

INVESTIGATING THE TEACHING STRATEGIES OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHER DURING THEIR PRACTICUM.

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ABSTRACT

Teaching practicum is a crucial component of teacher education programs, as it provides pre-service teachers with opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom contexts. Previous studies have reported that pre-service teachers often faced difficulties during teaching practicum. However, study that focused on the teaching strategies of pre-service teacher remain limited. Given the limited research, this study aimed to investigate the teaching strategies utilized by pre-service English teachers during their teaching practicum and how those teaching methods were implemented in the real classroom situation. This study applied a qualitative approach, utilizing a single case study design. The research included two English pre-service teachers from a private college in Malang. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews to gain information related to teaching strategies and analyzed thematically. The results showed that the participants employed diverse teaching strategies, such as, brainstorming, demonstrations, and so on. These strategies enhanced student participation, addressed diverse students learning styles, and encouraged effective classroom interaction. In conclusion, the results show that English pre-service educators can choose and apply suitable teaching methods during their practicum even with minimal teaching experience. This research shows that exposing pre-service teachers to a variety of teaching strategies in their teacher education programs can enhance their professional growth and teaching proficiency.

Keywords: Teaching strategies, teaching practicum, pre-service teacher.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching in classrooms with diverse learner abilities will spark some challenges, particularly for pre-service teachers who have limited experience (Dzulfikri & Azami, 2024). During the initial stages of teaching practicum, many pre-service teachers' encountered difficulties related to classroom management, instructional delivery, and self-confidence. Previous studies have reported that these challenges stem from factors such as lack of teaching experience, personality-related issues, fear of making mistakes, and so on (Gravett & Jiyane, 2019; Mokoena, 2017; Novitasari & Murtafi'ah, 2020). Although pre-service teachers are generally

capable of preparing lesson plans and structuring instructional content, they often struggle to engage learners effectively, close the lessons appropriately, and demonstrate the correct pronunciation and grammatical accuracy, which ultimately affects the quality of teaching (Mufidah, 2019).

Given these challenges, the development and application of effective teaching strategies are important to support successful learning processes. Teaching strategies can be understood as teaching plans, techniques, and classroom activities designed to achieve specific instructional objectives (Juariyah et al., 2018). Beyond the delivery of lesson, teaching strategies also encompass classroom management, lesson planning, and material development (Aini & Azizah, 2019). Exposure to a variety of strategies has been shown to improve pre-service teachers' teaching knowledge and practical teaching experience (Milal et al., 2020). However, using teaching strategies is not only about knowing the steps, but also about understanding the principles and expectations behind them (Rizqinia et al., 2025). Furthermore, pre-service teachers need to develop the ability to select and apply appropriate strategies that align with learners' needs and teaching goals.

Several teaching strategies have been identified as effective in language learning contexts. Wehrli & Nyquist categorize strategies such as brainstorming, case-based small-group work, role play or simulation, demonstration, games, whole-class discussion, presentations, real-life examples, and one-on-one teaching. While previous research has studied the difficulties encountered by pre-service teachers during practicum, studies focusing specifically on the teaching strategies they employ remain limited. Existing research on teaching strategies has primarily examined in-service teachers (Juariyah et al., 2018), leaving a gap in understanding how pre-service English teachers implement these strategies in real classroom settings. This study seeks to explore the types of teaching strategies used by pre-service English teachers and how these strategies are applied during their teaching practicum. Therefore this study addressed this following questions:

- 1) What kind of teaching strategies do pre-service English teachers employed during teaching practicum?
- 2) How do pre-service English teachers apply those strategies for teaching during teaching practicum

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a holistic single-case study design to investigate the teaching strategies used by pre-service English teachers and how these strategies were applied during their teaching practicum. The participants of this study are Doni and Fairuz Two pre-service English teachers that were selected through purposive sampling. The participants were voluntary, and both met the criteria, which that they have completed microteaching course and teaching practicum

The researcher used one instrument which is semi-structured interviews to gather the data. The interview questions were adapted from Wehrli & Nyquist (2003) about teaching strategies and reviewed for content validity by the expert. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to ensure clarity and to minimize misinterpretation, as it is the participants' first language.

