

ENHANCING PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCIES IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS THROUGH MICROTEACHING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract: Pedagogical competence is one of compulsory competencies required for teachers to perform their tasks professionally. To produce qualified teachers, many teacher training institutions provide courses that can help pre-service teachers build their pedagogical competences, such as Microteaching. However, not all pre-service teachers understand the importance of this course, and they barely take this course seriously. This research aimed to explore how Microteaching course can assist pre-service teachers build their pedagogical competences and explores its aspects that can be improved. Therefore, to guide the study, two research questions were formulated; 1) how does Microteaching course assist pre-service teachers' pedagogical skills, and what pedagogical aspects can be improved through Microteaching course. Utilizing qualitative approach, six participants of pre-service teachers of English language education department of Private University in Central Java were involved, and they were individually interviewed to collect the data. Microteaching course enables pre-service teachers build their pedagogical competences in that 1) it improves their lesson plan, 2) it provides them with teaching practice experiences, and 3) it gives opportunities for them to evaluate their teaching practices. In addition, Microteaching course enables the pre-service teachers to build their pedagogical competencies aspects, comprising 1) identifying students' characteristics, 2) carrying out reflection, 3) understanding students' learning, 4) developing students' potentials, 5) building good communication skills, and 6) carrying out assessment and evaluation. As microteaching course enables pre-service teachers improve their pedagogical knowledge in many aspects, students of teacher training should take the course more seriously. It is, then, recommended that teacher training institutions design the curriculum that supports pre-service teachers' competences such as Microteaching course more thoroughly and comprehensively so that it results in high qualified teaching skills of pre-service students.

Keywords: *Microteaching course; pedagogical competence; teachers' competence*

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate Microteaching course in connection to pedagogical competence improvement among pre-service teachers. In an attempt to give clear guidance of the research, two research questions were formed; 1) how Microteaching course builds pre-service teachers' pedagogical competencies, and 2) what pedagogical aspects can be developed by the pre-service teachers through Microteaching course. To maintain its coherence, information about teachers' competences in Indonesian context, the role of teacher training institutes, pedagogical competence, Microteaching course, and reviews of related study is presented in order. The

following paragraphs elucidate these issues in detail.

Education is important for human beings to build their academics, life skills, social development, and behavior (Bouck & Park, 2019). In other words, education impacts the quality human resources. In the process of education, many parties are involved, and one of them is teachers.

According to Indonesian Government Regulation No. 74/2008, teachers are defined as professional educators with the task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education through formal education, basic

education, and secondary education (Sidik, 2021). Based on this definition, it can be implied that teacher is one of the important parts in education field (Loeneto et al., 2020). Teachers play important roles in carrying out tasks and educate the students to help the nation reach educational goals (Disas, 2017). However, Revina et al. (2020) mentioned that Indonesian teachers' quality remains low.

Based on Teacher and Lecturer Law No. 14/2005 and the Ministry of National Education Law No. 18/2007 on Teachers' Certification, the quality development of teachers and lecturers are concerned with the qualification of teachers. The quality aspect is reflected in the need for teachers to meet two national standards: bachelor academic qualifications and teacher competencies (Suyanta et al., 2020).

Teacher and Lecturer Law No. 14/2005 has demanded Indonesian teachers and lecturers to be professional by performing their four competencies, comprising professional, pedagogy, personal, and social (Purwanti et al., 2023). Of these competencies, pedagogical competence is defined as the ability to manage students' learning which includes understanding of students, designing and implementing learning, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students to actualize the various potentials they have. This pedagogical skill can be trained and honed for pre-service teachers in teacher training institution. This institution plays a vital role in helping the pre-service teachers fulfill the required competencies to become professional teachers in the future (Suyanta et al., 2020).

