The Impact of Microteaching Practices on EFL Students' Teaching Skills and Confidence in Teaching English to Young Learners

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of microteaching practices on EFL undergraduate students' teaching skills and self-confidence in preparing to teach English to young learners (TEYL). Conducted with 12 participants enrolled in a TEYL course, the research applied a mixed-methods approach involving pre- and post-tests and thematic analysis of reflective journals. The teaching skills assessed included classroom management, instructional clarity, use of child-centered strategies, and the ability to actively engage young learners. Results showed a marked improvement in both pedagogical competence and confidence following a series of microteaching sessions. Statistical analysis using paired-sample t-tests confirmed significant differences between pre- and post-intervention scores. Qualitative data further revealed enhanced student awareness of effective TEYL practices and growing readiness for classroom teaching. The findings suggest that microteaching is a valuable pedagogical tool, not only for building instructional proficiency but also for developing the emotional and psychological readiness needed to teach young learners. This study highlights the need for experiential learning in TEYL teacher preparation programs.

Keywords: Microteaching, Teaching Skills, Confidence, EFL Students, TEYL

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of English language education, preparing prospective teachers to effectively instruct young learners has become increasingly important. Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) presents pedagogical challenges distinct from teaching adolescents or adults, requiring specialized approaches in classroom management, lesson design, and learner engagement. Young learners demand creativity, movement, and multisensory stimuli in lessons, and teachers need to be emotionally responsive while managing developmental constraints (Moon, 2000). Unfortunately, teacher education programs often overemphasise theoretical

instruction, with limited opportunities for practical teaching experience. This imbalance may leave pre-service teachers feeling underprepared and lacking in confidence when entering real-world classrooms, especially those involving young children.

Microteaching, developed by Allen and Ryan (1969), offers a scalable, low-risk environment where pre-service teachers can develop their teaching competence. In this model, student teachers conduct short, structured teaching sessions among peers, allowing them to practice core instructional skills such as questioning, explaining, giving feedback, and managing the class. Microteaching enables participants to reflect critically on their teaching performance, revise lesson strategies, and receive focused feedback from peers and instructors (Zalavra & Makri, 2022). Notably, these peer-led or video-based reflections have shown to significantly increase student

awareness of effective teaching behaviors and foster professional growth (Murphy Odo, 2023).

Within the TEYL context, the teaching environment becomes more complex. Teachers must understand child psychology, simplify input without diminishing learning quality, and provide a stimulating, emotionally safe atmosphere. Effective TEYL instruction requires mastery of skills such as using stories and songs, classroom language management, visual aids, Total Physical Response (TPR), and scaffolding techniques (Moon, 2000; Reynolds et al., 2022). Microteaching offers pre-service teachers a space to experiment with these methods in controlled conditions, developing the confidence to later apply them with actual young learners.

Several empirical studies emphasize the value of microteaching in improving teaching competence. Mujais and Haryani (2019) found

significant improvement in pre-service teachers' core instructional skills after engaging in structured microteaching cycles. Similarly, Tadaluring models that blend offline and online delivery modes showed that students improved both in lesson planning and delivery through iterative feedback and practice (Susanto et al., 2021). Integrating microteaching into lesson study cycles further enhanced reflective practice, peer collaboration, and instructional adaptability (Suryani & Rismiyanto, 2021).

Peer feedback and video-based microteaching sessions enhance pre-service teachers' critical reflection and self-awareness, allowing them to realistically assess and improve their teaching strategies (Murphy Odo, 2023). These modes of engagement expand student teachers' capacity for metacognitive reflection and offer richer opportunities for developing adaptive teaching techniques. The process of giving and receiving peer

feedback—especially when mediated by video—encourages novice teachers to internalize instructional principles, identify teaching habits, and innovate their practices.

