

Investigating Media Usage of Pre-Service Teachers during Microteaching Practices in TEYL Class

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Abstract. This study was carried out to investigate how Elementary School pre-service teachers used instructional media in TEYL class. The investigation was conducted to reveal perspectives of both lecturer and pre-service teachers related to challenges in using instructional media for microteaching practices. The challenges were discussed in the light of pedagogical aspects and non-pedagogical ones. The method of this research was a case study as this research was particularly targeted for the TEYL class of Elementary Teachers Education Program at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin. The data were obtained through observations and interviews. The results of this study suggested that based on the lecturer's perspective, there were five challenges related to the use of Media in TEYL microteaching practices. These challenges were (1) the lack of understanding regarding the importance of media, (2) low English proficiency, (3) low creativity, (4) low motivation, and (5) limited time allotment. Furthermore, based on pre-service teachers' perspective, four issues related to the usage of media were found. These issues were (1) low English proficiency, (2) high cost in developing media, (3) burden from other subjects, and (4) confidence issues.

Keywords: TEYL, pre-service teachers, media, micro-teaching

1 Introduction

Teacher candidates must be aware of their responsibilities and roles later when they become real teachers. The responsibilities include how to make sure the teaching and learning process runs smoothly and the objectives of the lessons achieved. Therefore, during their education, pre-service teachers are given opportunities to train and stimulate their teaching ability through micro teaching practices. Microteaching practices are integrated as part of some classes, including Teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL). In these practices, they learn to prepare how to teach and how to handle the class well. Therefore, it is common for pre-service teachers to use various media in their micro teaching practices.

Media is the means by which teachers can give instruction and content of the lessons clearer. The use of media is crucial to help teachers deliver the material effectively. In the context of pre-service teachers' education, media usage in microteaching class is important to the development of their creativity. Muvango et.al. (2020) stated that teaching while implementing media will enhance academic performance and it is recommended for teachers to use media to enhance learning outcomes. Teachers can use many forms of media in the classroom including video, phones, computer software, television (TV), camera and projectors. Additionally, Kariadi et.al. (2021) mentioned that because of the development of smartphones, teaching medias are also developed into digital forms such as Youtube as video sources, PowerPoint as presentation tool featuring animated slideshows, and zoom as online meeting and teaching tools in pandemic era.

In STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin, TEYL class is not only offered for students of the English Language Education Study Program. It is also offered as one of the compulsory subjects for students of Elementary Teachers Education program. Elementary teacher candidates are expected to be able to

teach different subjects, including English, for their students once they become real teachers later. Thus, for students of Elementary Teachers Education, TEYL class is designed with the goal of preparing them to teach English for children. However, because these students are not specifically prepared to be English teachers and due to the low exposures of English in their daily interactions, the challenges of teaching in TEYL class are bigger.

Furthermore, the study on how pre-service teachers from Elementary Teachers Education Program prepare themselves to teach English subject is not common. Many researchers have investigated how pre-service teachers from the English Language Education Program prepared teaching English for Young Learners (Arianti, 2019; Mufidah, 2019; Sabgini & Khoiriyah, 2020; Sahardin et al., 2020) However, only few researchers have conducted similar study with pre-service teachers from Elementary Teachers Education Program as the subjects.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher believed that investigating pre-service teachers in TEYL class of Elementary Teachers Education Program was both interesting and important to be done. Thus, this research was conducted with the intention to reveal how Elementary School pre-service teachers prepared themselves to teach English, the language that was foreign to many, if not all, of them. Because there were abundant aspects to be analysed related to the topic, the researcher limited this study only to the investigation of instructional media usage by pre-service teachers in their microteaching practises during TEYL class. Furthermore, the research was designed to answer only two research questions: 1) from lecturer's perspectives, what challenges are faced by pre-service teachers in using instructional media? and 2) from pre-service teachers' perspectives, what challenges that they encounter when choosing and using instructional media in their TEYL class?

2 Method

This research was a case study because the study was only limited to TEYL class of Elementary Teachers Education at STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin. Case study, according to Cresswell (2021; 2013) is intended to obtain information of a case being the research focus in order to understand event, activity, individual, and so on. The main objective of this study was to investigate challenges affecting the use of media in microteaching practices. The investigation focused on two perspectives namely lecturer's perspectives and students' perspectives. The students in this study were pre-service teachers who were still studying at Elementary Teachers Education of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin.