Teacher training institution is a form of education that is properly planned and systematically designed and applied for the preparation to those who will teach at primary or secondary school level (Adamu, 2016). Thus, teacher training institution is an educational institution which prepares future professional educators and plays a role to prepare pre-service teachers so that they have the teacher competencies through learning programs guided by lectures. Therefore, one of the key successes or failures of education in Indonesia depends on teacher training institution. In addition to equipping the pre-service teachers with subject knowledge, this institution also provides them opportunities to improve their pedagogical competencies through Microteaching course. Indeed, Putra et al. (2023); Sele and Sila (2022) argued that teacher institutions should support teachers' pedagogical competence.

Pedagogical competence is one of the four competencies that must be fulfilled by teachers. Nur (2020) stated that pedagogical competencies are those specifically characterize and distinguish the teaching profession from other professions. These competencies should be owned by every teacher to achieve success in teaching practices. Thus, pedagogical competence is the ability that teachers must have to manage the students, and it characterizes the teaching profession from other professions.

The Minister Regulation of Indonesia National Education, Number 16 Year 2007, concerning Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competence, states several aspects of pedagogical skills, such as 1) mastering the characteristics of students from the physical, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects, 2) mastering learning theory and educational learning principles, 3) developing a curriculum related to the subjects taught, 4) organizing educational learning, 5) utilizing information and communication technology for the benefit of learning, 6) facilitating the development of the potential of students to actualize their various potentials, 7) building communication with students effectively, empathetically, and politely, 8) carrying out assessment and evaluation of learning processes and outcomes, 9) utilizing the results of assessment and evaluation for the benefit of learning, and 10) carrying out reflective practice to improve the quality of learning (Nur, 2020). These aspects of pedagogical competence are, indeed, necessary to support effective learning in the classroom. Therefore, any prospective teachers who want to take teacher profession should improve their pedagogical aspects, and one way to do so is by taking Microteaching course seriously during their study in teacher training institution.

Microteaching is a simple form of teaching in which pre-service teachers are in a controlled and limited environment. Microteaching course is a compulsory subject that must be taken by every student in the teacher training institution (Arifmiboy, 2019). Another definition of microteaching described by Putra et al. (2023) who mentions that in essence, microteaching is a performance-based learning methodology that involves practicing the components of core teaching competencies during the learning process. This allows future teachers to become truly proficient in each component separately or in certain components combined in shortened learning environments.

Rohmah (2021) states that microteaching aimed to raise the standard of professional teachers was initiated in Stanford University in 1963, and up to now it has been implemented by a number of teacher training institutions in Indonesia. She further mentions that microteaching is a practice method created to enhance teaching abilities of pre-service teachers and grow their professional experience by simplifying or reducing aspects of learning like the number of students, time, and the focus of teaching materials as well as by limiting the application of certain teaching skills so that pre-service teachers can accurately identify their own strengths and weaknesses.

Indeed, Microteaching is a method used in teaching where a pre-service teacher teaches a small portion of a lesson to a small number of students, and teaching skills are practiced under strict supervision. After teaching a small group, the pre-service teachers continue to teach a whole class. In addition, teaching a whole lesson can be a useful option in teacher training institute. Therefore, it can be concluded that microteaching is a media for pre-service teachers to learn how to teach by practicing their teaching skills in which other peers have a role of students in a classroom, and they give feedback to improve the teaching quality (Sihite et al., 2024).

Microteaching course intends to equip prospective teachers before they really go to school to have teaching internship. Microteaching includes preparing and presenting a brief lesson to peers in the classroom (Enama, 2021) so that these pre-service teachers gain experience of teaching in real classroom. In addition, the purpose of Microteaching is to prepare the pre-service teachers with basic teaching skills to deal with various problems during the actual teaching and learning process in the classroom by applying knowledge, teaching skills that have been learned in microteaching learning.

In general, Microteaching course consists of pre-observation, observation, note-taking, examination technique, tape watching, and self-assessment (Majoni, 2017). Parts of the lesson included warming, reviewing, and developing relationships, situational presentation, modeling, introduction of classroom applications. Richard (2021) asserted that Microteaching work best when they are conducted frequently.

