and processes of academic rank promotion in Indonesia is centralistic. The Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education (MoRTECH) sets up regulations, requirements, and procedures for faculty rank promotion. MoRTECH also assumes the sole authority to appoint academic ranks for university lecturers. The promotional process follows a credit point system. According to the current credit score system, new faculty need a minimum credit score of 150-200 to be promoted to the position of an associate lecturer, a minimum credit score of 300-400 is needed for promotion to senior lecturer, and a minimum 700 score is required to move up to professorship ranks. Teaching, research, and service are the main components of the scoring system where research and
publications in international journals weigh heavily (The Minister Regulation, No. 20 the year 2017).

The academic promotion process involves a multi-layered and multi-staged verification system that requires approval from officials in every stage. It begins with lecturers collecting a portfolio of their work and submitting it to the human resource (HR) department of the university. However, the HR department will not process the portfolio unless it has been previously verified and approved by the official at the college level: the head of the department and the dean of the faculty where the lecturers are affiliated. After securing the approval and verification, HR will calculate the credit points for the portfolio and submit it to the university rector for having approval before uploading it into a system created by the ministry for academic rank promotion submission. The process takes months and to a large extent, creates a source of frustration among lecturers.

My interest in the topic of professional development of teacher educators stems from my personal and professional experience working in the field of EFL teaching and learning in Indonesia. Reflecting on those experiences and in line with the literature, teacher educators in Indonesian teachers colleges also assume similar responsibilities as mentioned earlier: teaching, research, and service. Cumulatively, in these three areas of responsibilities, lecturers have to assume at least 12 (twelve) credits hours and maximum 16 (sixteen) credit hours in a semester. For teaching and research, lecturers are required to work a minimum of nine credit hours in a semester.

In a teachers college, lecturers work as the teachers of teachers with responsibilities including designing and teaching teacher education courses, supervising students in teaching practices and research and providing academic advising services.
Lecturers are also required to conduct and publish research in reputable academic journals. The Ministry Regulation number 20, passed in 2017 mandates that in order to improve the quality and quantity of scientific publication in Indonesia, lecturers are required to publish at least three articles in a nationally reputable journal or one article in an international journal within three years.

The research usually takes the form of process-product research such as quantitative experimental, survey-based, or descriptive qualitative with a focus on examining students’ learning and identifying the effectiveness of a particular instructional strategy or materials. Lecturers also occasionally participate in curriculum development of the college. To fulfill their roles in service, lecturers are assigned to supervise students in conducting community service for at least a month. Moreover, although this rarely happens, teacher educators occasionally participate in in-service teacher professional development through facilitating a variety of training and workshops for schoolteachers.

**Tensions and challenges**

Indonesian teacher educators also encounter similar tensions and challenges to those I have identified in the literature above. As mentioned earlier, teacher educators in this context have been criticized for their inability to become role models for their students and for lacking school teaching experiences, and research. As a consequence, they contribute to the considerable gap between theory and practice in Indonesian preservice teacher education program. The gap between theory and practice is not a new issue in Indonesia as over two decades ago, Waworuntu & Holsinger (1989) warned that the lack of research had resulted in low quality of teaching and learning in Indonesian universities.
However, attempts to deal with these critics are complicated by many factors such as the reward system, bureaucracy, a limited support system, research capacity, poor research culture, and research tradition. Although research and publication have been parts of the academic rank promotion, the amount of research produced by academia in Indonesia is still low compared to neighboring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. The Indonesian publication rank in scimagojr.com is 52 among 229 countries in 2016. As a result, there are no Indonesian universities included in the list of top 500 universities in the world (Pramisti, 2016). Therefore, to boost publication, the Indonesian government has increased funding for research up to a hundred percent in 2016 and included publication in reputable national and international journals in the primary requirements of the academic rank promotion.

Unfortunately, the salary system is not favorable to this initiative. While the new policy of academic rank promotion weighs heavier on the component of research and publications, the salary system relies heavily on the teaching component. Lecturers in Indonesian teachers colleges receive a low base salary with significant additional allowances tied to hours spent in class and other duties such as supervising undergrad research and teaching practice. In other words, the more teaching and supervising hours, the higher their salary. As a consequence, it is a common practice that, in order to get additional take-home pay, lecturers teach in more than one teachers’ college or take on an additional job. Teacher educators are now facing a dilemmatic situation where they have to find a balance between research and publication for rank promotion and maintaining sufficient teaching hours for having sufficient pay.
Another factor that contributes to the lack of research produced by teacher educators is bureaucracy and access to knowledge resources. Although the government has introduced a new grant scheme for research, the complicated bureaucratic system applied to the funding scheme makes faculties reluctant to submit a proposal for the grant (Rakhmani & Siregar, 2016). Also, since the majority of teachers’ colleges are small private schools with limited financial capacity, they cannot afford access to knowledge resources such as academic journals, which are highly expensive. Most teachers’ colleges are small private schools that are highly dependent on tuition for their operation. Many even struggle to support their daily operating budget, let alone access to academic journals.

To further complicate the situation, the research tradition in Indonesian teachers’ colleges is still dominated by traditional practices of process-product research with behaviorist and positivist views. Additionally, there is also a prevailing view that research and teaching are two separate practices that require different commitments and resources. With heavy workloads in teaching, teacher educators have almost no time for conducting research. There is also an issue with the capacity of teacher educators to conduct research and produce high-quality academic writing. The combination of lack of time, limited support and resources, and poor research capacity has made research and publication challenging tasks. Kozok (2015) claims that having the pressure to do research and publish while receiving limited support and capacity have led faculty in Indonesian universities to take a shortcut to publish in low quality and predatory international journals.
I have been working as a teacher educator for about five years. Previously, I worked as a middle school teacher for six years. I spent five years in my undergraduate training in EFL teacher education. Reflecting on these experiences, I share views with Cochran-Smith (2003), Goodwin & Kosnik (2013), Johnson & Golombek (2016) and Ping, Schellings, and Beijaard (2018) about the important roles of teacher educators in preparing and educating teachers. I also agree with what Zeichner (2005), who argues that if teacher education is to be taken seriously in colleges, then the professional development of teacher educators needs to be taken more seriously. I believe that any efforts intended to improve the quality of teachers should begin at the college where the teachers are trained and prepared. Therefore, supporting teacher educators’ professional development is equally as important as providing professional development for teachers.

Given the complexities, challenges, and issues teacher educators in Indonesia are currently experiencing, it has become critical to design a professional development program that will provide them with support systems for improving their capacity in conducting research, especially the research situated in their practice. This kind of research should become a professional development practice that is important to not only help teacher educators find a balance between fulfilling the demand for research and publication but also to improve the quality of their practice. Practitioner inquiry in the form of self-study research fits these criteria because it is situated in practice, conducted in collaboration, and importantly, is relatively inexpensive.


**Purposes and questions of the study**

Literature underpinning this study is reviewed in the upcoming chapter two. Based on the literature, I began this study believing that self-study research has the potential to be used as a platform for the professional development of teacher educators in Indonesia. While I do not see this as a panacea for all the problems Indonesian teacher educators are currently experiencing, I believe that self-study research that is conducted collaboratively as a community offers Indonesian teachers educators support for improving their practice and opportunities to develop both professionally and personally – all of which will help to advance the field of teacher education (Kosnik, Lassonde, & Galman, 2009 and Loughran & Northfield, 1998). I was intrigued by what self-study research has to offer for teacher educators. Therefore, upon the completion of my doctoral education, I plan to return to the teachers college, where I previously worked and continue my work as a teacher educator. In addition to teaching, I will focus my research scholarship on studying how self-study research could improve the quality of teacher education in Indonesia. Therefore, this current study acts as the entry point into that scholarship.

However, I am aware that the sociocultural contexts, values, and education system in Indonesia are different from the Western contexts where self-study research was born and widely implemented by teacher educators. I cannot just ‘copy’ what I have learned about self-study and ‘paste’ it in my context verbatim. There are specific characteristics of self-study research that I need to pay close attention should I implement this in Indonesia. Two such characteristics are collaboration and reflection, which have been part of self-study research since its inception and are viewed as its defining
characteristics (Kitchen & Parker, 2009; Lighthall, 2004). Self-study is a systematic research process that requires dialogue and critique (Samaras, 2011), which may potentially lead participants to feel vulnerable. Therefore, to be successful, self-study research requires an environment that is open and safe for exchanging voices and perspectives (Barnes, 1998). Collaboration and critical reflection are two practices that must be considered carefully when implementing self-study research in the Indonesian context.

In Indonesia, as suggested by Suratno & Iskandar (2010), while some elements of collaborative inquiry and reflective practice have been implemented in education through classroom-based action research, their implementation may be challenged by personal issues and cultural factors. They explain that collaboration and reflective conversations are uneasy because people are worried about being judged by others for their quality of teaching. Moreover, in a society with high collectivism, such as Indonesia, maintaining harmony and well-being of others are priorities in social relationships (Sardjono, 1995 and Hardjowirogo, 1984 in Mangundjaya, 2013). Therefore, critiques may be considered to be a form of judgment that should be avoided for they may jeopardize the social relationship. Additionally, Mangundjaya (2013) claims that social hierarchy plays essential roles in a social relationship in Indonesia. People tend to be reluctant to have different opinions or express different opinions openly, especially to those whom they give high respect, such as teachers, leaders, elders, or parents.

With these characteristics in mind, developing a self-study community of practice in my context is not an easy task. Even in Western society, developing this kind of learning community is not easy. Kitchen and Parker (2009) suggest that the first vital step...
in creating a self-study community of practice is establishing conditions for research. They explain that it is important to ensure that the involvement in the community is voluntary. Also, the community should happen on common ground and requires safety, trust, and care to make the members feel less vulnerable when they share their struggles. The quote from Malcolm Gladwell (2002) at the beginning of this chapter that says, “If you want to bring a fundamental change in people’s belief and behavior … you need to create a community around them, where those new beliefs can be practiced and nurtured,” represents my overall vision for developing a self-study community of practice. To realize this vision, this study serves as the groundwork for establishing the precondition for the self-study research community as shown in the following picture, where the highlighted circle area on the left is the position of the current study in the plan.

![Figure 1-2: Situating the current study in the long-term plan of developing a self-study community of practice](image)

The goals of this study are twofold. First, I examine the dynamics of online conversations in a group consisting of five EFL teacher educators to identify whether engagement in the dialogues could foster critical reflections on their practice in teaching preservice teachers. More specifically, the objectives of this examination are to identify
the kinds of reflection that emerge from the conversation group and gain an in-depth understanding of the nature and quality of the dialogues in the online conversation group that might lead or hinder the critical reflections. Second, I investigate the relative benefits of participation in the conversation group as perceived by the participants. Moreover, I also seek to identify the conditions of sociocultural factors that support and inhibit the conversation and possibilities for moving forward with the plan of developing self-study community of practice.

To realize the goals, in this study, I seek to answer these following two fundamental questions:

1. How do teacher educators collaboratively identify shared problem spaces for inquiry through conducting self-study about their practices in teaching teachers? This question is based on my literature review-based assumptions that engaged in conversation about their daily practice may lead teacher educators to reflect on it. Through this question, I seek to identify:
   a. What kind of reflection emerges from the group conversations? and
   b. What is the nature of the talks in the conversations that lead to the reflections?

2. What challenges and opportunities do teacher educators identify to moving forward with self-study as a community of practice? In this question, I aim to identify value creation the teacher educators perceived from participating in the conversation group and sociocultural factors the teacher educators identify as the potential barriers and opportunities available for moving forward with the self-study community of practice.
The findings of this study are significant for me to reach my personal, professional, and intellectual goals. Personally, the findings of this study will shed light on my efforts in creating the self-study community of practice. Using the knowledge that I gain from this study as the basis, I will identify steps I need to take in the future to realize my goal in creating the self-study community. Professionally, for the larger context of Indonesian education, the findings of this study are beneficial for illuminating the efforts of building professional learning communities in teachers colleges. Moreover, through this study, I introduce a new perspective of researching EFL teaching and learning and provide an alternative platform for teacher educators’ professional development.

Although this study is context-bounded to a teachers’ college in Indonesia, I use it as a vehicle to contribute to the development of scholarship in the field of EFL teacher education, especially in the topic of professional development for teacher educators. Through studying professional development of educators in a particular context, this study serves my intellectual goal to participate in the scholarly conversations about how to effectively and meaningfully facilitate the professional development of teacher educators (Berry, 2008; Knight et al., 2014; Lunenberg et al., 2014) as Hamilton & Pinnegar (1998) have asserted that conducting studies about educational topics in different contexts is important to critique findings and propositions generated by previous studies and to urge educators to look at issues in education through many different lenses. I intend to contribute to the conversation by providing insights about facilitating and creating a safe, trusting, and caring environment that is supportive for teacher
educators to learn from and with each other through self-study group in a collective society.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have outlined the personal, professional, and literature-based rationales for conducting this study. This study made a small step of a larger initiative to develop a professional development platform in the form of self-study community of practice in an EFL teachers college in Indonesia. I view the self-study community has the potential to become a professional development platform for it is anchored in practice, conducted in collaborative ways, and relatively inexpensive. In the following chapter, I will present a review of the literature and theoretical frameworks that inform and sustain this study.
Chapter Two

Review of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks

“If we want to grow as teachers –
we must do something alien to academic culture:
we must talk to each other about our inner lives.” –
Parker J. Palmer (2017)

In The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life

This study is not a self-study, but a case study intended as a groundwork for establishing the preconditions for the self-study community of practice I intend to create in the EFL teachers’ college. In the previous chapter, I have elaborated that the purpose of this study is to examine the potential application of self-study community of practice to be used as a professional development practice for EFL teacher educators in Indonesia. In this chapter, I will review previous research that informed this study and theories that sustained it. This chapter consists of two sections: The first section presents a review of previous studies about self-study research in teaching and teacher education practices. The second section discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpinned this study. I will conclude this chapter by summarizing how this literature and theories informed and underpinned the study.

Self-study research in teaching and teacher education practices

In addition to contributing to the improvement of teacher educators’ practice, Vanassche & Kelchtermans (2015) explain that self-study research has also become a vehicle for teacher educators to make explicit and validate their professional expertise with the explicit intent of advancing the public knowledge base of teacher education. Therefore, despite being criticized for lacking methodological rigor and transparency (Feldman, 2007; Loughran, 2010) and insufficient basis in previous work in the field that
establish ‘chains of inquiry’ (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Zeichner, 2007; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2015), self-study research has also been conceptualized as the research with the most significant development in the field (Zeichner, 1999 in Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2015). In this section, I will review previous studies about self-study in teaching and teacher education practices with a focus on identifying its characteristics and methodologies.

**What is self-study research?**

Self-study has been defined in multiple ways in the literature. It has been characterized as an approach to research that enables teacher educators to reflect on and scrutinize practice and assumptions about learning to improve pedagogy and challenge the status-quo within the profession (Brandenburg, 2008). Additionally, Sell in Samaras (2011) defines self-study as a systematic inquiry about one’s own teaching context that requires critical and collaborative reflection in order to generate knowledge and inform the broader education field. Meanwhile, Hamilton & Pinnegar (1998) describe self-study as a study of one’s self, action, and ideas and a process of researching the practices and perspectives of teacher educators and preservice teachers from the “inside.” Furthermore, self-study is also defined as a systematic inquiry into practice that is often instigated by problems and intended to gain deeper understandings about teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2005; Loughran, 2004; Tidwell & Fitzgerald, 2004). Self-study is a research genre that teacher educators use for improving their personal and professional capacities as well as contributing to the development of pedagogy of teacher education.
Characteristics of self-study research

Self-study research has two essential characteristics: being situated in one’s own practice and conducted in collaboration.

Situated on one’s own practice

Self-study researchers strive to find answers to the research questions that are anchored in their own practices (Nilsson & Loughran, 2012). Using a dilemma identified from practice as the basis for inquiry, self-study researchers pursue a variety of topics. One trend has included self-study researchers who pursue the topic of transition, transformation, and identity development of new teacher educators. For example, using self-study research, Murray & Male (2005), Morberg & Eisenschmidt's (2009), and Bullock & Ritter (2011) examine their transition process from schoolteachers into academia. Their self-study has revealed that the transition from school teaching to college teaching was not an easy process because it happened in phases and involved turning points.

Meanwhile, for Morberg & Eisenschmidt's (2009), self-study helped them to identify and make sense of the transition into academia that happened in two phases: maintaining previous identities as schoolteachers and familiarizing themselves to the norms, values, and expectations as academics. Moreover, for Bullock & Ritter (2011), self-study became a tool that enabled them to have better understandings of the tensions they experienced and acted as the catalyst for them to reframe their identity as researchers who teach teachers. Previously, Murray & Male (2005) also conducted self-study research to examine their story of becoming teacher educators. Their self-study helped them identify two levels of teaching: first-order teaching and second-order teaching.
While first-order teaching refers to the teaching of school students, they named second-order teaching as the teaching of college students – preservice teachers. They explained that second-order teaching requires teacher educators to have not only knowledge of the content area, but also knowledge about educating teachers, such as the ability to work with adult learners and promote active independent learning.

The self-study research regarding the transition and transformation process from schoolteachers into academics offers good examples of the potential of self-study as a vehicle for teacher educators’ professional development. As defined by Sell in Samaras (2011), that self-study is a systematic inquiry about one’s own teaching context that requires critical and collaborative reflection, in these self-studies, the teacher educators collaboratively and critically examined their pathways of becoming to make sense of it and identify what knowledge basis they needed for teaching preservice teachers.

Teacher educators have also used self-study research to gain a better understanding of the learning and development of preservice teachers in learning to become teachers (Loughran, 2004; Tidwell & Fitzgerald, 2004). For example, Fletcher (2012) employed self-study to understand his students’ learning process of becoming elementary schoolteachers. Through self-study, Fletcher learned about the importance of previous experiences that teacher candidates bring into the teachers’ college. He went on to explain that the understanding of prior experiences of elementary preservice teachers led him to tailor his teaching to deal with these prior experiences. Reflecting on his self-study, Fletcher stated

Had I not understood the nature of teacher candidates’ negative experiences as school students, I may have gone on with what I had been doing as a classroom teacher, armed with the inaccurate assumption that learning was taking place if they were having fun and participating (p. 99)
In another study, Rosaen & Terpstra (2012) used self-study to help preservice teachers develop their conceptions of literacy and how to incorporate technology into teaching literacy. Through self-study, they identified how preservice teachers learned from their learning experiences when teaching literacy and the difficulties they experienced as they integrated technology into their teaching. Self-study has been a means for teacher educators to do research and get a better understanding the complex nature of teaching and learning (Loughran, 2007) as well as for connecting their beliefs and practices with a purpose of improving the quality of learning (Tidwell & Fitzgerald, 2004).

**Collaboration in self-study research**

Collaboration has been an essential part of self-study since its inception and is one of its defining characteristics (Lighthall, 2004). Kitchen & Parker (2009) claim that collaboration provides teacher educators with spaces and communities where they can engage in conversations about their practice. Through engagement in the conversations, teacher educators share stories of their practices and provide support for each other. Collaboration is critical for self-study research to guarantee that the focus, data collection, and interpretation do not become self-justification and rationalization of experience (Loughran & Northfield, 1998). In this way, collaboration functions as a mechanism for triangulation and avoids the pitfalls of individualism and navel-gazing (Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, & Placier, 2004; Kelchtermans & Hamilton, 2007). Therefore, although the focus may be on one’s own self, self-study uses systematic and well-designed procedures that involve critical friends in a collaborative setting.
Collaboration in self-study research is also essential for the creation and dissemination of knowledge (Bodone, Gudjonsdottir, Dalmau, Gudjόnsdόttir, & Dalmau, 2004). Through collaborative self-study, researchers engage in dialogic reflections with trusted colleagues to validate their experiences by asking for clarification and offering alternative perspectives. Collaborative self-study, therefore, offers teacher educators spaces for learning from and with each other. Loughran & Northfield (1998) claim that self-study will become a valuable learning opportunity when it is a shared task.

Teacher educators have engaged in a variety of forms of collaboration and used different tools for establishing collaboration in self-study research. Researchers have established collaborations with colleagues from overseas universities and benefitted from the advancement of technology for collecting data. For example, Bullock & Ritter (2018) used microblogging in their self-study to share stories of transition into academia. There has also been an intercollegiate self-study collaboration formed by teacher educators from two different universities located in the same region, such as Green et al. (2013) who explored issues in the online teaching of early childhood teacher education. Teacher educators have also established collaborations with schoolteachers such as Geursen, Berry, Hagebeuk, Peters, & Lunenberg (2016) who created a self-study community of inquiry and invited teachers and teacher educators to be members. Finally, Freese (2006) conducted a collaborative self-study with her students to examine how the preservice teachers think, the conflicts and fears they encountered, and what benefits they derived from systematically examining their teaching. Geographical boundaries did not make self-study research challenging to be conducted collaboratively.
Methodologies of self-study research

LaBoskey (2004) argued that self-study has to be improvement-aimed research, and the knowledge developed through self-study research cannot be disconnected from the complex realities to which it refers. Therefore, in practice, while relying heavily on qualitative methods, self-study researchers usually modify these traditional qualitative methods to fit within the context of their study (Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009). In this review, I classify self-study research methods into three general categories: personal history self-study, self-study through action research, and self-study through visual representation.

Self-study research grounded in life history

Personal life is defined as “formative, contextualized experiences that have influenced teachers’ thinking about teaching and their own practice” (Samaras, Hicks, & Berger, 2007). Generally, researchers who ground their self-study on personal history have the goals of gaining a better understanding of their professional identity and making sense of how their personal life experiences influence their professional work as teacher educators. Samaras, Hicks, & Berger (2007) describe three primary purposes of personal life self-study research. First, researchers use personal life self-study for self-knowing and forming – and reforming – a professional identity. Through exploring their personal history and its connections to teaching and learning and studying their home culture and its influence on whom they have become as teacher educators, researchers strive for self-knowing and developing professional identity.
Second, researchers use personal life self-study for modeling and evaluating effective reflection. Preservice teachers come to teachers college with preconceptions about teaching and learning. Hammerness et al. (2005) cited Lortie (1975) name the preconceptions as to the apprenticeship of observation; one of the well-documented problems in learning to teach. To deal with this problem, teacher educators may use self-study personal history to reflect on their own apprenticeship and use their own life history as an example of reflection for preservice teachers. Moreover, third, teacher educators may also use personal life history research to push the boundaries of teaching. Using this kind of self-study, teacher educators “examine the inconsistencies involved in their teaching and showcase their failings so that they and others, especially their students, might learn from their mistakes” (Samaras et al., 2007, p. 924).

Cole & Knowles (1995) note that two assumptions guide life history self-study. First, it assumes that becoming a teacher educator is a lifelong process of continuing and growth rooted in personal histories. Therefore, “making sense of prior and current life experiences in the context of the person as it influences the personal is the essence of facilitating professional development” (Cole & Knowles, 1995, p. 131). Furthermore, the second guiding assumption maintains that professional development is facilitated by the opportunity for ongoing critical reflection on an inquiry into the broad spectrum of experiences that influence professional lives and history. Therefore, they “place emphasis on the importance of being professional who engage in critical analysis of practice with attention to the multiple roles and context that comprise it” (p. 131).
Personal history self-study can take many forms such as autoethnography (Sanders, Parsons, Mwavita, & Thomas, 2015), co/autoethnography or duoethnography (Higgins, Morton, & Wolkenhauer, 2018; M. Taylor, Klein, & Abrams, 2014), and narrative inquiry (Akinbode, 2013; Allison-Roan & Hayes, 2012; and Hayler & Williams, 2017). Taylor, Klein, & Abrams (2014) engaged in collaborative co/autoethnography to examine the complexities of working in the third spaces as a mentor for preservice teachers. Using narrative writing for data collections and dialogic conversation for analysis, they revealed the authentic relationship, authority into collaboration, collaborative agency, and apprenticing to master teachers as sources of this complexity. Similarly, (Higgins et al., 2018) conducted a duoethnography study to (re)conceptualize the role of supervisors in teaching practice. They claim that duoethnography can promote critical reflection and break down supervisor isolation. Other teacher educators have also taken up autoethnography and used their own life histories to explore their roles as facilitators of professional literacy development (Sanders et al., 2015) and to uncover their journey as feminist teacher educators (Coia & Taylor, 2013). Taylor & Coia (2009) acknowledge that using co/autoethnography in researching their own practice has led to a stronger learning experience for them and their students by making explicit the relational and cultural aspects of teaching.

There is also personal life history self-study research in the form of narrative inquiry (Akinbode, 2013; Allison-Roan & Hayes, 2012; and Hayler & Williams, 2017). Using Johns’ six dialogical movements, Akinbode (2013) wrote reflective journals and engaged in dialogues with critical friends to examine his transformation into teacher educators. Also, Allison-Roan & Hayes (2012) used autobiographical narratives of their
own early schooling experiences to provide their students with examples of how to deal with the preconceptions they bring into teachers’ colleges. They found that sharing their early school experiences had encouraged their students to develop an understanding of the histories and backgrounds of their own. Moreover, Hayler & Williams's (2017) personal history self-study examined their work as co-editors of an international collection about teacher educators’ journeys of becoming through a narrative approach. Through examining the chapters in the collection and writing their historical narratives, they acknowledge that working as co-editors of a collection helped them to develop a stronger sense of evolution in their professional selves and gave them more apparent perspectives on their own professional development.

Through self-study personal history, teacher educators use themselves as the basis for professional development. They examine the dilemmas, tensions, and challenges they experienced along the way of becoming teacher educators as the stepping stone for improving their personal and professional competence and gaining a better understanding of their students’ learning. Loughran (2004) as cited in Samaras (2011) noted that “self-study allowed teacher educators to gain a better understanding of the intersections of their personal histories of learning, their culture, and their professional practices” (p. 58). Moreover, by examining their practice collaboratively with colleagues, they developed a self-understanding personally and professionally and reframed their practice.

**Self-study through action research**

Self-study research is influenced by earlier practice-situated research models such as teacher inquiry, reflective practice, and action research. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (2004) collectively combined these three types of inquiry under the umbrella term of practitioner
inquiry. With its influence on self-study research, it is not surprising that many self-study researchers come to self-study with a background of involvement in action research (Samaras & Freese, 2009). However, despite the apparent similarities in the ways that both focus on inquiring into problems situated in practice, self-study and action research also have some key differences.

According to Feldman, Paugh, & Mills (2004), the significant distinction between self-study and action research is in the change that occurs. In self-study, the “self” is the focus with the goal being to reframe the understanding of teachers’ roles on students’ learning. Meanwhile, in action research, the focus is on the actions that are intended to change activities in classrooms. Using their experiences as resources for research, self-study researchers “problematize their selves in their practice situations” to reframe their beliefs and/or practice (Feldman et al., 2004 in Samaras, 2011). Moreover, (Samaras, 2011) and Samaras & Freese (2009) note that questions in self-study research are often framed in orientation to critical pedagogy and the study is designed to lead to the reconceptualization of the role of teachers. They also distinguish self-study from action research in the way that it requires collaboration for building new understanding through dialogs and validation of findings.

I found it challenging to fully grasp the distinction between self-study research and action research. Based on my experience in conducting action research, I came to use the analogy of “window” and “mirror” to differentiate the two research methodologies. Conducting action research is like looking out through a window. We look out the window to see there is a problem in our classroom and then take actions to deal with the problem and improve the quality of the classroom. We focus on the action and its impacts
on our classroom. Meanwhile, when we identify a problem in our class and take actions to deal with it, instead of focusing on the actions, we look at the “mirror” to think and reflect on the action we take – this is self-study. Feldman et al. (2004) argue that action research could provide methods for the self-studies. Thus, when we engage in self-study through action research, it means we look out the “window” and at “mirror” at the same time to problematize our practice and gain knowledge about it.

An example of self-study through action research is a study by Paugh & Robinson (2009) who conducted self-study through participatory action research to explore the ways they and their students came to co-construct knowledge in a master degree course. They claim that conducting self-study research on teacher education practices using participatory action research offers researchers with cycles of studying dynamic roles and relationship. In their study, they collected and analyzed data in three cycles that included reflections on critical moments in each cycle. From this study, their self-study through participatory action research helped them gain deeper understandings of student learning, extending, and negotiating their roles as critical teachers and creating socially just literacy education.

Another self-study conducted through action research was carried out by Allan Feldman et al., (1998), who examined doctoral students’ roles in teacher education. They collected data through preservice student journals, lesson plans, surveys, interviews, research notebooks, and field observation notes. They analyzed data continuously through memos, reflective journals, and weekly conversations with response groups, starting point speeches, and data workshop. In two years, their study is divided into two cycles that they called first and second order. In the first order, they focused on individual
self-studies that each doctoral student conducted to examine the relationship between themselves and preservice teachers. In the second order method, they focused on the cross-case analysis of the individual self-study report. They identified three major themes in their study: power and voice, professional growth, and reflective practice. They concluded their research by claiming that doctoral students’ roles in the teacher education program are essential, and they could become peer collaborators for teachers in conducting action research.

**Arts-based self-study research**

Citing Nussbaum (1995), Galman (2009) claims that arts can help us focus on human meanings and experiences. She describes that examining teacher educators’ practice through arts can deepen their understanding of their practices and improve student learning. It is also joyful, deeply satisfying, and compelling work. Galman (2009) defines art-based self-study as research “about using the power, economy, and reflective/transformative potential of the arts to conduct and deepen inquiry and to represent and disseminate its findings” (p. 130). Her view of the potentials of arts as a medium for self-study research is in line with Sandra & Claudia (2007). They hold that there are certain theoretical stances and methodological methods derived from cultural studies, visual studies, and the visual arts that fit into self-study research because they facilitate self-reflection and encourage critical consideration of social and cultural dimensions of personal experience. Therefore, visual and artistic objects can make self-study profoundly meaningful and pleasurable.
According to Galman (2009), art-based self-study is useful when we are interested in experimenting with new discourses and new ways to demonstrate knowing and promoting meaningful reflection toward the transformation of self and practice with the goal of improved teaching. Similar to other self-study methods, art-based self-study also emphasizes the use of multiple data collections tools and collaborations in the analysis to guarantee authenticity and truthfulness. There are a variety of artistic modes and expressions used as a means for self-study research such as performance, photography, video documentary, art installations/multimedia representations and stories (Galman, 2009; Samaras, 2010; Grushka & Young, 2014; Sandra & Claudia, 2007; Hiralaal, Matebane, & Pithouse-morgan, 2018; Pillay, Pithouse-Morgan, & Naicker, 2017; Pithouse-morgan et al., 2015; Pithouse-morgan & Samaras, 2009, 2018; ).

Samaras (2010) used art-based techniques for teaching research to support the development of students’ self-study research projects. She utilized three arts-based research projects in the forms of artifacts, visual proposal, and self-portraits to facilitate her doctoral students to articulate their research interests, frame research proposals, and reflect on their development as researchers. She collected data through eliciting students’ feedbacks, writing instructional logs that include weekly reflections, lesson plans, notes, email from students, teaching videotapes, blackboard posting, and colleague feedbacks; and getting students’ final narrative course evaluation. Her study revealed that arts-objects are useful for examining students’ expressions, confusions, self-understanding, and understanding of others.
The literature also identified other examples of art-based self-study research such as Pillay et al. (2017) who used collective poetry to explore academics’ lived experiences of working with graduate students and came to a turning point of reflexivity and self-realization; Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras (2018) explored how multiple interests, practices, and methods have come together to support fluid, dialogic co-learning, and re-learning through creating poetic bricolage; and Grushka & Young (2014) used perzine to promote preservice teachers reflectivity. This art-based self-study research offers teacher educators alternative modes for conducting research.

**Creating a self-study learning community**

This section will present a review of previous research about self-study learning community. I will focus this review on the creation of the community that includes the critical roles of critical friends, dialogue and conversation in a learning community, and facilitation process.

**Critical friends in self-study research**

Self-study research is paradoxical in a way that it is a study of one’s self, actions, and ideas and a process of researching the practices and perspectives of teacher educators from the “inside” (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998), but one of its defining characteristics is collaboration (Lighthall, 2004) where researchers engage in critical dialogues throughout the process. Critical friendships have been encouraged in self-study research (Schuck & Segal, 2002) and widely documented within self-study research methodology (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001) and made it an essential part of self-study research.
The most recent self-study research about critical friends is one by Olan & Edge (2019) who examined recursive processes such as collaborative meaning-making and dialogic interaction in generating critical friendship and how the recursive processes generate and sustain a critical friendship. They used modified conference protocols to guide them in the conversations, and they identified that self-study had helped them in

(1) disarming the boundaries of our individual selves by disrupting our existing understanding of self in relationship to our past lived experiences;
(2) crossing into a collaborative space where we are able to co-author our narrative lives through a collaborative conference protocol; and (3) pushing the boundaries of our present work as teacher educator-researchers by transforming our professional inquiries through co-authoring (p. 31-32)

Their self-study reveals the critical roles of conference protocols to facilitate conversations that lead to the establishment of critical friendship. While Olan and Edge’s (2019) study is about generating critical friendship, the study by Martin & Russell (2018) provides an example of how critical friendship works in supporting self-study research.

In her study, Martin, a graduate teaching assistant, investigated her practices in supervising preservice teachers’ practicum and invited her professor, Russell, as a critical friend. The role of the critical friend in her study is in line with the definition of critical friends as identified by Costa & Kallick (1993), “trusted persons who ask provocative questions and offers unique critiques about the study but also provides data to be examined through another lens” (p. 50). Russell also visited classrooms for supervision and collected data to be analyzed collaboratively with Martin. In this way, Russell is not only acting as a critical friend but also actively engaged as a co-researcher. There is also a reciprocal nature of critical friendship in this study in the way that Russell acts as a trusted person who asks challenging questions, offers critiques, and provides data, and
Martin acts as a trusted colleague who seeks support and validation of her research to gain new perspectives in understanding and reframing of their interpretation (Samaras, 2011, p. 5).

