

BEYOND SIMULATION: UNCOVERING STUDENTS' EMOTIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN MICROTEACHING PRACTICE USING PHOTOVOICE

Karimatul Ulya¹, Dewi Puspitasari²

UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan

karimatululya@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id, dewi.puspitasari@uingusdur.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Emosi yang dirasakan siswa dalam kelas mikroteaching dieksplorasi melalui pengalaman mereka ketika praktek mengajar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Photovoice untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman dan emosi mahasiswa. Lima mahasiswi dari Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan foto-foto representasi yang diambil partisipans. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan beberapa tantangan yang dihadapi mahasiswa, seperti kesulitan mengelola atmosfer kelas, kehilangan kepercayaan diri, blanking out, kecemasan, dan manajemen waktu yang buruk. Namun, ada juga yang mengalami hal di luar dugaan, seperti partisipasi aktif dari teman-teman yang berperan sebagai siswa. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang dinamika emosional dan menekankan pentingnya pendalaman praktik dengan banyak berlatih mandiri sebelum menghadapi situasi nyata di kelas.

Kata kunci : Photovoice research, microteaching, pre-service teacher's emotion, experiences, teacher training.

ABSTRACT

The emotions felt by students in the microteaching class were explored through their experiences during teaching practice. This research used the Photovoice method to explore the students' experiences and emotions. Five female students from the English Language Education Study Program at UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan participated in this research. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and representational photos taken by the participants. The research findings revealed several challenges faced by the students, such as difficulty managing classroom atmospheres, losing self-confidence, blanking out, anxiety, and poor time management. However, some also experienced unexpected situations, such as active participation from friends acting as students. This research provides insights into the emotional dynamics and emphasizes the importance of deepening practice through extensive independent practice before facing real classroom situations.

Keywords : Photovoice research, microteaching, pre-service teacher's emotion, experiences, teacher training.

INTRODUCTION

Developing competent teachers becomes the main and paramount goal in education departments and teacher training programs (Daminov et al., 2020). Preparing to become a professional educator is not merely understanding teaching theories. Students pursuing education are required to master basic skills in teaching and classroom management (Jones, 2013; Lazarides et al., 2020).

One of the courses that facilitates students to practice teaching skills and act as teachers is the microteaching class. Park (2022) defines microteaching as a teaching practice activity carried out by preservice teachers and teacher educators before they enter into real classroom situations. In this class, students will learn and practice various teaching methods, classroom management techniques, and effective communication skills in front of the class (Sonia et al., 2023). Through this practice, students can build teaching skills, and evaluate their practice results through reflection and feedback from peers and lecturers (Bakir, 2014).

Uniquely, simulation practices often elicit different perceptions for each student (Teboli, 2020; MN, 2016; Bülent et al., 2021; Florence et al., 2012). For those who have mastered presentation skills or even have direct teaching experience, such as teaching private lessons or tutoring, this exercise may feel easier. However, for students who have never taught in real life and only rely on the experience of presenting material in front of the class, microteaching can be a distinct challenge they must face.

Previous studies have explored the benefits and challenges of microteaching practice. Permatasari (2018) mentions four challenges often faced by preservice teachers in microteaching classes, namely teaching preparation, proficiency issues, delivery methods, and student participation in class. Additionally, mental challenges related to emotions and mentality need to be faced (Dewi & Rayinda, 2023). However, limited research has explored the emotional experiences of students during microteaching practice.

To address this gap, this study aims to uncover the emotions and experiences of students during microteaching practice using the Photovoice method. Photovoice is a participatory method that combines photography with oral or written narratives to reveal the voices of participants (Wang & Burris, 1997; Evans & Rosemberg,

2016). This method was chosen to provide a deeper understanding of students' emotional dynamics and emphasize the importance of extensive independent practice before facing real classroom situations.

The research questions guiding this study are: What emotions do students experience as a pre-service teacher during microteaching practice?; and what challenges do they face?

This study employed a qualitative approach, collecting data through semi-structured interviews and representational photos taken by student participants. The data was analyzed using visual discourse analysis, linking the photos to the participants' narratives. The data in this paper is obtained from interviews with 5 female students taking the microteaching class and photos taken as representations of the students' experiences and feelings. The purpose of this writing is to understand the students' feelings during teaching practice in the microteaching class as well as to provide an overview for readers and younger students who have not taken the course, so they can prepare thoroughly.

It is hoped that this paper can contribute to the world of education, especially for pre-service teachers or prospective educators. Thus, the data obtained can help prospective teachers manage their feelings and create a positive learning environment for students when they go directly into the real situation.

DISCUSSION

This photovoice-based research was conducted to deeply explore participants' experiences and emotions when practicing in the microteaching class. The analysis of the photos and narratives provided by the participants revealed several key themes related to the challenges they faced and their emotional journeys during the practice sessions.



Figure 1. Participant No. 2

“This blank white paper is empty, there is only book lines. There is a lot of space to write something, but this blank paper is like me when I did microteaching practice. Although I had prepared by practicing a lot, when I went up to do the practice teaching, I felt a different atmosphere in my teaching session. Suddenly my self-confidence disappeared. I forgot the order of the material and my mind suddenly went blank, confused about where to start. The expectation and reality became so far apart.”