Two interview sessions were conducted with each participant. In the beginning of the interviews the researcher introduced himself and explained that the interview being conducted was confidential. The researcher explained about the research objectives before the interview session begin. The first session explored the types of teaching strategies employed during practicum, while the second focused on how those strategies were implemented in classroom practice. Interviews were conducted individually, scheduled based on participants' availability, and carried out in a comfortable and confidential setting. All sessions were conducted online, audio-recorded with consent. Each interview lasted approximately 20–40 minutes, and then transcribed verbatim.

The data gathered through interview were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun & Clarke. The analysis involved several stages: transcribing the interview recordings, repeatedly reading the transcripts to achieve data familiarization, generating initial codes based on the research questions, grouping codes into themes related to the types of teaching strategies and their implementation, and interpreting the themes to identify patterns across participants' experiences.

FINDINGS

1. The Teaching Strategies Employed During Teaching Preacticum

Doni was familiar with several of these strategies and even employed them during his teaching practicum. He employed several teaching strategies such as demonstration, brainstorming, presentation, roleplay and one-one. However Fairuz appeared to be more familiar with a broader set of teaching strategies, during her time in teaching practicum, she employed various teaching strategies

such as small group discussion, role-play, demonstration, games, real life examples and one on one.

Demonstration Strategy

Demonstration strategy was employed by Doni, and he used it frequently for reading class.

“Oh yes, I have used this strategy, in fact, I often use it in class. So, If I say a sentence, then I ask them to repeat it, Maybe a few students, maybe five, are asked to repeat what I said, like repeating a sentence. I often use this demonstration during reading class, in the reading section.”

Fairuz explained that she also used demonstrations because, in her view, students wouldn't grasp the material without seeing it in action first."

“Most of the time I demonstrate a lot in front of my students, because how can they understand something if we don't demonstrate it, for example how do they know how grammar works if I don't demonstrate it a lot So I provide as many examples and feedback as much as possible so that they could truly understand.”

Role-play Strategy

In one occasion, Doni use role play strategy, he asked his students to imagine a scene, and he asked them how they would react to that scene.

“I've done this, Sir, on greetings, on things like congratulations, happy birthday, and so on. I've done that. For example, I gave... For example, I separated the students, and asked them if one of their friends has a birthday, how do you say happy birthday? For example, if you win a class contest, how do you react? It's like that.”

Fairuz also employed a role-play strategy in her class, she stated that it made the classroom atmosphere more lively.

“Because each student's ideas are sometimes very unique, I used role-play in my class. It also makes the class lively with role-play. Because it's kind of like a game, but not quite. Because when you're in a pair, one person talks, the other gives feedback. One person talks, the other gives feedback.”

One on one Strategy

Another type of the strategies Doni used is one on one strategy, where he tried to understand his student's problem or struggles by approaching them one by one.

"I try to approach them, to find out, what are they lacking in, for example, their lack of reading, how to read fluently and pronounce words in English, for example, some children lack the skill to pronounce some word. So I sit in front of them, them. Then I direct them, I teach them how to pronounce it correctly. Then in writing too, I invite those who are lacking to chat. Then, I asked them which ones are difficult for you to write, then I help them, like that

Fairuz also practiced one-on-one teaching outside of class time, explaining that she would invite students to meet her personally after lessons if they had questions or simply need to talk about something.

I usually do one on one, do that but outside my class time. So every time after class, a few minutes before it ends, I always say, "later, if anyone wants to ask me, or if anyone wants to talk to me about something, you can meet me in the office."

Presentation Strategy

Another strategy Doni also use was presentation strategies, for example he gave his students an assignment to present about a medicine, he asked them to explain how that medicine work, what is the dosage and so on.

"I've used presentation strategies. I've used PPT. and also at that time, I gave them an assignment, if I'm not mistaken, I told them to find an example of medicine. So, it was like the assignment was to find the name of the medicine, then how the medicine works, what the dosage is, something like that. Then I asked them one by one, because it was an individual assignment. I asked them one by one to come to the front to read their work while showing the medicine container."