There is no one single standardized model of critical friendship in self-study research. The form and roles are varied depending on the context of the study. Petroelje Stolle et al. (2019)collaboratively investigated critical friendship to explore its layers. In their study, they investigated how their interactive inquiry on the topic of critical friendship led them to new understandings of critical friends. To find the answers, they collected artifacts from the self-study scholarship/literature, written and real-time (audio recorded) dialogue and critical friend response memos. They identified a flexible definition of critical friendship in self-study research, as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close friend(s)</th>
<th>Stranger(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insider(s)</td>
<td>Outsider(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert(s)</td>
<td>Non-expert(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully involved</td>
<td>Loosely involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocal in nature</td>
<td>One way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple critical friendship</td>
<td>Single critical friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive</td>
<td>Not productive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined expectation</td>
<td>No defined expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-1 Critical friend definition continuum (Stolle et al., 2019)

The table above summarizes how critical friendship is enacted in self-study research and identifies the various forms it can take within self-study research: between close friends, between strangers, insiders and outsiders, or between experts and non-experts, and so forth. However, Stolle et al. (2019) emphasize that the continuum above does not denote the value of the critical friendship (i.e., which form is more effective than others), but rather indicates the variance of critical friendship in self-study research.
Samaras (2011) describes that establishing and sustaining critical friendship should be the initial vital steps in self-study research because the research is built “on the necessity of a relationship between the individual and collective cognition in teachers’ professional development and the power of dialog in building a learning community” (p. 5). However, Costa & Kallick (1993) remind us that since the word critique is often equated with judgment, the critical friendship requires trust and formal processes in establishing a critical friendship. A similar suggestion is also offered by Samaras (2011) & Schuck & Russell (2005) who explain that critical friendship requires openness and trust as vital elements in establishing and sustaining a team of critical friends.

Samaras (2011) suggests the following steps for establishing a critical friendship. *First*, create a working structure for critique and support. While having personal friends who share views about teacher education could provide a strong foundation, there is no guarantee that a fruitful critical friendship will be established (Schuck & Russell, 2005). Therefore, it is important to be clear about the nature of the relationship (Costa & Kallick, 1993) and establish ground rules and revisit and reclarify them often (Samaras, 2011). *Second*, take a critical approach to each other’s research. Critical does not necessarily mean placing blame and making judgments, but rather becoming active listeners without having personal agendas (Samaras, 2011 & Costa & Kallick, 1993).

*Third*, embrace alternative perspectives for improving the quality of teaching (Samaras, 2011). Schuck and Russell (2005) urge that “critical friendship contributes by developing and extending each friend’s perceptions of the classroom context” (p. 120). It is through embracing the alternative perspective that critical friendship provides a meaningful learning experience. *Fourth*, acknowledge that collaboration is a complex
process. Friendship can be challenged by the complexity of talking across perceptual differences in a critical friend relationship (Schuck & Russell, 2005, p. 120). Be clear and open about everyone’s responsibility and uphold honesty, openness, and transparency of any problems that surface (Samaras, 2011) and avoid judgment; give judgment only when friends ask for it. Another important note when developing critical friendship is that it needs to be documented and reevaluated often for improvement (Schuck & Russell, 2005).

**Dialog and conversations in a learning community**

Although not specifically refer to self-study, Mercer (2000) suggests that active participation in a community enables its members to use specific languages – a discourse – that they can adapt and use as a tool for joint intellectual activity. Furthermore, Littleton & Mercer (2013) & Mercer (2000, 2004) claim that language is not only a tool for sharing information and social interaction but also a tool for collective thinking – “when we are working together, we do not only interact, we *interthink*” (p. 132). The functions of language as a tool for social interactions as well as for collective thinking are well-documented in the literature of self-study research in teaching and teacher education practice.

Since self-study research requires collaboration, dialog, and conversation have become essential parts of this line of research. In their self-study about conversations in collaborative spaces, Barak et al. (2010), for example, found that engagement in conversations helped them build a common language for understanding, investigating, and reframing the facets of their practice in teaching, researching, and collaboratively running a teacher education program. Moreover, they acknowledge that the conversations
facilitated them to build a knowledge-creating community that has the strength, resilience, and ability to continue and re-inventing themselves. Meanwhile, Cardetti & Orgnero (2013) claim that dialog facilitated them to engage in an inquiry that helped them to gain a better understanding of the essential aspects of their work and transform their teaching practice. As a result of the interdisciplinary dialog in their self-study, they identified five stages of their work that include creating a collaborative environment, imitating inquiry, sharing inquiry, scholarly connecting, and continuing collaboration in practice and beyond. Moreover, Kitchen, Ciuffetelli Parker, & Gallagher (2008) acknowledge that authentic conversations could contribute to faculty development.

Conversations in a learning community can also provide authentic learning experiences. Clark (2001) summarizes the ways authentic conversations promote learning: 1) facilitates the articulations of implicit theories and beliefs; 2) provides a means for seeing the world through the eyes of others; 3) rejuvenates a sense of personal and professional authority; 4) an antidote for isolation; 5) promotes reaffirmation of idealism and commitments; 6) offers solutions to problems; and 7) facilitates learning about teaching. However, to become an effective means of professional development in a learning community, conversations should have the characteristics of respect for each other, caring, strong voices, focus on practice or concrete situation, and inconclusive (Guilfoyle et al., 2004).

Furthermore, to provide an authentic learning experience, Clark (2001) identifies several qualities of good conversation. Good conversation must demand good content – something that can make the participants feel excited. The good content should make the conversations meaningful to participants and concern issues about which they are
passionate (Kitchen et al., 2008). A good conversation must also resist the bound of definition. In line with this quality, Kitchen et al. (2008) describe the conversation in their self-study as open to diverse views and able to cope with uncertainty. Engagement in conversations provides spaces for reflections and exchange ideas that can generate new ideas and perspectives.

Moreover, Clark (2001) also explains that good conversation is voluntary. To ensure this nature, Guilfoyle et al. (2004) and Kitchen et al. (2008) invited their colleagues to join the self-study learning community they are building. There is no institutionalized force for them to join the community. Good conversations also happen on common ground. The desire to have their voice heard and the needs for having a support system could become the common ground that provides the foundation for their conversation in the self-study (Kitchen et al., 2008). Good conversation requires safety, trust, and care. Managing confidentiality, no interruptions, no unsolicited advice giving, and no coercion to talk are a few of the rules for having good conversations (Clark, 2001). A good conversation must also have the potential to develop. Kitchen et al. (2008) describe that from their conversations, they can identify the themes in their work that need to be explored further collaboratively in their self-study group. Lastly, Clark (2001) explains that a good conversation has a future. It should lead to the improvement of teaching and learning quality.

Literature also describes that teacher educators use a variety of tools for facilitating their conversation in self-study research. They engage in face-to-face meetings regularly both on and off-campus (Anderson et al., 2010; Kitchen et al., 2008;
& Olan & Edge, 2019) or through an online platform such as chatrooms (Guilfoyle et al., 2004).

**Facilitating self-study learning community**

The literature on self-study research has documented studies about creating, enacting, and facilitating self-study. Most of the studies about the topic centered around the work of Hoban (2007); Hoban et al., (2012); Hoban, Butler, & Lesslie (2007) and Kitchen & Parker (2009) who provide guidelines, standards for quality, and model of self-study as a learning community.

**Procedures**

Examining the formation of self-study of the Arizona group conducted by Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, & Placier (2007), Kitchen & Parker (2009) identified eight characteristics of self-study community and framed them into four standards for quality of a self-study community. Included in the standards are the procedures for creating a self-study community. The first step in creating a self-study community is establishing the conditions for research. Kitchen & Parker (2009) described four qualities to be met when establishing conditions for research: 1) involvement in the community is voluntary; 2) the community happens on common ground; 3) community requires safe, trust, and care environment; and 4) members share struggles through conversations. The following picture summarizes the procedures of creating a self-study community of practice and the standards for quality that need to be met at each stage.
In order to ensure that the involvement is voluntary, Kitchen & Parker (2009) invited their colleagues to join the self-study they intended to create. They emphasized the purposes of the self-study community in the invitation letter to convince people to join. The community should also be founded on the common ground. Kitchen & Parker (2009) provide an example in their self-study community where they share concerns regarding tenure and promotion as the common ground. They suggest that the first gathering should focus on discussing topics addressed to the common areas of concern and interest of the members, and encourage the gathering to be held beyond formal academic meetings. Meanwhile, to create a safe environment, trust, and care, Kitchen & Parker (2009) urge the importance of attentive listening. A similar suggestion is also offered by Guilfoyle et al. (2004), who explain that a community that promotes meaningful dialogues has the characteristics of respect, caring, strong voice, and focus on practice. Moreover, the community should also facilitate discussions about struggles that each member encounters. For that purpose, active participation in the conversations is compulsory.

Table 2-2: Procedures of creating self-study community of practice and the standards for quality for each stage (Kitchen & Parker, 2009)
The second stage of creating a self-study community of practice involves the creation of educational knowledge. Kitchen & Parker (2009) describe that “collective dialogue within the self-study community should center on educational knowledge and improving our teacher education practices” (p. 121). To be able to create educational knowledge, Kitchen & Parker (2009) suggest that the community members should explore their practice through dialogues and critically examine their group process and dynamics. A critical feature in this stage is that members of the group study their own practices and share the results with a broader audience through publications in conferences and peer-reviewed journals. Moreover, in the last stage, the self-study community involves recreating teacher education and the public discourse of communities of practice. In this stage, using the knowledge they create through examining their practice in self-study, the community members then seek to contribute to the development of teacher education quality. Kitchen & Parker (2009) claim that taking part in a self-study community not only provided them with a sense of belonging and community but also increased their commitment to teacher education reform.

Model and design

Hoban et al. (2012) initiated a project intended to establish a professional learning community that “involves a group of teacher educators/academics making a deliberate decision to participate in a planned professional learning program to initiate and sustain self-study research” (p. 175).
They adopted the teachers’ professional learning community designed by Aubusson et al. (2009) as the guidelines for creating the professional learning community. As seen in figure 2.2, the model comprises of three main principles of a professional learning community based on self-study research: content, process, and condition.

To initiate the project, Hoban sent invitations to all faculty members in the university. Sending the invitation is intended to ensure that the involvement in the community is voluntary (Kitchen & Parker, 2009). Adopting the Aubusson et al. model, in the content, Hoban changed the focus of professional learning from classroom practice to aspects of teaching about teaching that is relevant to teacher educators’ work. To sustain the professional learning community, several conditions were identified. Hoban organized a one-day workshop at the beginning of the project, scheduled whole group meetings every six weeks, formed smaller groups of three or pairs to assist with data

**Figure 2-1:** A model of self-study professional learning community developed by (Hoban et al., 2012) and adopted from Aubusson et al. (2009)
collection, invited a facilitator for each group, and held a two-day writing retreat at the end of the first year in which an external expert on self-study was invited. Moreover, throughout the process, meetings were divided into two halves. In the first half, the meetings discussed general issues about self-study based on readings, while in the second half, the meetings focused on self-study activities such as academic sharing, reflecting on their study, and seeking advice on the ideas being attempted. Reflections, actions, feedback, and community were the primary characteristics of this self-study learning community.

The model that Hoban developed is an example of a variety of model and design of self-study learning community. A book volume entitled *Teaching, Learning, and Enacting of Self-Study Methodology: Unraveling a Complex Interplay* edited by Ritter, Lunenberg, Pitthouse-Morgan, Samaras, and Vanasche (2018) presents a variety of models, designs, practices, and issues of teaching and enacting self-study research in different contexts. However, these approaches share a commonality in the ways that they focus on examining one’s own practice, include reflections, dialogues, and community, and take a certain period to fully function as a community. Samaras & Pithouse-morgan (2018) summarize that the design of self-study research as learning community is comprised of elements such as accountability, integrated collective reflectivity, collective creativity, dissemination and sharing of the progress of the study, improved learning for self and others, and authenticated and invited leadership.

The studies addressing the creation of a self-study learning community also refer to the guidelines for teaching and facilitating a self-study research learning community proposed by Lunenberg & Samaras (2011). After studying their practice in teaching self-
study research in two different contexts: the Netherland and the USA, Lunenberg, and Samaras came up with the following guidelines for teaching self-study research:

1. The self-study should begin with the focus on the self. The facilitator should ensure that self-study participants initiate and study their own practice and utilize a self-study method aligned with their inquiry;

2. Emphasize the learning side of self-study research with improved and continuous learning that extends beyond the self. For this purpose, Lunenberg & Samaras (2011) remind facilitator not to provide direct solutions to the participants. While providing support is an essential role of a facilitator, they also should not make the participants too dependent on them;

3. Self-study community should produce knowledge and make it available to the public through conference presentation or journal publication. Here, facilitators should provide multiple opportunities to share their work through dialog and drafts, promote presentations in and outside the group, and offer support and direction in participants’ writing, presenting, and publication efforts;

4. Dialogic structures are important for facilitating participants to engage and contribute to the community productively. The facilitator should focus their efforts on creating an environment that is safe and supportive intellectually, being aware of personal issues in the group, and inviting and involving guests to share their experience in self-study;

5. Transparent and systematic research process: provide and promote continuous opportunities for participants to present the documentation of their work openly to assess and validate the quality of their research. The facilitator should promote the
culture of transparency, not assuming that participants know how to conduct research and thus the need to take time to teach about it, encourage participants to trust the process of research as discoveries and not necessarily final solutions, and celebrate the research journey together; and

6. Facilitators should become the role model for conducting self-study. They also carry out a self-study on his or her teaching of self-study research, explain the underpinnings of the process of doing so to the participants, and make himself or herself vulnerable in the community by asking for feedback.

Facilitators play critical roles in teaching, enacting, and creating a self-study learning community. They act as colleagues, teachers, mentors, critical friends, and co-researchers. However, facilitating a self-study community is not easy. Vanassche & Kelchtermans (2016) and Ritter (2018) warn that the facilitation of self-study research involves tensions and dilemmas. Ritter (2018) encountered at least three challenges when teaching and facilitating self-study research:

First, I struggled from an instructional perspective to actively plan and execute learning opportunities for the group. Second, from a relational perspective, I struggled to forge educative relationships with my diverse group of colleagues in a new professional context. And, finally, I struggled with teaching about some of the methodological features of self-study given its highly personal nature and the profound ways in which it diverges from other research methodologies (p. 22)

He explained that it took three years for him to deal with these challenges. He spent the first two years defining the contents, processes, and conditions for the self-study research and provided step-by-step guidance for the self-study community to navigate their study. In his reflection of the facilitation process, Ritter acknowledged that he was always somewhat concerned with how his colleagues perceived his actions as he
attempted to facilitate their understanding and practice of self-study. Additionally, Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2016) remind facilitators of the side-effect of self-study community. One such side-effect is the social relationship among the teacher educators as the results of the critical discussions in the group. Therefore, they warn facilitators to create preconditions for trust but also organize for productive discomfort. They also suggest that facilitators pay careful attention to the character of teacher educators’ work and thinking that might become the sources of tensions in the community.

Theoretical frameworks

A theoretical framework is a lens that the researcher uses to view the world (Merriam, 2001). Grant & Osanloo (2014) define a theoretical framework as “an existing theory (theories) in the literature that has already been tested and validated by others and is considered a generally acceptable theory in the scholarly literature” (p. 16). Two major theories of human learning and development underpinned this study in gaining an in-depth understanding of how EFL teacher educators engaged in conversations about their practices. These two theories are transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997) and communities of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998). Because these theories maintain that learning occurs as the result of social interactions, they offer tremendous explanatory power to understand how online conversations promote critical reflections and become a support system for the professional development of the teacher educators.

Transformative learning

Jack Mezirow coined transformative learning theory as a conceptual framework to understand how adults learn. He defines transformative learning as learning that transforms problematic frames of references – sets of fixed assumptions and expectations
(habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets) – to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change. It is a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and thereby become more open, permeable and better validated (Cranton, 2016; Mezirow, 2009, 2012).

Mezirow (1997) defines a frame of references as the structures of assumptions through which people understand their experiences. These are comprised of habits of mind and point of view. Habits of mind, as he explains, are broad, abstract, orienting habitual ways of thinking and acting influenced by assumptions that constitute a set of cultural, social, educational, economic, political, or psychological codes. Meanwhile, points of view are the constellation of beliefs, values, judgments, attitudes, and feelings that shape a particular interpretation.

Summarizing Mezirow, Cranton (2016) elaborates frames of reference as a coherent body of experiences that define people’s lifeworld; this includes associations, concepts, values, feelings, and conditioned response. She explains that habits of mind are mindsets, assumptions, or predispositions that people use to interpret experiences. While points of view are subject to continuing changes as people engage in the process of problem-solving and modifying assumption, Mezirow (1997) describes that habits of mind are more durable because they emerge from the cultural assimilation and personal influences of the contexts where people live. Habits of mind are expressions of a point of view, the way people see things that are usually uncritically absorbed from our families, community, and culture.
From the perspective of transformative learning, as Mezirow (1990) explained, “learning may be defined as the process of making a new or revising interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action.” (p. 1). The learning process begins when people encounter unexpected things or something that does not fit with their expectations, values, beliefs, or prior experiences. Then, to deal with these, people engage in activities intended to examine these unexpected things and their habits of mind through critically reflecting on them. As a result, people may encounter an alternative perspective that leads them to question their current habits of mind. According to Cranton (2016), learning becomes transformative when people respond to that alternative habit of mind by reconsidering and revising their prior belief systems, then act based on the revised habit of mind, by the time the learning process becomes transformative.

Influenced by Habermas, Mezirow (1990) classifies learning into three different forms: instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory. He explains that in instrumental learning, people engage in actions intended to control and manage the environment or other people, including improving performance. Results of instrumental learning are validated through empirical testing and can be measured by looking at the aspects of productivity, performance, and behavior. Instrumental learning usually takes the form of hypothesis testing processes. Communicative learning, on the other hand, involves “understanding what others mean when they communicate with us” (Mezirow, 2009, p. 20). Communicative learning relies on the notion that people validate or justify contested beliefs and reach a common understanding of a particular issue through communication with each other. In communicative learning, to solve problems, people attempt to
understand what is meant by others through speech, writings, drama, art, or dance – it is not a hypothetical-deductive learning approach, but rather, is a dialog or conversation-driven learning through which people learn from and with each other.

Transformative learning aims to foster autonomous thinking by developing capacities of critical reflection on taken-for-granted assumptions that sustain contested point of views. Mezirow (2000) explains that the product of transformative learning is greater autonomy in thinking; that is a condition where learners are

“acquiring more of the understandings, skills, and dispositions required to become more aware of contexts of interpretations and beliefs, critically reflective of assumptions, able to participate freely and fully in rational discourse to find common meaning and validate beliefs, and effective in acting on the results of this reflective learning process.” (p. 29)

Emancipatory learning is where individuals learn through critically reflecting on their existing assumptions and points of views. This type of learning helps the learners to challenge presuppositions, explore alternative perspectives, transform old ways of understanding, and act on new perspectives (Mezirow, 1990)

Furthermore, when studying transformative learning, Taylor (2009) reminds researchers to have an awareness that its theoretical orientations fall into two theoretical frameworks. The first framework places emphasis on personal transformation and growth, where the unit of analysis is individuals. This framework pays little attention to the role of contexts and social change in the transformative experience. Meanwhile, the second framework focuses on transformative learning as social change and personal transformation where individual and social transformation is inherently linked. Since this current study focuses on examining the potential of online conversation for fostering
transformative learning of individual participants, I take the first theoretical orientation as the guiding framework and focus on personal transformation and growth.

Teacher educators are mature and autonomous professionals (Smith, 2005). They are considered not only capable of looking after their own professional learning but also contributing to the development of teacher education by creating new knowledge for the field (Koster et al., 2005). In Indonesia, for example, college-based teacher educators sit on the top of the hierarchy of teachers. As the teachers of all teachers, – pre-service and in-service – they design and deliver teacher education courses, supervise teaching practice, and participate in in-service teachers’ professional development. Through carrying out research, they are also expected to create new knowledge about teaching and learning. In short, they are both sources and creators of knowledge about teaching and learning. Therefore, it is critical for teacher educators to have the critical thinking ability to examine their practice and transform their personal and professional knowledge.

**Fostering transformative learning through collaborative inquiry**

A collaborative inquiry has powerful potential for fostering transformative learning. It has become a vehicle for facilitating the dialogic groups and providing spaces for individuals to engage in conversations that lead to critical reflection of their presuppositions. According to Mezirow (1991), a collaborative inquiry is one potential approach for facilitating learning experiences that foster transformative learning by altering the existing frame of references. Alcantara, Hayes, & Yorks (2009) define “collaborative inquiry [as] a social process where the intention is to test systematically the assumptions and premises that the participants hold” (p. 254). They continue that collaborative inquiry aligns with transformative learning in three ways: providing social
spaces for engaging in productive discourse, following a holistic epistemic framework that integrates emotion with cognition, and fosters critical reflectivity.

The study reported in this dissertation focuses on identifying the ways how an online conversation group provides spaces for teacher educators to engage in dialogues about their practices of teaching preservice teachers and share their individual and professional experiences. Through the lens of transformative learning theory, I sought to understand how engagement in these dialogues can facilitate the participants to exchange perspectives that can trigger critical reflections as the catalyst for transformative learning. Therefore, this study centers around the three original core elements of transformative learning as defined by Taylor (2000): individual experience, dialog, and critical reflection. He highlights that these three core elements are interdependent because “without individual experience, there is little or nothing to engage in critical reflection” (p. 4).

**Individual experiences.** MacKeracher (2012) distinguishes two types of experiences: those that were imposed on her by her social and cultural heritage and those that happened to her personally and that she has made sense of. Quoting Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), MacKeracher (2012) defines the imposed set as received knowledge and the personal set as subjective knowledge. Moreover, since these two sets of experience have different origins and tend to overlap together, MacKeracher adds a third definition of experience and cites Belenky et al. (1986) to name it as constructed knowledge and procedural knowledge.

In this study, I define experiences as received knowledge and subjective knowledge that the participants bring into the online conversation group as they talk.
about their daily practice in teaching preservice teachers. These participants have been working as teacher educators for more than five years and hold graduate degrees in linguistics and EFL. Before working as teacher educators at the college-level, they also worked as English teachers at various level of schooling. From the perspective of transformative learning, these experiences taken together constitute a starting point for discourse that may potentially lead the participants to critically examine their presuppositions about their practice (Mezirow & Associates, 2000 in Taylor, 2009).

Citing Lang (2004), Taylor (2009) explains that the nature of experience offers a means for transformative learning because it constitutes “pedagogical entry points” that offer opportunities for engaging learner’s personal dilemmas as potentially transformative experiences. Taylor (2009) argues that experience is “the primary medium of transformative learning and seen as socially constructed and can be deconstructed and acted through a process of dialogues and self-reflection” (p. 6). It is interesting to examine whether the participants in this study utilize experiences as the “pedagogical entry points” that lead them to reexamine their prior experiences.

The literature on self-study research on teacher education also reveals the importance of experience in teacher educators’ professional development. According to Samaras & Freese (2009), the constructivist nature of self-study respects personal experiences. The collaborative component of self-study acknowledges the critical role of the social construction of knowledge through which individual experience has become the ground for self-study practices of teacher educators. Russell (1995, 2007) has conducted extensive self-study research on the importance of experiences for teacher
educators to learn and develop. He comes up with the idea of the authority of experiences and calls for its recognition in the process of learning to teach.

**Dialogues.** Literature characterizes dialogues as a means for transformative learning. Taylor (2009) explains that it is within the arena of dialog that experience and critical reflection are played out.

Dialogue is the essential medium through which transformation is promoted and developed. ... Dialogue becomes the medium for critical reflection to be put into action, where experience is reflected on, assumptions and beliefs are questioned, and habits of mind are ultimately transformed. The dialogue is not so much analytical, point-counterpoint dialogue, but dialogue emphasizing relational and trustful communication. (p. 9)

The research literature also notes that “the qualities of a dialogic group provide a unique container for transformative learning, in that the norms and directional force of the relationships foster critical self-reflection, brought on by members’ commitment to the group” (Schapiro, Wassermann, & Gallegos, 2012).

To become transformative, the learning process must involve a particular form of dialogue called reflective discourse (Mezirow, 2003). In this discourse, people engage in a dialogue that involves assessment of beliefs, feelings, and values. Wasserman (2004) defines this discourse as dialogic moments that have characteristics of “willingness to acknowledge and engage each other, a sensing of each other’s uniqueness, an openness to surprise that leads in unanticipated directions or has emergent unanticipated consequences, putting one’s story at risk of change, and challenging one’s way of knowing” (p. 41). Although never completely met, Mezirow (1991) explains that the dialogue has to have the following ideal conditions. It must provide accurate and complete information and be free from coercion and self-perception distortion. It also has to promote openness to alternative perspectives and requires the participants’ ability to
reflect critically on presuppositions and their consequences, to accept an informed and objective consensus as valid, and to weigh the evidence and assess argument objectively. Lastly, it must provide equal opportunities to participate.

In this current study, I invited the participants to engage in online conversations about their practice in teaching preservice teachers. I modified collaborative conference protocols developed by Steve Seidel at Harvard Zero Project to facilitate the participants to share stories, present ideas, ask questions, argue, and debate about their practice. I sought to understand if the online conversation group could become a dialogic group where the participants hold their own position but also allow others to hold theirs and are profoundly open to hearing others’ position (Mezirow, 1991; Schapiro et al., 2012).

Although not drawing on transformative learning theory, Mercer (2000, 2001, 2004) claims that conversations provide spaces for people to engage in interthinking – a joint intellectual activity to think together to make sense of experience and to solve problems collaboratively. He explains that “if a group of people is striving to communicate about their special interests, they can adapt and extend language as a tool for doing so” (p. 106). Mercer calls this specialized language a discourse that enables the group of people to think collectively because the language can act as a catalyst for activating the thoughts (Littleton & Mercer, 2013). Dialogues also hold potential for facilitating learning. Clark (2001) proposes that engaging in conversations not only removed the feeling of isolation but also stimulated learning through providing spaces for seeing teaching practices through the eyes of others and sharing problems and solutions.

Furthermore, the literature on teacher educators’ self-study research also acknowledges the importance of authentic conversation as a means for teacher educators’
professional development. In their collaborative self-study about authentic conversation as faculty development, Kitchen et al. (2008) identified that their self-study group developed into a dialogic group that provided spaces for teacher educators to examine the tensions of teaching teachers. To function that way, Wasserman (2004) in Schapiro et al. (2012) emphasizes the importance of continuity of commitment and motivation, curiosity and openness, emotional engagement, and reflection and mutual sense-making as the factors that enable transformative dialog in a group.

**Critical reflections.** Mezirow (1991) defines reflection as “the process of critically assessing the content, process, and premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience” (p. 104). It is a process of questioning the integrity of deeply held assumptions and beliefs based on prior experiences (Taylor, 2009) in response to an awareness of conflicting thoughts, feelings, and actions, and at times can lead to a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1990). In his book, *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*, Mezirow (1991) differentiates three forms of reflections: content (reflecting on what we perceive, think, feel, or act upon); process (reflecting on how we perform the functions of perceiving, thinking, feeling, or acting and assessment of our efficacy in performing them); and premise (examining on why we perceive, think, feel, or act as we do). Mezirow (1990) explains that reflection as an assessment of how or why people perceived, thought, felt, or acted, and reflection as an assessment of how best to perform these functions are different.

Simply reflexively drawing on what one already knows in order to act is not the same thing as reflection. Instead, this is the way one often takes thoughtful action … which involves consciously drawing on what one knows to guide one’s action. Thoughtful action is reflexive but not the same thing as acting reflectively to critically examine the justification for one’s beliefs (p. 6).
Looking at the three forms of reflection as identified by Mezirow, acting thoughtfully means one is involved in content and process reflection. Meanwhile, when acting reflexively, one is not only engaged in content and process reflection, but also in premise reflection – when we question the presuppositions underlying our knowledge (Kreber, 2004). In the field of teaching and learning, drawing on transformative learning theory, Kreber & Cranton (2000) developed the scholarship of teaching model and proposed that people who learn about teaching are involved in content, process, and premise reflection in three areas of teaching knowledge: curricular, pedagogical, and instructional. Thus, they proposed nine levels of reflection on teaching, as depicted in the picture below.

Kreber & Cranton (2000) explain that instrumental and communicative learning happens when people engage in process and content reflection on instructional and pedagogical knowledge. Meanwhile, communicative learning happens when people do process and content reflection of curricular knowledge; communicative and emancipatory learning takes place when people engage in premise reflection on curricular knowledge; and instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory learning occur when people do premise reflection on instructional and pedagogical knowledge.

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**Table 2-3:** Levels of reflections based on the scholarship of the teaching model by Kreber & Cranton (2000)
Reflection is also a characteristic of self-study research. A self-study is an approach which integrates reflection as a tool to view practice from varying perspectives (Dinkelman, 2003; Kosnik, 2001 in Brandenburg, 2008). Furthermore, Brandenburg (2008) explains that “self-study is an approach to research which enables teacher educators (and other professionals) to reflect on, and scrutinize practice and assumptions about learning, to improve pedagogy and to challenge the status-quo within the profession” (p. 21). Drawing on the theory of reflective thinking by Dewey (1938) and the concept of reflection in action by Schon (1983), teacher educators took different kinds of reflection in their self-study. However, as determined by Loughran (2004), while self-study research involves a process of examining and critiquing one’s own practice, it is more than just a reflection on one’s practice as defined by Schon (1983). In self-study, Loughran explains that reflection is intended to challenge the interpretation we make of our own experiences.

Loughran & Northfield (1998) define reflection in self-study as a personal process of thinking, refining, reframing, and developing actions. Self-study takes these processes and makes them public, thus leading to another series of processes that need to reside outside the individual. Russell (1995) and Zeichner (1995) also acknowledge the importance of reflection in teaching, learning to teach, and learning to teach teachers. This model of reflection in self-study is similar to the conception of reflection proposed by Mezirow (1990), who defined reflection as a process of challenging prior experiences and presupposition. Reflection is not just acting reflexively, drawing on what we already know. Instead, it is a process of reassessing current and previous presupposition as the results of conflicting thoughts, feelings, and actions.
However, Brokefield (1995) explains that reflection is not necessarily critical when it is used to describe the instructional process. Teacher actions are usually based on the assumptions they have about the best way to help their students learn. Brookfield (2017) explains that assumptions that teachers have about their practice come from several sources: their experiences as learners and how they interpret these, advice from trusted colleagues, and research and theories. According to Brokefield (2017), “critical reflection is the sustained and intentional process of identifying and checking the accuracy and validity of our teaching assumptions” (p. 3). He describes at least there are four specific lenses available to be used by teachers to examine their assumptions about their practice: students’ eyes, colleagues’ perceptions, personal experiences, and theory and research.

This study focused on examining how two of the four lenses function in facilitating the teacher educators to examine their presuppositions and assumptions about their practices. This study sought to understand how engagement in dialogues to share personal and professional experiences would provide the teacher educators with perspectives that they might have missed and responses to situations in which they feel clueless. As the consequences, the dialogues would lead the participants to critically reflect on their current assumptions and presuppositions that might result in a disorienting dilemma – the first step of transformative learning experiences.

However, the literature on transformative learning identifies two factors that can inhibit critical reflections: personality differences (Cranton, 2000) and sociocultural norms (Brookfield, 1995, 2017). Cranton (2000) explains that people have differences in psychological predispositions. There are people who are more imaginative and creative
learners and people who are more interested in concrete, practical, experiences, and care less about people or social values and so on. These psychological predispositions both influence the way we engage in transformative learning and are frames of reference that we should examine and reconstruct.

Meanwhile, Brookfield (1995) describes that there are three cultural barriers to be addressed when creating a culture of reflection: the culture of silence, the culture of individualism, and the culture of secrecy. He writes, “a precondition of critical conversation is a willingness to make public one’s private dilemmas, uncertainties, and frustrations” (p. 250). He also warns facilitators of critical reflection to be fully aware of its potential negative impacts, such as cultural suicide. Brookfield (1995; 2017) states that critical reflection may create a feeling of marginalization. One of the consequences of this marginalization is committing cultural suicide, which happens when people engage enthusiastically in questioning underlying assumptions and essential hegemony while simultaneously alienating their peers. In other words, cultural suicide happens when people engage in critical reflection based on judgment and criticism that threaten others and create the feeling that one is superior to another person.

The community of practice

The community of practice is a theory of learning that views engagement in social practice as the fundamental process by which people learn and become who they are (Wenger, 1998). According to Wenger and Trayner-Wenger (2015), “communities of practice consist of a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (p. 1). The community of practice theory sees learning as the production of social structure and identity. As the
production of social structure, learning is a part of social interactions where people make
meaning through participation and reification. Participation takes place when people
engage directly in activities, conversations, reflections, and other forms of personal
participation in social life. As a result, people produce words, tools, concepts, methods,
stories, documents, links to resources, and other forms of reification (Wenger & Trayner-
Wenger, 2015). They continue to explain that “meaningful learning in social contexts
requires both participation and reification to be interplay” (p. 1). Meanwhile, as the
production of identity, learning is not only a process of gaining skills and information but
also a process of becoming a particular person. Therefore, learning will always involve
the realignment of self (Wenger & Trayner-Wenger, 2015).

Furthermore, Wenger (2010) in Smith, Hayes, and Shea (2017) emphasize that
over time, through participation and reification, participants of a community of practice
develop and negotiate criteria for membership. They include joint enterprise, a collective
understanding of what community is about and its purpose; mutual engagement,
interacting and establishing norms, expectations, and relationship; and shared repertoire,
using the common resources such as language artifacts, tools, concepts, methods, and
standards. Wenger and Trayner-Wenger (2015) explain that in order to become a
community of practice, a community must have the following three characteristics: the
domain, the community, and the practice.

The first characteristic is domain; it is the area of knowledge that brings the
community together and defines a set of issues that members need to address (Wenger,
McDermott, & Snyder, 2002 in Agrifoglio, 2015). A shared domain creates a sense of
accountability to a body of knowledge and therefore, to the development of practice
Wenger et al. (2002). Domain not only creates a common ground and sense of identity for the community members but also binds the member together and guides them towards the learning process. The second characteristic of a community of practice in the community. It is the bounded system in which the members engage in joint activities and discussions to help each other, share information about the domain, and build a relationship that enables them to learn from each other. Wenger et al. (2002) explain that “the community element is critical to an effective knowledge structure. A community of practice is not just a Web site, a database, or a collection of best practices. It is a group of people who interact, learn together, build relationships, and in the process, develop a sense of belonging and mutual commitment.” (p. 34)

Agrifoglio (2015) argues that interpersonal relationships are the foundation upon which the community evolves because, in a community, people help each other augment their knowledge about a specific practice. It facilitates and encourages its members to learn from and with each other, to share issues and concerns, and to provide each other with resources needed to address the issues and concerns.