Another crucial component developed through microteaching is teacher confidence. Multiple studies show a clear relationship between repeated microteaching exposure and improved teacher self-efficacy. In TEYL settings, where learner behavior can be unpredictable and attention spans are limited, confidence plays a pivotal role in maintaining classroom order and delivering engaging instruction. As Reynolds et al., (2022) suggest, while beliefs about language teaching can shape pedagogical choices, experiential practices such as microteaching have the power to recalibrate and align those beliefs with best classroom practices.

Microteaching supports the development of lesson planning and reflective thinking by giving student

teachers the opportunity to try, fail, reflect, and revise within a structured environment. Across different delivery modes—face-to-face, online, or VR-based—microteaching consistently increases pre-service teachers' pedagogical competence, confidence, and readiness to teach in authentic classrooms (Lee & Wu, 2024; Murphy Odo, 2023).

Technological innovations have also enhanced microteaching, allowing for flexible, asynchronous participation and multi-angle feedback. Virtual reality-based microteaching (Lee & Wu, 2024) and asynchronous video-based feedback (Murphy Odo, 2023) have expanded access and depth of reflection, especially when real-time teaching is not feasible. These tools offer greater affordances for feedback review, peer analysis, and focused self-assessment, ultimately contributing to a more personalized teacher development process.

Despite its effectiveness, microteaching is underutilized in some pre-service programs, often treated as a performance task rather than a developmental tool. To maximize its benefits, institutions must embed microteaching within a broader reflective and practice-based curriculum that includes observation checklists, lesson planning frameworks, and structured peer collaboration (Zalavra & Makri, 2022). Furthermore, emotional and motivational aspects such as student anxiety, self-doubt, and resilience must be considered, as they critically impact how novice teachers engage with microteaching activities (Tazhitova et al., 2022).

The integration of microteaching in TEYL-focused teacher education offers a highly contextualized platform for both skill and confidence development. Synthesizing insights from studies by Reynolds et al. (2022), Murphy Odo (2023), and Suryani and Rismiyanto (2021), it

becomes clear that the combination of experiential practice, reflective peer interaction, and structured assessment fosters holistic teacher readiness. This readiness is not limited to the delivery of language content but extends to managing the sociocultural and emotional dynamics of young learner classrooms.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of microteaching practices on EFL undergraduate students' teaching skills and confidence in teaching English to young learners. Conducted among 12 students enrolled in a TEYL course at an Indonesian university, the study uses a mixed-methods approach that includes pre- and post-intervention self-confidence surveys, microteaching skill rubrics, and qualitative reflections. Through this investigation, the research seeks to contribute to ongoing discussions about effective teacher preparation and offer evidence-based recommendations for enhancing TEYL methodology in teacher education.

2. Methods

This study utilised a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to investigate the impact of microteaching practices on undergraduate EFL students' teaching skills and self-confidence in delivering English instruction to young learners. The research integrated both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic view of how microteaching affects pedagogical growth and professional readiness.

The participants of this study were 12 sixth-semester students enrolled in the English Department, Faculty of Arts and Letters at Pasundan University. All participants had previously completed foundational courses such as Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) methodology, curriculum design, and instructional media. They were selected

purposively based on their enrollment in the TEYL course and willingness to participate fully in the study's activities.

To measure the effectiveness of microteaching on teaching competence and confidence, the study employed three main instruments. The Self-Confidence Questionnaire consisted of 8 statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This instrument captured students' perceived confidence in key TEYL areas, including giving instructions, using English effectively in the classroom, managing young learners, and engaging students through age-appropriate methods. The questionnaire was validated by two TEYL instructors to ensure its relevance and clarity.

In parallel, a Microteaching Skills Rubric was used by the instructor to evaluate each student's microteaching performance. The rubric assessed eight core teaching components: opening and closing lessons, clarity of explanation, questioning strategies, reinforcement techniques, use of TEYL-specific strategies (e.g., storytelling, songs, and Total Physical Response), classroom management, use of visual and media aids, and overall student engagement. Each category was scored on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), allowing for comprehensive assessment of teaching behaviors and competencies.