Games Strategy

Fairuz incorporated games into her class, explaining that students learn better when they are actively involved and having fun.

"I also use game for my class, there was roleplay, then there was also boom clap. Then XOX, and tongue twister, i used this because my students tend to get motivated and understand some material better if they were also having fun"

Fairuz also applied real-life examples in her teaching, explaining that she often connected the material to events students had personally experienced.

"Yes, when I teach them, I always relate my lesson with real events, because I think that's what they find most relatable. So we use recent cases,

cases that have happened in their lives too. Because I also ask, 'Has something like this ever happened? Then , that means you should use this tense in situations like that.' So, they're immediately like, 'Oh, I see, something like that

Brainstorming Strategy

In addition, Doni applied brainstorming strategy in his class, He used this strategy every time at the start of the class before delivering the course to his students.

“Oh yes, I did this brainstorming at the start of the class, yes, before I delivered the material, I asked them, for example, I explained the material about let's say, like greetings, then I ask, students, do you know what a greeting is”

Small Discussion Strategy

Fairuz frequently employ small group discussion strategy for her class. She feels that this strategy is suitable for her student. The reason was that her student were shy to communicate with other students.

“I often use small group discussion, very, very often I think small group discussions can make each of the students closer and also learning together is nice, you can share. So if one doesn't understand something, the other one could tell him.” To be honest, the current generation is a bit difficult to ask or share, even Gen Z they often feel embarrassed to ask, maybe it's different from Gen A, they like to chat here and there, but if Gen Z is late it's a bit tricky. So. What I do is for my class. i always do small group discussion.”

Real Life Situation Strategy

Fairuz also used real life situation teaching strategy as she feels like her students could understand the material better.

“I really like using real-life situations in my lessons because I feel like students understand better when they can relate the topic to their own experiences

2. Teaching Strategies Application

Application of the Demonstration Strategy

It has been revealed that Doni used several strategies to teach his students, he then revealed on how to apply those strategies in class. With demonstration strategy, Doni starts by explaining the topic, then he guide his students to do it correctly,

“Oh yeah, in reading class I used demonstration mostly to show students how to approach a text. Like, before I gave them the actual reading task, I would take a short paragraph and show them how to read it step by step — like, how to find the main idea, underline key words, or guess the meaning of new vocabulary from context.”

Fairuz frequently applied the demonstration strategy in her teaching, she explained that she often demonstrated lessons directly in front of her students, then she provided multiple examples and offered consistent feedback during her class.

“I start with demonstrating it in front, then I explained it to them on how the thing I explained works, then I try to give them as many examples as I can, and after that I gave them several feedback.”

Application of the Role-play Strategy

Doni applied role-play strategies by making the students to take a certain role first, then he gave them some dialogue and told them to practice it first. After the practice was done he told his students to act their role and do the dialogue without reading any notes”

“One time, we were learning about expressions for shopping — like asking for prices, bargaining, that kind of thing. So I turned the classroom into a mini store. I asked some students to act as shopkeepers and others as customers. I gave them simple dialogues and let them practice first, then they had to perform it in front of the class without reading the script.”

Fairuz also applied role-play in her class. She explained that students were placed in pairs, where one student would speak while the other listened and provided feedback. This process allowed both students to respond in real-time. For instance, Fairuz gave a scenario such as being in a restaurant where Student B accidentally drops a plate. Student A was then asked to respond appropriately to the situation.

“Because it's kind of like a game, but not quite. Because in pairs, one person talks, the other gives feedback. One person talks, the other gives feedback. For example, like in a restaurant. And I asked them like: let's say Student B spills a plate and it breaks. So, what would your response be, Student A?”

Application of the One on one Strategy

With one-on one strategy Doni start to observe his students, he look for a confused or a struggling students, when he find one he sat beside them and guide them.

