

Pre-Service Teacher's First-Time Experience in Lesson Planning: Exploring Their Pedagogical Content Knowledge Perspective

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Abstract

This study aims to explore pre-service teachers' first-time experience in lesson planning from their pedagogical and content knowledge perspectives. The study involved four pre-service teachers as participants in a micro-teaching class to answer two theme questions, namely pedagogic knowledge pre-service students during micro teaching practice and content knowledge pre-service students during micro teaching practice. This research used interview study as the research design. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were analyzed using thematic analysis. Pre-service teachers share experiences in implementing their pedagogical and content knowledge into teaching modules to create the effective classroom process. Lecturer's feedback and pre-service teacher reflection after micro teaching practice play a significant role in improving their teaching practices.

Keywords: Pre-Service Teachers, Lesson Planning, Pedagogical Knowledge, Content Knowledge, Micro-Teaching.

Teaching represents one of the professional skills that requires significant responsibility when implemented. Teaching skill is highly intricate, as it is closely intertwined with the quality of individuals engaged in the act of teaching. This renders the field of teacher education to be of paramount importance, particularly to cultivate educators with professional-grade teaching abilities (Cochran-Smith, 2021; Sancar, Atal, & Deryakulu, 2021). One strategy for enhancing the professional teaching abilities of these prospective educators is to engage them in straightforward teaching experiences, such as microteaching programs.

Microteaching program can be argued to be a valuable educational initiative, as it enables prospective teachers to gain a simplified representation of the intricacies of the actual teaching process in the classroom (Al Farhan, 2023; Arslan, 2021; Azrai, Rini, & Suryanda, 2020). Its simplicity stems from the fact that it only involves peers in the implementation process. It should be noted, however, that this program also places considerable pressure on pre-service teachers, requiring them to engage fully with the entire teaching process, from opening to closing the class. After all, these pressures and challenges represent an

important early stage in the development of teacher quality in the teaching profession. These simple teaching practices further offer a wealth of insights. They provide opportunities for teachers to gain understanding through lesson planning and reflection, as well as through the guidance of their peers in the process of peer assessment (Enama, 2021; Richard, 2021).

The act of lesson planning represents a pivotal component of the learning process. Nonetheless, lesson planning is also regarded by pre-service teachers as the most challenging aspect of their training (Enama, 2021; Nugraheni, 2019). This complexity becomes readily apparent when one considers the multitude of elements comprising a lesson plan, including objectives, materials, teaching modules, activities, media, and assessment techniques (Aflahah & Nadia, 2022). Furthermore, all of the aforementioned learning components must be integrated into a unified goal in order to achieve the desired learning objectives, thus ensuring that each component contributes to the overall quality of the learning.

The challenges in lesson planning extend beyond the preparation of its components to encompass the abilities that students are expected to possess in the present era. One such ability is the 4 C's, namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication (Nadia, Yansyah, & Murtiningsih, 2020; Triana, Anggraito, & Ridlo, 2020). Consequently, prospective teachers must begin to think creatively and innovatively when designing their learning activities in order to facilitate the learning experience process that they intend to share with students.

The enhancement of prospective teachers' professionalism must commence with the fundamental aspects that constitute the primary foundation for the advancement of their teaching abilities. Among these fundamental aspects are the capacity to master the material and to effectively convey it to

students. In theory, the ability to master the material is referred to as 'subject matter content knowledge' (Shulman, 1986) or what can also be referred to as 'academic content knowledge' (Gess-Newsome et al., 2019). In subsequent research, Shulman (1987) elucidated that the sources of content knowledge development encompass scholarship in content disciplines, educational materials and structures, formal educational scholarship, and wisdom in practice. Consequently, a teacher with a high level of content knowledge can demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, the learning tools and resources, the curriculum, their own research experience in the field of learning, and their ability to apply the subject matter in a variety of learning contexts.

Mastery of the material is insufficient to guarantee students' comprehension and acquisition of knowledge if the ability to teach it effectively is absent. This teaching ability, as conceptualized by Shulman (1987), is referred to as 'general pedagogical knowledge'. This includes the management and organization of a series of learning processes. In recent developments, pedagogical knowledge encompasses a range of additional abilities, including the creation of learning plans that facilitate enhanced student learning experiences (Jacob, John, & Gwany, 2020), the formulation of appropriate learning strategies and methods (Asfihana & Yansyah, 2022), the establishment of learning objectives, the identification of student characteristics and learning styles, and the structuring of learning activities (Leijen, Malva, Pedaste, & Mikser, 2022). The preceding characteristics demonstrate that pedagogical knowledge concerns the teacher's abilities to devise all educational tools and to create an environment conducive to enhancing the quality of student learning.

