Peer and Real Student Microteaching: The EFL Student Teachers' Perception

Rismiyanto and Fitri Budi Suryani

Universitas Muria Kudus

Keywords: Microteaching, Peer, Real Student, EFL Student Teachers.

Abstract: Microteaching is characterized by student teachers practicing teaching in front of small group of their peers in a shortened length of time. The appearance of peers to act as students might play two contradictory roles. The peers can support microteaching for they play a role as students who respond to the student teachers' teaching practice and thus provide the student teachers with classroom situation. However, the kind of respond that is often unnatural might disadvantage student teachers since they do not get the real classroom situation. This study aims to explore the perception of the EFL student teachers on peer and real-student microteaching. Real students refer to the students of high school who are willing to participate in microteaching as students. The instrument used was closed-ended questionnaire administered to twenty-five EFL student teachers at the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University. The result reveals that the EFL student teachers perceive real student microteaching more naturally challenging teaching experience than peer microteaching as real-student microteaching enabled the EFL student teachers to make their maximum effort in practicing teaching.

1 INTRODUCTION

Microteaching is a kind of teaching practicum for student teachers. It is characterized by student teachers practicing teaching in front of the small group of their peers in a shortened length of time. The number of peers usually ranges from ten to fifteen, while the length of time is around twenty to thirty minutes.

In microteaching, one student teacher will practice teaching and their peers will act as the students. The appearance of the peers to act as students might play two contradictory roles. The peers can support microteaching for they play a role as students who respond to the student teachers' teaching practice and thus provide the student teachers with classroom-like situation. However, the kind of respond that is often unnatural might disadvantage student teachers since they do not get the real classroom situation. Their peers who pretend to be students might sometimes end up with joking or teasing their peer practising teaching.

Therefore, microteaching sometimes involves real students of secondary school to participate as students of the student teacher in the course. Real students of secondary school can act naturally as students during teaching practice in student teachers'

classroom. Unlike the student teachers' peers, real students do not need to pretend as students since they are the real students. Hence, it is expected that they are able to provide the real classroom situation to be dealt with by student teachers in their teaching practice. It is thus expected that student teachers can benefit their teaching practice.

The participation of real students as students for EFL student teachers in microteaching course has been conducted for years at the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University. The EFL student teachers enrolling in microteaching course are required to have teaching practice three times during the course, in which they teach in front of their peers twice and in front of real students once. This study aims to explore the perception of the EFL student teachers on peer and real-student microteaching. It seeks to know how EFL student teachers perceive the participation of their peers and real students as students during their teaching practice in microteaching course.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Brown (1984) asserts that teaching practicum is a

very complex activity as the student teacher has a twofold intention, i.e., that her/his students learn while she/he learns to teach. Teaching practicum can be differentiated based on the number of students taught involved and the place of the teaching (Brown, 1984). The first type of teaching practicum is what the so-called microteaching that is teaching the small group of the student teacher's peers or K-12 students in the student teacher's classroom. Meanwhile, the second type is known as school experience or internship program in which the student teacher teaches real students (K-12 students) in their schools.

Microteaching is firstly developed at Stanford University as a teacher training technique. The basic principle of microteaching is reducing the length of lesson and the number of students. In microteaching, the lesson is reduced shorter than the average time of a lesson. If the average length of a lesson is 100 minutes, microteaching takes only around 30 minutes. In term of the number of students, a common lesson usually has around 30-40 students, but microteaching has only 10-15 students. That's why Seidman (1968) sees microteaching as a scaled-down version of real world. This is in line with Love in Rokhayani (2017) who notes that in microteaching, student teachers take on a role in a school setting. It is also viewed as simulated encounter designed and teaching laboratory (Ghafoor et al., 2012). Meanwhile, Ghanaguru (2017) claim microteaching as "a pre-induction, booster or reinforcement involving hands-on and minds-on experiences".