The third characteristic of a community of practice is practice. It is the activity where the members are practitioners who share a repertoire of resources for them to use in learning. According to Wenger et al. (2002), “practice denoted a set of socially defined ways of doing things in a specific domain: a set of common approaches and shared standards that create a basis for action, communication, problem-solving, performance, and accountability” (p. 38). They explain that these are shared resources that include cases and stories, theories, rules, frameworks, models, principles, tools, experts, articles, lessons learned, best practices, and heuristics.
Lave and Wenger suggest that ‘community of practice’ is a social mechanism for sharing past experiences to create mutual understanding and coordinate ways of dealing with new experiences. It is a mechanism through which new expertise and knowledge are shared and developed by the members (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Participation in a community could enable collective thinking through which people learn from and with each other. Mercer (2000) identifies four ways a community offers its members resources for joint intellectual activities. Firstly, it creates an accumulated body of shared experiences that will generate information and expertise, upon which members can draw and pass to new members. Secondly, a community provides its member with a collective identity. Mercer (2000) claims that through sharing history, knowledge, aims and the experience of doing things together, members can find meaning, purpose, and direction for their endeavors and relate these to the unique contributions that others in the community make. Thirdly, participation in a community will encourage its members to have responsibilities towards each other. They will have reciprocal obligations to share intellectual resources. And, fourthly, Mercer says that participation in a community would enable its members to use specialized languages – a discourse – that they can adapt and use as a tool for joint intellectual activity.

Loughran and Northfield (1993) identify that self-study will become a valuable learning opportunity when it is a shared task conducted as a community. Meanwhile, Kitchen and Parker (2009) & Lighthall (2004) elaborate that collaboration has been part of self-study from its inception and is viewed as one of the defining characteristics of self-study. They argue that insight from a collaborator can help individual practitioners notice patterns in their practices and directions for professional growth. Research
describes that through participating in the social process in a self-study community of practice, teacher educators engage in joint intellectual activities to improve their personal and professional capacities.

Social structures of learning: the networks and the Community

Through the lens of a community of practice, the online conversation group in this study is seen as a social structure for the participants to learn from and with each other. According to Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011), social structures in which learning takes place to consist of two aspects: networks and communities. They define a network as “a set of connections among people, whether or not these connections are mediated by technological networks. They use their connections and relationships as a resource in order to quickly solve problems, share knowledge, and make further connections” (p. 9). Through a network, people who have personal reasons to connect form relationships and engage in personal interactions to create knowledge, solve problems, and share helpful information.

On the other hand, Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) define community aspects of the social structure of learning as “learning partnership among people who find it useful to learn from and with each other about particular domain” (p. 9). It is through a community that people develop a shared identity around a topic or set of challenges with the purpose to steward a domain of knowledge collectively and to support the learning of it. While for most groups, these two aspects are combined in which a community may involve a network of relationships, Wenger et al. (2011) explain that there are groups of people who work together and can only be classified as “pure” networks or “pure” communities. In a “pure” personal network group, Wenger et al. (2011) describe that a
community is rarely identified because “people in the network do not likely have much in common except for being connected to the same person in various ways based on their mutual interest” (p. 9).

Wenger et al. (2001) explain that in a donor community, for example, people may share the same concern about their cause, but this strong feeling of allegiance and identity does not necessarily lead to the formation of a network because there may not be any interactions or direct connections among them. Cummings & Zee (2005) identify that both concepts are different in a way that a network of learning is usually more institutionalized than a community of practice. However, Wenger et al. (2011) explain that despite having their distinctive features, both community and network are not opposite, but rather, develop together. They claim that “being more interconnected often increases the sense of community, and a desire to learn about shared concerns often motivates people to seek connections” (p. 12).

As said in an earlier chapter, this study makes up the preliminary stage of a larger initiative to create a self-study community of practice in an EFL teachers college in Indonesia. It does a groundwork for developing a self-study community of practice. Kitchen and Parker (2009) define self-study community of practice as “groups of at least four members committed to working together to study their teacher education practices” (p. 108). I italicized the phrase “to study” to denote the primary goal of developing the self-study community of practice; it is to create a social space in which participants learn from and with each other. In this study, I use the online conversation group as a stepping point to creating a self-study community of practice. In this group, I connect the participants through dialogues about their practice in teaching preservice teachers. I am
interested in identifying if this conversation group has the potential to develop into a community of practice where the participants could share knowledge, practices, and resources to learn from and with each other; and become a social space in which participants can collectively learn in the development of shared practice (Wenger et al., 2011).

The coexistence of networks and communities as a social structure for learning implies two types of cultivation as suggested by Wenger et al. (2011)

“the work of community is to develop the learning partnership that creates an identity around a common agenda or area for learning. It is to specify why people are there, what they can learn from each other, and what they can achieve by learning together. It is to develop a collective sense of trust and commitment. Meanwhile, the work of a network is to optimize the connectivity among people. It is to increase the extent and density of network by strengthening existing connections, enabling new connections, and getting a speedy response.” (p. 12)

Therefore, in this study, I am looking at ways this social structure of learning works and provides value for the participants. Also, since the concept of self-study research and community of practice were products of research conducted in Western contexts, I believe that it is crucial to look at the sociocultural contexts that may support and inhibit a self-study community of practice. Kitchen and Parker (2009) suggest that “each community must be adapted to the particular institutional culture in which it operates to sustain its members and overcome barriers” (p. 108). Understanding the sociocultural contexts of the site where I intend to develop the self-study community of practice is crucial for me to identify the next steps I need to take to improve the quality of networking among the participants, so they become a community.
Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) explain that engagement in network and communities has the potential of value creation for the participants. They describe that the values created in networks and communities happen in five different cycles. In the first cycle, participation in communities and networks creates immediate values in the form of activities and interaction. For the community immediate values include activities such as helping a member with difficult cases, engaging in useful online conversation, gaining and sharing tips provided by colleagues, and sharing stories about something that went wrong or getting help with a research project. Meanwhile, the immediate values of participating in networking include meeting someone, asking questions, passing a piece of information, and so forth.

In the second cycle, communities and networks provide the potential value in the form of knowledge capital. Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) explain that “not all the value produced by a community or a network is immediately realized. Activities and interactions can produce ‘knowledge capital’ whose values lies in its potential to be realized later” (p. 19). They identify five forms of knowledge capitals: (1) personal assets in the form of useful skill, a key piece of information, and a new perspective; (2) relationship and connections (social capital); (3) resources (tangible capital) in the form of specific pieces of information, tools and procedures, links, and other socio-informational structures that facilitate access to information; (4) collective intangible assets (reputational capital) that include the reputation of the community or network, the status of profession; and (5) a transformed ability to learn, as community and network can facilitate a new way of learning.
The third cycle of value creation in communities and networks include the creation of applied values in the form of changes in practice. As the results of interaction in communities and networks, people gain new knowledge and access to resources that they can use to change their practice. Furthermore, in the fourth cycle of value creation, change in practices, and reflections on the application of the knowledge capital may lead to the improvement of performance. Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) name it realized values. Moreover, in the fifth cycle, the value is created in the form of reframing values and redefining success. This value can be created when social learning causes a reconsideration of the learning imperatives and criteria by which success is defined. It happens both at the individual level and collective level. Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) warn that “while there is a causal relationship between the various cycles, it is important not to assume a hierarchy of levels or a simple causal chain” (p. 21). They continue by explaining that learning is not a linear process, and one cycle does not necessarily lead to another one.

The literature also describes the critical factors that inhibit and support a network and a community in creating values for the members. McDermott (2000) identifies four challenges in community development: management challenges, community challenges, technical challenges, and personal challenges. Developing a community requires people who can become facilitators—who can manage the community. McDermott (2000) explains that the role of facilitators is to not only lead the community using the knowledge they have in the field but most importantly, to connect people. He suggests facilitators be present and have enough time for encouragement. McDermott (2000) describes “the greatest danger for communities is for them to lose energy and drift into
apathy, letting the coordinator carry all the responsibilities for care-taking” (p. 5). Therefore, he suggests facilitator create a forum for thinking together; and most importantly, foster and maintain the social relationship among the members of the community. The facilitator also needs to deal with technical challenges; they must devise structures for community members to engage and connect. Lastly, facilitators need to deal with personal challenges – and how to build an environment that can foster activities for thinking together to share stories.

**Summary**

Through the lens of transformative learning, the conversation group in this study is seen as a practice of professional development of the EFL teacher educators. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the community of practice, the conversation group is regarded as a social structure that supports the practice of professional development. The quote from Parker Palmer (2017), “If we want to grow as teachers – we must do something alien to academic culture: we must talk to each other about our inner lives” in the beginning of the chapter represents the intention as well as the challenges that I encountered as I proceeded with a plan for creating a self-study community of practice in my context.

From the literature, I learned that through conducting self-study, teacher educators critically problematize their practice and transform their presuppositions. Self-study has provided teacher educators with a social structure where they share problems, identify solutions, and learn and develop collaboratively personally and professionally. Collaborations, dialogues, reflections, and critical friendships are essential parts of self-study research. Comparing these characteristics of self-study research to the sociocultural
contexts of Indonesia, some questions come to mind: how can self-study research fit into my contexts? How can I create an environment where people feel safe to engage in critical conversations about their practice? What kind of critical friendship do I need to create? What supports and resources do I need to provide? This study made a preliminary step to identify the answers to those questions. In the next chapter, I will elaborate on the methods that I believe to be effective for ensuring that this study generates findings to shed light on my efforts to move forward with the plan in creating a self-study community of practice in my context.
Chapter Three

Methodology

“Teacher knowledge develops through a better understanding of personal experience.”
-- Loughran & Northfield (1998)

This chapter describes the overall methods, contexts, and procedures involved in the study. I begin the chapter with an introduction of the context where the study took place. Then I present the research design – a qualitative case study – and its rationale. Following that, I elaborate on the process and procedures of the study with a detailed explanation about the participant selection process, data collection activities, and data analysis along with the rationales. I dedicate the last section of this chapter to discuss ethical issues and trustworthiness and elaborate on the research relationship between myself as the researcher and my colleagues as the participants.

Research design: the qualitative case study

The decision to use a particular research method is highly influenced by the goals the researcher is trying to reach (Maxwell, 2013). I have chosen a qualitative case study approach for this study because I am interested in understanding how the participants engage in dialogues about their practice in an online conversation group, interpret that experiences, and what meaning they attribute to the experiences (Merriam, 2009). I have outlined earlier in the chapter one that this study is a small part of my long-term plan of developing a self-study community practice as a professional development platform for teacher educators’ professional development in the EFL teachers’ college. Collaboration, conversations, and reflection are the essential characteristics of a self-study research
community of practice (Kitchen & Parker, 2009). This study intends to examine those essential characteristics in an Indonesian context.

In this research, I study how the conversations among the EFL teacher educators become a medium for reflections about their practices in teaching preservice teachers. More specifically, I am interested in identifying what kind of reflections the participants engaged in the conversation and understanding the nature and quality of the dialogues in the online conversation group. Moreover, I also examine the ways the online conversation creates value for the participants and identify challenges and possibilities for moving forward to make it a self-study community.

In examining the group conversations, I took an interpretive naturalistic approach and studied it in its natural settings because I wanted to make sure not to exclude the impact of the sociocultural contexts on the conversations (Bogdan & Bilken, 2003). My purpose was to make sense of and interpret the participants’ experiences of participating in the conversation group and how their multiple subjective views were situated within the contexts of the conversation (Creswell, 2013 and Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). I recognized the contextual complexities of the reality the participants’ brought into the conversation group, such as social relationships between them, their status and position in the social hierarchy of the institution where the study took place, the organizational culture of the institution, and the participants’ background knowledge and experience. I carefully examined how those contextual complexities influenced the way the conversation promotes reflection.

The understanding of how contextual complexities play out in the conversation group would not only shed light on the effort of creating a self-study community but also
potentially make a scholarly contribution to the conversation about how self-study research communities of practice are implemented in a different context.

I examined the topic of the study using a qualitative case method. A qualitative case study, as defined by Creswell (2013), is a qualitative approach in which an investigator explores real-life, a contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description and case themes. Yin (2014) defined a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in-depth and within its real-world context. He claimed the case study “allows investigators to focus on a “case” and retained a holistic and real-world perspective” (p. 4).

Stake (1995) classifies three variations of case study research: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. Intrinsic case study intends to examine a case that has individual uniqueness and needs to be described in detail. Instrumental case study focuses on understanding a specific issue or problem in a selected case to gain a better understanding about the issues. In a collective case study, the researcher examines one specific issue in a multiple selected case. Stake (1995) notes that a case study could be intrinsic and instrumental, and the distinction between the two is difficult to identify. He continues to explain that the researcher often has multiple interests and thus, engages in both intrinsic and instrumental case study.

Although intrinsic interest to some degree has become the motivation of this study, the primary interest of it was instrumental because it examined one concern – reflection through online group conversations, in one-bounded case – a group of EFL
teacher educators. This study is not a multiple case study because the five individual participants are treated as one bounded system.

A qualitative case study begins with an identification of a specific case that can be bounded within specified parameters such as place, time, and its intent at understanding a specific issue or problem (Creswell, 2013). Following Yin’s (2014) suggestions to identify the case, I defined and bounded the case. In defining the case, I identified the individuals who would become the focus of the study and be used as the primary unit of analysis. Yin (2014) suggests that although traditional case study focuses on the person as the case, a researcher can also select events or entities other than a single individual as the case such as small groups, communities, decisions, programs, organizational change, and other specific events. For this study, I have identified a group of teacher educators of an EFL teachers college in Indonesia to be defined as the case of the study.

After defining the case, Yin (2014) suggests the researcher bound the case by selecting specific individuals to be included as the participants. He explains that “if the unit of analysis is a small group … the persons to be included in the group (the immediate topic of the case study) must be distinguished from those who are outside of it (the context for the study)” (p. 33). For defining and bounding a case, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) illustrate that a study of how older adults learn to use computers would probably be a qualitative study but not a case study because the unit of analysis would be the learners’ experiences, and an indefinite number of older adult learners and their experiences using computers could be selected for the study. They go on to say that for it to be a case study, one program or one classroom of learners (a bounded system), or one
older learner based on typicality, uniqueness, success, and so forth, would be the unit of analysis.

Following this illustration, I choose a group of EFL teacher educators who were facilitated to engage in a series of an online group conversation about their daily practice as the bounded system. This study was bounded by time because it focused on the conversations about a specific teaching and learning process that took place in the second semester of the 2017-2018 academic year. It is bounded by the place because of the context of this study was an EFL preservice teacher education program in Indonesia. Moreover, Creswell (2013) explains that there is another essential feature of a qualitative case study research; it relies on multiple data sources and a variety of data collection and analysis methods. For that purpose, I collected a variety forms of data and used multiple analytical frameworks to explore, interpret, and make sense the real-life process of reflections in the conversation and identify the contextual environments that influence the conversation. In addition to the online conversation group, I also conducted individual qualitative interviews and asked the participants to write a reflective essay for collecting the data. I present a more detailed description of those data collection strategies in the forthcoming sections.

**Introducing the context of the study**

To identify the case, I used a purposeful selection strategy and selected a group of professionals that can best inform me about the research problem and provide me with the information relevant to the research questions and goals (Creswell, 2013 & Maxwell, 2013). I follow Stake's (2005) suggestion to choose a case from which I will learn the most about the topics under study. For that purpose, I chose the university where I will
work after completing my doctoral program as the case setting. It is a medium-sized private university located in Northern coastal area of West Java province, Indonesia. The university has seven undergraduate faculties that offer a total of eighteen programs of study and a graduate school that offers four master’s degree programs. As of the 2017-2018 academic year, there are around ten thousand students enrolled in the university.

More specifically, this study took place in the department of EFL teacher education – a program of study within the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences (FKIP). The faculty of FKIP offers six programs of study: EFL teacher education, STEM teacher education, Indonesian language and arts education, economics and social sciences education, elementary education, and post-graduate teacher professional education (PPG). The PPG is a department that is specifically designated for teaching licensure program. A more detailed description of the EFL teacher education, where the study took place is presented in the upcoming section.

I choose the university because it has the potential for providing the best information for the study. Like many other private universities in Indonesia, the university also has an issue with low productivity of research and publication. Time, limited access to resources, bureaucracy, and inadequate research culture are some of the factors contributing to the low productivity of research and publication. Moreover, it also has no programmatic professional development programs for the lecturers that specifically aims at improving the lecturers’ research capacity. The only professional development program that the university offers is a week-long teaching training held once a year. Although in the past two years, the department of research and academic development has started to organize training and workshops for research and invites
experts from nearby well-established public universities as the facilitators, the nature of the professional development programs is more like an event, not a process. Therefore, there is an issue with sustainability and appropriateness of the workshop and training topics to meet all lecturers’ needs and interest. Therefore, creating self-study research would offer an alternative solution to the issue the university is currently encountering.

Moreover, conducting this study in the university and including my colleagues as the participants helps me lay the groundwork for the future and build the foundation for the self-study community of practice I am planning to create in the university, especially in the EFL teachers college. However, I also paid close attention to Creswell (2013), who warns that studying one’s own workplace may raise issues of power relations that can compromise the quality of data. I am aware of this issue and provide a specific section addressing the issue later in this chapter.

**A brief profile of the selected case**

This study took place in the department of EFL teacher education; it is a program of study within the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences (FKIP) of a medium-sized private university in the Northern coastal area of West Java province, Indonesia. The department offers a four-year undergraduate program named *Sarjana Pendidikan* (B.Ed.) in English education. It is the largest EFL teachers college in the Northern coastal area of West Java province, where, as of the 2017-2018 academic year, there are 572 students enrolled in the department. Since its establishment in 1979, the department has been graduating thousands of alumni who work as English teachers at all schooling levels, and there is also a small percentage of them working in the field outside of education (UGJ document, 2018).
The curriculum

The vision and mission of the department express the desire to strive to become a reputable EFL teachers college that trains and educates professional educators in the field of EFL teaching and learning. Drawing on the vision and mission, the department designs a curriculum comprised of courses and other academic programs in line to the Indonesian Qualification Frameworks (IQF) – a set of basic skills and competencies that Indonesian students must gain at each education level as determined by the Indonesian government. It classifies the courses in the curriculum into five clusters, as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twelve credits of General education courses. These are government and institution mandated courses.</td>
<td>1) Religion education &lt;br&gt; 2) Civic education &lt;br&gt; 3) Indonesian language &lt;br&gt; 4) Communication ethics &lt;br&gt; 5) Cultural education &lt;br&gt; 6) Basic science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninety-one credits of content knowledge. Courses in this cluster are divided into five categories</td>
<td>Required courses &lt;br&gt; Category 1: Language skills &lt;br&gt; 1) Four blocks of listening &lt;br&gt; 2) Four blocks of speaking &lt;br&gt; 3) Four blocks of reading &lt;br&gt; 4) Four blocks of writing &lt;br&gt; 5) Five blocks of grammar &lt;br&gt; 6) Principles of interpreting &lt;br&gt; 7) Principles of translation &lt;br&gt; 8) Principles of translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Six credits of research and scientific courses. &lt;br&gt; Five credits of community outreach activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-1: List of courses in the curriculum of the EFL teacher education for the academic year 2018-2019.
The graduation requirements, as stated in the curriculum, are the completion of at least 150 credit hours, a 40-page research paper, and an oral examination of the research paper.

Faculty members

There are thirty-three lecturers employed in the department of EFL teacher education – three are lecturers of general non-EFL courses. Female lecturers make up eighty percent of the total lecturers. The majority of the faculty are young lecturers with the average age ranging from the early thirties to forties. Most of the faculty hold a master's degree, and some are currently working on their doctoral degree (including myself). The lecturers are responsible for teaching courses, supervising students in teaching practice and research, academic advising, and conducting research. Some lecturers are occasionally invited by local schools to become a facilitator of in-service teacher professional development activities. In terms of professional development, lecturers usually take part in professional organizations at the local and national level, read research journals and books, and attend and present in local, national, and international conferences.

Participant selection process

When selecting participants, I followed Maxwell's (2013) suggestion of identifying participants with whom I can establish the most productive relationship, the ones who will enable me to answer the research questions. I also paid careful attention to his warning about “key informant bias” when selecting participants purposefully and to Cresswell’s (2013) cautionary advice about power relation issues when studying one’s own workplace. In recruiting the participants, I specifically looked for the lecturers who
teach major-specific courses about EFL teaching and learning. Also, since this study would take up to at least eight months and include various ways of data collection activities through online platforms, I specifically looked for participants who would have high commitment and were willing to voluntarily allocate their time, energy, and resource throughout the study. This is not to say that other lecturers in the college have a low commitment to professional development, but rather to determine that participating in this study would add more work to their daily activities. Therefore, voluntary to participate in the study is a must.

To ensure that I could select the participants with whom I could establish a productive relationship and who would be likely to remain to participate across the entire study period, I also took steps that would help the participant candidates understand the study and be willing to participate voluntarily. Therefore, after receiving approval from the dissertation committee and the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I distributed a summary of the research plan and the consent form via a WhatsApp instant messaging group with the lecturers in the EFL teachers college. The purpose was to provide the lecturers with an initial introduction to the study. I asked them to read the plan and notified them that I would visit the college to present the study plan.

Then, early in Spring 2018, I went to Indonesia and organized a half-day introductory meeting with all lecturers and department chairs and explained the details about the study – the background, objectives, procedures, risk, and benefits of participation. I provided the lecturers with the opportunities to ask questions and voice their concern about the study. To inform the lecturers about my plan of creating a self-study community, I also took the opportunity to outline the plan and explained how this
current study becomes an essential part of the plan. I did not ask the lecturers to express their willingness to participate immediately after the meeting. Instead, I gave them time to think and reread the consent form that I developed in English with an Indonesian translation to help the lecturers understand the specific jargon and technical terms about the study.

On the next day, ten lecturers contacted me and expressed their willingness to participate in the study – five of them are lecturers working on their doctoral education. With the considerations of the time and space constraint, having ten participants would be too difficult to manage. Therefore, I decided to select the five lecturers who are not working on their doctoral program. I excluded them because I was worried that they would be extremely busy with their study and might not have much time and energy to fully participate in the study. More specific information on each participant and their characteristics will be included later in this section.

Once the participants for the study had been identified, I organized another workshop session about the technical aspects of the study, introducing the participants to self-study research and familiarizing them with the protocols to be used for data collection: interviews, monthly conferences, and reflective writing. Also, since data collection and communication throughout the study uses an online platform, I trained them on how to use specific technological tools including protocols for WhatsApp conversations, email, video calls, phone calls, Google Docs, and Google Drive. More importantly, I used the workshops to provide the selected participants with the opportunities to bargain about rules and expectations. I discussed the consent form again
and asked if the selected participants fully understood the consent form and were still willing to participate.

**Introducing the Participants**

The selected participants of the study comprised of two leading figures of the department (the head and the secretary of the EFL teacher education department), two senior lecturers, and one junior lecturer. Of the five participants, four participants teach EFL pedagogical courses, and one participant teaches linguistics courses. There are four females and one male lecturer selected as the participants. I asked the participants to pick their own pseudonym to protect their identity. The following table summarizes the brief profiles of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alias (M/F)</th>
<th>Education background</th>
<th>Current position</th>
<th>Courses currently teach</th>
<th>Years of teaching in the college</th>
<th>School teaching experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khairany / F</td>
<td>B.Ed in EFL, MA in Linguistics</td>
<td>Head of EFL department, Lecturer</td>
<td>Morphology</td>
<td>Eight years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baba / M</td>
<td>B.Ed in EFL, M.Ed in EFL</td>
<td>Secretary of EFL department, Lecturer</td>
<td>Academic writing</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina / F</td>
<td>B.Ed in EFL, MA in Linguistics</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Fifteen years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reisa / F</td>
<td>B.Ed in EFL, M.Ed in EFL</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Basic English Structure</td>
<td>Nine years</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryam / F</td>
<td>B.Ed in EFL, MA in Linguistics</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Language Teaching Strategy</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3-2**: A summary of the participants’ profiles

Curiosity is the primary reason the participants identify for joining the group. They were curious about self-study research and wanted to know more about the process of dissertation research. I was pleased with the participant group because it consisted of people who came from different levels in the social and institutional hierarchy. Khairany and Baba currently sit in the leadership positions of the department. Khairany, Baba, Marina, and Reisa are all alumni of the EFL teacher education department. Marina is the
most senior lecturer in the group where the other three participants – Khairany, Baba, and Reisa are her former students. Meanwhile, Maryam is relatively a newcomer in the college. She was entering her third year working in the college by the time this study began. Besides collegiality, there were also teacher-students, senior-junior, and alumni-non-alumni relationships existed among the participants.

**Data collection process**

To gain an in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell, 2013) and reduce bias at the conclusion (Maxwell, 2013), I used multiple methods of data collection. When designing this study, I developed the following strategies for data collection: individual interviews, focus group discussions, monthly conferences, and monthly collaborative online reflective writing. The study was designed to last for one academic year, divided into two phases: the first phase would focus on teaching and learning activities in the classrooms and the second phase would focus on the supervision of school teaching practice. However, some unexpected circumstances impacted the study.

Before the semester began, the university made a policy that required all new lecturers – those who have been working in the university for less than five years – to help in administrative duties besides their primary works in teaching, research, and supervising students. Maryam, who joined the university in 2015, was impacted by the new policy. Moreover, since the EFL teacher education department accreditation expires in 2019, the FKIP faculty established an accreditation team led by the assistant dean for academic affairs and appointed Khairany and Baba as the coordinators of the team, and the other two participants – Marina and Reisa – as team members. I was a member of the accreditation team back in 2014, and there was heavy work to do. The team members had
to stay late on the campus to finish the work. These unexpected events have immediate impacts on the participants’ time commitments.

I invited the participants to discuss the issues, and we all agreed to change the study plan. Given the current circumstances, we agreed to conduct the online conversation in one phase that focused on the teaching and learning activities in the ongoing semester. Also, we agreed not to conduct focus group discussions and replace the online collaborative reflective with writing a reflective essay at the end of the study. With these changes, I relied primarily on individual interviews, bi-monthly conferences, and reflective essays for collecting the data. However, these changes did not necessarily decrease the quantity and quality of the data needed for the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Venue and time</th>
<th>Modes</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First individual interview</td>
<td>Face-to-face online on campus in Indonesia January 16-25, 2018</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
<td>Talking about participants’ lived experiences as teacher educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First conference</td>
<td>WhatsApp conversation group Feb 26 to March 2, 2018</td>
<td>Synchronous and semi-synchronous</td>
<td>Talking about the syllabus the participants used in the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second conference</td>
<td>WhatsApp conversation group March 18-23, 2018</td>
<td>Synchronous and semi-synchronous</td>
<td>Talking about the implementation of the syllabus in the first few weeks of the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second individual interview</td>
<td>WhatsApp conversation group April 4-10, 2018</td>
<td>Synchronous and semi-synchronous</td>
<td>Participants reflections on the group activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third conference</td>
<td>WhatsApp conversation group May 6-12, 2018</td>
<td>Semi-synchronous</td>
<td>Talking about the results of Mid-term exam and sharing the plan for following-up the exam results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth conference</td>
<td>WhatsApp conversation group July 8-15, 2018</td>
<td>Full-asynchronous</td>
<td>Discussion about the second-half of the semester and finals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective essay</td>
<td>Instruction sent out via WhatsApp July 21-28, 2018</td>
<td>Participants submitted the essay via email</td>
<td>Write 1000-15000 reflective essay about the activities in the conversation group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final individual interview</td>
<td>Long-distance phonecall via WhatsApp September 27-November 5, 2018</td>
<td>Semi-structured</td>
<td>Follow-up what participants’ say in the essay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-3: Data collection activities

This study followed the academic year of the university. The second semester of the 2017-2018 academic year began in February and ended in July. However, the overall
activities of this study – starting from participant selection to the final stage of data
collection – lasted for about eleven months from January to November 2018. The table 3-3 above summarizes the overall data collection process.

I used an online platform – WhatsApp chat group, long-distance phone call, and
emails – as the primary medium of the data collection process. Before discussing each of
the strategy used in the data collection process, below I will outline the reasons why I
used online platform along with the rationales based on the literature about using the
online platform as a medium for data collection in a qualitative study.

The rationale for using an online platform for data collection.

Time, financial, and physical space constraints were the primary considerations of
using online tools for data collection in this study. As a sponsored student, I need to
comply with my sponsor regulation that does not allow me to stay outside of the country
where I am doing my doctoral study – the United States – for more than sixty days. There
were also financial factors that made it impossible to conduct fieldwork more than sixty
days outside of the United States. With those restrictions, therefore, I took advantage of
the advancement of information technology to collect the data for this study through
online platforms.

I used WhatsApp instant messaging apps to organize the monthly conferences, and
individual interviews and maintain communication with the participants throughout the
study. According to data released by http://www.businessofapps.com, as of February
2019, WhatsApp is the most popular instant messaging platform in the world with 1.5
billion users in 180 countries. As of 2016, databoks.katadata.co.id released a report that
states 43% of instant messaging users in Indonesia used WhatsApp, and they spent an
average of three hours a day using the platform as a communication tool. This makes *WhatsApp* the most popular and widely-used instant messaging application in the country.

Unlike in the US, where people use institutional email as the primary means for communication and distribution of academic-related information, in general, Indonesian universities have no institutional email. Email communication is not yet a norm. Instead, people usually use instant messaging or texting for communication because it is more comfortable to use and relatively inexpensive. In the EFL teachers’ college where this study took place, the lecturers usually form a *WhatsApp* group to distribute information on academic activities. There are also lecturers who create a *WhatsApp* group for each class they teach and use it to distribute information about the courses such as assignment, announcements, and consultations. While there are no empirical studies about communication platform in an academic setting in Indonesia, communication through an instant messaging platform such as *WhatsApp* is a norm and ethically accepted in most colleges in Indonesia. However, lecturers usually set-up timeframe and specific rules about how and when their students may contact them via an instant messaging platform.

The qualitative data collection process using online platforms has been widely documented in the literature. Online tools can be a viable alternative to face-to-face procedures for collecting qualitative data, especially when time, financial constraints, or geographical boundaries are barriers to an investigation (Farooq, 2015 & Meho, 2006). Farooq (2015) summarizes that there is no difference in the number, quality, and quantity of data generated through online discussions and interviews compared to face-to-face. Moreover, Matthews and Cramer (2008) have identified that using an online platform
provides research participants with more level of privacy and anonymity; thus, it allows them to discuss sensitive topics without feeling uncomfortable. This platform also encourages shy and less expressive participants to speak more. For example, in a study, Opdenakker (2006) uses a web-based platform for an interview and identifies that the online platform has not only saved time and money but also is free from disturbing background noise. He added that conducting web-based interviews can also make the job of a researcher easier because the interviews are conducted in written form; thus, the researcher does need to transcribe the conversation.

I found these advantages when using an online platform for data collection in this study. I used the WhatsApp instant messaging platform for facilitating the bi-monthly conferences, conducting individual interviews, sending instructions for reflective essay writing, and distributing other information about the study. Using WhatsApp instant messaging for data collection has advantageously allowed me to export the conversations into text documents instantly, reducing the working load for transcribing. WhatsApp also allowed me and the participants to share data that was easy to download, such as documents, videos, photos, etc. I found that it was easier to share the data through WhatsApp than through an email because the log-in process was relatively faster. Moreover, WhatsApp is now available in web browsers and computer applications. Typing on a computer keyboard is undoubtedly much more comfortable than on mobile phone keypad. Moreover, WhatsApp has a long-distance phone, and video call features that I used for conducting individual interviews. Connecting to Wi-Fi and making a phone call via WhatsApp was much more inexpensive than using a regular landline or cellphone.
While providing the advantages cited above, using an online platform for data collection also poses some disadvantages, in particular not seeing non-verbal languages such as gesture, body language, and facial expression (Farooq, 2015). Since I was interested in looking at the nature of the talks in the conversation, I utilized the “reply” feature in WhatsApp and asked the participants to use this feature whenever they wanted to respond to a specific statement. This feature helped me to track the flow of the conversation. I kept the conversation in its original version complete with emojis and other accessories included. I was fully aware that this online platform might give an impact on the nature and quality of the data, more specifically on the depth of the reflection and the richness of the stories that the participants shared. Therefore, it affects how I analyzed and interpreted the data.

**Individual interviews**

Through interviews, I sought out the participants’ narratives about their experience participating in the conversation group. Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011) delineated two functions of narratives: as accounts and as aspirations. Through the interviews, I looked for the participants’ account about what happened and was happening in the group conversation. I asked the participants to elaborate on their experiences in the conversation group and in what ways the group had given benefits for them. I looked for the participants’ aspirations for the conversation group and sought out their motivation to participate in the conversation group. Moreover, I asked the participants to elaborate on their aspirations about what possibilities and challenges that they might encounter to move forward and make the group a self-study community.
First interview

The primary purpose of the first interview was to learn more about the participants. While I have known them as my colleagues for about five years and engaged in numerous daily conversations with them, I have never had an in-depth conversation about who they are, how they became teacher educators, what their previous experiences are, how they see their roles as a lecturer and a researcher, how they see research, and so forth. For that purpose, I conducted the first individual interview in Indonesian when I visited the college for participant recruitment in January 2018. For this interview, I modified Seidman's (2006) three series interview protocol: life-history of becoming teacher educators, the details of the story, and reflection on the life history. Since self-study is both individually and socially contextualized, it is helpful to identify the stories of each participant, as these will influence how they see and reflect on their practices. I used the data from the interview to create a profile for each participant. Later, in the analysis stage, I used the profile as a reference to identify the participants’ life history that might have effects on the way they experience the online conversation. The modified three series interview protocol taken from Seidman (2006) is available in the appendix (See Appendix 1 for the protocol).

Second interview

I conducted the second interview after the first half of the study or after the second monthly conference; it took a week and started in April 2018. I used the WhatsApp online chat platform as the medium of the interviews. The purpose was to identify how the participants experienced the first two sessions of the online group conversation. I looked for what was happening in the group conversation, and how it
happened, as perceived by the participants. I developed an interview protocol based on Wenger, Trayner, and de Laat's (2011) value creation cycle in a community of practice. *(See Appendix 2 for the protocol).*

**Final interview**

I conducted the last interviews with the objectives of mining for the participants’ overall experience throughout the group conversation. The final interviews were held after I read and took notes some important themes from the previous interviews, the group conversations, and the reflective essay. Final interviews were started in September and ended in November 2018. This interview was the last data collection step in the study. I also used the interviews as a member check mechanism to clarify the major themes identified from the analysis of the previous dataset. *(See Appendix 3).*

All the interviews took the form of a semi-structured conversation to obtain descriptions of the participants’ experience participating in the study *(Kvale & Brinkman, 2008, as cited in Brinkman, 2013).* As suggested by Brinkman (2013), using semi-structured interviews have provided me with more leeway for follow up and increased the use of knowledge-producing potentials of the conversations. Guided by Wenger, Trayner, and de Laat's (2011) conception of value creation in a community of practice, I designed the interview protocol to identify participants’ perceptions about the conversation in the group. More specifically, the interview sought for information about the relevance of the conversation to their teaching practice and professional learning, relative benefits participants perceived from their participation in the study, what worked and what did not, how to improve the quality of the conversation, and participants’ aspirations for moving forward with this group conversation.
Bi-monthly conferences.

