

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Teaching Practicum course is a real teaching practice program for future teachers to get a vision of what and how teaching is. Ferrier and Kerr (2009) said the Teaching Practicum had been described as one of the most influential components of teacher education. However, according to Huang and Waxman (2009), it is also believed that Teaching Practicum is one of the most challenging, difficult, and frustrating aspects of a teacher education program for many pre-service teachers.

Teacher education programs are designed to develop prepared professionals to meet the challenges of the 21st century classrooms and the workplace (Tuli & Gemechis, 2010). One of the teacher education programs is the Teaching Practicum course. In Teaching Practicum, pre-service teachers may lack confidence in resolving serious problems in the classroom and may struggle to acclimate to school life, especially in forming colleagues' relationships. (Moore, 2003; Hsu, 2005; Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007). The Teaching Practicum course is a critical component of teacher education programs as it allows teacher candidates to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world classroom settings (Borko et al., 2011).

Teaching Practicum course is a mandatory program from the Faculty of Tarbiyah & Teacher Training, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. This program should be taken for students in the 7th semester. Teaching Practicum course aims to provide aspiring teachers with the practical skills and knowledge they need to be effective educators. In addition, from the Teaching Practicum Guidebook, *Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan* or Teaching Practicum is a learning activity to supply students to achieve competency skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning in real situations in schools/madrasas (Ekawati, 2022). In UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, this program is carried out after students take the Micro Teaching course.

Micro Teaching course is a program to prepare students before they take the Teaching Practicum course. As Allen and Ryan (1969:1) stated, Micro Teaching course is "a training concept that can be applied at various pre-service and in-service stages in the professional development of teachers." It allows teachers to practice in an instructional setting where the usual complexities of the classroom are limited and where they can obtain feedback on their performances.

In addition, Micro Teaching course is a technique aiming to prepare teacher candidates for the real classroom setting (Brent & Thomson, 1996). Besides, Micro Teaching course is a valuable tool for developing the skills of teacher trainees. A Micro Teaching course provides pre-service teacher-trainees with a simulated situation to put the theories they have learned into practice and develop confidence and teaching skills while conducting a mini-lesson for their colleagues. Micro Teaching is an essential education component that gives a chance to teaching practice to pre-service teachers (Stahl, Sharplin & Kehrwald, 2018).

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that Micro Teaching course is used to prepare for the Teaching Practicum course. However, many teacher candidates struggle with the transition from theory to practice, and the Teaching Practicum course can be a daunting experience for them (Arends, 2012). Micro Teaching course have been used in teacher education programs to help teacher candidates develop their teaching skills. These courses involve teacher candidates delivering short lessons to their peers, who then provide feedback on their teaching performance (Zhang et al. 2019).

In educational institution, Micro Teaching course is a practice of scaled-down teaching, feedback and self-analysis it offers a unique context for grounding pre-service teachers in the development of effective and reflective teaching (Amobi et al. 2009). Besides, another study shows that Micro Teaching course has the ability to enhance the skills of problem-solving, critical thinking, questioning, and reflective thinking. It improves learning by realistic applications (Can, 2009).

Moreover, the research of Zhou and Xu in 2017 revealed that Microteaching Lesson Study (MLS) exercise revealed teacher candidates real understanding of inquiry through multiple avenues: their lesson plans, their teaching, class discussion, and reflective reports. It provides an opportunity to properly assess teacher candidates learning difficulties, which might be disguised in the writing of lesson plans. The research will explore how the students perceive the role of Micro Teaching course in preparing them for the Teaching Practicum course, and how they reflect on their learning and development as teachers. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by conducting a narrative inquiry with eleven students who participated in both Micro Teaching and Teaching Practicum courses at a university in Indonesia.

B. Research Questions

1. How is the students' experience in taking the Micro Teaching course?
2. How is the students' experience in doing a Teaching Practicum course?
3. How is the students' perception of their experience in the Micro Teaching course to their teaching skills development in the Teaching Practicum Course?

C. Research Purposes

1. To find out the students' experience in taking the Micro Teaching course.
2. To find out the students' experience in doing a Teaching Practicum course.
3. To find out the students' perception of their experience in the Micro Teaching course to their teaching skills development in the Teaching Practicum Course.

D. Research Significance

This research explores the Micro Teaching course in preparing and developing students' teaching skills for their Teaching Practicum because every student may have different experiences. The contribution of this

research for the schools is that when the students have good results in the Micro Teaching course, this can help the mentor teachers and the student teachers more easily and efficiently direct pre-service teachers or the students in the Teaching Practicum.