Mergler and Tangen (2010) assert that microteaching is an activity where preservice teachers can engange in vicarious and mastery learning experiences since it comprises of planning a lesson and delivering it to their peers in class. Thus, microteaching, according to Saban and Coklar (2013), "can provide the possibility of forming a trial situation for teaching activities" and improve preservice teachers' view on teaching.

3 METHODS

Based on the aim of the research, this study is a descriptive one. The participants were the sixth semester EFL student teachers at English Education Department of Muria Kudus University who enrolled in microteaching course. The number of the participants was twenty-five student teachers. They were required to have teaching practices in microteaching course three times, in which they had

to teach in front of their peers twice and in front of real students once.

The instrument used to collect the data was closed-ended questionnaire adapted from Ogeyik (2009). The number of questions in the questionnaire is twenty eight. There are five criteria of the questionnaires, namely planning and preparation, lesson presentation, assessing pupil's progress, classroom management, and microteaching in general. To answer the questions, the EFL student teachers must choose from the five options presented following the Likert scale. The options range from (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neutral, to (2) disagree, and (1) strongly disagree. The questionnaire was administered to the EFL student teachers at the end of microteaching course.

Table 1: The Result of the Closed-Ended Questionnaires.

Item	Mean of Peer MT	SD of Peer MT	Mean of Real Stdnt MT	SD of Real Stdnt MT
1	3.76	.88	4.44	.65
2	3.96	.79	4.36	.64
3	3.92	.76	4.16	.69
4	3.72	.84	4.08	.81
5	4.16	.55	4.44	.58
6	4.36	.64	4.60	.58
7	4.60	.50	5.88	5.67
8	3.36	.95	4.20	.87
9	3.56	.92	4.12	.88
10	3.52	.92	3.76	.93
11	2.76	.88	4.04	3.11
12	3.00	.96	3.68	.98
13	3.56	.87	3.56	.87
14	3.36	1.08	3.96	.93
15	3.80	.82	4.04	.98
16	3.84	.55	3.92	.70
17	3.76	.59	3.92	.81
18	4.08	.49	4.04	.68
19	3.88	.60	4.12	.60
20	3.88	.44	4.04	.61
21	3.64	.81	3.60	.76
22	3.60	.76	3.40	.76
23	3.80	.41	3.72	.54
24	3.64	.76	3.68	.56
25	3.88	.67	3.84	.62
26	3.68	.56	3.68	.56
27	4.08	.70	4.12	.60
28	4.08	.57	4.04	.61

The data from the closed-ended questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively by calculating the mean and standard deviation of every item in the questionnaire. The result was then interpreted qualitatively to capture the perceptions of the EFL student teachers toward the peer and real students' microteaching.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study summarized from the questionnaires given to the EFL student teachers are presented in the table 1.

Based on the table 1, the EFL student teachers perceive that real students microteaching prepare them for real teaching better than peer microteaching. It can be seen from the mean of the questionnaire item number 1 in which the real student microteaching resulted in 4.44, whereas peer microteaching 3.76. This shows that the EFL student teachers view teaching real students and teaching their peers differently that made them prepare more for teaching real students. Questionnaire items number 4 and 5 indicate that the EFL student teachers prepare their lesson plan as well as teaching material for real students better than for peer students. It can be because they feel more challenged and enthusiastic with real students as shown in questionnaire items number 8 and 9. The means of real student microteaching is higher than those of peer microteaching.

Dealing with lesson presentation, the EFL student teachers claim that they can do microteaching more naturally with real students. This can be seen from the mean of real students microteaching in questionnaire item number 10 which is bigger than the mean of peer microteaching. In addition, the EFL student teachers think that they can comprehend teaching methods in a better way when they taught real students as the questionnaire item number 3 shows the mean of real student microteaching is higher than that of peer student. However, in terms of doing apperception and mastering teaching skills and material, the EFL student teachers do not find them quite different when they taught their peers or real students. This phenomenon is also found out when the EFL student teachers performed classroom language. They see it quite similar either in peer microteaching or real students microteaching as shown in questionnaire item number 25. It is when they need to relate the material with relevant knowledge and reality as well as when they deliver the material indicated in questionnaire items number 19 and 20, they perceive that real students microteaching enabled them to do it better than peer microteaching.