Microteaching can give advantages to build pre-service teachers' competencies, and it is regarded important for the pre-service teachers prior to their teaching internship program in real

schools. In Microteaching, pre-service teachers will find opportunities to develop pedagogical skills such as making good lesson plan, attracting learners' interests, lesson guiding and class evaluation. In the learning cycle, pre-service teachers can build their expertise in feedback and assessment and evaluation and, in turn, by integrating their colleagues, find a way to interpret and compare various teaching strategies. Reddy (2017) suggests that Microteaching is a program for pre-service teachers to develop their teaching pedagogical competence. He mentions several benefits of Microteaching course such as follows:

Lesson planning is one of the most important skills that must be owned by a teacher. Microteaching course helps pre-service teachers to prepare a systematic lesson plan within a given content.

Microteaching course helps in mastering teaching strategies and skills like lecturing, questioning, probing, and initiating discussion. Furthermore, it also helps in developing a separate teaching style. It is clearly stated that there are many benefits or advantages of Microteaching course for pre-service teachers, especially when it is well planned and conducted. It is one of the best programs to produce effective teachers and needs to be upheld and properly maintained and developed to get full benefits.

In another study, Reddy (2019) also mentions some benefits of microteaching. First, it can help pre-service teachers to develop specific teaching skills and competencies because it employs real teaching situation so that pre-service teachers can understand more and modify teacher behaviors which is important in classroom teaching. Second, microteaching increases the confidence of trainee teacher as it enables projection of model instructional skills. Third, microteaching provides expert supervision and constructive feedback, and it is also provided for repeated practice without adverse consequences to the trainee teacher or his/her students so that it can reduce the complexity of teaching process as it is a scaled down teaching. Fourth, micro teaching helps pre-service teachers to get deeper knowledge about the art of teaching, and it caters for individual differences of prospective teachers in their training. Fifth, there is facility of re-planning, re-teaching and re-evaluation of teaching practice. Sixth, microteaching puts the pre-service teachers under control so that all the faults are observed.

Based on the discussion above, it can be implied that Microteaching can help pre-service teachers develop their pedagogical skill in context

of the ability to make lesson plan, and guiding learning activities.

However, there are some challenges faced by pre-service teachers during Microteaching course (Sele & Sila, 2022). The first problem is related to their teaching preparation. Before conducting teaching practice, they must prepare a lesson plan. Hence, they have some difficulties in choosing an appropriate teaching strategy and how to facilitate students' learning evaluation. Therefore, they need guidance from their lecturer. The second challenge is the classroom management. During teaching practice, there are activities that are not in accordance with the lesson plans that they have already prepared, and it is sometimes due to lack of time management. Pre-service teachers also feel lack of confidence so that they got stuck when they were practicing their teaching in front of classroom. They make some mistakes as the teaching and learning activity cannot run smoothly. In addition, pre-service teachers are struggling to make the students participate in class activity, and they cannot analyze students' characteristics. These problems, indeed, are connected to pedagogical competencies.

Research about Microteaching in connection to the improvement of teacher competencies have been conducted by previous researchers. The first example is that of research conducted by Yan and He (2017) which entitled "Pair microteaching: an unrealistic pedagogy in pre-service methodology courses?". There are four research questions in this study, namely, (1) From the pre-service teachers' perspective, is pair microteaching a beneficial professional learning experience for pre-service teachers? (2) What are the benefits drawn from the experience? (3) Is pair microteaching a realistic practice in teacher education methodology course? (4) What limitations should be addressed in the process? This study was conducted in teacher education institution in China with 30 EFL pre-service teachers of education faculty as the participants. The researcher used qualitative approach by conducting observation, group discussion, and document analysis. The findings showed that microteaching had good effects to pre-service teachers' pedagogical skill. After joining the microteaching class for eight weeks, the participants became more aware in teachers' role by considering students' characteristics and needs so that they were able to choose appropriate teaching activities. The research showed that the participants could improve their pedagogical skills because microteaching class gave them whole experiences, such as preparations before they

conducted teaching practices by making good lesson plan and prepared the evaluation tools. During microteaching class, their lecturer gathered a group of first year students to be their audience. Thus, it gave the pre-service teachers a real teaching experience.