Using a Critical Friends Group protocol by the National School Reform Faculty (2009), in these conferences, I facilitated participant engagement in monthly online conversations about their practices in teaching preservice EFL teachers. I facilitated the participants to share stories from their practice and thought about if it may lead to reflection on their practice. Online group conversations took place on the WhatsApp instant messaging platform. Four online conferences throughout the study in which each of them covered a specific topic. Different modes of conversation were used, ranging from semi-synchronous to full-asynchronous, and protocols were modified to make them fit into the context and mode of conversation (See Appendix 4 for conference protocols).

The first conference

The first conference was held in the second week of the semester. It was scheduled to be held before the semester began. However, the unanticipated circumstances that I outlined earlier made us reschedule the conferences. The purpose of this conference was to share the syllabi the participants used that semester. Before the conference, I asked the participants to upload their syllabus to a Google Drive folder for everyone to read. Then in the conference, using a semi-synchronous mode, all participants presented in the chatroom and shared the syllabus they used in the semester. Everyone took a turn to present their syllabus: the objectives, the changes they made, what previous experiences in teaching the course that motivated the change, what made them excited and worried about the syllabus, and so forth. However, the first conference did not go well as planned because not all the participants read the syllabus in the Google Drive folder. Two participants requested that all syllabus should be shared in the
chatroom, not in the Drive folder because it was easier to access. Moreover, the participants experienced difficulty reading, thinking, and typing comments in the chatroom simultaneously. Consequently, I modified the protocol into a semi-asynchronous mode and rescheduled the conference.

The second conference

Immediately after we the completion of the first conference, we agreed to conduct a second conference in two weeks. The second conference was held in March 2018, four weeks into the semester. In this conference, the participants shared stories about the implementation of the syllabus within the first four weeks of the semester. I revised the protocols and the participants’ presentation schedule. This time, the participants were no longer required to present together at the same time in the chatroom, but they were assigned a schedule for presentations, and a timeframe was established for the members to give their comments. For example, I assigned Khairany to present her stories on Monday morning from five to ten in the morning. Then, anytime between ten in the morning and eight in the evening, the other members were to give their comments on Khairany’s stories. Then, after eight in the evening, Khairany was to give responses to her friends’ comments and draw a conclusion.

With this arrangement, the mode of the conversation was changed from synchronous to full-asynchronous; it looked more like a Blackboard discussion than an instant message room. The primary purpose of the change was to get the conversation to fit into the participants’ busy time. However, in reality, the conference had never followed the schedule correctly. There was much flexibility in the schedule, and the conversation modes were also varied from full-synchronous to full-asynchronous. More
lively synchronous conversations usually appeared early in the morning, at lunchtime, and in the evening.

**Third conference**

Held around two weeks after the midterm exam (May 2018), the objective of the third conversation was to facilitate the participants to share the results of the midterm exam and identify whether or not they reached the goal as identified in the syllabus, and how it might have an impact on the teaching and learning for the rest of the semester. I used the same conversation schedule with a rotation of who presented first, second, and so forth. After the third conference, the study took a long pause to give the participants the time to observe Ramadan. After Ramadan ended, the study could not immediately resume because participants were busy working on department accreditation. Therefore, there was no conference after the midterm. We all agreed to have the fourth conference after finals.

**The fourth conference**

I organized the last conference after finals in July 2018. In the conference, participants shared stories about their class during the second half of the semester and reflected on the overall classroom activities throughout the semester. There were no interactions at the conference because, at the time, participants were engaged in numerous meetings and working towards accreditation. They shared their stories without exchanging comments or feedback.

In all conferences, I positioned myself as a moderator since this study was the groundwork for the self-study community that I plan to create in the teachers’ college. I wanted to know how the conversation evolved without intentional intervention from the
facilitator. My understanding of the nature of the conversation would help design the facilitation strategies in the future as the group moves forward becoming a self-study community. I tried to create a comfortable setting that encouraged participants to talk. Therefore, at the beginning of each conference, I reminded participants about the voluntary nature of their participation in the study.

As a moderator, my role in the conference was to facilitate an interactive discussion among participants to achieve “non-directive interviewing” and allowed the discussion to emerge from the group itself while guiding it around the topics of the research (Hennink, 2014). I realized that my status as a doctoral candidate from a top tier research university in the United States had put me in a privileged position among the participants of the study. Therefore, I avoided giving substantive comments to the topics discussed in the conversation because I was afraid of mistakenly discouraging the participants from expressing their opinions as they might think that my opinions were better than theirs. This might influence the nature of the conversation.

**Reflective essay**

Approximately two weeks after the last conference had been completed, I sent out instructions and protocols for the participants to write the reflective essay. The participants submitted the essay in July 2018. For this activity, I asked the participants to write a 1500-2000-word reflective essay about their experiences in the conversation groups. The purpose of the essay was to get the participants to reflect on the conversations. I modified Gibbs's (1988) reflective cycle to guide the participants to write the essay because it encourages the participants to think about the phases of activities and experiences systematically. The reflective cycle protocol has six headings that help the
participants structure their essay: description, feeling, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action of the plan.

In the *description*, participants wrote a 250-word description of their experiences taking part in the online group conversation. Here, I merely wanted to know how the participants described what happened in the online conversation. In *feeling*, participants wrote a 200-word paragraph describing their feelings and thoughts about the experiences. This part is not analytical but instead, asks the participants to describe personal feelings and thoughts about what happened in the conversation. In the *evaluation* section, the participants looked objectively at what happened in the conversation and wrote a 200-word paragraph about it. Here, I asked them to focus on one or two things that are most relevant to the experiences. In *analytical*, the essential part of the reflection, participants wrote a 350-word paragraph explaining the causes and consequences of things that happened in the conversation group. *(See appendix 5 for the protocol)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Collection method</th>
<th>Transcription and transformation forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First individual interviews</td>
<td>180 minutes audio-recorded offline face-to-face interview</td>
<td>The first individual interviews were not transcribed. I took notes of important information that I used for creating a profile for each participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-monthly online group conferences</td>
<td>WhatsApp chatroom</td>
<td>Transformed into 101 pages single-spaced word document for analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second individual interviews</td>
<td>WhatsApp instant chatroom</td>
<td>Transformed into 40 pages single-spaced word document for analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final individual interview</td>
<td>WhatsApp long-distance phonecall</td>
<td>Transcribed into 45-pages single-spaced word document for analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective essay</td>
<td>Instruction was sent via WhatsApp chatroom. Participants submitted them via email.</td>
<td>15-pages single-space word document for analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3-4: Summary of collected data*
In the conclusion section, participants wrote a 250-word summary of the overall things learned from the experiences. In the action plan section, participants wrote a 250-word paragraph about their aspirations and suggestions for follow-up actions of this group conversation. I developed the reflective essay protocols in English and Indonesian and allowed the participants to choose if they would write the reflection in English or Indonesian.

**Data analysis**

I approached the dataset using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and Zhang and Wildemuth’s (2009) qualitative content analysis. Braun & Clarke's (2006) define thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 79). Using thematic analysis, I sought to capture themes – “something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within dataset” (Braun & Clarke, 2006). They explain that themes can be identified in two ways: inductive bottom-up approach or theoretical deductive approach. In the inductive bottom-up approach, the analysis is driven by the data. The researcher does not use theoretical interest as guidelines for generating and assigning codes and themes. Meanwhile, in a top-down deductive approach, the analysis was driven by research questions asked in the study as well as the theoretical and analytical interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Meanwhile, Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) define qualitative content analysis as a method for examining meanings, themes, and patterns that may be manifested or latent in a particular text. They describe the method as allowing the researcher to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner.
This study was informed by the examination of previous research on the topic and reflection on my personal and professional experiences. It was also motivated by my personal and professional scholarship interests in using self-study research as a platform for teacher educators’ professional development in Indonesia. Since the beginning of the study, I have known what I was going to look for in the data. Therefore, I used the top-down deductive analysis approach in both thematic and qualitative content analysis to identify the themes from the data. Nevertheless, in the coding process, while using a specific framework for analysis and interpretation, I did not use the frameworks as preset codes. Instead, in the early stage of analysis, I used the open coding process to generate as many codes as possible from the data.

Additionally, I adapted Seidel’s (1998) qualitative data analysis processes that include noticing, collecting, and thinking in each step. Therefore, the analysis process was not linear but recursive. The first stage of data analysis was concurrent with the data collection, as appeared in Figure 3.1. I took this step to make sense the data as early as possible and to avoid the data of accumulating, which would have made it more difficult to analyze. I used thematic analysis for analyzing the dataset of the conference, interview, and reflective essay. Meanwhile, the qualitative content analysis was specifically intended to analyze the dialogue in the conference to identify the findings of the second ancillary question of the first primary question in the study. Below I will elaborate on the analysis process of all datasets.

**Preparing and familiarizing myself with the data**

As shown in Figure 3.1., the process of familiarizing myself with the data was concurrent with the process of data collection. In this stage, my purpose was to mark
what is of interest from the data related to my research questions (Seidman, 2006). For the online conference and the interviews that I did through the *WhatsApp chatroom*, the process began with transferring the data in the chatroom into a Microsoft Word document.

Meanwhile, for the phone call interview, I transcribed the audio first and saved it in the form of Microsoft Word documents. Due to the time constraint, I did not translate the entire dataset into English. I analyzed all datasets in their original versions of Indonesian and translated the sample segments that I would include to support my claims and findings. Throughout the process, I kept in mind the following two questions: 1) what is happening in the data? And 2) how does it happen? I also took short notes about the marks. This first stage of data analysis helped me navigate important issues from data in the second stage of data analysis.

![Diagram of data collection and analysis process](image)

**Figure 3-1:** The concurrent data collection and analysis process

Then, I read the dataset and put marks on it. The marks were not necessarily codes, but rather highlighters with phrases or short descriptive notes to help me identify
which segments of data I need to pay close attention to in the upcoming coding process. For the online conferences, I also put marks on “social-talks,” the dialogues that have nothing to do directly with the sharing stories about the participants’ practice. For example, in between dialogues about their practice, the participants often share stories from their life such as stories about their children, food to cook at home or food they have for lunch and so forth. I marked these segments as “social-talks” and did not include them in the segments to be analyzed because the dialogues were not relevant to the study’s objectives.

Meanwhile, for the reflective essay, the process of familiarizing myself with the data started with downloading the essay from email. Then I created a table to summarize what the participants said in their essay. The table format follows the format of the essay. It helped compare what the participants said in each part of the essay. Also, during this stage, I maintained a researcher journal consisting of notes to summarize what I found in the familiarizing process. This stage also included the process of defining the unit of analysis for qualitative content analysis.

**Generating initial codes**

In this stage, I organized data in a meaningful and systematic way and reread them thoroughly to generate initial codes. I printed out all of the datasets and used pen and pencil to assign the codes. I generated the codes based on the semantic meaning that I identified within the explicit or surface meanings from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, when a participant said that she implemented her colleagues’ suggestion in her classroom, I coded the statement as ‘impact on practice.’ Although I took the deductive thematic analysis approach, there were no preassigned codes that I generated...
from the theoretical frameworks. Instead, I used the open coding process to generate as many codes as possible. Then, I aggregated the codes into a table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual interviews and reflective essays</th>
<th>Monthly conferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling less isolated</td>
<td>Student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity of participation</td>
<td>Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feels like having a mirror</td>
<td>Asking questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Exam results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing stories from classroom</td>
<td>Students’ passiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Classroom activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Ask or help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>Giving suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Vs Judgmental</td>
<td>Similar experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance of reflection</td>
<td>Disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn from colleagues</td>
<td>Defensiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take and give feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Vs Offline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New way of discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New perspective of research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of participation</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of participation</td>
<td>Shared experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of participation</td>
<td>Confusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more time to discuss</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of specialization</td>
<td>Synchronous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding process and procedure</td>
<td>Asynchronous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to expose practice</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting feedback</td>
<td>Offering suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit of collaboration</td>
<td>Sharing resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting second opinion</td>
<td>Taking perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution to problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-5: Initial codes from all datasets

Searching for the themes

In this stage, I sorted the codes into potential themes. Since the analysis took a deductive approach, I collated the codes to address the research questions based on the analytical frameworks.

1. To identify answers to the research question, “what kind of reflection emerges from the group conversations?”, I collated the codes around the types of reflection as proposed by Kreber and Cranton’s (2000) the scholarship of the teaching model that I used as the analytical framework;
2. To identify answers to the research question, “what is the nature of the talks in the conversations that lead to the reflections?”, I collated the codes around the theme that referred to the two analytical frameworks I used for answering this question: Clark’s (2001) good quality of talks, and Mercer’s (2004) typologies of talks in conversation. Here I used qualitative content analysis; and

3. To identify answers to the research question, “what challenges and opportunities do teacher educators identify to moving forward with self-study as a community of practice?”, I collated the initial codes around the themes that were referred to the framework of value creation in a community of practice proposed by Wenger et al. (2011) such as immediate value and potential value. Any codes that did not fit into these categories were placed in a miscellaneous category. Here in this stage, I began to identify the correlation between the codes within categories and in between categories. I created concept maps to help me identify the themes. I also took notes about what was happening in the process of data analysis in this stage. After the initial codes have been grouped into categories based on the research questions, I did a second-round process of searching the themes within each of the categories. For example, I am noticing the possible themes in each category of benefits, challenges, and opportunities. I created another concept map to summarize the matrix of the initial themes identified in this process.
**Reviewing, defining, and naming the themes**

In this stage, I reviewed the initial themes for each category. Here, I reread the collected artifacts from the dataset for each theme I identified. The process also included coding and encoding the artifacts that I found did not fit into the categories. To help with this process, at the final stage, I created concepts map to identify the connections between the themes.

![Concepts Map]

**Figure 3-2:** The final category

The last stage was defining and naming the final themes, which can be seen in a table that summarizes all the themes, and put the quotes from the data that support the themes. I presented the final themes in the form of descriptive categories as they appear in the following table. There were threats to the quality and trustworthiness of the findings. Below, I outline the steps I took to deal with the threats.
I present these findings in more details in chapter four and five.

**Ethical considerations and trustworthiness**

While there were no anticipated serious physical threats posed to any of the participants, since this study investigated issues in my workplace and involved my colleagues as the participants, I paid close attention to ethical issues and threats to the quality of data that may compromise the trustworthiness of the findings. In this study, I facilitated the participants’ engagement in conversations about their practices in teaching EFL preservice teachers. In the conversations, the participants were not only sharing their stories of teaching, but also exchanging perspectives, critiques, and judgments. Therefore, there was a possibility that the conversation could make the participants feel vulnerable. Also, engage in the conversations might pose the risk of damaging the social

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Final findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do teacher educators collaboratively identify shared problem spaces for inquiry through conducting self-study about their practices in teaching teachers?</td>
<td>The teacher educators engaged in content and process reflection in the domain of instructional, curricular, and pedagogical knowledge that includes: Defining and presenting problems in their practice Drawing on personal experiences and theoretical knowledge to provide advice and suggestion to deal with the problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of reflection emerges from the group conversations? What is the nature of the talks in the conversations that lead to the reflections?</td>
<td>There are no critical reflection happened in the conversation group because the dialogues focused on problem-solving that limited its possibilities for exploration of ideas, the online platform provided limited spaces for exchanging more information and data for discussion, and the participants were not ready to engage in such critical conversation. However, there were spaces for critical reflection happen in the future should there will be a facilitation process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sociocultural factors the teacher educators identify as the potential barriers and opportunities available for moving forward with the self-study community of practice?</td>
<td>The participants reported that they experienced immediate value in the forms of interaction and connection: 1. Experience a new way of discussion 2. Providing safe space for talking about problem and getting solution 3. Impacts on practice And potential value creation in the forms of knowledge capital: 1. Learning to take and give feedback 2. Reflection and collaboration 1. Learning to take and give feedback 2. Reflection and collaboration 3. Learning to take and give feedback 4. Reflection and collaboration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To maintain commitment: 1. It needs a facilitator who can lead, mediate, and teaches 2. Work with a group people who come from the same discipline 3. Combining online and offline 4. Writing and publication |

Table 3-6: The final findings
relationship among the participants, between the participants and the teachers college, and between the participants and myself as the researcher. Moreover, involving my colleagues as participants and collecting data through the online platform may compromise the authenticity of the data and jeopardize the quality of the findings (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). I was aware of these issues since the beginning of the planning process of the study. In this section, I will elaborate on the strategies and steps I took to deal with ethical issues and manage trustworthiness.

**Ethical Considerations**

Two principles that sustained this study regarding ethical considerations were the voluntary nature of the involvement and confidentiality of data and information. I believed that people would voluntarily participate in an activity when they have a full understanding of the goals, processes, benefits, and risks involved in the activity. Therefore, to ensure that the participants fully understood the study, I sent out an invitation to participate in the study via a WhatsApp conversation group consisting of the lecturers in the college. Included in the invitation was a short and concise plan of the study and consent form in English and Indonesian. While the lecturers are EFL teacher educators and thus they could communicate in English, they are non-native speakers who rarely use English in daily activities. Therefore, I put Indonesian into the consent form to ensure that they understood the technical and specific jargon related to the study.

Additionally, to ensure that the participant candidates had a thorough understanding of the study and thus be willing to participate voluntarily, I visited the college and organized a half-day introductory session. In the session, I elaborated in detail the goals, process and procedures, benefits, and the potential risks of participating
in the study. I also gave the lecturers opportunities to ask questions and voice their concerns regarding the study. I did not immediately ask the lecturers to express their willingness to join the study, but instead, I gave them a week to re-read the consent form. Furthermore, at the beginning of data collection activities, I told the participants that they were free to leave the study any time they feel uncomfortable.

The second principle was the confidentiality of data and information. To address the issues, participants chose their own pseudonym to make them feel comfortable with their alias. With the consideration of time and geographical boundary, I created a *WhatsApp conversation group* and put a password on all the devices that I used to access the group; it included my cellphone, laptop, and desktop computer. I also regularly transferred the conversations file in the *WhatsApp* into Microsoft Word documents and stored them in password-protected cloud storages. To avoid damage or loss of data, I also stored data in other password-protected places and an offline device. I was the only person who had access to the data.

**Managing Trustworthiness**

The greatest threat to this study is the authenticity of the data because I collected data through an online chatroom and involved my colleagues as participants. I followed Maxwell's (2013) suggestion to identify participants with whom I can establish the most productive relationship while staying alert to the issues of “key informant” bias and power relations that might compromise the quality of the data.

**Managing online communication, biases, and research relationship**

To avoid misunderstanding between the researcher and participants and among the participants, I follow the suggestion from James and Busher (2009) about ensuring
the agreement on the nature and style of our online communications that are appropriate, polite, and respectful. Also, I took efforts to ensure that everyone sought to understand the common languages and jargon used in the conversation and kept updated about the purpose, nature, procedures, and risks of the research (Hall, Frederick, & Johns, 2004, as cited in James & Busher, 2016). Therefore, I regularly discussed the rules, expectations, and regulation with participants to get them to keep updated and have their approval.

My position in the study was unique because I was both an outsider and an insider. I am an outsider because I am a current doctoral student from Penn State who is working on a dissertation research. The relationship I formed with the participants was a researcher-participant relationship. As an outsider, I have my own agenda, beliefs, and dispositions about the topic under study. I also must comply with the rules, values, expectations, and ethical code of conducts in research as determined by Penn State. On the other hand, I was also an insider – I was technically still an employee of the teachers college where I conducted the study. The relationship I developed was a collegial relationship. The participants are all my colleagues, and we shared knowledge about the contexts of the study. I have known the participants for about five years.

As an insider, I was also aware that the participants may have preconceptions about me, and it might impose some influence on the quality of their participation and the information they provided in the study. I also recognized that they might have different views about things such as research paradigm, the roles, and responsibilities of teacher educators, professional development practices, and so forth. Therefore, with these dual positions, it is critical for me to form a research relationship that can help me produce research under the standard of quality as determined by Penn State. While at the same
time, I also paid respect to the preconceptions the participants have about me and their views of research, their roles, and responsibilities as teacher educators, and the professional development practices. I have tried my best to from imposing my own preconceptions and beliefs about the topic under the study to the participants.

Furthermore, I made efforts intended to develop a safe, trusting, and caring relationship with the participants to make them feel comfortable sharing their authentic experiences and respecting each other’s’ views. I paid attention to the suggestion from Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach (2009) about acknowledging everyone’s equal rights for participation. I also kept in mind Lyons & LaBoskey (2002) reminder that if I want the participants to share their meanings of experience, I had to reassure that the study will respect their ideas and explorations; and that their work will be confidential. Therefore, since the beginning of the research process, I tried my best to be honest and be open with the participants about nature the partnership at each step (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). I developed protocols, rules, and expectations that functioned to guarantee that everyone has equal opportunities to participate, and everyone’s voices were respected. I made my best efforts to present myself as an equal learning partner for the participants. I avoided giving substantive comments on the issues the participants discussed in the conversation because I did not want to intervene in the nature of the conversations and mistakenly impose my own beliefs, values, and disposition about the topic.

**Ensuring the quality of the findings**

One of the essential features of a case study research is that it relies on multiple data sources and a variety of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013). In this study, I collected data through individual interviews, online group conferences, and reflective
essays. Moreover, I used the final individual interviews to clarify my interpretation of the data collected through interviews, reflective essays, and group conferences. By so doing, I made the final interviews as the member checking mechanism to ensure that my interpretation was genuinely based on the data, and I did not make up-story about the participants’ perceptions.

There were unanticipated events that happened in the teachers college that had direct impacts on the process of the data collection – I outlined the events earlier in the section of the data collection process. I invited the participants to discuss the events, and we all agreed to make changes to the activities for data collection. This change was not imposed by me as the researcher. However, it was made based on our consensus. I saw positive sides of this unanticipated change because it allowed us to renegotiate the process and procedures of the study. The participants’ willingness to negotiate indicated that their participation in the study was voluntary. Thus, it guaranteed the quality of their participation and the authenticity of the data they provided. Since this study acted as preliminary work for a larger initiative to create a self-study community of practice in the college, this unanticipated change was also positive because we learned that these might happen in the future as we move forward to become a self-study community.

This study was informed by the results of the examination of literature, reflection on my personal and professional experience, and the plan of my future scholarship. Since the beginning of the study, I knew what I was looking for. Therefore, I used thematic analysis because I have already known what themes I looked for from this study. Meanwhile, to analyze and interpret the data, I used multiple analytical frameworks such as Wenger et al. (2011) value creation in community and network, Kreber & Cranton's
(2000) scholarship of teaching model, and Mercer's (2004) types of talk. Combining these frameworks of analysis allowed me to see the data through different approaches and perspectives. It was intended to get the findings of the study triangulated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

**Presenting cross-language quotes from data to support the findings**

In this study, the participants spoke in Indonesian during the interviews and online conferences. Although they are EFL lecturers, they are still non-native English speakers who rarely use the language in their daily activities, even in their classroom. Therefore, using Indonesian as the medium of conversation would create a more comfortable setting for the participants and allow them to provide richer information. Meanwhile, for reflective essays, I allowed the participants to use either write in English or Indonesian. There were two participants who wrote essays in English.

In addition to my unique position as both insider and outsider, I also assumed duo position as researcher/translator. Having fluent in both English and Indonesian, I translated some specific segments of the data that support my claims from Indonesian to English. My position as researcher/translator allows me to pay close attention to cross-cultural meanings and interpretation (Temple & Young, 2004). However, I also maintained my position as a neutral and objective transmitter of the messages of the study. To maintain the trustworthiness of the claim I made in this study, I put a quote from data in original language juxtapose with its English translation, except for those quotes from reflective essays that are written in English.
Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the context of the study, explained the design along with its rationales, and more importantly, I elaborated on the process and procedures, as well as the efforts I took to guarantee trustworthiness and maintain ethical issues. With this design, I am confident this study will present scholarly and ethically sound findings that are beneficial for improving my own understanding and contributing to the scholarly conversation about the topic. The following three chapters present the findings of the study.
Chapter Four

Teacher educators’ reflections on their practice through conversations

“Maybe you should evaluate the materials you used and the assessment tools, Reisa.”
– Khairany’s comments for Reisa

The purpose of the study is to examine the potential application of self-study research as a professional development platform for EFL teacher educators in an Indonesian context. This study laid the groundwork for establishing the preconditions for a long-term initiative of creating a self-study community by examining the three characteristics of self-study research: collaboration, conversation, and critical reflections. Drawing on Mezirow’s (1991) transformative learning theory, this study observed the engagement in dialogues meant to share stories from practice and experiences in an online conversation group as a professional development practice. Therefore, through the lens of transformative learning theory, this study investigated whether the online conversation group could become a unique container for the participants to engage in dialogues about their practice and trigger critical reflection.

An understanding of how the conversation group promotes collaboration and facilitates critical reflection are essential because “through dialogues that inquiry became a collective struggle in which everyone contributed through critique and reflection” (Kitchen & Parker, 2009, p. 121). As the first step to gain understanding, this study asked, “how do teacher educators collaboratively identify shared problem spaces for inquiry through conducting self-study about their practices in teaching teachers?” Based on my literature review-informed assumptions that engagement in a conversation group...
about to share stories from practice may lead teacher educators to reflect on it, more specifically, through this question, I sought to identify:

a. What kind of reflection emerges from the group conversations? And

b. What is the nature of the dialogues in the conversations that might lead and hinder the reflections?

The answers to the questions are critical for shedding light into the effort of establishing the self-study community and providing a basis for developing future steps to support the implementation of conversation as a means of professional development of the teacher educators. To identify the kind of reflection that emerged from the conversation, I analyzed the dataset of the online conversation using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and used Kreber & Cranton’s (2000) scholarship of teaching model as the analytical frameworks. Meanwhile, to identify the nature of the dialogues in the conversation group, I approached the dataset of the online conversation using Zhang & Wildermuth’s (2009) qualitative content analysis and used Mercer’s (2004) concepts of interthinking as the analytical frameworks.

I will begin the discussion about how the participants reflect on their practice in this chapter with a brief reintroduction of the two analytical frameworks and an overview of the findings. The chapter will end with a discussion where I compare and contrast the findings to the literature and a reflection on how these findings inform the plan for creating a self-study community.
The analytical frameworks

A more detailed description of how I used these frameworks in the analysis process was presented previously in chapter three. Here, I will only provide a brief description of them.

The Scholarship of Teaching Model

Drawing on Mezirow's (1990, 1991) transformative learning, Kreber & Cranton (2000) develop a scholarship of teaching model to identify how people reflect on their practice in teaching. The model proposes that individuals who learn about teaching engage in content, process, and premise reflection in three domains knowledge of teaching: curricular, instructional, and pedagogical. Kreber (2005) and Kreber & Cranton (2000) also explain that knowledge of teaching comes from two different sources: educational research or theory and personal teaching experience.

The model acknowledges that there are three types of the knowledge of teaching: instructional, curricular, and pedagogical. Instructional knowledge is the knowledge about all aspects of instructional design, for example, organizing lectures, preparing materials, writing learning objectives, and constructing tests. Curricular knowledge is knowledge about the goals, purposes, and rationales of the class, course, or programs. It also includes the knowledge about how a particular course fits into the broader curriculum and how, through teaching, contributes to the university’s societal and cultural role. Pedagogical knowledge is knowledge about how student learn and how to facilitate them for learning. It includes knowledge about student motivation, their
learning style, and how they construct knowledge and process information. The following table shows examples of questions that lead people to reflect on their practice in teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content reflections</th>
<th>Instructional knowledge</th>
<th>Curricular knowledge</th>
<th>Pedagogical knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The problem I need to solve here is evaluating large classes and I do this by using multiple choice exams.</td>
<td>The problem I need to solve here is to clarify my goals and my main goals is to help students understand the discipline.</td>
<td>The problem I need to solve here is helping students learn and I cannot because they don't want to.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did I do? Were my methods, materials, and course design effective?</td>
<td>How did I arrive at the goals and rationales for my course?</td>
<td>How did I do? Am I successful in facilitating student learning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why does it matter the course, materials, and course design I use?</td>
<td>Why do our goals and rationales matter?</td>
<td>Why does it if consider how student learn?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4-1:** The scholarship of teaching model (Kreber and Cranton, 2000)

Content reflection is a reflection on a problem where people engage in describing or defining a problem, without questioning the presupposition upon which the definition or description of problem is based (Kreber, 2005). Kreber (2005) provides the following examples to illustrate content reflection on the three domains of knowledge:

“The problem I need to solve here is evaluating large class and I do this by using multiple choice exam” (content reflection on instructional knowledge). The problem I need to solve here is helping students learn and I cannot because they don’t want to (Content reflection on pedagogical knowledge). And, “the problem I need to solve here is to clarify my goals and my main goals is to help students understand the discipline (Content reflection on curricular knowledge).” (p. 325)

Kreber (2005) further explains that in content reflection, the problem is merely described and how it is habitually solved. According to Mezirow (1991), in content reflection, “we are not attending to the ground or justification for our beliefs but are simply using our beliefs to make an interpretation” (p. 107). Furthermore, Kreber (2005) describes, “whether our knowledge is valid is not a question that is posed through content
reflection” (p. 326). In process reflection, teachers question the adequacy of instructional knowledge by focusing their reflection on the strategies or procedures which led to them. How instructional knowledge is created may be asked (Kreber & Cranton, 2000). Lastly, in premise reflection, teachers engage in critical reflection that questions the presupposition underlying their knowledge.

The interthinking

Neil Mercer and his colleagues conducted extensive studies for analyzing talks in a group of people. He views language as a tool for collective thinking. He argues that “human activities involve not just the sharing of information and the coordination of social interaction, but also a joint, dynamic engagement with ideas amongst partners” (Mercer, 2005). Mercer (2000, 2001, 2004) claims that conversations provide spaces for people to engage in interthinking – a joint intellectual activity to think together to make sense of experience and to solve problems collaboratively. Mercer’s concept of interthinking prescribes languages, particularly spoken languages, a central role. Mercer asserts that language, as a cultural tool, has a power to be used as a means for pursuing creative and collective thinking because it bears possibilities that listeners may interpret the speakers’ words differently based on their personal perspectives and background knowledge.

From his extensive work in studying talks and conversation, he created a typology of talks in a conversation group as summarized in Table 4.2. below. Mercer’s typology of talks proposes that in a conversation, people engaged in three types of talks. The first type of talk is disputational that is dominated by assertions and counter-assertions with few repetition and elaborations, the dominant features of a cumulative talk. To ensure
that a group discussion be productive as a means for joint intellectual activities, the
dialogues in the conversation should be exploratory where the conversation filled with a
“combination of challenges and request for clarification with responses that provide
explanations and justifications” (Mercer, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of talks</th>
<th>The characteristics of the talks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disputational talks</td>
<td>Characterized by disagreement and individualized decision making. There are few attempts to pool resources, to offer constructive criticism or make suggestions. Disputational talk also has some characteristic discourse features &amp; short exchanges consisting of assertions and challenges or counter assertions (Yes it is or No is not).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative talks</td>
<td>Speakers build positively but uncritically on what the others have said. Partners use talk to construct a common knowledge by accumulation. Cumulative discourse is characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory talks</td>
<td>Speakers engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas. Statements and suggestions are offered for joint consideration. These may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered. Partners all actively participate and opinions are sought and considered before decisions are jointly made. Compared with the other two types, in Exploratory talk knowledge is made more publicly accountable and reasoning is more visible in the talk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2: The typologies of talks (Mercer, 2005)

Mercer (2013) noted that these three types of talks are not distinctive in a conversation, but rather overlap each other. Although the original application of this typology was in discourse analysis studies focusing on researching conversations in classroom settings, I found that this typology also provides a guideline to make sense of the nature of the dialogues in the conversation group because it helped me in identifying the linguistic features of the dialogue – kinds of speech acts, the psychological features of the dialogues – defensiveness or competitiveness, and the cultural features of the dialogue – who says what to what effect. All these features helped me in identifying the overall nature of the dialogue in the online conversation group.
Overview of the findings

Thematic analysis of the dataset revealed that engagement in the dialogues in the online conversation groups to share stories from practice had led the participants to make reflections on their practice in two levels of reflections – content and process reflections – and in the three domains of teaching knowledge – instructional, curricular, and pedagogical. However, these are surface level reflections that would not lead to transformative learning experience. To become transformative, the participants must engage in dialogues that lead them to critically reflect on their practice – premise reflection (Mezirow, 1991). Meanwhile, the qualitative content analysis into the dataset did not identify convincing evidence to indicate that the participants engaged in such reflection. The dialogues in the conversation did not lead the participants to critically reflect on their practice because the conversation focused on problem-posing and advice-giving where everyone immediately buys into the problems perceived by their colleagues.

Focusing the dialogues on problem-posing made the dialogues centered around advice-giving conversations that limited the conversation into either disputational or cumulative in nature. As the consequence, the dialogues in the conversation did not facilitate the participants in engagement in critical reflections that might provide them with disorienting dilemmas about their practice. To critically reflective on practice, the participants must engage in a form of dialogue named reflective discourse where experiences is reflected on, assumptions and beliefs are questioned, and habits of mind are ultimately transformed (Taylor, 2009). This kind of dialogue shares characteristics with Mercer’s exploratory talks and they did not appear in the conversation group.
Content and process reflection on instructional, pedagogical, and curricular knowledge of teaching through dialogues in the online conversation group.

As the focus of the first research question is identifying the types of reflection emerge in the dialogues and the nature of the dialogues that might possible promote or hinder critical reflection from emerging, analysis focused on the dataset of the online conversation group. I mentioned in Chapter three that there were unforeseen circumstances that made a huge impact on the plan and process of the research. As the research went by, the activities in the conversation group became less interactive, especially in the third and fourth conference. Therefore, I selected the section of dialogues from the first and second conference, especially the dialogues of Reisa, Marina, and Baba because during their segments, the participants were highly engaged in the conversation group. I included their segments in this chapter to support my analysis and findings.

The objectives of the first and second conference were to get the participants to share stories about the instructional programs they designed for the semester and the implementation of the instructional programs in the first few weeks of the semester. The first segment of the conversation that I analyzed were presentations from each participant. Then, I proceed to analyze the dialogues subsequent to their presentation. In general, the conversations began with a presentation where the participants described and defined the problems in their class. Then, in the subsequent conversations, the participants engaged in the dialogues focusing on exchanging advice or solutions to the problems based on either personal experiences or theoretical knowledge.
Describing and defining problems in the class

The participants used the online conversation group as a place to share the problems they encounter in their class. They expected that they would be given solutions to the problems from their colleagues in the conversation group. Reisa was the first to share her syllabus in the first conference. In this semester, Reisa was assigned to teach Basic English Structure – a compulsory subject for freshmen. In the following excerpt, Reisa opened the conversation with a presentation about the objectives and goals of the course, the change she made to the syllabus, the reasons why she made the changes, and the learning process she implemented in the course. She concluded her presentation by defining and describing the problems she is currently experiencing in the class.