The EFL student teachers seem to have difficulty in encouraging real students to ask or give comments. They can do better with peer students as questionnaire item number 23 shows that the mean of peer microteaching is higher than that of real student microteaching. Nevertheless, the EFL student teachers responded the question and comments of real students better than peer students indicated in the result of the means of questionnaire item number 24. They also state that they can reinforce real students better than their peers. Regarding setting interesting teaching circumstances, the EFL student teachers find it the same for both their peers and real students. This can be seen from the same mean of questionnaire item number 26, that is 3.68.

In managing the classroom, the EFL student teachers perceive that they can manage the class with peer's students better than with real students. Furthermore, they can allocate time with peer students better as well. The questionnaire items number 22 and 23 display that the means of peer microteaching are bigger than those of real student microteaching. The same phenomenon is found in concluding and reflecting the material with students. The EFL student teachers note that they can do it better with their peers than with real students.

In general, the EFL student teachers perceive that real student microteaching is more difficult and causes more anxiety compared with peer microteaching as shown in the mean results of questionnaire items number 11 and 12. Besides, real student microteaching is more money consuming and time limited than peer microteaching. However, in term of causing criticism from their peers, the EFL student teachers do not find difference between peer microteaching and real student microteaching.

Despite the difficulty the EFL student teachers face with real students, they admit that teaching real students is more interesting and knowledgeable than teaching their peers indicated in questionnaire item number 2. They also acknowledge that real student microteaching gives them more benefits compared to peer microteaching. One of the benefits is that they can learn from observing their friend's teaching practice as shown in questionnaire item number 7, in which the mean of real student microteaching is 5.88, while peer microteaching is 4.60.

The results of the study reveal that the EFL student teachers work better with peer and real students in different areas. In planning and preparation, they view real students enable them to prepare the lesson plan and material better than their peers. This might be caused by their anxiety when teaching real students that they are not familiar with before. When teaching their peers, the EFL student teachers are familiar enough and so, it did not cause much anxiety for them. Besides, dealing with real students for the first time made the EFL student teachers feel challenged and enthusiastic which resulted in their preparing the lesson more seriously.

In conducting the lesson, the EFL student teachers

find out that they can conduct the teaching practice more naturally with real students than with their peers. This must be obvious since real students provide them with classroom-like situation where the students act naturally as students. Therefore, the EFL student teachers think that they can comprehend the teaching methods and deliver the material better when having teaching practice with real students. Nonetheless, in perceiving doing apperception, mastering teaching skills and performing classroom language, the EFL student teachers have similar perception for both peers and real students.

The EFL student teachers encountered difficulty when they had to encourage real students to ask and give comment. It is easier to do it with their peers than with real students as they use the same level of language when communicating with their peers. With real students, they must delve into the real students' world that not all EFL student teachers are capable of doing so. As a result, they found it more difficult in making real students to ask and give comment during the teaching practice. This phenomenon is quite different from responding questions and comments as well as in reinforcing. The EFL student teachers can perform better in those areas with real students compared with their peers. However, in setting interesting teaching circumstances, the EFL student teachers seem to make the same efforts when teaching both their peers and real students.

Regarding classroom management, the finding shows that the EFL student teachers can work better with their peers than with real students. They were able to manage the time better when having teaching practice with their peers. One of the reasons might be due to the nature of their peers that already know the material well so that as students, they can come up with better time management. Real students might face difficulty with the teaching material and that might take more time for them which finally result in worse time management from student teachers' point of view. In concluding and reflecting material, the EFL student teachers also acknowledge that they can do better with their peers. The distinct level of education might be the cause of it in which the peers will be able to make conclusion and reflection better and faster than real students.