To capture students' reflective growth, participants were also asked to complete Reflective Journals after each teaching cycle. These journals were guided by prompts designed to elicit insights about their teaching experience, emotional reactions, perceived challenges, and areas for improvement. Students described what worked well during their lessons, what difficulties they encountered, and what changes they intended to make for future teaching.

The research was conducted over a period of six weeks during the second half of the semester. In the first week, participants completed the self-confidence questionnaire as a pre-test. This was followed by four consecutive weeks of microteaching, where each student delivered a simulated TEYL lesson of 15–20 minutes in front of peers acting as mock learners. These sessions were observed and assessed using the teaching rubric and were followed by immediate oral feedback from the instructor and peers. After each microteaching, students completed a reflective journal based on their performance.

In the final week, participants completed the post-test self-confidence questionnaire, and all reflective journals were submitted. This timeline ensured that both quantitative and qualitative data could be collected in a systematic and parallel fashion.

Data analysis followed a two-pronged approach. Quantitative data from the pre- and post-test questionnaires were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to identify statistically significant differences in students' confidence levels before and after the microteaching intervention. Rubric scores were averaged to describe the overall performance trends across the eight teaching skill categories.

The analysis involved familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, identification and review of themes, and interpretation of meaningful patterns. The triangulation of rubric assessments, self-report questionnaires, and reflective journals helped ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

By combining structured observation, self-assessment, and reflective inquiry, this study aimed to capture not only the behavioral outcomes of microteaching but also the cognitive

and emotional shifts experienced by the participants throughout their professional learning process.

3. Results and Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the impact of microteaching practices on EFL students' self-confidence and teaching skills in the context of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL). To achieve this, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The quantitative data came from a pre- and post-test questionnaire measuring self-confidence across several teaching domains and a rubric-based assessment of microteaching skills. The qualitative data were derived from student reflection journals.

3.1. Results

The data revealed a consistent and notable improvement in students' teaching confidence and skill performance after participating in the microteaching sessions. The scores presented in Table 1 reflect this trend clearly:

Table 1. Mean Scores Before and After Microteaching Intervention (n = 12)

Indicator	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Gain
Teaching Confidence	3.12	4.08	0.96
Classroom Management	3.25	4.21	0.96
Instructional Clarity	3.42	4.17	0.75
Child-Centered Approach	3.00	4.08	1.08
Learner Engagement	3.08	4.25	1.17

The increase in all five indicators was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), showing that microteaching practices had a substantial impact on students' development. The highest gains were found in the domains of learner engagement and child-centered teaching approaches, indicating that the microteaching experience helped participants better internalize age-appropriate instructional strategies.

Figure 1. shows the difference in students' confidence scores before and after the intervention, based on individual data.
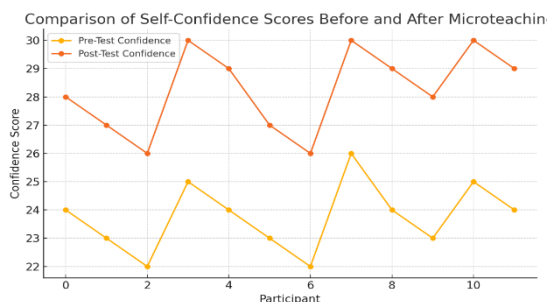

Figure 1. Comparison of Self-Confidence Scores Before and After Microteaching

All 12 participants experienced measurable growth in their teaching confidence. This finding is aligned with previous studies highlighting microteaching as a powerful tool for enhancing teacher self-efficacy and psychological readiness for classroom instruction (Almulla, 2022; Syaputra, 2021).