The second study conducted by Murtafiah and Lukitasari (2019) was entitled "Developing pedagogical content knowledge of mathematics pre-service teachers through microteaching lesson study". The purpose of this study was to investigate pedagogical content knowledge of mathematics pre-service teachers. This study was conducted in Universitas PGRI Madiun with Mathematic pre-service teachers as the participants. The researchers used qualitative methods by conducting observation, unstructured interviews, and documentation. The result of this study indicated some improvement in pre-service teacher skills such as teaching practices, content knowledge and pedagogical skills, clarity of learning scenarios, the ability to use learning media, and the ability to use appropriateness of assessment techniques. The researchers found that before the participants joined microteaching class, most of them still lacked in content knowledge such as demands of algebra operating procedures, and the concepts of logarithmic numbers. Also, they were still lack in designing lesson plan and conducting evaluation of the class. However, after they joined microteaching class, the participants showed improvement in concept mastery and material understanding from average to good. There was also improvement in making lesson plan and pre-learning activities. The pedagogical skill such as clarity of learning scenario, the ability to use learning media, and the ability to choose the appropriate evaluation techniques with learning objectives also increased after they joined microteaching class.

The study related to Microteaching course in improving pre-service teachers' pedagogical competencies have been well investigated by the researchers. However, the aspects of which pedagogical competencies can be improved during Microteaching course has not yet been widely investigated. Regarding the importance of these issues, it is then very interesting to conduct research focusing on how Microteaching course is potential to assist pre-service teachers' pedagogical skills and explore the pedagogical aspects that can be improved through Microteaching course. This study is an attempt to bridge the gap.

METHOD

The purpose of this research is to explore how Microteaching course can help pre-service teachers build their pedagogical competences and the pedagogical aspects that can be improved. Qualitative approach was applied for this study to find out the answers. Creswell and Poth (2016) asserted that qualitative approach is conducted to empower participants by providing them with the opportunity to share their stories and have their voices heard. In addition, descriptive qualitative research design was adopted in the study because the researchers needed the information from the participants' experiences in doing microteaching as a part of their teaching and learning process.

This research was conducted at English Language Education Department (ELED) of a private university in Central Java. This setting was chosen because this institution obtained 'A' accreditation, and it had Microteaching course offered to the students. Finally, the researchers had access to this institution so that the process of collecting data which lasted from March – April 2021 could be carried out smoothly.

Using in-depth interviews to collect the data, six participants were involved. These participants were pre-service teachers who had taken Microteaching course at English Language Education Department (ELED) of a private university in Central Java. These pre-service teachers were recruited as the participants based on convenient sampling, meaning that they were selected as the participants due to their availability time and voluntary commitment. Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad (2012) mentioned that Convenience sampling is non-random sampling in which the participants are chosen based on practical factors like living close by, being available at a specific time, being easily accessible, or being willing to participate.

In presenting the findings, the researchers used pseudonyms such as Mulan, Sunny, Tiffany, Maya, Lia, and Fina to preserve the participants' anonymity (Itzik & Walsh, 2023). Finally, member checking was carried out to ensure the trustworthiness of data (Birt et al., 2016), and the result of the member checking was in line with the participants' agreement, and no further interviews were needed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The in-depth interviews conducted with the participants have been successful in answering two research questions. Regarding the first research question, the findings reveal that

Microteaching course supports pre-service teachers build their pedagogical competences in that 1) it facilitates pre-service teachers to design lesson plan, 2) it provides pre-service teachers with teaching practice experiences, and 3) it gives opportunities for pre-service teachers to evaluate their teaching practices.

Also, in relation to second research question, Microteaching course enables the pre-service teachers to build their pedagogical competencies aspects, such as 1) identify students' characteristics, 2) carry out reflective practice, 3) master learning theory, 4) develop students' potentials, 5) build communication skills, and 6) carry out assessment and evaluation. In an attempt to focus on comprehensive discussions, the findings and the discussions are analyzed separately.