The data also indicates that the EFL student teachers perceive real student microteaching is more money consuming. This is due to that they had to spend some more money given for real students as the transport fee. Actually, there is no such rule to give real students the transport fee, but the EFL student teachers were willing to do it by themselves. In addition, they see real student microteaching is more

limited in time. It is understandable and parallel with the finding of time management in which the EFL student teachers had more difficulty with real students in managing the time. The natural acts of real students cause the EFL student teachers unable to predict what response those real students give. Meanwhile, the acts of the peers can be easily predicted as they just pretend to be students. However, in general the EFL student teachers agree that working with real students is more interesting for them compared to working with their peers. They get more benefits from the natural acts of real students when they taught them during the teaching practice.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the EFL student teachers perceive real student microteaching more naturally challenging teaching experience than peer microteaching. However, in some other areas like classroom management and presenting the lesson, the EFL student teachers perform better when they practice teaching with their peers.

Based on the conclusion, some recommendations are given to microteaching instructor. It is suggested that microteaching course invite real students to be the students of the EFL student teachers for teaching practice. It will be better if the EFL student teachers can teach real students more often than their peers due to the more benefits the EFL student teachers perceive toward real student microteaching.

REFERENCES

Brown, G., 1984. *Micro-teaching: a programme of teaching skills*. Methuen, London.

Ghafoor, A., Kiani, A., Kayani, Sumaira, Kayani, Saima, 2012. 'An exploratory study of microteaching as an effective technology'. *Int. J. Bus. Soc. Sci. 3*.

Ghanaguru, S., Nair, P., Yong, C 2017. 'Teacher trainer's belief in micro teaching and lesson planningin a teacher training institution'. *Engl. Teach. 13*.

Mergler, A. G., Tangen, D 2010. *Using microteaching to enhance teacher efficacy in pre-service teachers.* Teach. Educ. 21, 199–210.

Ogeyik, M. C 2009. *Attitudes of the student teachers in English language teaching programs towards microteaching technique.* Engl. Lang. Teach. 2, 205.

Rokhayani, A., Nurcahyo, A. D., Rukmini, D., Sofwan, A 2017. 'Peer teaching as a simulation for communicative classroom English rehearsal'. *Celt J. Cult. Engl. Lang. Teach. Lit. 17, 103–116*.

Saban, A., Çoklar, A. N., 2013. 'Pre-service teachers' opinions about the micro-teaching method in teaching practise classes'. *Turk. Online J. Educ. Technol.-TOJET 12, 234–240.*

Seidman, E 1968. 'Micro-teaching in English Education: some basic questions'. *Presented at the Selected Addresses Delivered at the Conference on English Education, JSTOR, pp. 47–53.*

APPENDIX

Table 2: The Questionnaire of Student Teachers' Perception on Peer and Real Student Microteaching.

Points of Perception
1. I can use… microteaching to mentally prepare myself for real teaching
2. I think… microteaching class is interesting and knowledgeable
3. I can comprehend the teaching methods in a better way with … microteaching activities
4. I think … microteaching is efficient in producing teaching material
5. I think … microteaching activities make me learn how to prepare lesson plans
6. I think … microteaching activities are beneficial for evaluating my teaching performance
7. I can learn from observing my friends' practice in the … microteaching
8. I think I am challenged to do … microteaching
9. I think I am enthusiastic to do … microteaching
10. I can do … microteaching naturally
11. I think … microteaching is a discouraging and difficult situation
12. … microteaching can create anxiety
13. … microteaching can cause criticism by peers
14. … microteaching is money consuming process
15. I think … microteaching is time limited, so I cannot teach freely as a teacher
16. I can master over the teaching skills in …microteaching well
17. I can do apperception toward … students well
18. I can master the material of teaching in … microteaching well
19. I can relate material with relevant knowledge and reality in … microteaching well
20. I can deliver the material of teaching in … microteaching well
21. I can manage … microteaching class well
22. I can allocate time in … microteaching well
23. I can give … students to ask or give comment well
24. I can respond … students' questions and comments well
25. I can perform classroom language well in … microteaching
26. I can set the interesting teaching circumstance in … microteaching
27. I can reinforce the … students well
28. I can conclude and reflect the material of teaching together with the … students well