Excerpt 4.1

Reisa: I am going to share my syllabus for this semester. The goals and objectives are still the same. Students know how to use tenses and questions in a sentence and paragraph. However, I made change on the learning process that is no longer teacher centered, but more student centered. Previously, grammar class was full of lecturing. Students are just listeners. After trying some teaching techniques, from group work, jigsaw, and the last one was peer learning, according to the students, the last one was the most effective. Because of 1 thing, they feel comfortable exchanging questions and explanations. And in the last session, I jumped in and giving clarification. I think there is change in students activity; they are more active in class and have courage to participate; not just came and sit. I also have an intention to make them speak and be active, not passive. For assignments, I always ask them to read at home, there are also quizzes (flexible); and there are also changes on the materials which is this one is more detail (previously, too much materials packed in one session).
Reisa began her thread with a description of the goals and objectives of her course which were the same as the previous academic year. She continued articulating what she knew about the instructional strategies that are suitable for her class. Based on the feedback she got from her students, she decided to change the instructional strategies from teacher-centered to more students-centered. She also explained that she positioned herself as merely a facilitator of learning as she said, “And in the last session, I jumped in and giving clarification”. She reflected on the learning process as she said that her students were becoming more active and have the courage to participate in the class. She then clarified the goals for her class which was to encourage students to actively participate in the class. She ended her presentation by posing problems she encountered in her class. In so doing, she made content reflection on instructional and pedagogical domain of teaching knowledge to define and describe the problems: 1) performance gap between daily activities and exam results and 2) students’ low commitment to learning. She then invited her colleagues to give feedback to her class and solution to her problems.
by saying, “please any insights?” Implied from her presentation was that the source of the problem was her students.

Similar to Reisa, other participants also began by presenting the identification of problems they encountered in their class. For example, Marina shared her instructional activities in the Reading for Interpretation class she taught in the first four weeks of the semester. As appears in the excerpt below, Marina began her presentation with a content reflection on the instructional knowledge as she explained the diagnostic test she administered to identify her students’ current level of reading proficiency. Then, based on the diagnostic test, she identified the following problem in her class: difficulties in identifying topic and main ideas of a text due to a lack of vocabulary.

She continued her presentation with a process reflection on the instructional and curricular knowledge of teaching when she explained the strategies she used in the class to deal with the problems the students encountered in reading class. Marina seemed to be confident that the teaching strategies and materials she developed had successfully solved the problems in her class as she claimed that two of the three classes she taught that semester had mastered the ability to identify the topic and main ideas of a passage. She concluded her presentation with an acknowledgement that she still used traditional lecturing in teaching and would change it to cooperative learning in the next session.

**Excerpt 4.2**

*Untuk mengajar Reading for Interpretation sy ingin tahu apakah materi teso dibutuhkan oleh mhsw atau tdk di pertemuan kedua sy memberikan mereka test reading dan minta ceritakan problem apa yg dihadapi utk memahami bacaan saat mengerjakan test tadi. Hasilnya rata2 mrk di angka 50 - 65 (sy blm menghitungnya baru selintas aja)*

In Reading for Interpretation class, I wanted to know if the materials that I developed fit into the students’ needs, I gave the students a test in the second meetings and asked them to tell me the problems they experienced when working on the test. The results were that in average, the students scored between 50-65 (this is just from the overview of the
Problem yang mereka hadapi rata-rata kurang dengan vocabulary, menemukan topik dan pernyataan yang tersirat. Ada juga yang mudah bosan dan lelah jika membaca bacaan yang panjang, padahal menurut aku sih gak panjang, tp bg mhsw itu textnya panjang jeh hehehe...


Dan sebagai upaya mereka agar suka membaca dan agar mudah memahami bacaan, sy kasih tugas extensive reading juga, tp di luar pembelajaran. Sy wajibkan mereka utk membaca minimal 4 buku sbg syarat kelulusan mata kuliah reading. Krn kalau gak diwajibkan mrk akan malas membaca. Setia minggu mereka harus lapor melalui schoology.

Based on the diagnostic results, I developed materials to serve the students’ needs. Since they told me that they were lacking vocabularies, having difficulties in identifying topic, and synonym and antonym, the third meeting focused on discussing the way how to identify topic and main idea in a passage. Yesterday, I provide them with examples in passages in the PowerPoint. And thanks God, they seemed to understand it.

To make sure that they really understood the materials, I gave them assignment to read 3 passages from the reading textbooks and identify the topic. Thanks God, they could identify the topic correctly. Only 1 class of the 3 classes that still had difficulties in identifying topic. When I asked them, they did not work on the assignment at home. They seemed to have difficulties in finding the topic.

In the fourth meeting, I provided them with materials about contextual clues to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words without look up dictionary. I assigned them to identify unfamiliar words and find the meaning based on the clues.

In order to get them easier to understand passage and improve their reading habits, I assigned them extensive reading. I asked them to read at least 4 books in a semester; and this is one of the most important requirements for having good grade in the class. I made it a requirement, otherwise, they would not

Another example of how the participants used the online conversation group to share problems in the class was a presentation by Baba below. In the excerpt below, Baba presented the learning activities and the issues he encountered in his class four weeks into the semester.

Excerpt 4.3


In the first four meetings in my academic writing class, I identified four issues. When I provided the students with opportunities to ask questions, only 3 or 4 of them did ask questions and actively involved in the class. In the Schoology, there are some students who had not submitted their work on the assignment. In general, my students seemed to understand the materials. It can be seen from their answers to the questions that I asked (What are components of an introduction section in an article? Can you identify the gap in an article?) However, there are some of them who said that they were still confused about it. Any insights? overall, from analytical data in the Schoology, the students are all active using the platform. However, only some of them working on the assignment.
In his short presentation, Baba made a content reflection on his instructional knowledge of teaching when he explained that there are three to four issues in his class. First, his students were not actively involved in the classroom activities. Only few of them were active in the class and engaged in asking questions. He then identified that he used Schoology – a free online teaching and learning platform - to facilitate the instructional process. Thus, he blended the face-to-face classroom sessions with offline sessions on Schoology. However, he reflected that he found an issue in his class. Although Schoology data indicated that his students were actively using the platform, in reality, there were some students who did not work on the assignments and had not submitted them to the platform. In the presentation, Baba relied on his assumptions about how to best teach his students. He assumed that blending the online and offline platform would help his students learning in better ways. He then made a claim that that his students had grasped and understood the materials about identifying components of an introduction section and finding a gap in an academic article. However, he also found that there were students who were still confused with the materials. Then, he asked for help from his colleagues to deal with the issues in his class.

Using Kreber & Cranton’s (2000) scholarship of teaching model to analyze the three excerpts of presentations above, I have identified that the participants made content and process reflections on their practice in the three domains of knowledge of teaching: instructional, curricular, and pedagogical. However, these reflections were not based on their evaluation on their own practice, but rather, anchored in the assumptions and presuppositions they had about their practice. They based their actions on the taken-for-
granted beliefs about what was going on and how things should be going on in their classrooms.

For example, in excerpt 1, Reisa made a content reflection on instructional and pedagogical knowledge when she described the instructional process she did in her class.

However, I made change on the learning process that is no longer teacher centered, but more student centered. Previously, grammar class was full of lecturing. Students are just listeners. After trying some teaching techniques, from group work, jigsaw, and the last one was peer learning, according to the students, the last one was the most effective. Because of 1 thing, they feel comfortable exchanging questions and explanations. And in the last session, I jumped in and giving clarification. I think there is change in student’s activity; they are more active in class and have courage to participate; not just came and sit.

Kreber & Cranton (2000) describe that we engage in content reflection when we try to describe the teaching process. That is what Reisa did in her presentation. She made a content reflection on instructional knowledge when she described the change she made on the instructional strategy – to become more student-centered; and content reflection on pedagogical knowledge when she claimed that the change she made to the instructional strategy had made her students became more active in class. However, this claim was based on the assumption that the new strategy helped her students learn better in class.

Teachers take action in the classroom based on the assumptions they have about how best to help students learn. The excerpts of the presentation above consisted of such assumptions-based actions by the teachers. Knowing that her students had issues with identifying the topic and main idea of a passage due to their lack of vocabularies, Marina developed teaching materials and instructional strategies to help her students deal with the problems.
Based on the diagnostic results, I developed materials to serve the students’ needs. Since they told me that they were lacking vocabularies, having difficulties in identifying topic, and synonym and antonym, the third meeting focused on discussing the way how to identify topic and main idea in a passage. Yesterday, I provide them with examples in passages in the PowerPoint. And thanks God, they seemed to understand it.

In the fourth meeting, I provided them with materials about contextual clues to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words without look up dictionary. I assigned them to identify unfamiliar words and find the meaning based on the clues. In order to get them easier to understand passage and improve their reading habits, I assigned them extensive reading. I asked them to read at least 4 books in a semester; and this is one of the most important requirements for having good grade in the class. I made it a requirement, otherwise, they would not read at home. They have to file report every week.

Marina assumed that the teaching materials, the instructional strategy, and the assignments she designed would help increase her students’ vocabulary mastery, which in the end, would help them improve their ability to identify the topic and main idea of a passage. Similarly, Baba did the same thing. He combined online and offline platforms for teaching with an assumption that it would made his students more easily understand the materials and submit their work.

In describing the teaching process in their class, the participants made content and process reflections on instructional, pedagogical, and curricular knowledge based on assumptions they had about what was happening in their classes and what actions should be made to deal with it. Brookfield (2017) names this kind of assumption as prescriptive assumption – what the participants think ought to be happening in a particular situation; and causal assumption – when the participants think of how things would work if a certain condition could be met. However, Brookfield (1997) describes that reflection is not necessarily critical when it is simply used to describe the teaching process just like the participants did in their presentation. He asserts that “critically reflective teaching
happens when we build into our practice the habit of constantly trying to identify, and check, the assumption that inform our practice” (Brookfield, 2017, p. 4). There were no indications that the participants engaged in such checking of assumptions. The excerpts did not show that the participants question the merit and functional relevance of the practices and materials they used in their class and the problems they claimed existed in their class. Implied from the three presentation above is that the sources of the problems the participants elaborated were the students, not themselves.

However, the analysis into the dataset also revealed there were some possible “entry points” to lead the participants critically reflect on their practice and check the assumptions that informed their practice.

For example, Marina said,

“In order to get them easier to understand passage and improve their reading habits, I assigned them extensive reading. I asked them to read at least 4 books in a semester; and this is one of the most important requirements for having good grade in the class. I made it a requirement, otherwise, they would not read at home.”

Reisa said,

I always ask them to read at home, there are also quizzes (flexible); and there are also changes on the materials which is this one is more detail (previously, too much materials packed in one session).

and Baba said

In general, my students seemed to understand the materials. It can be seen from their answers to the questions that I asked (What are components of an introduction section in an article? Can you identify the gap in an article?) However, there are some of them who said that they were still confused about it. Any insights?

These statements should become “entry points” for conversations that might possibly lead the participants to questions their assumptions and critically reflect on their
practice. Brookfield (2017) elaborates that inviting colleagues to engage in conversation about their practice would help teachers notice aspects of their practice that are hidden from their own eyes. Engaged in dialogues with colleagues should provoke critical reflection because through the dialogues, the critical reflection to be put into action by reflecting on the experiences, questioning the assumptions and beliefs, and transforming habit of mind (Taylor, 2009). This is the purpose of the study – to identify if engaging in the dialogue with colleagues would provoke the participants critically reflect on their practice – checking and questioning the assumptions and presuppositions that sustained their actions. In the following sections I would describe how the conversation evolved and examine if the dialogues in the conversation group could actually lead the participants to engage in the critical reflections.

Using personal- and theoretical-based knowledge to provide advice and solutions

In the subsequent conversations, the participants engaged in dialogues that focused on advice-giving to offer solutions to the problems defined in the presentation. They relied on personal-experience based knowledge and theoretical-based knowledge to provide the advice. Responding to Reisa’s presentation Marina and Maryam, drawing on their personal experiences, provided Reisa with possible solutions to her problems.

Excerpt 4.4

Marina: saya inget wkt diajar structure sama bu mien. beliau saat perkuliahan mewajibkan setiap mahasiswa membuat kalaimat sesuai dengan topic yg diajarkan. Beliau memang cara menjelaskan mudah dipahami. setiap mahasiswa baca kalimat yg sdh dibuatnya. satu mahasiswa satu kalimat. itu bagi saya ngena banget, krn wajib buat jadi akhirnya harus belajar. kalau gak buat bakalan diceramahin

Marina: I still remember learning structure with Ms. Mien. She required us the students to make a sentence based on the topic of the day. The way she explained the materials was easy to understand. Every student is required to read the sentences they make; one sentence for each student. For me, the way she taught was fit into my learning because she forced us to learn. She got really mad to students who did not make
Reisa: Alright, thanks Ms. Marina. In Basic English structure, students analyze sentences in a journal article. Since it's very basic, the objective is to get students understand subject-verb agreement. Later, in English Structure 2, I ask them to prepare 1 book for them doing practice. I would say it is like a diary. So, I would require students to write their activities using the kind of Tenses they learn in the class; and they work with their peers and I would check if the sentences are correct or not 😊 Oh yeah, from Mr. Wendi's note, he said that students called me "killer lecturer" 😏 This is a long time image of myself. Students know if their lecturer is crazy ... maybe ... Even when I make a joke in class, students thought it was serious ... I don't know what is wrong with my face 😅 And FYI ... it's not only in campus that people say that ... if you know what should I do? but don't ask me to keep smiling ... 😊 please mercy me ....

Maryam: I've no idea Reisa. I have never taught English structure before and when I was in my undergrad, the lecturer who taught structure came to class only twice in a semester. 😏 so, we were just asked to read a book, made a summary about it, and answered the questions. But, what if ask students to analyze texts from Reading class; and the lecturer provides the text (to be analyzed the structure of the sentence) and ask for help from lecturer who teaches Writing to analyze the error ... maybe you want to try it ... So, the students got an integrated material from different courses.

Reisa: I have done that too ... I asked them to get Reading textbook in Ms. Marina's class and used it for practicing. But, in the exams, the questions are different ... so, they found new vocabularies (different to that of in the textbook) and they didn't know it, and again, they incorrect in identifying verb agreement.
Marina and Reisa shared unique past experiences. Marina is Reisa’s former English teacher; and they both are alumni of the teachers college where this study was conducted. They share a past experience of studying grammar with a lecturer named Ms. Mien. Reflecting on that experience, Marina found that she had a great experience studying grammar with Ms. Mien and invited Reisa to reflect on that shared experiences and try to replicate Ms. Mien’s approach of teaching grammar. Marina’s comment made Reisa looked back to the goals and instructional process in her class. She found that what Ms. Mien did in her class did not fit into the objectives she tried to reach in her class. She then restates the objective of her class which more focus on getting students to recognize the pattern of Basic English sentence, not making a sentence. Here, Reisa again engaged in content reflection in the domain of curricular knowledge.

Joining the conversation, Maryam also drew on her personal experience of studying English grammar in her undergrad study because she also a graduate of an EFL teachers college. Maryam seems to have no wonderful experiences of studying grammar in her undergrad study because her lecturer rarely came to the class. Her time of studying grammar was filled with activities such as reading books, making summary, and answering questions without guidance from the lecturer. However, she still managed to
learn something from that experience and used it as the basis for providing a possible solution to Reisa’s problem.

Suggestions from Marina and Maryam has made Reisa to look back to the goals and activities in her class. She reflected on the goal and the instructional process of her class as she said:

“Since it's very basic, the objective is to get students understand subject-verb agreement. Later, in English Structure 2, I ask them to prepare 1 book for them doing practice. I would say it is like a diary. So, I would require students to write their activities using the kind of Tenses they learn in the class; and they work with their peers and I would check if the sentences are correct or not.”

Here, she engaged in content and process reflection in the domain of curricular and instructional knowledge by reintroducing the goals of her class and the instructional activities she uses to reach it. Her comments also implicitly indicate that the way Ms. Mien taught grammar will not fit into her goals for the course and the instructional process she believes to be effective for reaching the goal. She did the same when responding to Maryam’s suggestions and confirms that she had already tried the strategies Maryam suggested. Here she engaged in process reflection on instructional knowledge when she said:

“I have done that too ... I asked them to get Reading textbook in Ms. Marina's class and used it for practicing. But, in the exams, the questions are different ... so, they found new vocabularies (different to that of in the textbook) and they didn't know it, and again, they incorrect in identifying verb agreement. So, it could be that they lack of vocabularies.”

Reisa’s responds indicates that comments made by Maryam has directed Reisa to redefine the problem she encounters in her class. However, there was no indication that the comments made by Marina and Maryam provoked Reisa to critically reflect on her practice. Instead, the comments had just strengthened Reisa’s assumption that the sources
of the problem in her class was her students as she said that her students also lack adequate vocabulary.

While Marina and Maryam relied on their personal experiences for providing advice and solutions to Reisa, Baba, who has a keen interest in using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) strategy for teaching grammar, used his theoretical knowledge about SFL to propose the idea of using the strategy in Reisa’s class.

Excerpt 4.5

Baba: Structure bagaiamana kalau memakai pendekatan SFL, ini bisa menjanjikan pembelajaran menyeluruh. Karena tidak hanya belajar struktur bahasa secara terisolasi namun disesuikan dengan kontextnya.

Reisa: Ky Functional grammar gitu yaaa Klo structure kan per part yah pa hen. Mgkin bs diliat dulu tiu tik nya.


Reisa: Ya pa hen. Nah pr nya itu, they know meaning of each sentence. Mgkn pas di reading itu yah dikupas artinya. Dan raijn2 jg buka kamus utkambah vocab dan tau funsiga msg2 word or phrase. Bgituakah p hen?


Reisa: Yeah, but, the problem is ... they know meaning of each sentence. Maybe in reading class they learn about it, and from dictionary. That's why they got new vocabularies and know the meaning of words or phrases. Is that what you mean?

Baba: 1. Soekarno was sent to the jail by Dutch; 2) Dutch sent Soekarno to the jail. Those two sentences were presented but the meanings are different. But if we bring this into meaning making choice, it would be more meaningful and related to students’ daily life. In the first sentence, Soekarno as actor/participant; in the
Kalimat pertama Soekarno sebagai actor/participant. Kalaimat kedua Belanda sebagai actor/participant.

Reisa: Itu stc 2 pak. Klo menurut saya 1 1 saja dulu biar ga berat. Jd balik k tiu dan tik. Reisa: That is Structure 2. I think it would be better if we focus on one course level at a time. Let’s go back and see the objectives and goals in the syllabus.

Baba: Ya ini contoh kalimat. Coba contoh kalimat di Structure 1 apa? Baba: I had just given you an example; so, what is an example of sentence discussed in Structure 1?

Baba: Contoh kalimatnya? Baba: What is the example?

Reisa: I ate fried rice

Baba: Kalimat ini harus dilengkapi dalam konteknya, dimana? Kapan? Ini yg dinamakan SFL. Baba: Those sentences should be put in context; where? when? that's what called as SFL


Reisa: I started with the simplest one, Mr. Baba. Please check my syllabus for Structure 1, 2, 3, and 4. Once they understood grammar through traditional way, it would be easier to implement functional grammar.

Baba used his theoretical-based knowledge to provide a possible solution to Reisa’s problems. He believes that SFL is an appropriate strategy for teaching grammar because it connects grammar to a context. When Reisa asked for clarification if SFL is similar to functional grammar and seemed to doubt that it fits into her class, Baba tried to clarify what he meant by SFL by defining that SFL must have a component of “meaning making choice” to make the materials discussed in the class connects to the students’ daily life contexts. However, it seems that Baba did not read the syllabus that Reisa uploaded in the folder and had no idea what the goals and objectives of Reisa’s class
were. But he continued explaining how SFL fit for teaching grammar by providing examples.

The conversation continued with dialogues about assignment. In the following excerpt, Khairany and Maryam joined the conversation.

**Excerpt 4.6**

Khairany: ini menarik inih...dimana ya letak kesalahanya diterangkan paham, latihan Ok, UTS dan UAS blank. atmosfir suasan ujian? bentuk soal yg mengecohkan, bukan justru memintarkan? atw mereka emang ga ngerti...krn biasanya prosea tidak membohongi hasil brngkli musti dievaluasi semua perangkat pembelajaran dan assessment nya Reisa. mahasiswa, dosen, cara dosen mengajar, latiha2 yg diberikan, soal2 UTS/UAS nya, fasilitas belajarnya, kondisi saat belajar dan saat ujian..apakah sudah pernah coba dievaluasi bgt Reisa?

Khairany: this is interesting …. So where is the problem? In the class, they said they understood, they performed well in daily exercises, but, in exams – midterm and finals, they blank … what is it? The atmosphere of the exam? The types of questions which is confusing, not making students to think? Or they actually just don’t understand the materials. … “Hard work pays off” … may be you should evaluate the materials you used and the assessment tools, Reisa.. evaluate also the lecturer, the students, how the lecturer teach, exercises given, questions in the exams, learning support systems, condition in the exams, … have you evaluated all those things?

Khairany: nah sepakat,.lebih autentic ya.. baik kalimat2 yg dijadikan bahan latihan maupun kalimat2 yg nanti diberikan saat ujian.

Maryam: Kl bgtu di RKPS sebaiknya sdh ada soal UTS dan UAS nya. Bs dgunakan sbg salah evaluasi apkh soal ujian berada d jalur yg benar 😊

Khairany: tepat sekali, bgt seharusnya 😊

Maryam: Well, in that case, syllabus should include all questions for exams – midterm and finals. So, we can make an evaluation if the questions for the exam is based on the materials given in the class 😊

Khairany: exactly, that’s what we should do
Maryam: Krn kdg mhsw suka ngLes, soal ujiannya kok susah bgt. Gk spt di perkuliahan 😊


Reisa: The questions I used in exams are much easier than those in the daily exercise in class. I even provided the students with quiz comprises of preview of the question I will give in the exam. I was so open. When I ask people (other lecturers), they said that grammar has always been difficult for students. And the problems are always the same. They are not focus, rush in working on the exam, they were confidents if the answers were correct. But I think structure is similar to math. One part of sentence incorrect, then the whole sentences would be incorrect. They understood, but reckless. I think that’s the problem. Compared to the students last year, my students this year are better in term of capability; but they are reckless, they think that they answer the questions correctly, in fact, they are not.

In her comments, instead of “buy-in” Reisa’s formulation of the problems in her class, Khairany invited Reisa to be more self-critical by posing questions and asking Reisa to do a thorough evaluation on herself, the materials she used, and the questions she gave to students. She believed that results would follow efforts when she said an idiom “hard work pays off.” If everything were just right, then why were there problems.

Then, supporting Baba about the use of SFL, Khairany said,

“Agree … (with Baba) … the materials should be more authentic, both sentences to be used in daily exercises and assignments and in the exams.”
Maryam joined the conversation by emphasizing the importance of including the questions for exams in the syllabus, and Khairany agrees with that idea. Here, Maryam suggested her colleagues take the syllabus more seriously. Generally, in Indonesia, the syllabus is merely a formal document created to serve the purpose of accreditation. It is not taken as real guidance for teaching. Lecturers normally do not share the syllabus with students and students do not care about it. Here, she was suspicious if the problems lied in the quality of questions in the exam – the difficulty level of the questions in the exam might be higher than those in daily practice or the questions are not relevant to the materials discussed in the class. Therefore, she suggested that questions for exams should be included in the syllabus.

Responding to Khairany and Maryam’s comments, Reisa again looks back on the instructional activities in the class. This time she focuses on the way she formulates questions for the exams. In the talk above, Khairany tried to invite Reisa to think of her own practice critically by asking questions. She asked if Reisa has evaluated her overall teaching practices. Implicitly, Khairany asked Reisa to see if it is true that the problems are on the students’ side, not the other way around. In a slightly different manner, Maryam also talked about the quality of questions to be asked in the exam. She suspiciously suggested that the sources of the problem might not on the students’ sides, but on the lecturers’.

However, a reaction from Reisa did not indicate that she was invited to critically reflect on her practice. Instead, the comment from Khairany might have made her overwhelmed. Although the comments from Khairany and Maryam have made Reisa
look back at her own practice again, especially on how she designs materials for assessments, her response was defensive.

“The questions I used in exams are much easier than in daily exercise in class. I even provided the students with quiz comprises of preview of the question I will use in the exam. I was so open.”

Although the dialogues with Maryam and Khairany made Reisa reflect on the instructional process in her class, the dialogues did not push Reisa to examine her own assumptions about grammar teaching and the problems she had in her classroom. She responded to her colleagues’ comments defensively and confirmed that she even provided the students with a preview of the questions of the exam. She emphasizes “I was so open” to indicates that she has done everything to help her students. She is still blaming the source of the problem in her class on her students as she said that her students are reckless when working on the exam.

Similar model of advice-giving dialogues based on personal and theoretical based knowledge also happened to the subsequent conversations to the presentation by Marina and Baba.

Excerpt 4.7

Maryam: Sedikit pandangan dr sy, mengenai pengajaran reading dan soal kkni. Mengenai kkni level 6 dl, sepemahaman sy mhs diminta utk menulis, tdk mesti yg berat2, mrk bs menulis hal2 sederhana saja. Krn mata kuliahnya reading, mgk mrk bs dmnta utk membaca bbrp teks atau jurnal kemudian menganalisis isinya. Jika ingin memberi tgs yg mudah, Misalkan, apakah thesis statement dari beberapa tulisan yg mereka baca sesuai dg isi karangan keseluruhan. Atau hal lain bs dsesuaikan dg silabus. Kemudian utk mshh menemukan topik, mgk mng hrs dilatih dg memberi contoh2 paragraf dan mhssw

Maryam: Just to add my two cents, in reading class, to my understanding, students are guided to write, not heavy writing, just simple ones. Since the class is reading, maybe you can ask the students to read texts or journal articles and analyze the contents. If you want to give simple assignments. For example, what is the theses statement of the texts they read. Or anything else depends on what you plan in the syllabus. Then, for the issue of finding topic, maybe you should expose them to samples of paragraphs and guide them to identify the topic. For the use of Schoology, Mr. Baba is the expert.
As far as I know, before students submitting their assignment, I usually go to the menu first, then add material, and select discussion. The assignment will go to the discussion section. Other students can also give comments on the assignment, just like in Facebook.

**Reisa:** Menu pilihan tgs, quiz banyak di schoology.

**Maryam:** Tp kl bacaannya novel, cerpen, puisi, yg mepet2 ke persoalan love, patah hati, mgk mhsw lbh semangat 😄 Spt extensive listening, awal mula mhsw dmnta utk extensive listening diluar pembelajaran, rerata mrk mendengarkan lagu2 ttg perasaan.

**Reisa:** In my opinion, since this is reading, the length of the text should be aligned with the goals. Students always said the texts are too long. They don’t get used to reading. So, don’t give up. They will get used to it. …. Maybe we need also to make variation into the topic to increase their vocabularies. Also, to help them identify the meaning of unfamiliar words, we should get them bring dictionary all the time or ask them to have dic apps. About finding the topic and main idea, maybe you should try the TOEFL model. You can also use jigsaw for text understanding.

**Marina:** I have done all of that yesterday. Now I am going to assign them a longer text to identify the topic. For practicing, I would use cooperative learning strategies such as jigsaw, learning cell, and collaborative reading strategy. … I also assign them to report the reading in the schoology, but, unfortunately, some of them did that in Indonesian. I asked them why using

**Marina:** boleh minta masukan utk meningkatkan vocab mrk apa yaa? krn hampir tiap mhsw menuliskan hal yg sama yaitu bermasalah dgn vocab Dr hasil extensive pak hen, kecenderungan mhsw membaca jenis buku apa?

**Maryam:** Kl di kelas listening, utk meningkatkan pemahaman mhsw akan isi conversation, sy hrs tingkatkan kemampuan mrk utk mengetahui topic conversationnya. Ini bs dr key word. Dan utk meningkatkan ini koleksi vocab mrk jg hrs byk. Jd stlh menderangarkan, sy mnt mhsw menyebutkan satu kata yg mrk dengar. Stlh itu membuat kalimat lgkp dg kata yg td dsebutkan (kalimatnya bebas, tdk mesti sesuai dg isi recording). Nah level berikutnya, mrk hrs buat kalimat lgkp sesuai resume dr recordingnya. Dlm membuat kalimat lgkp ini, sy mnt mrk type saja di WA. Dan 5 yg tercepat sy apresiasi (ckp menyebutkan nama saja dan sdkt pujian). Atau cara conventional spt di pare, bu nunung. Mhsw dberi list vocab berikut artinya. Setiap minggu mrk setor satu halaman 😊

Indonesian, they told me that Mr. Baba also allowed them to do that.

**Baba:** 1) Ms. Marina, we can direct students to read books in the library, the graded extensive readings. It has complete volume from level 1 to 6. 2) To make sure if they actually read, check their reading logs. In the summary or response they write. 3) Many students don’t like reading. In class A, there is one student who loves reading so much. Some of them said they were easy drowsy when reading. 4) we can also randomly interview the students to ask if they read and report what they read. Ask them to tell the plot and setting. 5) the principle of extensive reading says that teachers should become the role models for reading. Therefore, we need also to read.

**Marina:** What should I do to improve their vocabulary? All students said they have problems with the vocabularies. In your class, Mr. Baba, what kind of books the students usually read?

**Maryam:** In listening class, to help students better understand the content of the conversation, I need to improve their kill in identifying the topic of the conversation. It can be focused on identifying the key words. After listening to the audio, I asked the students to identify one key word they hear. Then, they must make a sentence using the key word they hear. Then, they need to write a complete sentences related to the topic of the recording. I asked them to just submit it via WhatsApp. The first 5 students submitted the tasks would get more credits. Or maybe, we can try the traditional way … students are assigned a vocabulary list and every week, they have to memorize it in front of us.
Marina: kalau cara seperti ini maaf sepertinya tidak memungkinkan utk dilaksanakan di dalam kelas krn terbentur waktu akan habis oleh setoran vocab.

Khairany: 1. klo melihat hasil pre test mereka rentang perbedaan nilai tertinggi dan terendah cukup jauh ya bu, berarti ada mhsw yg perlu diberikan perhatian extra. 2. vocabulary, sy setuju dg metode bu nunung yg mengajarkan mhsw guessing from the context. atw istilahnya inferring meaning from context. agak kurang nyambung menurut sy ketika bu nunung mendeteksi kurangnya mhsw pd vocab dg treatmen cara menemukan topik dan main idea dlm bacaan. 3. upaya bu nunung agar mhsw suka baca menurut sy udh ok bgttt, dengan akan menerapkan cooperative learning pun bu nunung sudah membuat mhsw belajar memiliki tanggung jwb ats pencapaian hasil kerja dlm kelompok.

Marina: iya bu... sy mau melanjukan program extensive reading yg dilaksanakan oleh pa hendri krn menurut saya bagus utk menanamkan kecintaan membaca. hanya bedanya dgn pa hendri sy jadikan tugas bukan bagian dari pembelajaran di kelas seperti yg pa hendri lakukan di semester sebelumnya. sayang kalau dihentikan.

Marina: i am sorry I don’t think that traditional way would do in the class because it take too much time to do that.

Khairany: 1) Looking at the result of the pretest, there was a huge gap between the lowest and highest score; it means there are students who need a careful and extra attention; 2) vocabulary, I agree with Ms. Marina to teach students to make a guess based on context – inferring meaning from context. But, I don’t think the problems you identify – students’ lack of vocabulary, and the action you took to deal with it, congruent. 3) your efforts to make students love reading is great, I think. By applying cooperative learning, you will get the students be responsible to the results of the learning in a group.

Marina: Yes, I wanted to continue with extensive reading initiated by Mr. Baba because I think it is great for developing reading habit. What I did differently to Mr. Baba did was that the assignment – the reading assignment was not a part of the course assignment.

This subsequent dialogue to Marina’s presentation was filled with assumption-based advice. Maryam, relying on her personal experience in teaching listening, assumed that listening and reading face similar problems – lack of vocabulary. Then she suggested Marina implement the strategies she used in her listening class to deal with the problems. Reisa also used her personal experience dealing with students’ issues in teaching as the foundation for giving advice to Marina. Similar to her dialogue section above, she still blamed the students as the source of the problem when she said

Students always said the texts are too long. They don’t get used to reading. So, don’t give up. They will get used to it. ....
Implied from her comments is that students are lazy. Therefore, she encouraged Marina not to give up. Meanwhile, Baba, who previously taught reading classes, relied on his experiences in teaching reading classes, immediately provided Marina with suggestions to deal with her problems. He assumed that since the issue was the same as what he had previously experienced, the solutions would be also the same. Moreover, Khariany did the same. Her comments were mostly complementing Marina’s action. This dialogue did not provoke Marina to reevaluate her assumptions about her students and her class.

In other dialogue, subsequent to Baba’s presentation, the participants also engaged in similar way of conversation that was filled with assumption-based solutions and problem identification.

**Excerpt 4.8**

*Reisa:* mungkin untuk dibag awal, case nya sama yah dengan yang lain. bs jadi solusi juga dari yang sudah disampaikan disini pa hen.. bisa dicoba untuk jadi alternatif. untuk yang ke 2 juga sama yah,, mgkin dr bu ratna td bisa dicoba. atau ditanyakan jg ke siswa, alesannya knp blm submit atau bahkan mgkin mereka tdk punya akses kesana. (ada mahasiswa saya yg malah tdk punya schoology). dr sini mgkin bs inform klo bs log in di warnet (karena ini kan tugas gituh. jadi harus dikerjakan).. remind olweiz

*Baba:* Secara umum dilihat dari data analytical schoology, mereka aktif dalam schoology. Namun ada satu dua orang yg belum submit

*Maryam:* Adakah issue yg berkaitan dg academic writingnya?

*Baba:* Maksud issue nya tuh gmn bu farah? Klarifikasi pertanyaan dulu sebelum jawab.b

*Reisa:* Maybe, for the first issue, the case is the same as other lecturers; so, the solution would be the same. So was the second issue – the suggestion from Ms. Khairany should be tried or directly ask the students why they did not submit the assignment, in fact, they have access to the schoology. (There are students who don’t have access to it). You can also suggest them to go to internet café if they don’t have their own internet.

*Baba:* In general, from the analytical data of the Schoology, they were all active users of the Schoology. But still, there are some of them who did not submit the work.

*Maryam:* Is there any issue with your class related to the academic writing skills?