How microteaching build pre-service teachers' pedagogical competences

It facilitates pre-service teachers to design lesson plan. Microteaching course can build pre-service teachers' pedagogical competence because these pre-service teachers are required to make lesson plan prior to teaching practices. Based on the interview, most of the participants state that they must prepare their teaching practices by making lesson plan.

One of the participants, Lia said,

"In the beginning of microteaching class, we learn about how to make a lesson plan".

Another participant, Mulan continued,

"during microteaching class, we are given a task to make lesson plans and then we discussed it with our lecturer and revised it"

Similarly, Fina said that she should make more than one set of lesson plans,

"before conducting teaching practice, we must make lesson plans, and we make three or two types of lesson plan".

These statements show that Microteaching course has given opportunities for the participants to sharpen their pedagogical competence by designing a lesson in which they must follow the instruction from the lecturer comprehensively. Tiffany shared the steps when making lesson plan such as:

"The lecturer gives us the sample of lesson plan and then we should make the lesson plan

according to the sample given by the teacher. After that, we have a consultation with our lecturer about the lesson plan that we have made and then revised it. Finally, we conduct a teaching practice according to our lesson plan”.

This statement shows that several activities are carried out by the participants when making lesson plans, such as 1) study the lesson plan samples from the lecturers, 2) create their own lesson plan, 3) consult their lesson plans with the lecturer, 4) revise their lesson plans, and implement their lesson plan in teaching practice. These processes of making lesson plans have gradually equipped the pre-service teachers in Microteaching course with better pedagogical competence.

It provides pre-service teachers with teaching practice experiences. Based on the interview, all of participants are on agreement that Microteaching course gives them teaching experiences. Mulan, Sunny, Tiffany, Maya, Lia, and Fina share almost similar statement. Mulan said,

“...I got many experiences in teaching practices from microteaching class”.

Sunny added,

“Microteaching helps us to have many teaching practices so that we can improve our teaching performance. If we don’t join microteaching class, maybe we can’t have those experience”.

Similarly, Tiffany stated,

“The thing that I get from microteaching class is the teaching experience”.

Interestingly, due to COVID-19 pandemic, teaching practice was not only done in conventional classes, but also in virtual classes. Maya and Fina share almost similar experience, in which Maya stated,

“...we have a project to conduct teaching practices in campus with junior and senior high school students. But, due to COVID19 pandemic, the teaching practices was conducted with recorded videos with only two students as the participants”.

This excerpt is added by Fina who said,

“we have minimally three teaching practices, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic we just made microteaching video and uploaded on

YouTube and later, we submit the link to our lecturer”.

It is obvious that the Microteaching course is a very suitable means for pre-service teachers to hone their teaching skills as teaching practices become compulsory activities for all of them. Indeed, in many of Microteaching course syllabus, pre-service teachers are required to have two types of teaching practice; 1) guided teaching practice, and 2) independent teaching practice. Usually, these pre-service teaching practices are given feedback, both from the lecturer and the peers.

It gives opportunities for pre-service teachers to evaluate their teaching practices. Three participants share their opinions that during Microteaching class, the lecturer helps them to evaluate their teaching performances. Mulan said that

“every week, we present our video recording about our teaching practices. After that, our lecturer evaluates our teaching practice and give us feedback one by one”.

Furthermore, Lia added,

“The lecturer will evaluate the part [teaching practice] that we’re lacking and the part that is already good, and we can use the feedback to better our next teaching practice.”

Finally, Tiffany stated similar opinion in a more detail explanation,

“Talking about the reflection of my teaching performance, the lecturer helps me give feedback so that I can improve it [my teaching] on next teaching practice. For example, [the lecturer give feedback] whether the material I teach is in accordance with the learning outcomes or not, whether the teaching media that I use is relevant or not, or the way that I speak, whether it is clear enough to hear or it’s still too slow”.

As mentioned previously, pre-service teachers have guided teaching practice and independent teaching practice during Microteaching class in which they are given feedback regarding their performance. In guided teaching practice, usually the lecturer gives thoroughly individual feedback in the hope that the pre-service teachers can understand their strength and weaknesses and they can have better performance in independent teaching practice. In addition to individual feedback, there is also video recording display in

which the lecturer plays video recording on the pre-service teachers' teaching practice. In this occasion, the students are given the opportunity to reflect and evaluate their own teaching practices. Having assistances from the lecturer, these pre-service teachers are able to evaluate their teaching practice, especially their strengths and weaknesses.