Based on the reflection from participant number two, she felt difficulty in handling the different atmosphere. The atmosphere referred to here is the quiet classroom atmosphere where the students acting as pupils were less participatory.

In a study conducted by Medaille & Usinger (2019), they revealed that a quiet and rigid classroom atmosphere can hinder the learning process. When students feel awkward or uncomfortable, they tend to not be actively involved in teaching and learning activities. To break the ice in a quiet classroom, teachers can use more casual and less formal language (Prihandini et al., 2022). By creating a more relaxed environment through dialogue selection, students will feel freer to participate and express their ideas (Hennessy et al., 2023).

Additionally, she mentioned that her self-confidence diminished. A lack of teacher self-confidence in teaching can affect their performance in the classroom (Mavuru & Pila, 2021). Teachers who lack confidence tend to exhibit defensive attitudes, lose control of the class, and are less able to create a conducive learning environment. This can hinder students' learning process and cause them to lose interest, resulting in the class becoming passive as she described previously (Harlen & Holroyd, 1997; Martinez & Giner, 2023).

Furthermore, the participant had difficulty explaining the material due to blanking out. When someone experiences a blank condition or loses concentration at crucial moments, everything that was neatly arranged becomes disrupted (Toshikazu et al., 2019). Judging from this participant's reflection, blanking out can occur due to stress factors because her expectations of the class were opposite. It could also happen because she was too fixated on what she had memorized during practice, so when she forgot to say one sentence, the following sentences became blurred (Anastasia & Alexandra, 2010). Paharudin (2020) explains that the way to overcome this problem is for teachers to learn to manage their emotions and

concentration, as well as prepare materials by focusing on the main points rather than memorization.



Figure 2. Partisipant No. 4

"In my opinion, this photo represents me when I went up to do my microteaching practice. At first, I thought my friends who were observing would not respond and the class would be monotonous, but it turned out they appreciated my practice by actively responding from the start, so the class atmosphere was quite lively. Even more unexpectedly, I even forgot the point of taking attendance of the students."

Participant number 4 experienced an unexpected situation during microteaching practice. Initially, she expected that her friends who were observing would not respond, so the classroom atmosphere would seem monotonous. However, in reality, they gave appreciation by actively responding from the beginning, creating a lively classroom atmosphere.

Student involvement is indeed important in creating a good classroom atmosphere. As described by the participant, when students are actively involved by responding and participating, this can help break the ice in a classroom atmosphere that was initially expected to be monotonous. Not only that, active student participation can also increase the teacher's confidence when delivering the material (Tambak & Sukenti, 2024). Another study by Hennessy et al. (2023) also emphasizes that high student involvement can support the creation of a more conducive and effective learning environment.

However, the importance of student participation is sometimes still not realized by novice pre-service teachers. As experienced by participant number 4, she had low expectations for the response from her friends who were acting as students. In fact, in a study by Bülent et al. (2021), one of the factors that influence the success of microteaching practice is the ability of pre-service teachers to facilitate the involvement and participation of "students". Therefore, it is important

for pre-service teachers to develop strategies that can increase student participation, such as using good questioning techniques, providing positive reinforcement, and creating interactive and interesting learning activities (Florence et al., 2012; MN, 2016).



Figure 3. Partisipant No. 1

"This photo is like my feelings when doing teaching practice in the microteaching class. These tangled ropes depict my chaotic thoughts during the microteaching practice. I felt very nervous and worried about how my presentation would be evaluated by the lecturer and friends. That worry made me get caught up like those ropes, causing me to stumble when explaining the material and repeat unnecessary sentences. Whereas when practicing at home, everything went smoothly and was structured according to plan, but the actual practice was beyond expectations, like ropes that were once neat becoming tangled."

Participant number 1 described her feelings during microteaching practice as tangled ropes. The tangled ropes represented her chaotic thoughts during the practice. She felt very nervous and worried about how her presentation would be evaluated by the lecturer and friends. That worry made her get caught up like those ropes, causing her to stumble when explaining the material and repeat unnecessary sentences.

The feeling of nervousness and anxiety experienced by this participant is in line with previous research findings. Atzeni et al. (2024) in their study stated that negative thoughts and excessive worries can contribute to the emergence of anxiety when giving presentations or teaching. This is in line with what the participant expressed, where the worry of being evaluated by lecturers and friends made her feel nervous and anxious during teaching practice.

Furthermore, the participant's lack of fluency in teaching and the unnecessary repetition of sentences is also an impact of anxiety. Yaztappéh et al. (2024) believe that one of the symptoms of anxiety in public speaking is the unnecessary repetition

of words or sentences (stuttering). This is caused by a lack of self-confidence and excessive anxiety.

This finding underlines the importance of emotion management for pre-service teachers. As stated by Paharudin (2020), to overcome problems such as blanking out or stuttering, teachers need to learn to manage their emotions and concentration, as well as prepare materials by focusing on the main points rather than memorization. In addition, other strategies such as regular presentation practice, using relaxation techniques, and building self-confidence can also help reduce anxiety when teaching (Adrian et al., 2013; Toshikazu et al., 2019).