The data of the research were taken from observations and interviews. The observations were conducted by the researcher herself who was assigned to teach TEYL classes. The observations were aimed to note how the pre-service teachers utilised their media in microteaching practises to conclude the challenges occurred. In other words, the observations were intended to answer the first research question related to lecturer's perspectives on media usage by pre-service teachers. Furthermore, to investigate the second research question related to the pre-service teachers' perspectives, semi-structured interviews were conducted. By investigating both perspectives, it was hoped that the results of this study would be more impactful and meaningful for both lecturer and students.

3 Findings and Discussions

3.1 Lecturer's Perspective

The lecturer's perspective was investigated to reveal problems related to the use of media in TEYL classroom. In the end, the result showed the need for improvement in training for pre-service teachers. The conclusion was drawn after analysing pedagogical and non-pedagogical challenges found in the classroom.

3.1.1 Pedagogical Challenges

This view was tightly related to internal factors causing issues in using media for microteaching practices. There were three challenges faced by students regarding their use of media in TEYL class. The three were 1) lack of understanding on the interrelations between media and objectives of the lessons, 2) low English proficiency, and 3) creativity in using various media.

3.1.1.1 Lack of Understanding on the Interrelations between Media and Objectives of the Lessons

Related to the first finding, it was found out that the pre-service teachers did not have deep understanding of the importance of using the media. They also did not have comprehensive knowledge on how to use teaching media effectively and efficiently. This fact led to a lack of understanding of interrelations between media and the objective of the lesson. It was very recommended to use media in teaching young learners to smoothen the teaching and learning activities; however, the pre-service teachers tended to use inappropriate media. Thus, the function of media to enhance the teaching and learning activities was not optimal.

Furthermore, pre-service teachers hardly recognized the connection of media and objectives. They tended to ignore that media usage should be relevant to objectives. This relevancy would enhance student's learning experience and smoothen objectives fulfilment. Thus, failure to meet the relevance would lead to ineffective teaching and learning process. In short, their understanding towards the usage of media was limited to using media as tools to deliver the material, while the goal of the lessons was sometimes neglected.

3.1.1.2 Low English Proficiency

Since the pre-service teachers in this study were from the Elementary Teachers Education Program, most of them had low level of English mastery. This became a hindrance in developing appropriate learning media. As the result, this proficiency put the pre-service teachers in a very difficult situation in which they must teach English to young learners while their own abilities were limited.

There were situations in which the pre-service teachers themselves face problems in delivering the materials as they did not master them well. In this case, the usage of media would not really help; instead, it would double their burden.

3.1.1.3 Creativity in Using Various Media

In many occasions, pre-service teachers showed their frustration and lack of creativity in using various media and integrating them into the teaching and learning process. This could be seen through monotonous and repetitive use of media. As mentioned above, the use of media supposedly enhanced teaching learning experiences, not just as a decoration and additional tool. However, many pre-service teachers failed to use different media. Instead, they used similar media repeatedly on different occasions.

Creativity of pre-service teachers were also challenged to build an interesting, effective, and engaging learning and process. The creativity of a teacher will determine the outcomes of the learning process (Artini & Padmadewi, 2021). Overused media usually occurred in TEYL microteaching classrooms, and this was the evidence of lack creativity. In other words, popular media were often used just because of their popularity, not because of their usefulness in teaching and learning process.

In addition, the way pre-service teachers delivered the material using media was also monotonous and repetitive. There was no evidence of improvisation and enhancement by the pre-service teachers. They just straightforwardly delivered the material. Hence, the use of media then became additions only.

3.1.2 Non-pedagogical Challenges

3.1.2.1 Low Motivation

TEYL was an additional subject for students of the Elementary Teachers Education Program. This point of view put pre-service teachers' motivation in a low level. The obligation to learn about TEYL only came from obtaining additional scores for their transcripts. Thus, low level of motivation then led to uninterested pre-service teachers to learn more about TEYL, let alone learning about the use of media. Pre-service teachers then did not have any further motivation to learn and search more about media to be used in the classroom. Even worse, when English itself was the subject that they were not excellent at. As a result, they just used the media for the sake of doing the task given and finishing the class.

3.1.2.2 Time allotted for Microteaching Practices

With only two credits and delivered in only one semester, time allotment for TEYL was very limited. This subject not only covered theory but also microteaching. However, the limited time allotment and large number of theories covered led to minimum time allotment for microteaching.

These problems of time allocation for microteaching made the pre-service teachers do not receive adequate experience in real-time teaching. Furthermore, another problem that occurred was lack of time management in using media by pre-service teachers. They did not know perfectly when and how to apply the media in teaching and learning process and how to use them effectively.