What aspects of pedagogical competences can be developed through microteaching course.

The result of the in-depth individual interviews shows that there are six aspects of pedagogical competencies that can be developed after joining Microteaching course, such as 1) identify students' characteristics, 2) carry out reflective practice, 3) master learning theory, 4) develop students' potentials, 5) build good communication skills, and 6) carry out assessment and evaluation. The aspects mentioned above are described below.

Identify students' characteristics. Based on the interview, two participants share their opinion that they are able to identify students' characteristics after joining Microteaching course. One of the participants, Tiffany said,

"I conduct teaching practice three times; during the first and the third teaching practice, my students tend to be more silent. Because of that, I tried to use a method that can make the students to be more responsive or active during class, that is QnA. Indeed, there is a better interaction between the students and me; also, I can identify characteristic more and whether they understand the material or not".

In this context, Tiffany was finally able to identify the students' characteristics after she met them several times in her class. The first meeting with the students was not regarded successful; however, she tried different teaching approach in the next teaching practice so that she was finally able to have better teaching performance as she already had understood about the students' characteristics.

Similarly, Maya mentioned,

"during my teaching practice session, I can understand the students' characteristics. I can identify their characteristics from their attitude and the way they talk or participate in the classroom or interact with me as a teacher".

According to Indonesian Teacher pedagogical competency standards that have been regulated in the Minister of National Education Regulation No.

16 of 2007 point 1, teachers must be able to understand the characteristics of students which includes identifying students' characteristics and identifying their learning difficulties. As the statement above, Tiffany and Maya can develop their skills through their teaching practices after joining Microteaching course.

Carry out reflective practice. The interviews reveal that four participants share their experiences mentioning that they were able to reflect on their teaching practices during Microteaching course. One of the participants, Mulan mentioned,

"...[sometimes] I do not follow the lesson plan when I'm teaching because I need to make sure that the students understand about the material. So, sometimes I improvise the teaching".

She added

"...for example, when the students are sleepy, because it's in the afternoon... I still refer to lesson plan but with a little improvement. Sometimes, there are activities [in lesson plan] that I didn't use, or I added other activity to get students' interests"

Based on her statement, it can be indicated that Mulan did "reflection in action" during her teaching practice in which she adjusted the lesson plan in responding students' learning. When she realized that the students did not understand the material, or the students were sleepy, she improvised her lesson plan. In this case, Mulan has a good self-awareness about her teaching practice. Another participant, Maya said similar opinions,

"..., I feel the improvement on my skills. I know how to prepare the materials, what steps I should take and how to have good class management skill. Before I join microteaching class, I don't know what I should do or what should I prepare".

The statements above show that the participants can develop their pedagogical skill by reflecting on their teaching practices. They both know when they have to adjust their lesson plan in order maximize students' learning

Master learning theory. Based on the interview, two participants share that they can understand about learning theory after joining Microteaching course. One of the participants, Maya mentioned:

"For me, [before having teaching practice] firstly, I must prepare the material that is suitable

for the students; second, I must find the easiest teaching method so that the students could understand the material easily; third, I select teaching material related to students' daily life. And...I don't use things materials unsuitable for students such as adult romance or porn".

As previously mentioned, pre-service teachers have several teaching practices in Microteaching class. This situation has enabled them to understand more about learning theory as they must prepare material which is suitable for the students as well as deliver the material in front of the class. Likewise, Fina added similar opinions,

"I have followed the rules in teaching, starting from greetings, then asking for students' condition, reviewing previous lesson, and then moving on to the new material, after that we have questions and answers session, and in the end of the class, I gave them motivation".

In this context, Fina added detailed information regarding the process of teaching in which she designed the lesson carefully from the beginning until the end of meeting in the classroom. This teaching procedures was potential to be a problem if she did not join Microteaching class. She was able to run the class smoothly because she mastered the learning theory.