This study aims to specifically explore the pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge of pre-service teachers in their experience of lesson planning in the classroom. While numerous studies have addressed the

experiences, challenges, and difficulties of pre-service teachers, little have conducted in-depth investigations on their pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. Thus, this study attempts to address the research question of how pre-service teachers experience lesson planning for the first time based on their pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge.

Method

This research used interview study to explore pre-Service teachers' first-time experience in lesson planning in one of South Kalimantan private universities. Interviews comprehend the meaning people involved in education make of their experience (Seidman, 2006). The research investigated students' pedagogical and content knowledge perspective in experiencing microteaching and its challenges.

This research invited four pre-service teachers. Their participation is based on two requirements. The first requirement is that pre-service teachers were private university students. The second was that they have completed micro-teaching program.

Data was obtained through a semi-structured interview done through Zoom online application. The interview was done at two different times between the five participants. It was conducted in two languages, English, and Indonesia; it depends on which language is easier for participants. While the interview was conducted, we asked for participants' consent to record the interview and translate the result of the interview to English after transcribing it. Two main themes have become the discussion analysis, which are pedagogic knowledge and content knowledge pre-service students during micro teaching practice.

Result and Discussion

Based on the analytic result, it was found that there were two research result themes. They were Pedagogic knowledge pre-

service students during micro teaching practice and Content knowledge pre-service teacher during micro teaching practice.

Pedagogic knowledge pre-service students during micro teaching practice

Before teaching in the classroom, pre-service teachers' have been trained with various theories about the ins and outs of micro-teaching, ranging from various teaching methods to preparing lesson plans, class management, and media use in the classroom. However, all participants still mentioned feeling afraid, nervous, and anxious at the beginning of microteaching implementation; they thought that microteaching lessons were frightening and required particular attention. Additionally, the presence of peers who played the role of students in the activity increased their nervousness.

The first-time practitioners experienced micro-teaching, they felt **extremely nervous**. Previously, micro-teaching was a **very frightening course**, and **they had to go through it with great diligence**. So, they felt very nervous and afraid when presented with micro-teaching for the first time. In addition, friends who acted as students had excellent teaching skills compared to me. (AR)

Practitioners felt **very nervous** when they performed their first practice of micro-teaching, which made them make some mistakes when teaching. Previously, practitioners thought that **microteaching practice was a terrifying course and a course that students must go through seriously**. So, they felt very nervous and afraid when faced with micro-teaching for the first time. Plus, friends who played the role of student practitioners had excellent teaching skills compared to their teaching practice (AP).

Other participants also mentioned that in conducting microteaching, they felt tested in terms of their ability to communicate in front of students, albeit in a small environment. At the next meeting - after the first practice - their confidence began to grow, and they were ready to face the challenges of micro-teaching.

Micro-teaching also served as a moment for students to conquer their nervousness and learn to overcome their fears and expectations from students. Through several practices, participants finally began to feel comfortable and began to implement and handle micro-teaching skillfully.

For practitioners, the first time they experienced micro-teaching was a mixture of feelings, nervousness, tenseness, and anxiousness. This is because they can feel challenged in their teaching and **communication skills in front of students**, albeit in a smaller and more relaxed environment than teaching in front of an actual class. Occasionally, **practitioners may feel confident and ready to face this challenge, especially if they already have some teaching experience from the first meeting**. At the same time, micro-teaching is when they must conquer their nervousness and overcome their fear of being judged by their students. However, **with time and experience in their few meetings, they feel more comfortable and more confident in tackling microteaching**. (WA)

When practitioners started teaching, they were nervous because it was the first time, they started teaching students. They also felt tense, **but on the second day of teaching, they were no longer tense**; they practiced first before going to the classroom (CE).

In the end, the participants mentioned that there were many experiences and lessons learned through the implementation of Micro teaching, namely the appropriate learning methods needed, the creation of a comfortable classroom atmosphere during the learning process, the importance of brainstorming at the beginning of the lesson, and the role of learning media as one of the tools to support learning processes and the role of lesson plans as a guideline when teaching in the classroom.