In addition, students' scores on the microteaching rubric indicated strong performance in critical teaching competencies, as seen in **Figure 2**.
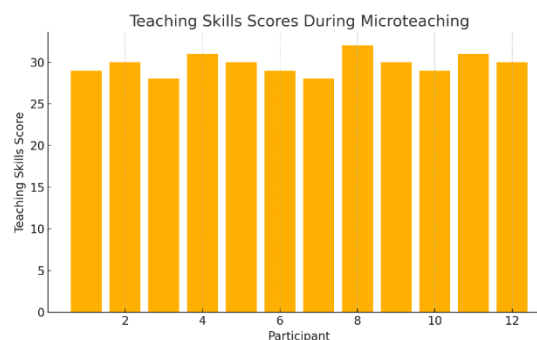

Figure 2. Distribution of Teaching Skills Scores During Microteaching

Most participants scored between 28 and 32 out of 40. These scores reflect high levels of instructional clarity, lesson planning, and engagement strategies. The consistency of these scores confirms the effectiveness of microteaching not only for practising delivery but also for reinforcing pedagogical principles learned in coursework.

3.2. Discussion

Analysis of reflective journals revealed three overarching themes: (1) pedagogical growth, (2) emotional

development**, and** (3) awareness of child-centered instruction**.**

First, participants expressed increased awareness and implementation of teaching strategies tailored for young learners. This finding emphasized that microteaching allows preservice teachers to apply theoretical knowledge into classroom practices, especially when combined with targeted feedback.

Second, students reported a shift in their emotional readiness, noting a transition from initial anxiety to growing confidence across the teaching cycles. As stated by Ajani (2023), experiential learning environments—such as microteaching—can reduce teaching anxiety and foster professional identity formation.

Third, students described specific realizations regarding TEYL needs, including the importance of repetition, visual aids, and movement. Many reflected on how young learners require consistent encouragement and multimodal delivery, mirroring observations by Jonaria and Ardi (2020) in their study on the role of positive reinforcement.

One student wrote:

"I realized that just knowing what to teach is not enough. How I talk to children, how I use the board, and how I make them smile matters a lot."

These insights stated that microteaching's strength lies in helping novice teachers internalize both technical and human dimensions of teaching.

In terms of feedback, participants highlighted the importance of peer observation. This aligns with Supriyanto & Sulistyaningrum's (2019) study, which demonstrated how cooperative modeling enhanced reflective capability and classroom awareness in Indonesian microteaching students.

From both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, this study confirms that microteaching is not merely a performative exercise but a **transformative process**. It provides a safe space for failure, reflection, feedback, and improvement—four pillars of experiential learning.

Furthermore, when embedded in TEYL-focused courses, microteaching promotes the transfer of theoretical learning into practical, classroom-ready strategies. Repeated cycles of guided teaching allow for gradual refinement of both instructional and interpersonal skills.

The design of this study, which combined rubric-based observation, self-assessment, and journaling, ensured that growth was measured holistically. Future research may explore how integrating **technology-enhanced tools**, such as video annotation platforms or VR-based simulations, could deepen reflective learning, as explored by Lee & Wu (2024) and Park (2022).

In conclusion, this study offers robust evidence that **microteaching significantly enhances both confidence and competence** in EFL student teachers preparing to teach young learners. Institutions should therefore prioritize experiential, feedback-rich practices in TEYL training programs to produce adaptive, confident, and skilled educators.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that microteaching is an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing both the teaching skills and self-confidence of EFL students in the context of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL). The significant improvements in classroom management, instructional clarity, learner engagement, and child-centered strategies—alongside reflective growth—demonstrate that

microteaching provides valuable experiential learning that bridges theory and practice. By offering structured opportunities for practice, feedback, and self-reflection, microteaching enables preservice teachers to internalize age-appropriate instructional methods and develop emotional readiness for real classroom environments. These findings address the research problems and objectives by confirming that microteaching can meaningfully prepare future teachers for the complexities of TEYL instruction. The study contributes to the field of teacher education by providing empirical evidence that supports the systematic integration of reflective microteaching models in EFL teacher training curricula, thereby advancing both practical pedagogy and teacher identity development.

5. Acknowledgement

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