According to Indonesian Teacher pedagogical competency standards that have been regulated in the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007 point 4, teachers must be able to understand the teaching principles, developing a lesson plan component and using learning media and learning resources that are relevant to achieve learning objectives. As the finding above, the participants can understand teaching principles and develop a lesson plan also using relevant learning media.

Develop students' potentials. Based on the interview, five participants share that they can develop their pedagogical skill after joining Microteaching course. Mulan shared her experience, and said,

"I need to make the students feel comfortable. If they have problems, I will be closer to them so that they don't feel afraid to ask questions. I also encourage them to ask me questions through WhatsApp, e-mail, and other media so that I can develop their potentials".

In this context, Mulan tried to get closer to her students by offering learning assistance in case

needed. This way, she expected the students felt comfortable and they were willing to learn more so that their potentials can be developed. Similarly, Maya added:

"If there is a student who have potential, for example in reading or speaking, I will encourage this student to read the passage as class representative, ...I must keep an eye on this kind of student and find a way to encourage them to improve their potentials.

Indeed, Maya did almost similar things by focusing on potential students, and she gave extra attention to those students. By so doing, Maya has similar expectation such as Mulan; developing students' potential. Both Mulan and Maya were successful in identifying students' potential and tried to maximize their potential to achieve students' learning. Finally, Fina concluded,

"As a teacher, if there are students who lack of certain skill, for example, when student A lacks in reading skill, I encourage student A to read more, and maybe if student B finds a difficulty in reading like the pronunciation, I can teach this student B the correct pronunciation".

In Indonesia, teacher pedagogical competency standards have been regulated in the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007 point six; teachers must be able to provide various learning and encourage students to achieve optimal achievement. As stated on the finding above, it can be shown that they can identify student's potential and implement activities that can support students' potential.

Build good communication skills. Based on the interview, three participants share that they can develop their pedagogical skill after joining Microteaching course. Mulan mentioned,

"I think my skill on interaction with students' is quite good, because I try to be friendly so that I can be closer to the students and the students feel comfortable talking to me. I tell a story to get the students' interest and to develop our communication in our learning activity".

Similarly, Sunny stated,

"I'm trying to get closer with them and being their friends so that they can be more comfortable when I teach them. So, we often talk casually".

Finally, Tiffany also excerpted similar idea, and she said,

“During the first teaching practices, I can’t really build good communication because of lack of preparation, but as time goes by, because I have the teaching experience, during the second and third meeting [in Microteaching course], I can build good communication with the students.”

Indeed, the teaching practices carried out by the pre-service teachers have given opportunities for them to practice more interactions with their students. They were all aware of their position as teachers in which they always tried to build proximity with their students, and these interactions had resulted in good communication among them.

Carry out assessment and evaluation. Based on the interview, four participants share their experiences that they can develop their assessment skill after joining Microteaching course.

One of the participants, Mulan mentioned that

“I use structured scoring and portfolio. For the structured scoring, I give them an exercise after I deliver a material and I give them a project for portfolio.”

Another participant, Maya added,

“usually I give the students a task, for example I ask them to do a project like making a poem or something like that, so later I can evaluate the grammar and how far the students understand the material”.

In addition, Tiffany learned how to evaluate her students appropriately after taking Microteaching class. She said,

“Personally, I’ve understood how to conduct an assessment/evaluation. For example, when we’re learning about speaking, we must use speaking activity such as speech, ask the students to tell the story about their experience to assess/evaluate the students’. Finally, Lia also stated similar thing,

“We can conduct assessment and evaluation from the result of our teaching. So, after we deliver the material, we can give the students a question or exercise so that we can see their abilities, we can also identify their weakness so that we can help the students improve the weak area”.

The goal of this study is to investigate how Microteaching course might help pre-service teachers develop their pedagogical competencies and identify pedagogical features that can be improved. In relation to the first research question, the findings show that almost all of the participants are in agreement that Microteaching course helps them enhance their pedagogical abilities because the course facilitates them to design lesson plan, get teaching practice experiences, and evaluate their teaching practices.