... From this micro-teaching course, practitioners know that students **prefer to use learning methods through games or engaging media**. ... Teachers who have seen the shape of the class and the facilities in it can set up classroom management and utilization when making lesson plans. In addition, teachers also need to

increase their professionalism so that there are no more cases where teachers can be arbitrary with their students and various cases that tarnish the teacher's name. Practitioners can feel the usefulness of Micro Teaching courses. **Micro Teaching is a valuable provision for practitioners when teaching later**. (CE)

Another important thing in teaching is **creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere** so that students do not feel pressured when participating in activities or lessons during class. Creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere is tricky because sometimes, we experience several obstacles that cause feelings or moods that can be bad when teaching. However, that is how a professional teacher must be in teaching; we must be able to put aside personal feelings. (AP)

... As someone who was once a student who quickly bored with the class atmosphere, according to practitioners' practice, **using media is essential and helps educators during learning activities**. Media is something that can help make teaching more fun and more accessible. However, the media must also be based on the material and help learn.... However, **some moments require practitioners to think quickly about activities outside the lesson plan or teaching module arranged to make the class conducive**. Sometimes, practitioners have to **break the tension of the class with jokes that are not included in the learning flow in the lesson plan or teaching module**. Some activities must be left out and not included in teaching activities because there is not enough time, or the activity cannot be carried out because there are too few students.... In the practitioner's opinion, **brainstorming is a valuable teaching process**. In addition to acting as a trigger for material, brainstorming helps teachers break the ice in the classroom and increase student enthusiasm before engaging in core learning. (AR)

No less critical, through micro-teaching activities, students can also find out their weaknesses and strengths, making this an evaluation material for themselves in measuring what steps to take when planning the teaching process in the classroom.

...During the teaching practice process, practitioners gained insight into the **strengths and weaknesses of an educator**. Thus, they can

design more responsive and relevant teaching to learners. Afterward, seeing **learners who understand and benefit** from their teaching gives them great satisfaction. This can be a motivation booster for them (WA).

The transition from the K13 curriculum to the new emancipated curriculum requires students to learn and practice it in the micro-teaching class. The study program team has conducted many lectures to provide knowledge and an overview of the teaching modules used in emancipated curriculum learning. However, as with micro-teaching courses, anything new will confuse students and give them new experiences. Moreover, that is something natural.

Meanwhile, when making teaching modules for high school and above Practitioners certainly need help finding material that is suitable for students. When practicing teaching modules to students, the challenge is that students must be more active than practitioners. When practitioners implement it to students, the next challenge is that some students are absent, so assigning groups needs to be balanced. (CE)

... According to practitioners, writing, designing, and compiling teaching modules are **the most significant challenges and obstacles of micro-teaching**. Designing Teaching Modules is also one of the things that practitioners are **afraid of** in micro-teaching. (AP)

At the beginning of the preparation of the teaching module, students needed help in determining the learning phase and deriving learning objectives from the learning outcomes. To overcome this, participants still rely on Internet sources to support the prepared lesson plans and teaching modules.

Another obstacle that practitioners experience when compiling teaching modules is **developing CP into TP**. Supposedly, in this section, practitioners must adjust to the needs of students, and yet practitioners are still adjusting to the material that practitioners will teach. Thus, practitioners continue to use lesson plans as a reference to develop learning objectives. In addition, practitioners still rely

on references from the internet to make this teaching module. When compiling the teaching module, practitioners **needed clarification on the distribution of phases**. After practitioners re-learned, the phase is a stage found in the emancipated curriculum. (AR)

While preparing learning activities, participants also mentioned that many still find it challenging to understand and use appropriate assessments in learning. They still need clarification about determining the right assessment type in the lesson.

Practitioners also **need clarification on the elements** in the teaching module that are different from the K13 lesson plan. The teaching module must contain a profile of a Pancasila student. Practitioners think that the **profile of Pancasila students** is like that of KI, but the version has been simplified. Practitioners also need help determining the assessments they will use in class. Practitioners still need clarification about using the correct **summative and formative assessments**. Thus, practitioners only rely on their understanding during training to make teaching modules. Practitioners only understand how formative assessments are used. (AP)

Learning media is one of the learning tools that must be integrated into the teaching and learning process. The development of technology and the COVID-19 outbreak that hit in 2020 is one reason for the significant development of learning media; media is not only traditional but also in the form of technological applications whose use is also straightforward to access by teachers, lecturers, and students. Students have previously been equipped with media learning through Teaching Media and TEFL 2 courses. Some media used are Flashcards, learning videos from Youtube, audio, power points, Quizziz, and Wordsearch.

Practitioners prepared media such as **PowerPoint, learning videos**, and papers at the first meeting. For the second meeting, they prepared a PPT and paper. They prepared PPTs, pictures, paper, and speakers for the third meeting. In the fourth meeting, they prepared a PPT and paper. They prepared food media, PPT, markers, and paper

at the fifth meeting. For the fifth meeting, they prepared PPT and worksheets (WA)

During the first meeting, the media used by practitioners were **PPT and flashcards** about congratulating people because the skills used by practitioners were writing and reading skills. During the second meeting about greeting card material, practitioners used **audio listening media and PPT** because they use listening and speaking skills. (CE)

The last media that practitioners use is **wordsearch**. This media is displayed on the blackboard using a projector. Students can play while learning using this media. (AR)

In addition to **PowerPoint**, the media we use must also be able to make them enjoy following the material activities. Usually, the media I use is **Quiziz** so that they can play games while learning.... (AP)

According to participants, the media is beneficial in livening up the classroom atmosphere, making it more fun and not dull. In listening-speaking learning, media can also be used as an evaluation assessment. The media can also make students focus and pay attention when the teacher explains the material.