*Baba:* What do you mean by issue? Just clarifying
Maryam: Maksudnya sy bkn jelas ttg academic writingnya, isi perkuliahannya, permasalahannya yg dihadapi selain schoology. Mkn penjelasannya Penjelasannya krn banyak Kl cm segini saja sy msh bkn ada gambaran. Maksudnya meeting pertama sampai ketiga isinya membahas apa, temuannya apa saja?


Marina: waah masukan yg bagus nih... selama ini saya setelah selesai menjelaskan materi selalu bertanya " is
there any question?" dan mrk pasti menjawab "No" mau nyoba dirubah aah pertanyaanya biar mrk gak pasif.

Khairany: at least they try to think something bu rather than just simply say yes or no 😊

Marina: yuups setuju


Baba: Saya menyediakan jurnal yang introductionnya hanya dua paragraph. Tugasnya mereka mencari 6 hal. Sebelumnya saya berikan dulu contohnya.

Maryam: Hal apa saja, pak?

Marina: sepakat ... apa aja pak?

Maryam: Ini nih yg dr siang ditanyakan k pak hen. Detailnya 😊


Maryam: : Terus mrk mencari 6 hal itu?

Baba: Menggaris bawahi di dua paragraph ini.

Marina: ooo mrk diminta mengidentifikasi 6 hal itu ya?

Baba: Betul bu.

Marina: mungkin pertanyaan itu terlalu banyak utk dicari bagi mhws yg masih bingung

the students will surely say, No, I would try this, reformulate the questions so that my students don’t passive.

Khairany: at least they try to think something rather than just simply say yes or no 😊

Marina: Yup, agree.

Marina: How do you explain the materials to students? Can you give me the details?

Baba: I provided the students with a journal article; just two introduction paragraph. I provided them with examples previously.

Baba: I explained to the students that in writing an introduction, it has to be at least six components. The fact about the topic, findings, literature review, personal experience, definition, and gaps.

Maryam: And they analyze and look for those six things?

Baba: To underline the paragraphs

Marina: Ohh so they were asked to identify those six things?

Baba: That’s right.

Maryam: maybe … there are too many questions; so the students became confused
Until this stage, there was no indication that the dialogues led the participants to critically reflect on their practice. There was no indication that they engaged in a dialogue to check and evaluate their assumptions about how the best way to teach students. As Mezirow (1991) describes, to become transformative, people must engage in premise reflection when they question the presupposition underlying their knowledge and belief. Throughout the dialogues in this study, the participants did reflect, but it was only on the level of content and process reflection, not premise reflection. They are not attending to the ground of justification for their beliefs or assumptions but are simply using their belief to make an interpretation. In other word, as Kreber (2005) describes, whether their knowledge is valid is not a question that is posed through the reflection. In these kinds of reflections, they get at what they presently know or believe.

**The nature of the dialogues in the conversation group**

Using Kreber & Cranton’s (2000) scholarship of teaching model as the analytical framework, this study revealed that it was true that the participants used their experience as a “pedagogical entry point” (Taylor, 2009) for them to engage in dialogues to share problems and identify solution (Clark, 2001; Littleton & Mercer, 2013). However, the dialogues did not lead the participants to critically reflect on their assumptions and
presuppositions that sustained their practice. To identify why the dialogues did not provoke critical reflection, I conducted a qualitative content analysis into the dataset and used Mercer’s (2000) interthinking as the analytical framework to understand the nature of the conversation. The analysis revealed that the common ground of the conversation focused on problem-posing and advice-giving has contributed to inhibit the dialogues from provoking critical reflection. As a result, the conversations developed into either disputational or cumulative.

**The conversation happens on the common ground of problem-solving and advice-giving**

Mercer (2000) explains that a group of people who strive to communicate about their interest can adapt and extend language as a tool for doing so. He calls the language a discourse that people use to think collectively because it can act as a catalyst for activating thoughts. Furthermore, Mercer (2013) also explains that “successful interthinking requires partners to have, and to develop, a foundation of common knowledge to underpin their discussion” (p. 109). He distinguishes two types of common knowledge. First, the common knowledge that is accumulatively produced through the activities in the group. Engaged in a conversation in a group will result in new knowledge shared by the participants of the group. Mercer calls this type of knowledge dynamic common knowledge because it is produced by the dynamic of the group activities. The second type common knowledge is background common knowledge – the taken-for-granted knowledge that the participants bring into the group.

This common knowledge, especially background common knowledge, existed in the dialogues in the conversation group in the study. The participants of this study share
identity as lecturers in the same EFL teachers’ college. Therefore, they share contextual background common knowledge about the issues in college. They also share past experience as students of an EFL teacher education program. In fact, Marina, Baba, and Khairany are graduates of the EFL teachers’ college where they are currently working. Thus, everyone shares past experiences crossing paths of their life history. However, since everyone share common knowledge about the contexts, they tend to assume that their colleagues would understand the contextual foundation of the conversation and thus become less critical (Mercer, 2000).

That what was happening in the dialogues in the conversation group. In the subsequent conversation to Reisa’s presentation, for example, everyone in the group shared past experiences of studying grammar in their undergraduate programs. Since they share common knowledge about studying grammar and assume that their counterparts understand the contextual foundation of a grammar class, everyone then “buys into” the problems defined by Reisa and immediately offer advice. As the results, the conversation developed into a problem-posing and advice-giving process. But, when the participants found out that the advice would not fit into their contexts, they immediately rejected it. As a consequence, the dialogues then developed into disputational ones as what appears in the subsequent dialogues to Reisa presentation (Excerpt 4.4 and 4.5).

The dialogues in the two excerpts (4.4 and 4.5) are disputational because everyone just held onto their own assumptions. Relying on their own assumptions, the other participants provided Reisa with suggestions to deal with her problems. On the other hand, Reisa also firmly held onto her assumptions about what problems she encountered in class, what the sources of the problems were, and how to deal with the
problems. The dialogues did not make Reisa question her assumptions about the best way to teach grammar. However, it might be possible that Reisa made a premise reflection about her practice, but it was made outside of the data collection in this study. Therefore, a follow up study is needed to identify if the participants have actually made premise reflections through different means.

Similar things happened in the other dialogues in this conversation group. In the subsequent dialogues to Marina and Baba’s presentation, everyone used their shared common knowledge as the foundation for giving advice to deal with the problems that Marina and Baba defined. As the consequences, the dialogues in the subsequent conversations to Marina and Baba’s presentation developed into cumulative conversations where everyone built on positively but uncritically on what they said as appears in excerpts 4.7 and 4.8. In both excerpts, everyone accepted Marina and Baba’s definition of the problem and agreed with the actions taken by them to deal with the problems. Even when they disagreed, instead of asking provocative questions, they rather immediately provided suggestions that they thought would fix the problems.

Interestingly, although there are possible “entry points” for critical reflection identified in the dialogues, such as when the participants invite their colleagues to give feedback to their problems, since the dialogues focused on the process of problem-posing and advice giving, there were no indications that the participants used the dialogues to questions their own assumptions and presuppositions about how the best way to teach the students. Everyobe held onto their own assumptions about their practice and relies on their shared common knowledge about the contexts to immediately accept other’s assumptions.
Discussion and Reflection on the Findings

Dialogue, individual experience and critical reflection are core elements of fostering transformative learning (Taylor, 2009). The goal of this study was to examine if engaging in dialogue to share experiences from practice could lead the participants to critically reflect on the practice, transform the presuppositions underlying their practice, and eventually transform their practice. This study did not find any convincing information from the data that tells the participants engaged in critical reflection. Using Kreber & Cranton’s (2000) scholarship of teaching model as the analytical framework, this study revealed that it was true that the participants used their experience as a “pedagogical entry point” (Taylor, 2009) for them to engage in dialogues to share problems and search for solution (Clark, 2001; Littleton & Mercer, 2013). However, according to Kreber & Cranton’s (2000) scholarship of teaching model, the participants reflected only on the content and process reflection level about their curricular and instructional knowledge of teaching.

Literature identifies that conversations could become a potential professional development platform for teachers. A good conversation has always included uncertainty and resists boundaries (Clark, 2001). The conversation group in this study does not have these characteristics. Since the beginning, there has been a boundary that the dialogues focused on the problem posing and problem-solving process. In consequence, the nature of the conversation is an advice-giving conversation that delimits its potential to provoke the participants to critically reflect on their practice. As I read and analyze the datasets, I sensed that the participants came to this group with this fixed-mindset: “I have problems in my class and I need feedback from my colleagues to fix it. And my colleagues have
problems in their class and I need to provide them with feedback to solve their problems.” It can be seen from the conversations throughout this study where the participants always began their presentation with posing problems and inviting feedback from their colleagues to solve the problems.

The fact that the participants shared past experiences and used these experiences as the common ground of the conversation has contributed to inhibit the dialogues from provoking critical reflection. Having shared common grounds shaped the conversation into disputational and cumulative conversations because the participants easily assumed that their counterparts understood the contextual foundation of the conversation (Mercer, 2000). This characteristic is identified in the conversation group in this study. Since they share past experiences and contextual references, they easily agreed to the problems their counterpart presented. As a result, instead of asking questions to provoke their counterparts to examine the validity of the problem the defined, the participants immediately provided each other with solutions and advice for fixing the problems.

Moreover, literature on transformative learning theory identifies that “the qualities of a dialogic group provide a unique container for transformative learning, in that the norms and directional force of the relationships foster critical self-reflection, brought on by members’ commitment to the group” (Schapiro et al., 2012). Dialogue is regarded as the essential medium for critical reflection to be put into action, where experience is reflected on, assumptions and beliefs are questioned, and habits of mind are ultimately transformed (Taylor, 2009). However, the findings of this study did not indicate that the dialogues in the conversation group led in that direction. Aside from the factors outlined
above, there are other factors that might have contributed to preventing the dialogue from becoming a means for critical reflection.

From the perspective of transformative learning, to become transformative, learning processes must involve a special form of dialogue that Mezirow (2003) names critical reflective discourse. It is a dialogue that involves the assessment of beliefs, feelings, and values. Wasserman (2004) names these discourses as dialogic moments characterized by “a willingness to acknowledge and engage each other, a sensing of each other’s uniqueness, an openness to surprise that leads in unanticipated directions or has emergent unanticipated consequences, putting one’s story at risk of change, and challenging one’s way of knowing” (p. 41). Although never completely met, Mezirow (1991) proposes that to get the participants to engage in a critical reflective discourse, the dialogues must have the following ideal conditions: 1) provide accurate and complete information; 2) freedom from coercion and self-perception distortion; 3) openness to alternative perspectives; 3) include critical reflection on presuppositions and their consequences, acceptance of an informed and objective consensus as valid, and objective assessment of evidence and counter-arguments; and 4) provide equal opportunities to participate.

My analysis of the dataset in this study found that while to some degree the ideal conditions Mezirow outlined above has been met, such as equal opportunity to participate, there are other ideal conditions that might have not yet been met. For example, the online platform used to facilitate the dialogue might pose difficulties for the participants to provide accurate and complete information. Misunderstanding of the instructional goals between Reisa and Baba is an example of lacking accurate and
complete information due to the limitation of space the online platform provided. More importantly, the participants’ lack readiness to reflect critically, accept an informed and objective consensus as valid, and to weigh evidence and assess argument objectively could be possible reasons why the dialogue did not lead to critical reflection.

Another factor that might also inhibit critical reflection is sociocultural norms (Brookfield, 1995, 2017). According to Brookfield (1995), there are three cultural barriers to be addressed when creating a culture of reflection: the culture of silence, the culture of individualism, and the culture of secrecy. In a collective society like in Indonesia, the culture of silence and secrecy are prevailing. Lecturers are not comfortable asking for help openly or engaging in a conversation where their problems in teaching are exposed because they are afraid of being judged incompetent. This culture of silence may lead to the creation of a culture of secrecy. Brookfield (1995) writes, “a precondition of critical conversation is a willingness to make public one’s private dilemmas, uncertainties, and frustrations” (p. 250). Although the participants seemed to engage in the dialogues where they exposed their own problems in practice, the process was discomforting for them. Moreover, the participants also seemed to be confused by the difference between being critical and being judgmental. Costa & Kallick (1993) and Samaras (2011) previously warned about this issue. They explain that critical comments are often equated with judgmental comments.

What has been learned from these findings? First, that the conversation group facilitated participants to reflect on their practice. It has become a means for the participants to share problems they experience in their practice (Kitchen et al., 2008). In Indonesia, while some elements of collaborative inquiry and reflective practice have been
implemented in education through classroom-based action research, its implementation is challenged by personal issues and sociocultural factors (Suratno & Iskandar, 2010). This study indicated that when provided with a guidance such as a protocol, these Indonesian teacher educators could engage in reflection on their practice. The protocol that I used to facilitate the conversation was able to guide the participants to share stories from their practice and reflect on it. However, the reflection is not at the level of critical reflection. Brokefield (1995) explains that reflection is not necessarily critical when it is simply used to describe the instructional process just like what happened in the conversation group in this study. With better facilitation, dialogues through a conversation group has a potential to be used as a platform for professional development for the teacher educators.

Second, when I designed this study, I had no intention to actively engage in the conversation. I would merely play a part as a facilitator because I wanted to see how the conversation evolved “naturally” without intervention from facilitators. I modified a protocol which I expected to guide them to engage in critical reflection through the conversation. The findings of the study indicated that the protocol guided the participants to engage in dialogic interaction (Olan & Edge, 2019). However, they merely relied on the protocol, and it was not sufficient to facilitate the participants to critically reflect on their practice. Literature suggested that a facilitator needs to become a role model of critical reflection Brookfield (1995; 2017) and a critical friend who asks provocative questions and offers unique perspective (Costa & Kallick, 1993; Schuck & Russell, 2005; Samaras, 2011). Meanwhile, Mercer (2013) suggest that the process of interthinking requires ground rules to ensure that group discussion is “effectively-regulated, allow and
encourage the sharing of new ideas and their critical examination, while avoiding the risk of personal attacks on those who offer new ideas or criticize them” (p. 109).

Therefore, as the facilitator of an inquiry community, my first task would be to develop appropriate ground rules and create an environment that is supportive for fostering critical conversation. Referring to the suggestion by Samaras (2011), the immediate follow-up step I need to take is establishing and sustaining critical friendship as the initial vital steps in self-study research. As the facilitator, I need to make myself a critical friend for the participants to move forward with the self-study research. Acting this way would not only make myself a mentor, but also a mediator and role model for the participants. Then, slowly moving forward, I would create collegial critical friendship among the participants after everyone understood how critical friendship functions in self-study research.
Chapter Five

The participants’ perceptions about the benefits, challenges, and opportunities to create a self-study community of practice in Indonesia

“This is like I have to replay a CCTV recording of my own teaching and share it with others …”

– Khairany in her reflective essay

In this chapter, I elaborate on the EFL teacher educators’ perception and experience engaging in the online conversation group. Since this study was intended as a preliminary stage to identify the potential application of self-study research as a professional development platform for EFL teacher educators in an Indonesian context, I thought that it was important to explore how the participants experienced the process of collaboration and reflection through the dialogues in the online conversation group. Drawing on community of practice theory (Wenger, 1990), this study regarded the conversation group as a social structure that sustains professional development of the teacher educators. Informed by the theory, the second question of the study asked, “what challenges and opportunities do teacher educators identify for moving forward with self-study as a community of practice?” I will begin this chapter with an exploration of the participants’ perception about the relative benefits they gained from participating in this online conversation group. Then, I will proceed to present the challenges and the possibilities the participants identified for moving forward to make the online conversation group a self-study community.

The findings that I present in this chapter are the results of the thematic analysis of individual interviews and reflective essays and qualitative content analysis into the online conversation conversations. To analyze the dataset, I applied Wenger, Trayner, &
de Laat's (2011) value creation in communities and networks as the analytical framework. They suggest that “in order to appreciate the richness of the value created by communities and network, it is useful to think about it in terms of different cycles.” (p. 19). The cycles of value creation in a community and network are summarized in Table 6.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycles of value creation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples of value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cycle 1: Immediate value: Activities and interactions</td>
<td>Engaged in a network and community would allow the participants to involve in activities and increase interaction among them.</td>
<td>Helping a member with a difficult case Useful conversation Tips provided by colleagues Opportunity to ask questions Passing along information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle 2: Potential value: Knowledge capital</td>
<td>Activities and interactions can produce &quot;knowledge capital&quot; whose values lies in its potential to be realized later</td>
<td>Knowledge capital comes in a variety of forms such as: Personal assets (human capital): useful skills, access to information, new perspectives of ideas; Relationship and connections (social capital): knowledge as resources distributed across the networks and communities; Resources (tangible capital): connection to information, documents, and tools; Collective tangible assets (reputation capital): a sense of belonging to a community with a strong reputation or status; Transformed ability to learn (learning capital): the capacity to learn by exploring new learning approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle 3: Applied value: Changes in practice</td>
<td>Implementing the knowledge capital that leads to the improvement in practice</td>
<td>Reusing a lesson plan Changing procedures Trying new ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle 4: Realized value: Performance improvement</td>
<td>When participants are able to apply knowledge and be conscious and reflective on the effects of the applications on their practice</td>
<td>Reflecting on what effects the application of knowledge capital on the achievement of what matters to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle 5: Re-framing value: Redefining success</td>
<td>Social learning causes a reconsideration of success at individual, collective, and institutional level.</td>
<td>Re-framing strategies and goals Redefining success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6-1: Cycles of value creation in a community and network developed by Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat (2011).
Using the framework as an analytical lens, the analysis into the datasets revealed that the participants reported a variety of value creation experiences, the challenges they perceived as the potential inhibiting factors of the value creation experiences, and the opportunities available to make this conversation group move forward to become a self-study community of practice.

**Immediate value:**

**Interaction and connection**

Wenger et al. (2011) explain that “the most basic cycle of value creation considers networking or community activities and interaction as having value in and of themselves” (p. 19). In the individual interviews and reflective essays, the participants reported that the activities and interaction in the online conversation group has provided them with immediate value creation experiences in the form of increased interaction and connection among them. In addition to claiming that engaging in a conversation to share stories about their practice and exchange perspectives a new experience, they are also reporting that the online conversation group has provided them with a relatively safe space for talking about problems. Furthermore, although the analysis did not reveal convincing evidence in the conversation dataset, the participants also reported in their essays and interviews that they got valuable feedback from their colleagues and implemented the feedback with the goal to improve their practice.

**Experiencing a new way of discussion**

Like many other colleges in Indonesia, especially small- and medium-sized private ones, the EFL teachers college where the study was conducted does not provide a private office for each lecturer. Instead, it provides a large room named “Lecturer Office”
– a coworking space where all the lecturers have their own desk and working space in one large room. While it might sacrifice privacy and pose more distractions, working in a coworking space provides the lecturers with the opportunities to interact with each other and develop a sense of community. In their daily activities, usually in between classes, lecturers get together in the shared office and engage in conversations about a variety of topics including issues in their classrooms. However, these conversations are spontaneous and less formal without specific ends and goals. They are just a means for maintaining social relationships and interactions among the lecturers.

Meanwhile, in this study, the participants were intentionally moderated by the researcher to engage in dialogues to share stories from their practice. As appears in the excerpts presented in the previous chapter, throughout the conferences, the participants engaged in dialogues to share stories from their classrooms that included the stories about the syllabus they used in the semester, the implementation of the syllabus, the results of midterm and final exams, and the problems they had in their class. Most of the time, the participants took the opportunities to share problems they encountered in their class and the actions they took to deal with the problems, and to look for feedback from their colleagues.

The participants reported that engaging in such conversation was a new experience. For example, Marina, who has been working in the college for about fifteen years, said in her reflective essay that she had never been involved in a conversation where everyone felt so encouraged to talk. For her, participating in the group conversation that focuses on talking about daily practice in teaching is a unique experience.
Saya merasa senang bisa berpartisipasi dan bersyukur bisa berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan ini karena mendapatkan banyak hal positive dari kegiatan ini. Terutama dalam kegiatan diskusi, saya mendapatkan pengalaman diskusi baru yang belum pernah saya dapatkan dalam kegiatan diskusi lainnya. ... Hal semacam ini tidak pernah saya alami sebelumnya dalam mengikuti kegiatan diskusi lainnya. Karena semua dosen harus memberikan laporan secara tertulis dan yang lainnya wajib memberikan tanggapan dan masukan.

I am excited and thankful for participating in this group activity because I got lots of positive things from it. Especially, the discussion where I learned a new experience of discussion that I had never had before. … This kind of discussion, I had never had before because all the lecturers must provide written report and everyone is encouraged to give comments and feedback. -- Marina in reflective essay

Marina admitted that through participating in this study, she had an opportunity to experience a new way of discussion where everyone was encouraged to contribute. She credited the protocol of discussion as the feature that made the conversation a unique experience. Marina took the opportunities to participate in the conversation group to share problems in her class and look for advice to deal with the problems as they appear in the following conversation.

**Baba:** Bisa juga diwawancara secara random untuk memastikan bahwa mereka baca. Ditanyakan beberapa alur cerita dan plot maupun settingnya. Prinsip extensive reading, Guru harus menjadi role model dalam membaca. Karena itu perlu juga kita baca agar tahu isinya.

**Marina:** makjleh nih...dosenya belum sempat baca bukunya ☺☺☺ tp sbg antisipasi mhsw supaya betul2 membaca sy bilang ke mhsw tidak boleh membaca buku yg sdh dibaca saat diajar sm pa hendra dan melaporkan betul2 buku yg telah dibaca. disini kalian harus jujur, walaupun ibu gak tau kalian baca atau tidak atau baca buku yg telah dibaca atau

**Baba:** We can also interview the students randomly to make sure that they read at home. Also ask them about the plot of the story and the setting. In extensive reading, teachers have to become role models. That is why we need also to know how to read and understand the content.

**Marina:** What you said was snuck right into my heart. I myself rarely read the books … ☺☺☺ I told my students not to read the books assigned by Baba in the previous semester. I asked them to make report what books they read. I told them to be honest; I couldn’t always watch them, but God knows if you are cheating. I told them to learn about honesty because as teacher candidates,
In her presentation, Marina shared the issue that her students did not like reading. She then elaborated that to improve her students’ reading habit, she assigned them to read books at home. However, she did not have an effective method to monitor if her students were reading at home. Then, Baba came up with the ideas of interviewing the students randomly and asking them to retell what they have read. Baba also determined the importance of the role of the teacher to become a role model of reading. Marina reacted to Baba’s advice to become a role model by saying, “What you said was snuck right into my heart. I myself rarely read the books ... 😊😊😊.” This model of conversation would have never been possible in daily conversation in the lecturer’s room.

Resonating with Marina, Baba reported that the conversation was something new and interesting as he said:

I think it is a very good way to conduct discussion … one of us, for example, Ms. Maryam, showed her data getting from her class. We gave a comment and suggestion on what she deliver of presentation. I felt that uncommon way between the lecturers to share the idea and problem in our class. … In the middle of the semester on UTS (Midterm exam) time, I have to report the UTS results. It is positive thing that I have. As we know it is rarely that examination results can be seen by other lecturers. But after this program, it is quite inspiring to do such thing. -- Baba in reflective essay

Note: Baba wrote the essay in English. I present this quote as it is and do not provide the Indonesian version of it. The bold and italicized words are my addition to provide a definition of UTS.
In real-life conversations in the lecturers’ room, the participants would typically hesitate sharing the results of the exams for they are afraid of being judged as incapable of teaching. In line with Baba, Maryam also reported that this conversation group is new to her. In the interview, she explained that the conversation group was interesting because it facilitated the participants to do self-reflection and exchange correction for each other. She also found the conversation in the group fun because she could watch how some people struggled to deal with “hurt-feeling” situations.

As I wrote in the essay, I had the impression that, the activity was fun, because it was for the first time I had this kind of self-reflection, also, there are activities where we give corrections to each other, get feedback from others, it was fun, sometimes I saw some people took hurt-feeling … it was fun. -- Maryam in the interview

For Maryam, although the conversation led some people to have “hurt-feeling”, the conversation was also fun because it allowed her to self-reflect and exchange corrections with her colleagues. Similar reactions were also expressed by Reisa and Khairany who added “problem solving” and “reflection” as the most significant value they perceived as they participated in the study.

The conversation group provided the participants with immediate value in the form of activities and interaction (Wenger et al., 2011) where they connected to each other. In the conversation group, the dialogues among the participants do not only function as a tool for managing social relationships, but also a means for purposefully exchanging stories from practice. Consequently, as I will elaborate in the following
section, they feel relatively safe to expose the problems in their practice; something that they would have never been able to do in the daily conversation in the lecturers’ room.

Providing a “relatively” safe but challenging space for talking about problems

The participants in this study reported that engaging in the conversation about their daily practices was not only a new experience but also useful. It provides them with a “relatively” safe space for exposing the problems they have in their class. In the reflective essays and interviews, the participants claimed that they had the opportunities to share problems, ask questions, and provide feedback for each other in a “relatively friendly environment”. I said “relatively friendly environment” to emphasize that although the conversation group has provided the participants with an open space for talking about their problems, engaging in this conversation was actually challenging and made them feel uncomfortable with each other. The sociocultural norms of the community provide a little space for this kind of conversation to happen. Therefore, in the conversation, the participants have always inserted consolation messages with the purpose of maintaining the harmony of social relationship between them.

As appeared in the following excerpt, in this dialogue, Marina commented on Reisa who shared issue with her image as “killer lecturer” that was circulating among students in the college. Reisa invited her colleagues in this conversation group to provide her with comments about the issue. Marina was the first to give comments.

Marina: Reisa maaf yaa jangan baper mungkin ini masukan lebih ke personal Reisa. image yg sudah tertanam di pikiran mahasiswa bhw Reisa itu killer memang benar adanya. sebetulnya dari dulu mhsw sdh bilang begitu setiap perwalian dari yg anak wali saya yg sudah lulus sampai sekarang kalau pas matkul structure yg ngajar Reisa mrk menolak. bahkan kemarin perwalian pas ada matkul structure lagi mereka berharap smg bukan Reisa yg ngajar. Dan ternyata saat tau bkn Reisa yg ngajar mrk merasa lega. tp kalau mau ngomong begitu langsung ke Reisa kan saya gak enak, takut Reisa tersinggung. tp karena kata pak usep apapun boleh disampaikan dlm diskusi
ini utk perbaikan atau mencari solusi dan Reisa nanya masukan utk ngajarin mhsw structure baru sekarang saya berani menyampaikan apa adanya yg ada dalam fikiran mhsw ttg Reisa.

Buatlah mereka merasa nyaman dulu supaya materi yg akan disampaikan bisa masuk ke mahasiswa. Kalau mahasiswa sudah merasa kurang nyaman, otak dan hati mereka sudah memblock duluan sehingga agak susah untuk menerima material. Sehingga mereka merasa lebih nyaman ketika belajar dengan teman sejawat.

Maaf yaa Reisa🙏🙏🙏 jika yg saya sampaikan kurang berkenan. Bukan berarti saya kalau mengajar sdh lebih baik dari Reisa. Saya juga sama masih harus banyak belajar dan mencari cara agar mahasiswa kita dapat mudah menerima materi yang kita sampaikan dan mendapatkan nilai yang bagus. Sekali lagi, mohon maaf yaa Reisa🙏🙏 dan maaf buat semuanya kalau terlalu panjang🙏🙏🙏

Marina: I apologize, Ms. Reisa, please no hurt-feeling, because my comments would be more personal. The image that you are a “killer lecturer” that circulates among students are true. Students have been talking about it. In every advising session, all my students, including those who have graduated, always expected that you are not teaching grammar classes. And when they found out that you are not teaching the class, they looked so relieve. I have never told this to you because I am worried if you would be offended. But, here in this group, the researcher says we can talk and share everything with the purpose of improving the quality of our teaching, and also since you are asking about this issue, I have the courage to say how students feel about and see you.

I would encourage you to get the students feel comfortable with you first so that they would easily accept the materials in the class. Otherwise, if they don’t feel comfortable, they shut their mind and heart and it makes them difficult to grasp the materials. That is why, they become more comfortable learning with their friends …

Once again🙏🙏🙏 I apologized Ms. Reisa if what I just say makes you feel uncomfortable about yourself. It doesn’t mean that I am better than you. I myself still needs to learn and search the ways how to help our students learn and get better grade.🙏🙏🙏 I am sorry Reisa and I am sorry everyone if I talk to much lengthy🙏🙏🙏
From her comments to Reisa, Marina shared that she was uncomfortable giving the tough comment because she was worried that Reisa would take her comments offensive. Therefore, she tried hard to “formulate” sentences in a way that would not make Reisa feel offended and ended the comment by inserting a consolation message to maintain her social relationship with Reisa.

I have never told this to you because I am worried if you would be offended. But, here in this group, the researcher says we can talk and share everything with the purpose of improving the quality of our teaching, and also since you are asking about this issue, I have the courage to say how students feel about and see you … Once again, 😊😊😊 I apologized Ms. Reisa if what I just say makes you feel uncomfortable about yourself. It doesn’t mean that I am better than you. I myself still needs to learn and search the ways how to help our students learn and get better grade. 😊😊😊 I am sorry Reisa and I am sorry everyone if I talk to much lengthy 😊😊😊

Commenting on her critics to Reisa, in her essay, Marina reported that she felt the conversation group has provided a supportive environment for her to exchange comments without fearing that the comments would make her colleagues feel uncomfortable. As a consequence, she developed the courage to give such tough comments.

Diskusi ini keren sekali karena semua bebas berbicara dan berpendapat untuk memberikan masukan atau pertanyaan kepada setiap individu dosen tanpa ada ganjalan walaupun mungkin masukan dari dosen lain kurang enak tapi kita semua harus bisa menerima dan gagah baper, dan hal pengalaman seperti ini tidak pernah saya dapatkan sebelumnya. Saya pun jadi punya keberanian untuk memberikan masukan kepada dosen lain dengan tujuan untuk membantu memecahkan masalah yang dihadapi mereka, walaupun mungkin yang saya sampaikan tidak berkenan di hati mereka. ... Mungkin tanggapan dan masukan dari saya kurang berkenan di hati teman-teman dosen lain, mereka bisa saja tersinggung karena budaya kita masih belum terbiasa mengungkapkan apa adanya dan harus menjaga perasaan orang lain. ...

The discussion was cool because everyone was free to talk and give comments or ask questions to each other without worrying that other people would feel offended; although the comments might trigger uncomfortable feeling, but we must be accepting and no hurt-feeling, and I had never had this experience before. I have the courage to give feedback to other lecturers with hope that my feedback would help them solving their problems. Even though my feedback might make them feel uncomfortable. … My feedback may have given uncomfortable feelings
to my friends; they might feel offended because our culture has no space for this kind of conversation, so, we have to always be considerate to others’ feeling. … -- Marina in essay

Marina admitted that it was not easy to engage in such tough conversation with colleagues. However, as she reported, the conversation group provided her with a relatively safe environment to engage in tough conversation.

Responding to Marina’s critic, Reisa said in the conversation


Reisa: Ok, thanks, Ms. Marina. Take it easy. I was confused when everyone said that I am a “killer lecturer” – in what ways? I was so determined about rules when I became an exam proctor. Even in my classes, I always make jokes. And I was wondering if it was my face that makes me looks “killer”. Caring … I believe I have done my best to provide care to my students. I created a WhatsApp group with them so they can talk to me 24 hours a day. About grade, I always open to students; I invited students who have low grade and talk with them face-to-face and we make commitment … I will always strict about rules and regulations. … In the WhatsApp group, I encourage students to talk if they don’t feel comfortable with the way how I teach them in the class. But again, the issue (that I am a killer lecturer) always comes up. I have done everything, but, whatever people say about me, good or bad, that’s their rights to make judgement.

Reisa sounded uncomfortable with the comments from Marina. In her response above, she defended herself by explaining that she had done everything to make her students feel comfortable with her. Also, she tried to counter Marina’s critics by elaborating her view about the importance of adherence to rules and regulation that might make her look
“killer”. To comfort the situation, the conversation continued with Marina thanking and praising Reisa for not taking her comments offensively.

*Marina:* thank you Reisa gak baper dgn yg saya sampaikan. keren lah Reisa😊😊😊😊
*Marina:* Thank you, Ms. Reisa, for not taking my comments offensive. You’re so cool 😊😊😊😊
*Reisa:* Sama-sama Ms. Marina ... Saling mengingatkan itu wajib. 😊
*Reisa:* You’re welcome, Ms. Marina. It is our noble duty to give each other reminder of good thing 😊

Following up this conversation, in the interview, I asked Marina and Reisa how they felt about this tough conversation. I also asked if they followed up this conversation with offline talk. Marina said

*Saya sih nyaman ajah (ketawa) ... karena kan gak kelihatan mukanya. Tadinya kaya gimana yah ...?? Tapi gak follow-up juga sih, untuk minta maaf.*

I felt fine (laughing) … because I don’t see her face. And I did not follow up the conversation by seeing her in person for asking apologize. – *Marina* in interview

and Reisa said

*Haha ... yh aku bilang sh biasa aja, gak ada sama sekali dimasukin ke hati, karena emang sadar yh ini lah saya.*

Haha … yah, I would say I was fine. No hurt-feeling at all. Because I was also aware that this is who I am. – *Reisa* in interview

She further elaborated her feeling about the conversation

*Cuman pas ngobrol dengan mereka, terus ada banyak masukan, akhirnya, oh ternyata, bukan hanya faktor materi atau lingkungan, tapi juga dari sayanya, contoh, mungkin, hmm, saya sadr, macam kaya, oh iyah, mukanya killer lah atau segala macam ... nah di group ini ada yang negmongin kaya gitu, jadinya saya coba lebih lembutin lagi. Yh sekarang jadi lebih cheerful ajah gitu kayanya.*

In the conversation, I got feedback, and it made me think that .. ohh, it is not only the factor of material or environment, but also myself, for example, maybe, hmm, I am aware that, I have killer face or whatever … and in this group, I have people who remind me about that; so now I try to become more relax and cheerful. – *Reisa* in the interview
Although she sounded defensive in her respond to Marina, in the interview, she reported that Marina’s comments have made her realized that she might also be a part of the problem in her class. The conversation raised her self-awareness, and this is an important step of critical reflection to happen.

The conversation about “killer lecturer” was the toughest dialogues happened in the conversation group. Although not as tough as this “killer lecture” conversation, in other segments of the conversations, the participants engaged in similar dialogues to share problems and issues in their class and exchange perspectives about the problems.

**Impacts on practice**

Although there was no convincing evidence identified from the conversation dataset, the participants also reported in the interviews and reflective essay that engaged in the dialogues in the conversation group had provided them with solutions to the problems they had in their class. They claimed that they implemented the feedback they received from their colleagues in the conversation group. As a result, the participants reported that the dialogues have immediately given impacts on their practice. For example, Marina reported that her engagement in the conversation group was rewarding because she received valuable feedback that she believed positively influenced her practice.