This pedagogical development happens because Microteaching course is designed to equip students with teaching skills, starting from designing the lesson, delivering it in front of classroom, and evaluating it to get better performances. Reddy (2017) stated that micro-teaching class helps the pre-service teachers to prepare a systematic lesson plan within a given content. Similarly, pre-service teachers will find opportunities to develop their pedagogical competences such as making good lesson plan (Reddy, 2019) through Microteaching course. In addition to the ability of designing a lesson, the situation in which the participants were facilitated with teaching practices was in line with Yan & He (2017) who stated pre-service teachers could improve their pedagogical competences due to the opportunities of having teaching practices during Microteaching course. Finally, Reddy (2019) mentioned that Microteaching course provides expert supervision and constructive feedback so that the participants were able to reflect back on their teaching practices, and then evaluated them. In fact, in Microteaching class, there is always opportunities for pre-service teachers to conduct re-planning, re-teaching, and re-evaluation of their teaching practice. Microteaching course put the pre-service teachers under supervision so that all the progress of their teaching practices are observed.

Regarding the second research question, the participants admitted that Microteaching course enabled them to improve their pedagogical competencies aspects, such as: 1) identifying students’ characteristics, 2) carrying out reflective practice, 3) mastering learning theory, 4) developing students’ potentials, 5) building good communication skills, and 6) carrying out assessment and evaluation. These pedagogical competencies aspects are gradually improving during and upon the completion of Microteaching course, and these pedagogical aspects corroborates The Minister Regulation of Indonesia National Education, Number 16 Year

2007, concerning Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competence which mentions ten aspects of pedagogical competence, and only six were found in the study.

The phenomenon in which the participants thought Microteaching course made them able to identify students' characteristics is also in line with a previous study conducted by Yan & He (2017) who found out that pre-service teachers are more aware with their role as teachers by considering students' characteristics and needs so that they can choose an appropriate teaching activity. While delivering the lesson, the participants admitted that they also tried to reflect their teaching activity, and when they found out that the students were less attracted to the lesson, they automatically adjusted their lesson plan; either changed the activity or deleted some activities which were not suitable with the students' condition. This situation is in line with Karlström and Hamza (2019) who mention that reflection activity is commonly carried out by pre-service teachers in Microteaching class. Other pedagogical aspect improvement related to mastering learning theory and building good communication with students are indeed relevant to a study conducted by Reddy (2017) who argued that through Microteaching course, pre-service teachers mastered skills like teaching strategies lecturing, questioning, investigating, and initiating discussion as well as increased the confidence of pre-teacher as it could build communication with the students. Finally, pedagogical aspect improvement such as carrying out assessment and evaluation experienced by the participants is in line with previous study from Reddy (2019) who mentioned that pre-service teachers could build their expertise in feedback and assessment and evaluation in Microteaching course.

CONCLUSION

Indonesian teachers should perform pedagogical competence to perform qualified teaching. This competence can be trained to pre-service students through Microteaching course. This study has aimed to explore how Microteaching course build pre-service teachers' pedagogical competencies as well as investigate pedagogical aspects that can be developed by the pre-service teachers during Microteaching course.

This study shows that Microteaching course can build pre-service teachers' pedagogical competence. Thus, it can be a good consideration for teacher training institutions to provide high qualified Microteaching course. In addition, this

study shows the pedagogical aspects that can be developed through Microteaching course. Thus, the microteaching lecturer could use this study as a reference to evaluate their teaching method so that their students can maximize the advantages of Microteaching course. Finally, the researchers expect this study can be useful as a reference for pre-service teachers to be more aware about the benefit of attending Microteaching course so that they take the course seriously.

Though some new findings related to pedagogical aspects has emerged in this study; however, this study has some limitations that might affect the generalizability of the results. First, the study focused only on six participants which may not be able to represent the whole population of the participants, and the data was collected from merely one institution. Thus, future researchers who are willing to break these limitations and complete the research with more participants and more institution are greatly welcome.

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