For the curriculum developer in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, this research contributes to how the Micro Teaching course can be designed and delivered effectively to prepare the Teaching Practicum. This study will provide insight into the experiences and reflections of pre-service teachers who have taken Micro Teaching courses and completed Teaching Practicum.

E. Research Scope

This research will focus on investigating the role of Micro Teaching courses in developing students' teaching skills in the Teaching Practicum course using a narrative inquiry approach at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati for the students who have done their Micro Teaching Course in the 6th semester and Teaching Practicum Course in the 7th semester. The research concern is within the experiences of teacher candidates who have completed both Micro Teaching and Teaching Practicum courses to gain a rich and nuanced understanding of the role of Micro Teaching courses in developing teaching skills in the Teaching Practicum course.

F. Conceptual Framework

Teaching Practicum is a crucial part of any teacher preparation program. It provides a chance to build links between theory and practice and to apply academic knowledge (Nemtchinova, 2018). Teaching Practicum course is a program for students or pre-service teachers to get the real experience of real teaching facing actual students in schools or madrasas. Teaching Practicum can help the pre-service teacher to build their confidence in teaching. According to Ismail (2011), in teacher education study, Micro Teaching has a positive influence on student teachers' consciousness and perceptions about their teaching skills and in developing operational teaching strategies.

Therefore, before going to the Teaching Practicum, students or pre-service teachers will be prepared by taking the Micro Teaching course in the UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in the 6th semester.

Micro Teaching is a teacher education method that facilitates a transition from theory to real-world teaching circumstances (Çelik, 2001). Pre-service teachers can engage in imitation and mastery learning experiences through Micro Teaching. Micro Teaching involves organizing and giving a brief lesson to classmates. Pre-service teachers can reflect on how they conduct their Micro Teaching sessions by seeing what others do. Furthermore, Micro Teaching can assist students in identifying and correcting areas of weaknesses in their teaching and developing a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process.

The Micro Teaching course has an important role in the Teaching Practicum success. In teacher education, Micro Teaching is a technique that provides a transition from theory to real teaching (Majoni, 2017). Micro Teaching courses can help students get better teaching skills because the students are implementing the theory into real teaching through peer-to-peer teaching before doing the Teaching Practicum Course. The Micro Teaching practices improved students' and teachers' self-confidence and emphasised teaching skills (Şen, 2009; Şen, 2010).

G. Previous Studies

There are previous studies regarding this topic. The first is Mergler & Tangen (2010) on this research they are using pre- and post-tests also. Students completed three qualitative questions added to the end of the survey. The result shows that Micro Teaching sessions would help pre-service teachers learn more about creating appropriate lessons during their Practicum in schools.

Second, Zhang, Wang, and Zhang (2019) found that Micro Teaching effectively improved pre-service teachers' teaching competencies. The results showed that the Micro Teaching approach improved the participants' teaching skills, including planning lessons, managing classrooms, and engaging

students. The study also found that Micro Teaching improved the participants' self-confidence and motivation to teach.

The third research by Merc (2015) who dealt with the Micro Teaching Experience in Distance English Language Teacher Training. The result showed that the students in DELT need to study more than their peers for practicum courses in face-to-face education.

Forth, the research conducted by He and Yan (2010) Exploring authenticity of Micro Teaching in pre-service teacher education programmes. The study results show that Micro Teaching was a useful tool for the pre-service teachers' professional development; however, the experience was not without flaws. The study suggests that microteaching should be supplemented with various alternative forms of school experience and practice.

This research is different from the previous studies above. The difference is that this research investigates the Micro Teaching course's role in developing students' teaching skills in preparing for Teaching Practicum. This research also uses narrative inquiry as the design. In addition, this study aims to investigate the experiences of students who participated in the Micro Teaching and Teaching Practicum courses, as well as the effectiveness of Micro Teaching in enhancing their teaching skills for the Teaching Practicum. Furthermore, this study examines how the students' teaching skills developed from the Micro Teaching to the Teaching Practicum courses.

H. Clarification of Terms

1. Pre-service Teacher : A pre-service teacher is a student who is studying to become a teacher in the future.
2. Cooperating Teacher : Experienced teachers who work with pre-service and help the pre-service teachers during their Teaching Practicum.
3. University Supervisor: A teacher educator who supports pre-service teachers during their Teaching Practicum experiences. They also became quality assurer who evaluates and assesses pre-service teachers' work based on standards and criteria.