*Melalui diskusi ini banyak hal positif yang didapat, saya menjadi tambah pengetahuan dan pengalaman dari teman-teman dosen lainnya saat mereka memaparkan pengalaman mengajar mereka yang bisa saya tiru untuk perbaikan saya dalam mengajar. Saat saya memaparkan masalah yang saya hadapi teman-teman dosen lainnya memberi masukan dan solusi untuk mengatasinya, dari beberapa masukan ada yang saya coba terapkan dan alhamdulillah masalah tersebut bisa diatasi.*

I got lots of positive things from participating in this study. I gained new knowledge and experience from my colleagues when they presented their experiences in teaching. The experiences that I can replicate in my class. Also, when I presented the problems in my class, my colleagues gave me feedback and
solutions; and I implemented some of them in my class, and Thanks God, the problem was solved. – *Marina* in essay

Other participants also reported similar value.

*Masukan dari semua peserta benar-benar membantu kesulitan yang dihadapi di kelas. Yaa, meskipun dengan berbagai karakter tentunya. Ada striker, keeped, sayap, atau apalah itu … hehe … tapi hal-hal yang gak enak di hati di ignore ajah … yang penting the problem solved.*

Feedback from all participants are truly helpful for solving problems in my class. Yaa, although we have to deal with a variety of character. There are striker, keeper, winger, or whatever … hehe … all hurt-feeling was ignored as long as the problem solved – *Reisa* in essay

Meanwhile, Baba reported that the conversation group helped him improve preparation for teaching:

One week after I joined the group, I remember that it was my schedule to deliver presentation about my lesson plan. I think it is very valuable activities since no such program was done in my campus. So, sharing the preparation on pre-lesson provide me an opportunity to improve my teaching preparation. – *Baba* in essay

Unfortunately, this study did not identify convincing evidence from the conversation dataset conforming their claim. The claim I made about this immediate value in the form of impact on practice was based on what the participants reported in the interviews and their reflective essay.

**Potential value: knowledge capital**

According to Wenger et al., (2011), not all value created by network and community is immediately realized. They call this potential value “knowledge capital.” They explain that “interaction can produce ‘knowledge capital’ whose value lies in its potential to be realized later” (p. 19). They also identify that knowledge capital take different forms such as personal assets (human capital), relationship and connections (social capital), resources (tangible capital), collective tangible assets (reputational
capital), and transformed ability to learn (learning capital). The thematic analysis of the data in this study revealed that the participants acknowledged that they in some way experienced the potential value of participating in this study. I italicized the words “some way” to denote that the forms of knowledge capital the participants experienced vary from one another. Below I will elaborate on how engaging in the conversation group creates potential value in the form of knowledge capital.

Developing the courage to engage in perspective taking conversations

According to Wenger et al. (2011), “the learning value of a network derives from access to a rich web of information sources offering multiple perspectives and dialogues, responses to queries, and help from others” (p. 11). Throughout the study, the participants engaged in conversations about their daily practice in teaching preservice teachers. Most of the time, they used the conversation group as a place for sharing problems and issues in their class and exchanging possible solutions. As they reported in the interviews and reflective essays, engaging in these conversations provided them with multiple perspectives about the problems they had in their classroom. While they acknowledged that to some degree engaging in the conversation group was discomforting, they also admitted that this activity made them develop the courage to engage in perspective-taking conversations and led them to become more open-minded.

In addition to the immediate benefits outlined above, the participants also reported that they experienced potential benefits when participating in the conversation group. Maryam, for example, reported that the potential benefits from participating in this conversation group that she experienced was that she learned how to take and give criticism as it appears in the following excerpts. In her opening presentation about the
implementation of the syllabus in the first few weeks of the semester, Maryam shared her goals and objective in teaching the course of Language Teaching Strategy (LTS). She elaborated that she had an issue with her students who mostly had negative views about the teaching profession. To deal with this issue, she assigned her students to observe school classroom and write a reflective report about it.

Baba commented on Maryam’s presentation as follows:


Firstly, the learning objectives are not specific. Ms. Maryam, you should make your objective specific for example, students are able to implement a certain teaching strategy. Also, I wanted to know students’ philosophy about language learning? Can you ask them and share it here?! The philosophy would give impact on the teaching strategy they will use in their class. I also noticed that the teaching strategies covered in your class were too old. There are still grammar translation method, audio lingual, total physical response. Are there any new strategies introduced in your class?

Baba criticized Maryam for lacking specificity in her instructional goals and still including outdated instructional strategies for language teaching in her materials.

Responding to Baba’s critics, Maryam said

_Sebetulnya saya memang kurang setuju dengan metode past era juga. Tp hasil diskusi dan dipikir lagi, mungkin mahasiswa juga butuh tahu strategi-strategi jadul itu. Berarti, menurut Mr. Baba, tujuan pembelajaran saya hanya kurang mencantumkan kata “pembelajaran Bhs. Inggris” yah, supaya lebih spesifik? Nampaknya, Mr. Baba, tidak membaca dengan teliti redaksi lengkap silabus saya.

Actually, I also disagree with including old instructional strategies. But, after discussion, I have second thought that my students might also need to know these old strategies. And, according to Mr. Baba, the statement of instructional goal in my syllabus was not specific because it did not mention “English learning”; it looked that you did not read my syllabus carefully.
In her response, Maryam reiterated that she wanted to introduce new instructional strategies to her students. However, she changed her mind because she believed that her students also needed to know the old strategies. Maryam seemed to feel uncomfortable with Baba criticizing her instructional objective statements because she knew Baba did not read the syllabus first. Reflecting on the conversation, Maryam said that the conversation was uneasy, but she managed to learn something from it – she learned to be a good listener and to take and give criticism.

Maryam in Essay

She further elaborated in the interview that she learned to feel comfortable in accepting and giving criticism.

Maryam in the interview
Another participant who reported that she experienced potential benefits from participating in this conversation group was Khairany. In her reflective essay, she admitted that she learned how to communicate ideas to people who have different opinions in this conversation group. As a result, she claimed that she now has become a more tolerant person and open to different views.

Moreover, from this group, I learn how to give feedback. Even though, I am not sure if what I have done can be accepted well or not by others. At least, I have trained myself on how to arrange proper sentences in giving comment or feedback. This skill is important for me as a lecturer as in many cases I need to give comment toward my students’ task. This group makes me learn how to respect others with different opinion as well as to give such a polite comments or suggestions. As each member must share their teaching experience and at the same time must give comment towards others’ sharing, so this give me lesson on how to communicate politely and appropriately in a discussion group. I am even become more tolerant and respect to other people that have different opinion with me. -- Khairany in reflective essay

Note: She wrote the essay in English. I present this quote as it is. Thus I did not provide the Indonesian version of it.

For Khairany, the learning experience she gained from participating the conversation group is not only personal in that way that she became a more tolerant person, but also professional because it has equipped her with the new skill of giving feedback. She acknowledged that her newly-acquired skill in giving feedback would be useful in the future as she works with her students. I put this learning experience as potential value because in the future, as the conversation group moves forward to become a self-study community, the participants would engage in a numerous conversation that includes criticism and perspective-taking. Engaging in this conversation group has provided the participants, especially Maryam and Khairany, with a preview of how a self-study community could look.
Realizing the importance of reflection and collaboration

Another value created from participating in the conversation group reported by the participants is that they developed a sense of awareness of the importance of reflection in practice. In Indonesian sociocultural norms, learning has always been referred to gaining knowledge from someone whom regarded as more knowledgeable, such as teachers or lecturers. While Indonesians reflect in their daily life, they generally do not consider it as a way of learning. Thus, they do not recognize the knowledge gained from reflecting as legitimate knowledge. Participating in the conversation group has made the participants develop an awareness that reflection is an essential way of learning.

In her essay, Khairany acknowledged that she had never reflected on her practice before taking part in the conversation group in this study.

By joining this group, I learn how to reflect on my own teaching. This group has given me guidance on how do reflection activity toward our teaching so that we can improve our teaching quality. Therefore, I do realize that reflection is important to correct our fault in teaching so that I know what should do in the next time. Before joining the group, I did not do reflection after teaching. But since I involved in this group, I was required to reflect on my teaching; and it made me realized the importance of doing this. This is like I have to replay CCTV recording of my own teaching and share it to other people. By doing reflection after teaching, it helps me to find the strengths as well as weaknesses of my teaching activity. This is important to improve our quality of teaching.

--Khairany in essay

The conversation protocol in the group requires the participants to share stories from their practice with the group members. It also allows them to share artifacts from their class such as syllabus, pictures, teaching and exam materials, and even exam results. Then, everyone in the group provides feedback, comments, and questions. These activities made them reflect on their practice and helped them identify what went right and wrong. For Khairany, the dialogues in the conversation group felt as if she watched a
CCTV recording of her teaching with her colleagues. She claimed that the comments and feedback from her colleagues helped her become more aware of her strengths and weaknesses.

Meanwhile, Reisa and Baba analogously compared the dialogues in the conversation group to having mirrors to reflect.

*Dan ketertarikan untuk melakukan self-study sebagai basis untuk melakukan penelitian semakin kuat. Ditambah dengan adanya masukan dari semua peserta. Akhirnya saya pribadi jadi punya cermin, dan tidak hanya satu ... kita jadi punya second opinion.*

And my interest in conducting self-study as the method for research has been growing stronger. This is due to the fact that I got so much feedback from other participants. In the end, I feel like I have mirror, and it is not only one. … we have second opinions. – *Reisa in essay*

She further elaborated how the mirrors helped her reflect on her practice.

*Iyah, kaya cermin ... biasanya kan selama ini kan rasanya kaya yang saya tuh sudah bener semuanya, macam kaya ngajar, kayanya sudah bener gitu, yah. Cuman, pas ngbrol dengan mereka, terus ada banyak masukan, begini-begini, ... akhirnya, oh, ternyata memang yh, tidak hanya dari (incomprehensible) atau lingkungan, tapi*

Yes, it’s like a mirror … I feel like everything was fine with my teaching, I feel like everything was right. Until, I had this opportunity to talks with my friends in this group, there are lots of feedback and comments, … -- *Reisa in interview*

In line with Reisa, Baba also experiences the same thing that the conversation in the group feels like having a mirror.

*Iyah kaya cermin ... bener ... yg reading kan, misalnya, saya kira saya ngajar tuh sudah benar, tapi ternyata ada ajah, ... bisikan-bisikan, mahasiswa yang nyampek gak langsung ke saya, tapi lewat teman-teman di group ini ...*

Yes, right, feels like having a mirror … for example, in reading class, I thought that my teaching was good, but, there were students who talked behind my back that they got nothing from my class; and I knew about that here from my friends in this group. – *Baba in interview*
Furthermore, Baba also added that through the conversation group, he realized the value of collaboration.

 Ini kan pertama kali yah saya melakukan kegiatan ini ... kesannya sih bagus, dan jarang, dan memang sangat perlu, kalau kita tanpa kolaborasi, kalau kita bikin materi, misalnya, terus materinya gak dikolaborasikan dengan teman, gak ada masukan, kayanya kita tuh benar sendiri, gitu ya, tapi ketika ngajak ngrabol dengan teman-teman disini, ... ternyata masih ada yang kurang dari kita ini, dan bagi saya sih, kesannya yah bagus sekali.

This is for the first time I am doing this activity; ... it was a good thing to do, and rarely do we engage in this kind of conversation. And I think this activity is important. If we don’t collaborate, like when we develop materials, without collaboration with colleagues, I feel like we were do the right thing … but then, we engage in conversation with colleagues here, and I got feedback and comments, and realized that there are something missing .. for me this is a great thing. – Baba in interview

Wenger et al., (2011) explain that developing new perspectives is another form of human capital. Its value might not be immediately realized but it becomes useful in the future.

The courage to engage in perspective taking conversations, the ability to reflect, and a new perspective of the importance of collaboration are potential values the participants experience as they engage in the online conversation.

**Challenges and possibilities for creating a self-study community of practice in an Indonesian context**

I found that the value creation framework in a community of practice developed by Wenger et al (2011) put too much emphasize on the positive things. This emphasis could lead researchers to unintentionally disregard the moments when values are not created. Since this study functioned as a groundwork for creating a self-study community, I felt the need to look to both positive and negative stories that the participants experienced as they engaged in the online conversation group. Thus, I would have more complete information that I would use to identify the steps I need to take to move forward with the plan of creating a self-study community. There are two aspects of the study that I
felt concerned about: the use of online platform for data collection and involving my colleagues as the participants. I was aware of the warning from Creswell (2013) and Maxwell (2013) that involving my colleagues as participants and collecting data through the online platform may compromise the authenticity of the data and jeopardize the quality of the findings.

The authenticity and quality of information that the participants provided are other concerns that I had as I designed this study. I was worried if the participants would give me the information I wanted, not the information they wanted to share. I was concerned that they would only provide me with the information that would only please me. Therefore, from the beginning of this study, I have taken all the necessary steps for ensuring that the participants felt safe and be willing to voluntarily participate in the study, so they could provide authentic information. Moreover, to enrich the quality of the data, I included questions in the interviews and reflective essays that asked the participants to identify moments they felt value was not created and also their aspirations for moving forward and making this conversation group provide more value creation experiences.

**When value is not created: the quality of feedback and comments**

In this section, I elaborate on the moments the participants felt that value was not created. The findings that I present here are based on the results of the thematic analysis of the interviews and reflective essays. In the interviews and the essays, the participants reported that they had issues with the quantity of information the participants shared in the group and the quality of feedback from their colleagues because of their inability to
manage time and workloads that limited their participation and their areas of specialization.

**Time management and workload**

In Indonesia, there is a common view that teaching and research are two different things that require different resources and time. Therefore, when it comes to research, time has always been an excuse for not doing it. I have a keen interest in self-study research because it has a characteristic of situated in one’s own practice. Thus, one of the advantages of conducting a practitioner inquiry like self-study is that we can include it in our daily practice in teaching. In consequence, the same resources and time for working on both teaching and research could be used. In this study, my purpose was not only to introduce self-study research to the Indonesian context but also examine how this research genre could fit into the issue of time and limited resources and support system that the teacher educators encounter in their daily life.

However, the analysis of the dataset indicates that there is still an issue with time. Heavy workload and other commitments hindered the participants from fully engaging in the conversation group. For example, Khairany and Baba, who currently sit in the leadership position of the department, hold the lowest participation rate in the conversation group compared to the other three participants because they have many extra time commitments.

Actually, I have many tasks to do in my daily life that made me difficult to allocate my time to contribute in this group. – **Khairany** in essay

It is about the time this activity adds to my additional jobs, I like it. I still confuse how to manage my time to do a lot of things. So, the negative point of this group is that it consumes my time – **Baba** in essay

**Note:** They wrote the essay in English. I present this quote as it is. Thus I did not provide the Indonesian version of it.
As the chair and co-chair of the department of EFL teacher education, besides their primary jobs in teaching, Khairany and Baba also assume administrative responsibilities. This workload made it challenging for them to manage time between teaching, chairing the department, and participating in this study. Similarly, other participants also reported that they have an issue with time.

Marina also has concern with lack of time.

Kalau saya perhatikan dari obrolan yang ada dalam diskusi teman-teman dosen lain juga merasa senang dan enjoy dengan kegiatan ini. Karena kegiatannya diberi fleksibel baik dari segi tempat ataupun waktu sehingga masih bisa melakukan tugas -tugas yang diberikan peneliti walaupun mereka juga mempunyai kesibukan sebagai pejabat struktural. Hanya saja ketika tiba jadwal giliran tugas memaparkan pengalaman mengajarnya rata-rata tidak segera melakukannya karena kesibukannya karena kesibukannya.

I think everyone feels enjoy and had fun participating in this conversation group. Because the activities are flexible so that everyone could participate in the conversation as directed by the researcher. Even though I know that my colleagues are busy, especially those the chair and co-chair of the department. I found that everyone did not immediately gave their responses in the discussion thread because they are busy. – Marina in Essay

She further elaborates her inability to manage time because she has other commitments that also require her time and resources, while at the same time she reaffirms her commitment to moving forward with the conversation group.

Ketidakmampuan mengatur waktu disebabkan karena kami selain mempunyai tugas kewajiban mengajar juga mempunyai kesibukan yang lainnya, diantaranya ada yang menjadi pejabat struktural, istri Lurah dan saya juga mempunyai kegiatan lainnya menjadi Educational Product Consultant yang juga membutuhkan konsentrasi dalam menjalankannya. Jika kegiatan ini bisa diulang lagi sebaiknya harus ada komitmen bersama yang kuat untuk mengatur waktu dalam melaksanakan kegiatan ini dan menjadi prioritas bukan sampingan.

The inability to manage time because we have other commitments is an issue. Many of us have other commitments such as chairs of the department, works in the community, I myself has a side job as a consultant of educational products that also needs time and focus. So, in the future, we need to reaffirm our
commitment to manage time and make this conversation group a priority – Marina in Essay

Resonant with Marina, Reisa also shares her concerns about time


The challenge is the TIME. So we have to be able to manage time, more well-organized, follow the schedule from the beginning to the end. Because we are all busy. And again, it’s all about commitment … I think everyone has done their best to participate according to the rules in the group. But lately, toward the end of the semester, the intensity of their participation in the group was decreasing because at the same time, there are other things in campus that also need our attention. So, we are a little bit lagging – Reisa in Essay

Their comments imply that they do have commitments to professional development.

Their willingness to voluntarily participate in this study is also an indication that they have that commitment. However, certain circumstances made it difficult to fully engage in the study.

There is a contextual situation in the EFL teachers’ colleges that contributed to the issue about time. In the past three years, enrollment in the college has been constantly decreasing. In 2012, when I joined the college, the EFL teacher education department was the largest department in the university. It had sixteen classes consisting of at least twenty-five students enrolled at each level – from freshmen to seniors. However, the enrollment had been slowly decreasing. Last year, it had only six classes at each level. Consequently, the lecturers’ teaching hours are also decreasing. Decreasing the hours of teaching was supposed to be a positive thing because the lecturers could have more time for other activities such as research. Unfortunately, this is not the case. While the college has been encouraging lecturers to do research and includes research as a significant
component of rank promotion, the reward system – salary – weighs too much on teaching hours. Decreasing teaching hours means lowering the take-home pay. To deal with this, lecturers in the college found additional sources of income. The five participants of this study are not exempted from this situation.

While working as a lecturer and now in a leadership position of the EFL department, Khairany also has another commitment – she owns a home-industry producing *Thai Tea* that she sells online. Baba, the co-chair of the department, owns a laundromat. Meanwhile, Marina sells children’s books and Reisa owns a rice shop. Meanwhile Maryam is the wife of the chief of the borough where they live. As the spouse of the leader in the community, she has an obligation to actively help her husband in running the programs for women in the community. In addition, the participants also have their families to take care of. Having so many commitments has limited the participants’ time for actively interacting and sharing information in the group.

Throughout this study process, I have had to reschedule conferences and individual interviews a couple of time to fit the participants’ schedule. Failure to manage this time has impacted the schedule; and if the time is not well-managed, in the future, it may have an impact on the participants’ commitment to fully participate in the conversation group.

With this reality, I have come to a conclusion that time is no longer a problem, but rather, a reality to deal with. Therefore, to move forward and make this group a self-study community, the facilitator needs to include time management training into the facilitation process. Different to faculty in the universities in the United States, for example, who divide their time into teaching hours, research hours, and office hours, and apply appointment-based meetings with students, lecturers in Indonesian universities, especially
in the college where the study was conducted, do not divide their time into such portions. They usually go with the flow. With so many commitments they have, effective time management is absolutely required.

**Area of specialization**

Another factor that contributed to the low quality of feedback and information shared in the conversation group, as reported by the participants, was the area of specialization. Of the five participants in this study, Khairany is the only participant who teaches a non-EFL pedagogical class; she teaches morphology. While she holds a Bachelor degree in EFL, her Master’s degree is in theoretical linguistics; and she put this discipline as her area of specialization. Meanwhile, the other four participants have both Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in EFL Applied Linguistics; and their teaching and research interests are in this area. Baba teaches academic writing and EFL materials development; Maryam teaches Language Teaching Strategy (LTS); Marina teaches reading courses; and Reisa teaches grammar and microteaching courses.

The differences in the area of specialization have become an issue, especially for Khairany. While she reported that the conversation group has provided her with opportunities to learn about giving and receiving feedback and reflecting, she also claimed that she had a feeling of being excluded from the discourse of the conversation group because her area of specialization was different from the other participants. As a result, she reported that the conversation in the group contributed nothing for improving the quality of her teaching. In her essay she said
Moreover, regarding to my subject of morphology, I feel that some of lecturers seem uninteresting to my subject. They do not have idea on giving the positive input for my subject. Therefore, I found that I did not get what I really expect from this group. – Khairany in essay

**Note:** she wrote the essay in English. I quote it as it is.

She felt that the others did not have an interest in her class, and it made her feel discouraged from actively contributing to the conversation in the group. In the essay, she elaborated that she did not find anything interesting from the conversation with her colleagues in the group.

My contribution in this group was not too significant to achieve the goal. The main reason of this was that I did not find any something interests from this group that can attract me to spend more time in this group rather than doing my other activities. … Honestly, this self-study group did not fully meet my expectation. At the first time I decided myself to join this group was to gain many positive inputs to improve my teaching quality. Moreover, I hope that by joining this group I can gain some new as well as important knowledge that I have not had before. In fact, several members of the group assumed that he/she had no idea regarding morphology subject. -- Khairany in essay.

**Note:** she wrote the essay in English. I quote it as it is.

Meanwhile, in the interview, she explained that she came to this group with a high expectation that she would get help for dealing with the issues in her class. She also expected to gain new knowledge to improve her teaching quality. However, as the group proceeded with the activities, she found that the participants did not have ideas for her class. Her presentation sessions were quiet, and everyone has just given *Facebook style* feedback such as “I like it,” “it is nice,” and “it is good to know that” and “thanks for sharing.” The feeling of being excluded from the group discourse and finding no useful feedback from their colleagues decreased Khairany’s engagement in the group activities.
The other participants also confirm this issue. For example, Maryam, who explained in the interview that

_Yang saya lihat sih, kemudian juga begini ... khususnya ada dosen yg ketika dia presentasi, mata kuliah dia tuh kurang menarik, buat yang lain, kaya bu kajur ... misalnya dia mengajar morphology ... (tertawa) ... yah yang lain kan jadinya pada diem, saling menunggu,..._

I see that there is an issue when there was a lecturer presenting her class, but it is not interesting for us … such as Ms. Khairany, she teaches morphology… (Laughing) so everyone was just silent, waiting for others to comment first – Maryam in interview

Baba also commented on this issue and said in the interview that when he was in his undergraduate program, he did not really pay attention to linguistics classes such as morphology. Here in this group, he acknowledged that he learned about morphology from Khairany’s presentation but had nothing to ask because it did not interest him.

**Exploring the possibilities**

In the interviews and reflective essays, the participants also expressed their aspiration to move forward to make this group a self-study community and came up with the ideas to deal with the challenges. They expected to have someone to facilitate and guide them, include more people from the same discipline, combine online and offline platform, and gain opportunities to improve writing and publication.

**The important roles of a facilitator**

The participants agreed that the existence of someone who could coordinate them to move forward with the conversation group is critical. In the interviews and essay, they reported that they need someone to become the commander, or an overseer, for the group to move forward.
Kegiatan ini tidak bisa berjalan dengan sendirinya tanpa adanya inisiatif dan KOMANDAN dari semua kegiatan. Karena kalau kegiatan ini tidak wajib dilakukan, ada kemungkinan kegiatan hanya berjalan diawal, namun akan mandeg ditengah2. Maka dari itu, harus adanya orang (koordinator) yang harus juga mengingatkan dan menagih apa2 yang harus dikerjakan.

This activity will never be able to continue without an initiative and a COMMANDER who take in charge of everything. This is not a mandated activity; there are possibilities that it will just stop anytime. Therefore, the existence of a coordinator who can keep sending us reminder what to do – Reisa in essay

Reisa explained that she needed someone who can function as a coordinator or mediator and actively send a reminder on what to do and provide direction. Furthermore, In the interview she explained

Hmm, klo tantangannya sh, klo saya lihat, dari yg skrg terjadi itu th, di awal yh mngkin smngat, tp kesananya gk, tp mngkin klo ada yg apa yh mimpinnya, ngingetinnya sh mngkin bisa jalan, jdi, si pemimpinnya ini harus rajin, ngingetin, nyampe mana nh, krena klo pemimpinnya gak gitu, yh susah jga, pasti nantinya brhenti lgi, gk jalan lagi

Hmm the challenge is, for me, from what happened in the group, I saw that people were highly participating in the beginning. However, then, they started to slow down. I think it is because no one leads them, remind them. So, the leader has to be diligently reminding the participants, so that she/he sets good examples. Otherwise, the group could stop anytime. – Reisa in interview

She elaborated that the absence of someone who could have been acting as a mediator or coordinator made the participants lose enthusiasm. She also reported that she needed a facilitator who could become a role model for the group activities. In line with Riesa, Baba also said, “I need someone to remind me when I forget to participate in the group.”

Meanwhile, Khairany added that the facilitator should not only act as a reminder but also design protocols that can push people to share their real stories in the class, not just showing off good things, and allow the participants to exchange in criticism and nonjudgmental feedback.
However, in order to be more meaningful either for me or for others, is that each member needs to be aware that the goal of self-study group is to help each other to deal with the teaching problem faced in the classroom or beyond. Thus, it is important to be open to what happened in the classroom instead of just showing the good things. Furthermore, I think that if it is necessary, it is fine to give any critics, bad comment or even judgment toward other people report. Hopefully, the discussion will be more dynamic. – Khairany in essay

Note: she wrote the essay in English. I quote it as it is.

She further suggests that the protocols should encourage everyone to focus and eager to give any feedback for others. Do not let anyone in the group who had shared their teaching activity skipped without getting any comment or feedback from all the members. It will be much better that we do not turn to other member report first unless all the members have given their comment or feedback. – Khairany in essay

Note: she wrote the essay in English. I quote it as it is.

Resonating with Khairany, Maryam also suggested the facilitator let the participants exchange feedback in the forms of criticism and judgments as long as the rules are clear because it will give a greater dynamic to the conversation, “since the protocol said that we must avoid judgment, then the conversation is quiet” (Maryam in interview).

Moreover, she added that she needs the facilitator to act as a teacher to teach how to do research and critical reflection. Reisa agreed with Maryam and said, “since our qualitative research knowledge is so little, we only know classroom action research, and basic qualitative, and we don’t know how to analyze data, so, we need someone to teach us” (Reisa in the interview).

When I designed the study, I intentionally made myself a moderator of the conversation. Throughout the study, I avoided participating and giving substantive comments in the conversation because I wanted to see the conversation evolve naturally without being intervened upon by the researcher. Additionally, my status as a doctoral
candidate from an overseas university has placed me in a privileged position. I was worried that the participants would see me as having more knowledge than them and that it would discourage them from expressing their thoughts in the conversation group. Thus, it would compromise the authenticity of the dialogues in the conversation group. The findings of this study have not only confirmed that they need an expert facilitator, but also informed me what roles I need to play as I facilitate this group to move forward and become a self-study community.

**Work with people from the same discipline**

Previously, the participants reported that the difference in areas of specialization had decreased the quality of feedback they got in the conversation group. To deal with this, the participants reported that the conversation group would provide them with more benefit if they work in a group consisting of people who share the same area of specialization. For example, in order to get better connections, Maryam expressed her aspiration to continue participating in this kind of conversation group with the condition that she works with people who share a similar area of specialization.

*katanya, kan dosen gk paham satu sama lain yah, mata kuliah masing2; mngkin kalau ke depannya supaya paham .. dikelompokan kali yh dosesnya, per rumpun mata kuliah? ah iya itu kn saling berhubungan yah ... jadi LTS th sampai mana sih batasannya, kmudian ID dimana, gitu, lbh seru sih*

It looked that we experienced misunderstanding about the course; so it would be great if in the future, to make everyone share a similar understanding, we work in a group with people who teach similar courses. So we can connect each other … in my class, Language Teaching Strategy, we work in a group with lecturers who teach Instructional Design course. It’s going to be more fun.

– **Maryam** in *interview*

Like Maryam, Reisa also suggests that the lecturers work in a group with people from the same discipline.
So in the future, we make this kind of conversation group but we begin with working group of lecturers who teach similar courses; for example, we work together to develop syllabus and then continue doing what we are doing now in the group – Reisa in essay

Reisa expected that in the future, the conversation group begins with a workshop for lecturers who teach courses in the same block to work together in developing the syllabus. Then, the group continues throughout the semester to engage in conversation about the implementation of the syllabus.

Lacking background knowledge in certain areas of specialization made it difficult for participants to provide more meaningful feedback to their colleagues. Therefore, while the literature suggests an interdisciplinary self-study group to gain different perspectives, the participants in this study expected to work in a homogeneous disciplinary group. Areas of specialization was not a factor to consider when I designed this study because I did not think that it could become an issue. I expected that the participants would develop curiosity about other classes, and, since they all have background in EFL teaching and learning, they had common knowledge about the issues in the field. However, this study found that it did not happen that way.

**Combining online and offline platforms**

The participants also reported the advantages and the disadvantages of conducting serious and well-intentional conversations through an online platform, *WhatsApp* group chat. On the one hand, they reported that the platform provided them with a comfortable
space to exchange criticism because they did not see each other face to face. On the other hand, they claimed that the online platform also created problems.

May be they just read the message slightly, because of time constraint, that makes the quality of the comments were not really good … and even mismatch to the issue being discussed (incomprehensible) … when the researcher told Mr. Baba that his comment was mismatched the issue, I think that because of the time constraint for reading and comments. We have only one day to give comments to other participants’ presentation … so I think that’s an issue
– Maryam in interview

Conducting group discussions on WhatsApp was challenging because the participants have to read, think, and type at the same time. Consequently, as Maryam outlined above, the participants may not read the chats carefully and may miss the overall meaning, thus the comments do not align with the issues being discussed. Other participants felt the same way as Maryam.

WhatsApp is advantageous because everyone feel safe to say whatever they wanted to say (incomprehensible). Although in the beginning they seem uncomfortable with it, I believe they would feel more uncomfortable if the talks was face-to-face because we can see people’s expression. But in WhatsApp, we can talks whatever we wanted to say, just talks, freely. However, we often felt that the comments were not that good, I mean, it didn’t catch the idea; in the end, I sometime just go ahead see the people in person offline. So, one thing, in WhatsApp, we cannot see peoples’ face, so feel more freely to talk – Reisa in interview
Similar to Maryam, Reisa also has an issue with WhatsApp. She found that due to the limitation on space and time, the quality of the comments could be not as good as if participants were talking offline. To deal with this issue, the participants came up with the idea of combining offline and online platform.

Offline would be more fun. It would allow us to provide clearer comments, in WhatsApp, we use written language, that sometimes it led to misunderstanding … people may see us angry from the texts we sent on the chat, even in reality we are not angry … so, it would be better if we combine online and offline and design the scenario to fit that (platform). – Maryam in interview

My purpose of using an online platform for discussion was to provide flexibility for the participants to engage in the conversation. With WhatsApp, the participants can engage in the conversation anytime and anywhere because they can access it on their mobile phone. However, as the participants said, there are also disadvantages of using the platform. Therefore, combining online and offline modes would offer a solution to facilitate the participants' engagement in the conversation.

**Writing and publication**

In the interviews and reflective essays, the participants also reported that they expected the conversation group to provide them with opportunities to improve their writing skills and publications.
baru, sehingga oh ini tema baru, bagus nh. Tp kalau diundang ke refleksi lagi, gitu lg, mungkin ada titik jenuh, mungkin ada jenuh, dan dia punya prioritas lain, utk mengerjakan hal lain ... tp kalau ada tema baru sh, sbg pemantik saja,

I think, we need to have a regular meeting, once or twice in a month. Although not everyone can come, but we need to keep doing that. And also, we need to do other activities such as writing article for publication. So, we help each other in preparing it. … So, in the group we collect data, and we discuss it together, and we encourage each other to publish in academic journal. So, the meetings have themes and purpose, not just reflection, because it may get us feel boring. So, it will motivate us better. – Baba in interview

Maryam also shares similar expectation

Coba mungkin didepannya gak cuma dibahas kaya gini, bisa sambil nulis, gitu yah, tambahannya. Nanti ada hasil publish bersama, jadi hasil diskusi th jadi publikasi bersama.

In the future we are not only engaging in discussion, but also writing. We write article for publication, so, the results of the discussion is written to be a joint publication. – Maryam in interview

In the first chapter, I elaborated that Indonesian teacher educators are currently encountering criticism for their lack of research and publication. The goal of this study is to build a ground for creating a self-study community of practice. The long-term goal of the project is to provide the lecturers in the EFL teachers college with support systems for dealing with the challenges of research and publication. Research and publication would not only improve the participants’ expertise in their areas of specialization, but also boost their self-confidence because it would make them part of the scholarship community in their discipline. For the purpose of this long-term project, research and publication would sustain the participants’ enthusiasm because they could see the immediate results of the group.
Discussion and reflection on the findings

The participants reported that the overall value creation that they experienced was the increasing connection between them. The culture of the community in the teachers’ college is highly collective. Lecturers in the college sit and work together in a large office space named “Lecturer Office” where they engage in numerous conversations about their practice. However, this does not mean that they have a deep connection between them. The conversations in the lecturer office are not meant to share problems and hear solutions, but rather as a mechanism for maintaining social relationships. Therefore, engaging in the conversation group in this study has provided a new experience for the participants.

The participants reported that this new experience has provided them with useful connections and interaction. Wenger et al (2011) explain that communities and networks are social structures for learning. They elaborate that the formation of a community will create a social space for the participants to discover and further a learning partnership related to a common domain. Moreover, in this study, as reported by the participants, the online conversation group has provided them with a relative safe space to share problems and exchange feedback. Although they claimed that the feedback had helped them deal with the problems, the analysis did not identify convincing evidence for their claim.

However, I found that not all moments in the online conversation created value for the participants. There were moments where value creation was not maximally created. The use of online platform as the medium for conversation has limited the quantity of information the participants shared to the group. As the consequence, the participants felt that feedback was not complete. There are several factors that the
participants identified as contributing to the limited quantity of information and low quality of feedback. The first factor is that the time and workload made it difficult for participants to engage greatly in the conversation. Besides working as lecturers, the participants also had other commitments outside college life. From this finding, I learned that time is no longer a problem; it is a reality to deal with.