By managing emotions and preparing themselves well, pre-service teachers can reduce the negative impact of excessive thoughts and worries, so that they can give their best performance during teaching practice and create a conducive learning environment for students.



Figure 4. Partisipant No. 3

"This photo describes me when I was practicing Microteaching. We were only given 10 minutes which is very limited time. Every second passed so quickly. Because of that time constraint, I felt nervous and tense. I had difficulty adjusting to the time and was afraid of going over the limit. As a result, my practice did not meet expectations and there was not enough time to deliver the next materials."

Participant number 3 described her experience when practicing teaching in the microteaching class. The time given was only 10 minutes, which was a very limited duration. Every second passed so quickly. Because of that time constraint, she felt nervous and tense. She had difficulty adjusting to the available time and was afraid of going over the set time limit.

The challenge of managing time well, especially when limited by a short duration, is indeed often experienced by novice teachers. As stated by Madaminjonovna & Bahiru (2024), time is very important and must be utilized as well as possible so that the target material can be delivered according to the scheduled time. Another study by Jones (2013) also emphasizes that time

management ability is one of the basic skills that must be mastered by pre-service teachers.

To avoid a similar case experienced by participant 3, novice pre-service teachers must prepare a detailed lesson plan rundown, including allocating time for question and answer sessions and small talk. However, teachers must also be careful not to get too carried away with small talk or jokes in order to break the ice in the classroom, as this can break their focus and become the main factor causing the class to exceed the time limit.

In addition, pre-service teachers can also apply other strategies to manage time more effectively. For example, by practicing time management during independent practice, using a time reminder (timer) when teaching, or even practicing speaking skills and explaining concisely but clearly (Lazarides et al., 2020). The ability to manage time well is not only important for delivering material effectively, but can also help reduce stress and anxiety for teachers when teaching.



Figure 5. Partisipant No. 5

"I was nervous because I was in the first group and the first person to do the Microteaching practice. As a result, I didn't have much information on how to do it. Even though I had practiced, my self-confidence seemed to shrink and my mind froze as soon as the practice started. My message to other friends who haven't practiced yet is try to stay calm and let the flow go like a river, no need to panic excessively or be too rigid in teaching."

Participant number 5 experienced nervousness because she was in the first group and the first person to do the microteaching practice. As a result, she felt she didn't have much information on how to do it. Even though she had practiced, her self-confidence seemed to diminish and her mind froze as soon as the practice started.

The situation experienced by this participant shows the importance of preparation and information sources for pre-service teachers before practicing

teaching. As mentioned by Zou et al. (2024), a teacher must have great motivation before teaching. This motivation not only comes from the desire to give the best to students, but also from the willingness to keep learning and developing as an educator.

In addition, pre-service teachers should not only rely on direct practice experience, but must also seek inspiration from various other sources (Bönke et al., 2024). For example, they can take information from observing lecturers on campus when explaining material. By observing the teaching process from professionals, we can understand and adopt the best system to apply when teaching later.

The case experienced by participant number 5 is almost similar to the statements of other participants, where teacher self-confidence and performance are closely related. When someone feels anxious, as depicted by diminishing self-confidence and a frozen mind, this can hinder their ability to teach well (Atzeni et al., 2024; Adrian et al., 2013).

Therefore, this participant gives a message to other friends who have not yet practiced teaching to remain calm and go with the natural flow. This is because one way to overcome anxiety is to remain calm and follow the existing flow to avoid excessive panic (Yanhui et al., 2020). In addition, regular independent practice can also help increase self-confidence and reduce anxiety during teaching practice (Teboli, 2020; Florence et al., 2012).

CONCLUSION

This photovoice-based research aimed to uncover the emotions and experiences of student teachers during microteaching practice. The findings revealed several key challenges faced by the participants, including difficulty managing classroom atmospheres, lack of self-confidence, experiencing blanking out, difficulty managing time, and anxiety. These challenges stemmed from factors such as quiet and unresponsive classrooms, negative thoughts, excessive worries, and limited preparation. The emotional dynamics uncovered in this study align with previous research highlighting the impact of emotions on teaching performance and the importance of emotion management for educators. To address these challenges, the research suggests that pre-service teachers should focus on creating relaxed and

interactive learning environments, developing effective emotion regulation strategies, preparing lesson plans meticulously, and seeking inspiration from professional teachers. Regular independent practice, using techniques like relaxation exercises and building self-confidence, can also help alleviate anxiety during teaching. Overall, this study emphasizes the need for comprehensive preparation, both in terms of teaching skills and emotional readiness, to ensure optimal performance and create conducive learning experiences for students. While this research provides valuable insights, it is limited by the small sample size of five female participants. Future studies could involve a larger and more diverse group of participants to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, further research could explore specific strategies and interventions to support pre-service teachers in overcoming the emotional and practical challenges identified in this study, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective teacher training programs.

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