Limited exposure to real experience of teaching also affected pre-service teachers' skills. Lack of experience and skill made them eventually use the media simply to teach while abandoning other aspects such as target of achievement.

3.2 Pre-Service Teachers' Perspective

In this section, the researcher would like to outline the findings related to challenges faced while using media for teaching in the perspective of pre-service teachers. Like the challenges from lecturer's perspective, the challenges in pre-service teachers' perspective would also be explored based on pedagogical and non-pedagogical aspects.

3.2.1 Pedagogical Challenge

3.2.1.1 Low English Proficiency

Many pre-service teachers admitted themselves that they were low at English proficiency. This happened because they were studying at the Elementary Teachers Study Program where English was regarded as supplementary. Meanwhile, TEYL required a teacher with sufficient English proficiency. Failing to fulfil this requirement led to difficulties in preparing the material and media. Thus, the usage of media becomes limited.

The chunks of interviews below were examples of students' responses regarding their English proficiency.

TC 4:

"Saya suka bingung saat di kelas, soalnya banyak kata - kata yang kurang saya fahami. Tambah lagi saya harus ngajar yang materinya saya juga gak ngerti."

TC 11:

"Susah sekali mengajar dengan bahasa Inggris karena dari awal belajar saya tidak begitu suka pelajaran ini dan kemampuan saya terbatas sekali."

TC 15:

"Saya paling lemah dalam bahasa inggris, jadinya kaget waktu dapat mata kuliah ini yang mengharuskan saya menggunakan bahasa inggris di kelas."

Low English proficiency limited creativity and discouraged the pre-service teachers to use media in their teaching activities. Some of the pre-service teachers mentioned that they were not brave enough to use advanced media in teaching as depicted in one of pre-service teachers answer below.

TC 5:

"Bahasanya aja susah banget untuk digunakan. Saya kadang takut kalo membuat salah di kelas."

3.2.2 Non-pedagogical Challenges

3.2.2.1 Cost in Making Media

It costs a lot sometimes to construct an appropriate media for teaching. Preparing and creating a media does not only consume time but also pocket money. This becomes a burden since most of the pre-service teachers were full-time students who were still relying on their parents.

TC 19:

"Membikin media itu kadang perlu dana, saya agak mikir kalo harus keluar uang karena uang jajan saya terbatas."

TC 26:

"Membuat media itu modalnya banyak jadi mesti ada pengeluaran tambahan untuk itu."

As the result, they opted to make cost efficient media such as PowerPoint slides over again which led to limited variations of media.

3.2.2.2 Burden from Other Subjects

TEYL was only one of the compulsory subjects that teacher's candidates must take. There were many other subjects within the semester that they needed to cover. These subjects also required the pre-service teachers to do tasks and assignments which became a burden to them. They must arrange their time and consider which subject to cover first. This way, they could not give their all to TEYL only. This condition led to lack of preparation including creating and using teaching media.

Pre-service teachers' answers below outlined this finding.

TC 3:

"Di semester ini tugasnya banyak banget, ditambah lagi harus membuat materi dan media. Rasanya capek banget."

TC 18:

"Saya lebih memilih fokus ke matkul lain yang saya yakin bisa dapat nilai ok karena matkul ini saya kurang bisa bahasanya."

3.2.2.3 Confidence Issues

Teaching was a challenging process for the pre-service teachers even when they must teach in their native language, in this case Bahasa Indonesia. When they must teach in English, the burden then doubled and affected their confidence. This led to motivation and performance issues as reflected in pre-service teachers' responses below.

TC 4:

"Saya malu sama kawan-kawan karena bahasa inggris saya jelek. Takutnya nanti bakal dibully."

TC 15:

"Mengajar pakai bahasa Indonesia aja sudah susah, apalagi harus mengajar pakai Bahasa Inggris."

Confidence issues faced by pre-service teachers were linked to their low proficiency and resulted in even lower motivation.

4 Conclusion

Based on the findings, there were several conclusions to withhold for this study. Based on lecturer's perspective, there were five challenges that affect the use of Media in TEYL microteaching practices. They were lack understanding of the importance of media, low English proficiency, low creativity, low motivation, and limited time allotment. Moreover, based on pre-service teachers' perspective, four challenges related to usage of media have been found. These four challenges were low English proficiency, high cost in developing media, burden from other subjects, and confidence issues. In short, it was concluded that improvements were needed to help students maximize the use of media in their microteaching practices. The improvements should not only be directed at pedagogical aspects but also non-pedagogical aspects.

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