There was also an issue with areas of specialization. While literature on self-study research encourages teacher educators to develop interdisciplinary collaboration when conducting self-study (Ritter et al., 2018; Samaras & Pithouse-Morgan, 2018; Smith et al., 2018), this study found that interdisciplinary self-study might not work in an Indonesian context, especially when the conversation is focused on sharing stories from teaching. The participants prefer to work with people with whom they share knowledge and discipline. Therefore, to move forward with the plan for creating a self-study community, I need to start with forming self-study groups comprised of people from the same disciplinary background; and then move slowly forward to create more interdisciplinary ones when the focus of the conversation is on the supervision. Different to teacher education in the United States, for example, when only professors who teach pedagogical courses could become supervisors of teaching practice, in the EFL teachers college, all lecturers are supervisors of teaching practice. Therefore, an interdisciplinary conversation group could be formed when the focus is on sharing stories from supervision practices.

Lastly, the most crucial factor in creating a self-study community is showing the participants that the study is useful for them. Therefore, the self-study group should create a product in the form of publication. As the participants reported in their essays
and interviews, they expected that the conversation group would not only help them in improving their practice in teaching, but also providing them with opportunities for publication. Kitchen & Parker (2009) named this step creating an educational knowledge. The purpose of creating a self-study community is to provide its members with support systems for creating educational knowledge. For the participants in this study, publication serves personal and professional goals. Personally, it makes them a part of a scholarly community in their discipline. It will raise their sense of pride in themselves and boost their confidence. Professionally, the publication will help them improve their practice, increase professional identity, and support their rank promotion. Altogether, publication will help them stay committed to their practice and professional development activities to improve the quality of that practice.

What I have learned from this finding in regards to creating a self-study community in the college? First, I learned that time will always be an issue. However, from the findings, I also found that time availability is not the main issue but the participants’ inability to manage their time is the issue. Time is no longer an issue; it is a reality to deal with. As a facilitator, I surely could not force the participants to chose between conducting research or working on something else that is also important for their social life such as having additional job. The issue I need to deal with is how to help the participants be able to manage their time. They need to make time available for research, not find the time for research. However, to do this, I need to deal with another challenge – making the participants see that research is important and doable within their busy schedule.
Another crucial factor in creating a self-study community is showing the participants that the study is useful for them; the study should create a product. Kitchen & Parker (2009) named this step creating educational knowledge. The purpose of creating a self-study community is to provide its members with support systems for creating educational knowledge. For the participants in this study, the publication serves personal and professional goals. Personally, it makes them a part of a scholarly community in their discipline. It will raise their sense of pride in themselves and boosts their confidence. Professionally, the publication will help them improve their practice, increase professional identity, and support their rank promotion. Altogether, publication will help them stay committed to their practice and professional development activities to improve the quality of that practice.
Chapter Six

Implications and conclusions

“If teacher education is to be taken seriously in colleges, then the professional development of teacher educators needs to be taken more seriously.”

-- Zeichner (2005)

This final chapter presents the conclusion of the study. I begin this chapter by providing an overview of the research. In this section, I briefly reintroduce the purpose of the study, restate the research questions, and summarize the major findings. Following that section, I discuss the implications and the limitations of the study. As I said in the beginning of the dissertation, I used this study as groundwork and preliminary research for a larger initiative of creating a self-study community of practice in an EFL teachers’ college in Indonesia. Therefore, I conclude this chapter by presenting recommendations for future work related to the plan.

Overview of the study

In this study, I invited five teacher educators in an EFL teachers’ college in Indonesia to engage in dialogues about their practice in teaching preservice teachers through an online platform, WhatsApp. The goals of this study are twofold. First, this study investigated whether engagement in dialogues could foster critical reflections on the teacher educators’ daily practice. Second, the study examined whether the online conversation group could become a social structure for learning. More specifically, in this study, I am interested in investigating the relative benefits of participating in the online conversation group as perceived by the teacher educators. This study is a preliminary exploration of a larger initiative intended to create a self-study community of practice in an Indonesian context. The purpose of the creation of the self-study community is to
provide a platform and support system for teacher educators’ professional development in Indonesia. Therefore, the findings of the study are important, for it will shed light onto the efforts of creating the self-study community. Moreover, this study also responds to a gap in literature about how to effectively support teacher educators’ professional development in different contexts (Berry, 2008; Knight et al., 2014; Lunenberg et al., 2014).

Two general research questions guided this study:

1. How do the teacher educators collaboratively identify shared problem spaces for inquiry through conducting self-study about their practices in teaching teachers?
2. What challenges and opportunities do the teacher educators identify to moving forward with self-study community of practice?

From these two questions, I sought the following findings:

a. kinds of reflection that emerge from the conversation group;
b. the nature of the talks in the conversation that lead to the reflection;
c. the value creation the teacher educators perceived from participating in the conversation group; and
d. the factors the teacher educators identify as the potential barriers; and the opportunities available for moving forward with the self-study community of practice.

To answer the questions, I collected data through organizing bi-monthly conferences with the participants, conducting individual interviews, and assigning individual reflective essays for the participants. I approached the data using Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and Zhang and Wildemuth’s (2009) qualitative content analysis. I analyzed and

**Kinds of reflection emerging from the conversation group**

Using Kreber & Cranton's (2000) scholarship of teaching model as the analytical and interpretive framework, thematic analysis revealed that the conversations provided a space for the participants to engage in tough talks about their practices that led them to look back and reflect on the practice. However, according to the scholarship teaching model, the participants reflect only at the content and process reflection level in the domains of instructional, curricular, and pedagogical knowledge of teaching. The participants mostly began the talks with a presentation about problems in their practice. Then, drawing on their personal experiences, the participants exchanged views about the problems and offered solutions. This process led the presenting participants to look back and reflect on their practice. They mostly engaged in content reflection in which they look back on the goals of the instructional activities in their class. However, to be transformative, it is not sufficient to reflect on the content and process levels; they also need to reflect on the premise level. In premise reflection, participants questioned the integrity of deeply held assumptions and beliefs based on prior experience. There is no evidence from the data that shows the participants engaged in such reflection.

**The nature of the dialogues in the conversation**

To identify the nature and quality of the talks that possibly lead or inhibit critical reflection, I analyzed the conversation dataset using Mercer’s (2000) concept of
interthinking as the analytical framework. Analysis revealed that since the participants shared common background knowledge about the contextual foundation of the problems discussed in the dialogues, they focused the dialogues on problem-posing and advice-giving. Therefore, the nature of the conversation developed into either disputational or cumulative conversations. As a result, although there were many “possible entry points” for critical reflection, the dialogues did not provoke the participants to question and check their own presuppositions and assumptions that sustained their actions in teaching.

**Value creation cycles in the conversation group**

Using Wenger, Trayner, & de Laat's (2011) value creation in network and community as the analytical framework, this study identified that the participants claimed that the conversation group has provided the participants with opportunities to engage in activities that increase the quality of interaction and connection among participants. Taking part in the conversation group has provided the participants with new experiences of engaging in a conversation where they feel safe to expose their vulnerability. The respondent reported that the conversation has not only impacted directly on their practice but also provided them with room for thinking together. Engaging in the conversation group has provided the participants with a space for learning about taking and giving feedback and realizing the importance of reflection and collaboration.

**When value is not created: incomplete and inaccurate feedback**

The participants identified moments when value was not created. They admitted that the feedback that their colleagues gave was incomplete and sometimes did not match the issue they shared. There are several factors contributing to why value was not created. Lack of time has always been an excuse for not doing research. This study revealed that it
was true that time was an issue because of heavy workloads. However, the primary problem is no longer time, but rather the inability of the participants to manage time. The participants engage in many activities in college, community, and family. This is the circumstance they are currently experiencing. Therefore, this study concluded that time is no longer a problem; it is a reality to deal with.

Areas of specialization also contributed to the low quality of feedback. The participants have different disciplinary backgrounds. Although they share contextual knowledge about the issue they talk about in the conversation, the fact that they have different disciplinary backgrounds made one of them feel excluded from the discourse. Her presentations in the conversation have received little attention from other participants. As a consequence, while she acknowledged that she experienced the learning process from participating in the conversation group, she also felt that the conversation group did not meet her expectation in finding solutions to her problem in her class and improving her knowledge and competence.

Lastly, sociocultural norms of Indonesian society do not accommodate tough talks where people exchange ideas, feedback, and criticism openly. While the conversation group provided the participants with a relatively safe space for talking about their problem, since this is their first experience of participating in this kind of conversation, the participants also found that the conversation was challenging. There are numerous personal and social relationship challenges such as feeling offended, being excluded from the conversation, not being ready to accept and give feedback, and a lot of misunderstanding.
If they are not well-managed, in the long run, these threats may jeopardize the participants’ commitments the conversation group in the future. In turn, it will make the plan for creating the self-study community of practice more difficult to realize. However, there are also some aspirations from the participants about how to manage their commitment. First, the participants expected to have a facilitator who can act as a leader, mediator, and even teacher. Second, the participants suggested that working with a group of people who share similar background of discipline would be more useful for them. Third, while the online platform provided more freedom to talk, the participants also experienced problems with it. Therefore, they expected to combine online and offline platform for facilitating the conversation. And fourth, the participants expected immediate results of the conversation in the form of publication. They expect that the conversation group will become more than just a place for sharing problems and getting solutions, but also facilitate them to improve their academic writing and research ability.

**Implications**

The findings of the study have brought several theoretical and practical implications for the field.

**Theoretical implications**

The followings are several theoretical implications of the findings of the study.

1. A high collective society provides little space for critical conversations. As a result, when facilitated to engage in a critical conversation, people from a highly collective society seem to be confused by the difference between judgmental and critical comments. Judgmental and critical comments are expected in the conversation among people from a highly collective society. Therefore, while
literature emphasizes the importance of avoiding judgment for creating a safe, trust, and care environment, the findings of the study imply that it is fine to allow the participants to engage in a conversation that involved judgmental and critical comments as long as the facilitator can design a protocol of conversation that can guarantee the judgmental comments would not break the social relationship between the people engaged in it.

2. Literature on self-study research promotes interdisciplinary collaboration to provide the researcher with different perspectives. However, the findings of the study show that it is not always the case. The participants of this study felt that the conversation became less engaging when they were talking about topics in which they were unfamiliar. Therefore, this finding implies that in the beginning of the process, collaboration in self-study should begin with working in a group where the participants share a similar disciplinary background.

3. The findings of the study also imply the critical roles of a facilitator in creating a self-study community. The facilitator should play the roles of teacher, role model, and mentor. These roles are especially important in the contexts where participants are not familiar with a research that requires collaboration such as self-study.

**Practical implications for the plan of creating a self-study community**

This study is a groundwork for establishing preconditions of the self-study research community I intend to create in the EFL teachers’ college in Indonesia. The findings of this study raise several practical implications for the plan of creating a self-
study community. The following picture is the modified plan of the long-term plan of creating a self-study community of practice in the EFL teachers college.

![Diagram showing the revised version of the long-term planning of creating the self-study community in the EFL teachers college](image)

**Figure 6-1**: The revised version of the long-term planning of creating the self-study community in the EFL teachers college

The major practical implication of this study is that the participants need an expert mediator to engage in critical dialogues about their practice. Following the suggestion from the literature, the most immediate step I need to take to realize the plan is to establish critical friendship, especially between me as the facilitator and the participants. I would begin the formation of critical friendship by making myself a critical friend for the participants as they move forward with the self-study research. As this study finds that the participants are expecting to have a facilitator who can act as a mentor and also a role model, my roles as the facilitator will also include developing conversational ground rules for fostering critical reflection, becoming a role model of the critical reflections and self-study research, and teaching about self-study research.
As the group becomes more comfortable with how critical friendship works, referring to one of the findings of the study, I would proceed with establishing critical friendships in a group of participants consisted of people who share area of specialization. While the literature encourages an interdisciplinary self-study group, this study has identified that different area of specialization has become an issue. Therefore, in the beginning, especially when the self-study focuses on the issues of classroom teaching and learning, the self-study group should consist of people from the same area of specialization. Interdisciplinary groups would possibly work when the self-study focuses on the supervision of student teaching practice.

Meanwhile, different to the other parts of the world, such as in the United States, where only faculties who teach method classes can supervise teaching practice, in Indonesia, especially in the teachers college where this study was conducted, all lecturers supervise teaching practice regardless what courses they teach. There are thirty lecturers with three different disciplinary backgrounds in the EFL teachers college. The largest group is the lecturers who come from EFL education applied linguistics discipline. There are also lecturers whose disciplinary background is in theoretical linguistics and English culture and literature. This diverse disciplinary background provides opportunities for forming an interdisciplinary self-study that focuses on the supervision of teaching practice. However, this should be the next agenda to accomplish; after a same disciplinary self-study group effectively works.

Furthermore, as suggested in the literature, creating a self-study community requires conditions to sustain it, such as workshops and trainings. The findings of this study imply that, as the facilitator, I need to design activities that would sustain self-study
groups. For example, the participants reported that they still had issues with time and workload. To deal with this issue, instead of treating time as an issue, I would rather see it as a reality to deal with. Therefore, providing mentoring on time management should be included into the content that would sustain the self-study group. Moreover, since the participants of the study are not quite familiar with qualitative research and self-study research, workshops sessions intended to teach the participants the technical aspects of qualitative and self-study research should also be organized by the facilitator. More importantly, as the facilitator, I need to make myself the role model of all the aspects of the self-study research. It means that I also need to conduct self-study research.

**Significance of the study**

Although this study is context-bound to a teachers’ college in Indonesia, the findings of the study are also significant to contribute to the scholarship conversation about how to effectively and meaningfully facilitate professional development of teacher educators (Berry, 2008; Knight et al., 2014; Lunenberg et al., 2014). As Hamilton & Pinnegar (1998) have asserted, conducting studies about educational topics in different contexts is important to critique findings and propositions generated by previous studies and to urge educators to look at issues in education through many different lenses.

The majority of studies about self-study and teacher educator professional development are conducted in the Western world with its unique and well-developed support system. As far as I am aware, there is no study in Indonesia that focuses on examining the issues related to the teacher educators’ professional development. This study offers a new research perspective for the field of teacher education in Indonesian contexts. Also, the findings of this study contribute to the conversation about
sociocultural factors in teacher educators’ professional development. More specifically, this study provides insights into the issues of facilitating and creating a safe, trusting, and caring environment for supporting teacher educators to learn from and with each other through self-study group in a collective society.

**Limitations of the study and area for future research**

While this study has identified significant findings, there are some areas of limitation. First, when designing this study, I planned to conduct this study in two phases: the first phase would focus on teaching and learning in class, and the second phase would focus on the supervision of teaching practice. However, due to unforeseen events, I had to drop the second phase. Therefore, this study focused only on one aspect of teacher educators’ work, being a teacher of teachers. The study only investigated how teacher educators experience dilemma and tensions in teaching preservice teachers in classroom. Therefore, future research should also address the area of supervision.

Second, in term of methodology, the use of the online platform imposed the greatest limitation to this study. While it provides a safe space for exchange ideas and criticism, lack of face-to-face interaction created numerous challenges. The use of online platform may also raise questions about the authenticity of information the participants provided for the study. My dual roles as a researcher and a colleague for the participants may also pose threats to the authenticity of data. Also, as I read the data, I found that the participants acknowledge that participating in this conversation group impacted their practice. They claim that their practices are improving. However, since this study did not include field observations, it has no evidence from the field about the improvement. The claim that the conversation group has improved the participants’ practice was based on
the participants’ claim in the interview and reflective essay. Therefore, future research should include field observations to gain a more thorough understanding about the impacts of a conversation group to the teacher educators’ practice.

There are more than four hundred teachers colleges in Indonesia, each with their own unique contexts. The findings of this study could not represent the overall picture of teacher education issues in Indonesia because this study focused only on one aspect. However, since the purpose of qualitative research is not on making generalization, but rather placing emphasize on transferability (Maxwell, 2013), the findings of the study still could be used as the references for conducting a deeper study about the same issues in other contexts. Moreover, the use of deductive analysis also diminishes the richness of description of the study since the discussion is built around the preexisting theories that guided this study.

More specifically, the findings of this study also open up areas that need to be explored. First, for the topic of critical reflection, further research is needed to identify strategies to be used for fostering critical reflection in a collective society where reflection is not regarded as a legitimate way of learning. Moreover, further research also needs to address the issue of forming critical friendship in a collective society. While literature on self-study research emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in self-study (Ritter et al., 2018; Samaras & Pithouse-morgan, 2018; L. M. Smith et al., 2018), the findings of this study imply that this kind of collaboration might not properly work in an Indonesian context. Therefore, to move forward with a community of practice, I should begin with forming collaboration groups consisting of professionals who come from similar disciplinary backgrounds. The purpose is to help
participants feel comfortable with the dynamic process of the conversation in the group. Once this purpose has been achieved, the facilitation process can proceed with developing cross-disciplinary groups. In this respect, future research needs to explore the issues such as how to foster collaborative skills, what roles personal narrative play in the collaboration, and how to maintain group’s culture and negotiate individual and communal identity.

Literature also highlights the issues of tensions and dilemmas in facilitating professional development (Capitelli, 2015; J. Ritter, 2017; J. K. Ritter, 2018; J. K. Ritter, Pithouse-Morgan, & Samaras, n.d.). The followings are some issues that might provoke tensions and dilemmas as I move forward with my plan for creating a self-study community of practice in the college: 1) self-study is a highly personal nature of inquiry; how does one teach the methodological features of self-study or qualitative inquiry in general to people who are more familiar with quantitative methods and paradigms? and 2) how do I manage the conflicting agenda and research interest among the participants?
References


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Appendices

Appendix A-First interview about life history

Interview Protocol
Seidman’s Three Series Interview

Date/Time : __________________ / ______
Venues  : ____________________________
Participants : Pseudonym Identity
Interviewer : ____________________________
Duration : 45 to 60 minutes

Instructions:
1. Greet the participant and say thank you for their willingness to take part in the study;
2. Briefly explain the study and provide the participant with an opportunity to ask questions;
3. Tell the participant that the confidentiality of their identity and responses will become the primary concern and the researchers of this study will do their best to keep the confidentiality;
4. Briefly explain the procedures of the interview and turn the recording ON after the participant understand and agree to the procedures; and
5. The questions provided in this protocol are guidelines; they might not go in sequence. Some of them might be overlapped. The interview might not ask all the questions.
6. The interview should go more like a conversation.

The Interview:
1. Turn the recording ON;
2. Say name of the study, data, time, venue, participant pseudonym and interviewer’s name.

Focus on Life-History
1. How do you become a teacher educator? **Hint:** Think of the timeline of your journey of becoming a teacher educator, what are some significant moments, the milestones that you have gone through and made you who you are today!

Options for follow up questions:
   a. Think of yourself as a teacher, then a teacher educator, how does this change in professional status change your view of your professional image or identity?
   b. What does the title “teacher educator” mean to you? Or how would you describe yourself as teacher educators?
   c. How would you distinguish between teaching students and teaching teachers?
Focus on Detail Experiences

1. Tell me the most important experiences you ever had as a teacher and teacher educator? *Hint:* interactions with students, cooperating teachers, school administrators, college administrators, research, or service activities.

Options for follow-up questions:
Based on that experience, what do you think the most important skills and knowledge an EFL teacher should have?
- How do you see yourself in connecting to that knowledge and skills?
- How do you think an EFL teacher should learn? What are some of the efforts you take to help them learn and improve?
- What do you think the most challenging and rewarding parts of your work as a teacher educator?
- Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation which you believe that your students learn at their best?

Reflection and meaning making

1. How often do you ever wonder why your students can or cannot do things that you taught?
2. When you are wondering why your students can or cannot do things you taught, what kind of questions come to your mind?
3. How do you define learning? For you and for your students?
4. How do you define research?
5. Can you name three things that you are really proud of regarding to your practice and three things that you think you need improvement?
6. What you expect from your community in this college?

Note:

1. The interview was not conducted in three different occasion, but in one occasion and divided into three session;
2. These questions are merely guidelines.
Appendix B – Second individual interview 2

First cycle of data collection, February-March, 2018

Participant: 
Day/Date/Time: 
Venue: Online chat in WhatsApp

Instructions for interviewer.
1. Greet the participants and thanks/appreciate her/him for participating in the study;
2. Tell her/him that she/he has contributed positively to the process of the study;
3. Explain that she/he is free to not answer or stop the interview whenever she/he finds irrelevant questions; and
4. Explain the confidentiality of the information the participants has provided. Emphasize that the information they give will never be shared with other participants; and
5. Ask if the participant ready to start the conversation.

Objectives.
The objective of the conversation is elicit information about how the participant individually perceive the process of collaborative self-study with the focus on the following aspects:
1. To what extent the participants feel reluctant to share their knowledge/reflections or enthusiast and motivated;
2. The way how the collaborative self-study provides them with opportunities to gain new knowledge;
3. The way how the collaborative self-study enables them to exchange ideas, contribute new ideas or new way of looking at things in teaching teachers; and
4. The reasons why the engage or disengage in the collaborative works.
5. The participant’s suggestions to make the collaborative self-study process much better and provides them with meaningful learning experiences.

The nature of the conversation is informal semi-structured where the questions in this protocol merely serves as the guidelines. In practical, the interviewer is free to paraphrase or ask questions in different way as long as the questions still serve the main purpose of the interview.

Warming-up questions:
To refresh the participant’s memory about their philosophy of teaching, view about research, and motivation to participate in the research. This will also help the interview to make connection about those topics.
1. Could you please tell me again your teaching philosophy? *Hint:* Guide the participants with a clarification or example of what is philosophy of teaching. Or paraphrase the question into: What do you think the best way for students to learn in your class?
2. What is research? *Hint:* Or, what do you say about research?
3. What is your motivation to participate in this study?

**Main questions:**

Begin with questions:
Please describe, how do you feel about the conversation?

The conversation proceeds based on what the participants say in answering the main questions. However, the followings are some possible follow-up questions:

1. What is your concern regarding to the discussion?
2. Is there anything new from the conversation? New knowledge? New perspectives?
3. What is the most impressive part of the conversation? What is not?
4. Any uncomfortable comments, feedback, or talks?
5. How much do you feel comfortable with the conversation?
6. What is your suggestion for the next conferences?

**Closing.**

Say thank you again, explain the next steps of the study, and close the conversation.
Appendix C – Final interview

Interview Protocol

Date/Time : __________________ / ________
Venues : Phone-call
Participants : Pseudonym identity
Interviewer : ____________________________
Duration : 45 to 60 minutes
Purpose : Talking about the overall collaborative self-study process.
Frequency : Final interview

Instructions:
1. Greet the participant and say thank you for their willingness to take part in the study;
2. Briefly explain the study and provide the participant with an opportunity to ask questions;
3. Tell the participant that the confidentiality of their identity and responses will become the primary concern and the researchers of this study will do their best to keep the confidentiality;
4. Briefly explain the procedures of the interview and turn the recording ON after the participant understand and agree to the procedures; and
5. The questions provided in this protocol are guidelines; they might not go in sequence. Some of them might be overlapped. The interview should go more like a conversation.

Questions:
The interview will begin with opening question: “How do you feel about this collaborative conference process?”
The follow-up question will depend on the participants’ answer to the question above.
Here are some possible follow-up questions:
1. How much did you learn about your subject areas as the result of your participation in this self-study?
2. In what ways this collaborative self-study facilitates you in learn/look at things differently?
3. How much you feel comfortable/uncomfortable with the process of the self-study? Why? Why not?
4. One thing I would to do to improve this collaboration process is …

These questions are merely the guidelines. Specific probing or follow-up questions will depend on the participants’ responses.
Appendix D – Bi-Monthly Conference Protocol

Collaborative Conference Protocol
Adapted from Steve Seidel and colleagues at the Harvard Zero Project
Accessed through School Reform Initiative (SRI)

Date/Time : __________________ / __________
Venues : online on chatting platform
Participants : Pseudonym Identity
Facilitator : Usep Syaripudin

Previously, the facilitator asked the participants to bring a sample of student work that will be collaboratively examine.

The procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Facilitator</th>
<th>The Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Invites the participant to share his/her stories from practice to the group</td>
<td>• The presenting participants share the stories of their practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Then, ask the group, “What do you see from the stories? “What questions does this stories raise for you?”</td>
<td>• The other participants provide comments on the stories from the presenting participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The facilitator asks the group, “What do you think the participants experience in his/her class?”</td>
<td>• Participants provides their insights about the stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invites the presenting teacher to speak.</td>
<td>• The presenting teacher provides his or her perspective on her/his class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The presenting teacher also comments on anything surprising or unexpected that she/he heard during the describing, questioning, and speculating phases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The facilitator invites everyone (the participants and the presenting teacher) to share any thoughts they have about their own teaching, student’s learning, or ways to support this particular student.

Note:
• The procedures for the next conferences might need some revisions/modifications based on the reflections.

Conferences schedule:

First conference
Date: February 26 – March 2, 2018
Mode: Synchronous conversation (Everyone presents together at the chat group)
Topic: Syllabus

Second conference
Date: March 18-23, 2018
Mode: Semi-synchronous (Modified based on what was happening in the first conference)
Topic: the implementation of syllabus in the first few weeks of the semester
Presentation schedule:
1. March 18 – briefing
2. March 19 – Maryam
3. March 20 – Marina
4. March 21 – Baba
5. March 22 – Reisa
6. March 23 – Khairany
Activities
   a. From 5 am to 10 am, the presenter share the stories to the group.
   b. From 10 am to 8 pm, the other group members post their responses to the stories; and
   c. After 8 pm until morning, the presenter post his/her response and reflection.

Third conference
Date: May 6-12, 2018
Mode: Semi-synchronous
Topic: Talking about the results of Mid-term exam and sharing the plan for following-up the exam results
Presentation schedule:
1. May 6  – briefing
2. May 7 – Marina
3. May 8 – Maryam
4. May 9 – Baba
5. May 11 – Reisa
6. May 12 – Khairany
Activities
   a. From 5 am to 10 am, the presenter share the stories to the group.
   b. From 10 am to 8 pm, the other group members post their responses to the stories; and
   c. After 8 pm until morning, the presenter post his/her response and reflection.

Fourth conference
Date: July 8-13, 2018
Mode: Semi-synchronous
Topic: Sharing about the overall class activities in the semester and the results of the finals
Presentation schedule:
1. July 7  – Briefing
2. July 8 – Maryam
3. July 10 – Marina
4. July 11 – Baba
5. July 12 – Reisa
6. July 13 – Khairany
Activities
   a. From 5 am to 10 am, the presenter share the stories to the group.
b. From 10 am to 8 pm, the other group members post their responses to the stories; and

c. After 8 pm until morning, the presenter post his/her response and reflection.
Appendix E – Reflective essay

Protocol of Reflective Writing
Gibb’s Reflective Cycle
Adapted from Peter Lia Learning Support Tutor (2016)

Time: July 21-28, 2018
Participants: All participants
Objective: To get the participants to think systematically in reflecting on the experiences of activities throughout their participation in the research. This protocol intends to help the participants to make sense of the experiences and activities so that they can understand what aspects of the experiences they find meaningful and what aspects do not, as well as elicit their thinking about the future of the research group.

Instructions:
I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to everyone in the group for participating in the study and staying in there until today. It has been a semester we have been doing the activities in the group. Now it is the time for you to tell me how you feel about the study. To do so, I would like to ask you to write a reflective essay about the experiences and activities that we have been doing in the group. For the reflection, I use the following Gibb’s reflective cycle to guide you all in the writing process.


1. Please read through all the conversations that we have had throughout the semester;
2. Take note some important ideas, thoughts, events, or experiences throughout the semester; and
3. Please write a 1000 up to 1500 words (2 pages single space) reflective essay; and follow the guidelines below.

==============================================================
First part of the essay: Description (approx. 250 words).
Please describe the activities in the conversation group. Use your own words and put as much detail as possible to describe the activities.
Silahkan deskripsikan aktifitas dalam kelompok diskusi ini. Gunakan kata-kata sendiri dan berikan deskripsi sedetil dan serinci mungkin.

Second part of the essay: Feeling (approx. 200 words).
In this part, you must describe how you feel about the activities in the group. You may use the following questions as the guidance, but please feel free to craft your own ideas:

- What did you feel before the self-study group took place? (Ketika saya mengundang untuk berpartisipasi dan memberikan pemaparan tentang studi ini, apa yang ada di benak anda saat itu? Apa yang kemudian membuat anda memutuskan untuk berpartisipasi? Dsb. Silahkan kembangkan sendiri).

- What did you feel while this situation took place? (Kemudian, hingga akhirnya anda menjadi bagian dari group ini dan berpartisipasi dalam semua kegiatannya, diskusi, dsb, apa yang anda rasakan? Bagaimana menurut anda kegiatan (utamanya diskusi), yang dilakukan dalam group ini?)

- What do you think other people felt during this situation? (Meski teman akrab, rekan kerja, sulit rasanya untuk bisa menebak perasaan orang lain, akan tetapi, mungkin dari interaksi, obrolan, dan celetukan sehari-hari, anda mungkin bisa menebak kira-kira seperti apa pandangan anggota group lain terhadap kegiatan ini? Hmmm.... jujur yak?)

- What did you feel after the situation? (Setelah satu semester berjalan dan kita terlibat dalam beberapa sesi diskusi dan wawancara, apa yang anda rasakan saat ini? Apa pendapat anda?)

Third part of the essay: Evaluation (approx. 200 words).
In this part, please provide your evaluation on the whole process of the group activities. Please feel free to express what was good and bad about the activities in the group including the way how I facilitated the conversations. Use the following questions as the guidance:

- What were the things that you feel positive about the group? (Good experiences). Jelaskan secara ringkas dan jelas apa hal positive yang diperoleh dari partisipasi anda dalam kelompok ini!

- What were the things that you feel negative about the group? (Bad experiences). Jelaskan secara ringkas dan jelas apa hal negative yang diperoleh dari partisipasi anda dalam kelompok ini!
Fourth part of the essay: Analysis (approx. 350 words).
Here, please look back on the positive and negative things you describe in the previous section, and do an evaluative description on them. Use the following questions as guidance:

- For positive things, why do you think that it was positive? Also, what are the consequence of it? Please put detail explanation on it. Think about how this positive action could have been further improved. *(Kenapa pengalaman itu positive dan kira-kira apa penyebabnya? Dan akibatnya terhadap keseluruhan proses activitas dalam kelompok? Seandainya hal positive itu bisa diulang, apa yang harus dilakukan supaya bisa lebih maksimal?)*

- For negative things, why do you think that it was negative? Also, what are the consequence of it? Please put detail explanation on it. Think about what could have been done to have avoided these negative consequences. *(Kenapa pengalaman itu negative dan kira-kira apa penyebabnya? Dan akibatnya terhadap keseluruhan proses activitas dalam kelompok? Lalu, jika ada kesempatan mengulang, hal apa yang harus dilakukan supaya pengalaman negative tersebut tidak terjadi?)*

- Now think about your contribution to the group activities, how do you feel about your contribution to the group? *(Bagaimana dengan kontribusi dan partisipasi anda pada aktifitas group? Jelaskan.)*

- Now think about other people’s participation to the group activities, what do you think about it? *(Menurut anda, bagaimana partisipasi peserta lain terhadap aktifitas kelompok?)*

Fifth part of the essay: Conclusion (approx. 250 words).
Please provide your overall feelings and thoughts about the group activities. Use the following questions as guidance:

- Do you want to continue doing these activities in the future? Why and why not? *(Apakah anda ingin melanjutkan melakukan kegiatan seperti ini? Ya atau tidak? Kenapa?)*

- If you answer “Yes” to the previous question, please provide suggestions on how to make the group more meaningful to you and others? *(Jika anda menjawab “Ya”, berikan saran bagaimana caranya agar kegiatan ini bisa berjalan lebih baik dan berdampak makin baik bagi semuanya?)*

- What did you learn from this group? *(Secara keseluruhan, pelajaran/ilmu apa yang anda peroleh dari partisipasi pada group ini.)*

- Has the group met your expectations? Have your goals to participate in this group been achieved? *(Apakah harapan anda ketika memutuskan untuk ambil bagian dalam kegiatan ini sudah terpenuhi? Ya atau tidak? Jelaskan!)*
Sixth part of the essay: Action plan (approx. 250 words).
If you choose to continue with this group, what are the things that you think the group need to do to make it even better? Use the following questions as guidance!
Jika anda memilih untuk melanjutkan kegiatan seperti ini, hal apa saja yang harus ditambahkan atau dikurangi supaya kegiatan kelompok ini makin baik?

• What do I need to do in order to be better prepared to participate in the group in future? (Diri anda sendiri, apa yang akan anda lakukan secara lebih baik supaya kegiatan di kelompok ini semakin memberikan dampak yang positif?)

• What are the things in the future that you want the people in the group do? (Hal apa saja yang anda harapkan bisa dilakukan bersama kelompok ini?)

• What is your plan for the future to follow up the group activities? (Apa rencana anda ke depan untuk menindaklanjuti kegiatan di kelompok ini?).

Important:
1. You can write it either way in Indonesian or English.
2. The questions provided in each sections are merely guidance. You are free to write your own reflection and put as much detail as possible in it. Please write in the form of essay, not answering each questions.

After you have done with the essay, please send it to my email: ufs5004@psu.edu and give me notification on the WhatsApp group when you have sent your essay. Should you have further questions or concerns, shoot me a message.
Thank you.

Reference.
EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

Date: November 28, 2017  
From: Joyel Moeller, IRB Analyst  
To: Usep Syaripudin

<table>
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<th>Initial Study</th>
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<td>Title of Study:</td>
<td>Facilitating EFL Teacher Educators’ Self-study to Identify Problem Spaces in Teaching Teachers: A Case Study of Building Self-study Communities of Practice in a Teachers College in Indonesia</td>
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<th>Usep Syaripudin</th>
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<td>• Usep Syaripudin_Research Instrument_Reflective Interview.docx (0.02), Category: Data Collection Instrument</td>
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</table>

The Office for Research Protections determined that the proposed activity, as described in the above-referenced submission, does not require formal IRB review because the research met the criteria for exempt research according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations.

We would like to know how the IRB Program can better serve you.  
Please fill out our survey; it should take about a minute:  
https://www.research.psu.edu/irb/feedback.
Continuing Progress Reports are not required for exempt research. Record of this research determined to be exempt will be maintained for five years from the date of this notification. If your research will continue beyond five years, please contact the Office for Research Protections closer to the determination end date.

Changes to exempt research only need to be submitted to the Office for Research Protections in limited circumstances described in the below-referenced Investigator Manual. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the Office for Research Protections.

Penn State researchers are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within CATS IRB (http://irb.psu.edu).

This correspondence should be maintained with your records.
EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION
2019 - PhD in Curriculum and Instruction, The Pennsylvania State University, USA
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PRESENTATIONS

PUBLICATIONS and WRITINGS