For students to be energized following learning activities, a teacher must be able to take the attention of a student or child so that they can **focus and pay attention** to us when we explain the material. In addition to the PowerPoint media we use, it must also make them **enjoy** following the material activities. Usually, the media that they use is Quiziz, which allows them to **play games while learning**. If we give only sheets of paper, students will usually feel bored following the learning. Therefore, creating a **fun atmosphere** is very important. (AP)

Content knowledge pre-service students during micro teaching practice

Lesson preparation through planning is one way to make the microteaching process more accessible for students. This planning process can help students deliver material efficiently and understand the challenges faced by students in the teaching and learning

process.

I honed my skills in **conveying information more clearly and effectively** through material mastery and lesson planning. Additionally, my practical teaching gave me direct experience in dealing with students and managing the class content, which **helped me understand the challenges that may occur later when I teach at school**. (WA)

The challenges and obstacles I face when doing practical teaching are designing lesson plans with learning skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) where the practice must be adjusted to the material and time specified.... **I sometimes looked for references on the internet to overcome the challenges I faced when doing practical teaching**. In addition, I also asked the lecturer during the teaching module consultation with the microteaching supervisor (AP).

Discussion

The micro-teaching program seems simple, but it still puts pressure on students in the implementation process (Al Farhan, 2023; Arslan, 2021; Azrai, Rini, & Suryanda, 2020) although one student mentioned that at the beginning, they were nervous and afraid but the nervousness would decrease in frequency in subsequent meetings. Their confidence will slowly grow, and they will be ready to face the next challenge. A lot can be learned from these simple teaching practices, both the lessons they understand through the lesson planning process and the lessons provided by their peers through the reflection and peer-assessment process (Enama, 2021; Richard, 2021). One of the participants mentioned that from this micro-teaching process, they were able to learn the various learning methods needed, the creation of a comfortable classroom atmosphere during the learning process, the importance of brainstorming at the beginning of the lesson, and the role of learning media as one of the tools to support learning processes and the role of lesson plans as a guideline when teaching in the classroom. Most importantly, students discover their strengths and weaknesses in the learning process as evaluation material in the next step.

Difficulties in compiling teaching modules are also one of the crucial points in this study. However, these difficulties can foster creativity and become an exciting challenge for students. It cannot be denied that the advancement of the information technology process has made them use the internet to find more information about teaching modules and examples. As previously mentioned, the challenges in lesson planning are not limited to the preparation of the components but also to the aspects of the abilities that students are required to have today, one of which is the ability of the 4 C's, namely Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication (Nadia, Yansyah, & Murtiningsih, 2020; Triana, Anggraito, & Ridlo, 2020). The use of teaching media is also one of the creative processes by students, and it is one of the components of learning that can help create a fun and not dull classroom atmosphere. The media can also make students focus and pay attention when the teacher explains the material.

In the end, students in micro-teaching courses can understand that a whole union is formed in the lesson or teaching and learning process in the classroom, starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation. Students can prepare by making teaching modules, implementing them in the classroom through teaching practice despite fear and nervousness at the beginning, and evaluating forms through input from lecturers and peers for further practice. This is in line with what Shulman (1987) referred to as general pedagogical knowledge, which includes managing and organizing a series of learning processes. In recent developments, pedagogical knowledge includes various other abilities, such as creating lesson plans that lead to improved student learning experiences (Jacob, John, & Gwany, 2020), formulating appropriate learning strategies and methods (Asfihana & Yansyah, 2022), formulating learning objectives, identifying student characteristics, and learning styles, and structuring learning activities (Leijen, Malva, Pedaste, & Mikser,

2022).

Conclusion

Pouring student Pedagogical and content knowledge into *Modul Ajar* is a complex process. Without a well-designed *Modul Ajar*, teachers may struggle during the teaching process. An effective lesson plan should include essential components. This study aims to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers in lesson planning during micro teaching program. Pre-service teachers share experiences in implementing their pedagogical and content knowledge into teaching modules in order to create the effective classroom process. Lecturer's feedback and pre-service teacher reflection after micro teaching practice play a significant role in improving their teaching practices. The finding of this research quietly describes pre-service teacher's pedagogical knowledge rather than content knowledge. Further research is hoped to explore more about pre-service teacher content and technology knowledge.

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