“I didn’t use one-on-one teaching all the time because, you know, in a classroom setting it’s a bit hard to give every student individual attention. But I tried to apply it especially when some students looked confused or struggled with a task. For example, during reading activities, there were a students who who looked confused. So I would sit beside them, guide them on how to read it correctly”

Fairuz applied the one-on-one teaching strategy first by informing her students at the end of each lesson that they were welcome to meet her privately if they had questions or needed further clarification. These one-on-one sessions were usually held in the teacher's office or in a quiet space after class. During these meetings, Fairuz would focus on the student’s individual learning difficulties, offer some help, and guide them through areas they struggled with such as grammar, pronunciation, or writing.

“I actually really like doing one-on-one sessions with my students, but I usually do them outside of class time. At the end of the lesson, I always tell them, ‘If anyone wants to ask something or needs help, feel free to meet me in the office.’ Some students take the chance, especially the ones who are shy or too quiet during class. In those moments, I focus on what they personally struggle with — sometimes it’s grammar, sometimes pronunciation. I guide them step by step and give more feedback. I think it helps them a lot because they feel more relaxed and comfortable asking questions. It also helps me connect better with them.

Application of the Presentation Strategy

With presentation strategy, Doni starts by dividing his class into a several small group, then he told his student to prepare their presentation and then told them to explain about the topic that they were discussed that day in front of the class, if his student start to have any problem with the presentation, Doni will help them.

“Yeah, I used the presentation strategy a few times during my practicum. Mostly I asked students to prepare short presentations in small groups. For example, when we were learning about daily routines, I asked them to explain their group’s daily activities — like what time they wake up, eat, study, stuff like that. I gave them time to prepare, and then each group had to come to the front and share in English.. I also gave them some help if they start to struggle”

Application of the Games Strategy

Fairuz applied the game strategy by choosing what kind of game was suitable for the topic first. Then she explained how the game works to her student. After the game has ended, she decided to give the loser some punishment.

“I usually start by thinking about what kind of game fits the topic I’m teaching. For example, if the lesson is about vocabulary, I might use a word guessing game or something like a quiz race. I always make sure to explain the rules clearly before we start, so the students know what to do and don’t get confused. After the game ends, I usually give a small punishment to the losing team — nothing serious, just something fun like singing a song or answering a silly question in English

Application of the Brainstorming Strategy

For brainstorming, he start by selecting a word that is relevant to the material and ask them or explain what it is, then he orders his students to say as many ideas as possible. As his students say something, he writes on the whiteboard, then if no one has anything to say, he discusses it with the class.

“When I do brainstorming, i, asked them, something that is relevant to the material for example, do you know greetings students?, as my students say different ideas, I write them on the whiteboard, and if the class goes silent, then I discusses those ideas with my students”

Application of the Small Group Discussion Strategy

In implementing small group discussion, Fairuz began by dividing the class into pairs and providing each student with the same set of personal questions. Each student was asked to respond to the questions individually on their own paper. Once they finished, they exchanged papers with their partners then they read each other’s responses.

“I asked them to make groups. Usually pair of two. I give the same questions. But just switch like that. Then I. Say. Like. Later. Student A. For example, student A and student B. Write. Answer. The questions I’ve given. To. Each student. Well, later at the end of the session, I ask them to switch. So B, student B’s paper, switches to student A. So later student A reads B’s, so he knows, oh it turns out B likes this. B is allergic to this. B doesn’t like that.”

Application of the Real Life Situation Strategy

Fairuz implemented the real-life situation strategy by first choosing the topics that could be easily connected to students’ everyday experiences. Once she selected a relevant theme, she began the lesson by asking students if they had ever encountered similar situations in real life.. Throughout the activity, Fairuz provided guidance and feedback to ensure that students not only understood the material but could also apply it meaningfully.

“So usually, I start by choosing a theme that’s familiar to them — like going to the market, asking for directions, or talking about their daily routine. Then I ask questions like, ‘Have you ever done this before?’ or ‘When do you usually use this expression?’ That way, they’re more engaged from the start. After that,

I explain the grammar or vocabulary they need, and I show them how to use it in that context. I also let them practice it through short dialogues or role play, just to make it feel more natural.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that pre-service English teachers are capable of implementing a range of teaching strategies that support active and student-centered learning during their practicum. This supports previous research by Macias (2018) indicating that the use of varied instructional strategies contributes to a more positive and engaging classroom environment (Amiruddin et al., 2024). Furthermore, the diversity of teaching strategies enhances students' motivation and curiosity (Arsalan, 2024). Both participants employed strategies consistent with the framework proposed by Wehrli & Nyquist, suggesting that theoretical knowledge gained in teacher education programs can be translated into classroom practice.

Doni's instructional approach was characterized by structured, teacher-guided strategies such as demonstration, brainstorming, and presentation. His use of brainstorming at the beginning of lessons functioned as an activation of previous knowledge and promoted initial student participation, which aligns with the view that brainstorming stimulates idea and students engagement. Similarly, His use of demonstration in reading reflects a scaffolding approach, where the teacher models first and students work independently after. This supports the idea that modeling and guided practice help students understand and improve their skills. (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Doni's one-on-one support in class shows his awareness of individual student needs, even in a whole-class setting.

In contrast, Fairuz demonstrated a broader and more interaction-oriented of teaching strategies, including small-group discussion, games, real-life examples, and one-on-one sessions outside the class. Her use of pair and group work gave students opportunities to interact with each other and learn together, which helped them understand the material better and become more confident. The use of real-life examples to contextualize grammar and vocabulary also reflects the use of authentic and meaningful learning experiences, which have been shown to enhance engagement and relevance (Bond & Bedenlier, 2019). Moreover, her consultation outside the class shows her effort to address different student needs more effectively.

Both participants demonstrated an understanding of the importance of interaction in language learning and attempted to create student-centered learning environments through role play, games, and collaborative activities. These strategies are widely recognized as forms of active learning that promote communicative competence and knowledge retention (Macías, 2018; Poon, 2013).

The findings therefore suggest that, despite limited teaching experience, pre-service teachers can make pedagogical decisions that align with communicative and learner-centered principles.

This study also shows that the teaching practicum is an important space for pre-service teachers to try different teaching strategies. Through practicum experiences, participants were able to adapt strategies to classroom needs, combine multiple approaches, and respond to student characteristics. This supports the view of Abulhul (2021) that effective teaching does not rely on a single strategy but on the flexible integration of various strategies based on teaching goals and learner needs.

However, the findings are based on only a few participants from one institution, so the results may not represent other contexts. Future research could involve a larger sample of pre-service teachers, include classroom observations, and examine the relationship between strategy use and student learning outcomes.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of how pre-service teachers operationalize teaching strategies during practicum and underscores the importance of providing opportunities for strategy application, reflection, and feedback in teacher education programs.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings indicate that both participants have the ability to employ a variety of strategies consistent with the teaching strategies stated by Wehrli & Nyquist despite their lack of experience of teaching in real classroom situation. The selection and application of these strategies were influenced by lesson objectives, classroom context, and students' characteristics.

Although both participants demonstrated the ability to apply multiple strategies, their instructional orientations differed. Doni tended to employ structured and teacher-guided approaches. In contrast, Fairuz adopted a more interaction-oriented approach, integrating collaborative activities and individualized support to address diverse learner needs, especially among less confident students. These findings suggest that even with limited teaching experience, Pre-service teachers can choose teaching decisions that support learner-centered and communicative learning.

For pre-service teachers, the findings show that it is important to have a variety of teaching strategies and to choose them based on the lesson objectives and student needs. For teacher educators and practicum supervisors, the results highlight the importance of continuous mentoring, classroom observation, and feedback to help pre-service teachers apply strategies effectively in real teaching situations. This study only involved a small number of participants from one institution, so future researcher can involve more pre-service teachers from different institutions and educational levels to get broader results. In addition, using multiple data sources

such as classroom observations, lesson plans, and student feedback can give a deeper understanding of how teaching strategies are implemented.

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