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Transformative Experiences in English Microteaching: Educational Inquiry into Pedagogical Adjustment, Reflection, and Skill Refinement

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A B S T R A C T

This qualitative study addressed the limited understanding of how microteaching fostered reflective and pedagogical development among pre-service English teachers in higher education contexts. The study examined the experiences of 14 Indonesian pre-service English teachers during microteaching courses at two private universities in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Data were collected through teaching journals, classroom observations, audio-visual recordings, and stimulated recall interviews, and were analyzed thematically using Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, Schon's reflective practice, and Wenger's theory of communicative practice. The findings indicated a shift from routine instructional delivery to more adaptive and student-centered teaching approaches, marked by pedagogical adjustment, heightened reflective awareness, and refinement of instructional skills. Participants demonstrated increased sensitivity to instructional timing, language accuracy, classroom emotional climate, and sociocultural interaction. These findings positioned microteaching as a dynamic space for pedagogical growth and emerging professional identity. The study contributed insights into pre-service teacher development and recommended further research across broader institutional contexts to examine sustained pedagogical change in English language education.

Keywords: *Microteaching, Pre-Service English Teachers, Reflective Practice, Pedagogical Adjustment, Teacher Identity*

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INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving field of English Language Teaching (ELT), microteaching has long been positioned as a core component of teacher preparation programs, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts such as Indonesia, where pedagogical, linguistic, and sociocultural challenges intersect (Mafulah & Febrianti, 2025). Traditionally, microteaching has been conceptualized as a structured training technique designed to help pre-service teachers practice discrete instructional skills, such as lesson planning, classroom management, and language accuracy. While this skills-oriented approach has contributed to procedural competence, it has also narrowed the pedagogical lens through which microteaching is understood and evaluated.

In the Indonesian EFL context, the reliance on microteaching is intensified by limited access to authentic classroom teaching, institutional constraints, and a persistent gap between theoretical coursework and classroom realities. Despite its central role, existing microteaching

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research has largely emphasized observable teaching performance and technical skill acquisition, often treating teaching competence as a set of measurable behaviors rather than a complex, evolving professional practice. As a result, critical dimensions such as reflective sense-making, emotional regulation, and professional identity development remain underexplored. This reductionist focus limits our understanding of how microteaching functions not merely as a rehearsal space, but as a site where pedagogical beliefs, self-perceptions, and teaching identities are actively negotiated.

Theoretically, teaching is increasingly understood as a reflective and socially situated practice. Schon's concept of the reflective practitioner frames professional growth as an iterative process involving reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, highlighting how teachers reinterpret experiences to refine their practice (Halimi, 2025). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development emphasizes the role of social interaction, feedback, and scaffolding in learning, including the learning-to-teach process (Afrilyasanti & Basthomi, 2025). Wenger's theory of Communities of Practice further positions teacher identity as co-constructed through participation in shared pedagogical spaces (Hasib & Pratiwi, 2025). Together, these perspectives suggest that microteaching has the potential to support not only skill refinement but also deeper epistemological, affective, and identity-oriented transformation. However, empirical studies rarely integrate these frameworks holistically when examining microteaching practices.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of microteaching in enhancing self-awareness, confidence, and instructional clarity among pre-service teachers, as evidenced by Kim (2025), who emphasized the importance of critical reflection. Akyuz & Atay (2025) demonstrated that repeated practice in microteaching increased confidence and reduced anxiety. Within Indonesia, studies like Murtafiah (2025) and Riski & Sakhiyya (2025) showed that structured reflection, such as teaching journals and peer review, helped teachers fine-tune instructional clarity and detect unnoticed patterns like over-explaining or ignoring student reactions. Nevertheless, these studies tend to fragment the microteaching experience by isolating cognitive or technical outcomes, thereby overlooking how reflective, emotional, and identity-related processes unfold simultaneously during teaching enactment.

This gap points to a significant limitation in current microteaching scholarship. There remains limited exploration into how microteaching catalyzes transformation on a deeper level and how it initiates emotional shifts, prompts reflective recalibrations, and fosters adaptive teaching practices tailored to dynamic classroom contexts. Most notably absent in earlier literature is the understanding of microteaching as a holistic pedagogical arena that facilitates cognitive, affective, and social-emotional growth. Furthermore, little attention has been paid to the use of multimodal reflection tools such as screen recordings, peer dialogues, and digital feedback in Indonesian microteaching settings. By incorporating these dimensions, this study adds novelty through both theoretical expansion and methodological enrichment.

Empirical observations in Indonesian microteaching classrooms illustrate this limitation. Indonesian pre-service teachers often enter microteaching with a performative mindset and focus heavily on delivering content from a script or lesson plan. However, when asked to review their own recorded teaching or listen to peer comments, many of them begin to notice dissonance between their intentions and student reactions. A common case includes the use of monologic speech despite the lesson's interactive goals. Upon reflection, trainees often shift toward dialogic questioning strategies, increased wait time, and real-time student engagement tactics. These shifts are not merely procedural; they signal evolving pedagogical reasoning and a repositioning of the teacher's role from content deliverer to learning facilitator. Through this lens, the study reframes microteaching not as a test of teaching perfection but as a process of negotiation, where teachers revise assumptions, test ideas, and refine their presence.

Such reflections are not devoid of emotional labor. Many Indonesian trainees report anxiety, embarrassment, and vulnerability during microteaching, especially when peers and mentors observe their mistakes. However, this emotional intensity becomes fertile ground for growth when scaffolded with empathetic, constructive feedback. According to Rakerda et al. (2025), emotional responsiveness through gestures, voice modulation, and facial expressions

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transforms not only student engagement but also the teacher's self-efficacy. As novice teachers begin to manage classroom affective climates, they experience a heightened sense of professional identity. This study captures these narratives, showcasing how pre-service teachers move from feeling inadequate to empowered, hesitant to responsive: an emotional journey often ignored in performance-centered evaluation.

The significance of this inquiry lies in its layered analysis and practical implications. Pedagogically, it offers teacher education programs insights into designing microteaching sessions that prioritize reflection, feedback, and emotional safety as much as instructional precision. It advocates for integrating digital tools that allow for visual and auditory reflection, which supports deeper self-awareness. Institutionally, the findings can inform policy adjustments in teacher preparation curricula by emphasizing adaptive teaching and identity development, especially in multilingual, culturally diverse classrooms. Theoretically, the study enriches the dialogue on teacher education by presenting microteaching not as a bounded simulation but as an unfolding journey of personal and professional meaning-making.

In light of these observations, this research is driven by two central questions: (1) How do Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers experience pedagogical transformation during microteaching? (2) In what ways does microteaching contribute to their professional identity development and instructional repertoire growth? These questions are not merely diagnostic; they are exploratory, aiming to unpack the rich, textured, and evolving nature of microteaching as it is lived, reflected upon, and reimagined by pre-service teachers. The study takes a qualitative, interpretive approach, collecting data through narrative reflections, screen recordings, teaching journals, feedback loops, and in-depth interviews. It seeks to reveal how teaching knowledge, emotional attunement, and identity construction intersect during and beyond the act of teaching.

Ultimately, this study aims to reconceptualize microteaching as a holistic and transformative practice that integrates cognitive, affective, and sociocultural dimensions of teacher development. It seeks to explore how Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers experience pedagogical transformation during microteaching and how these experiences contribute to instructional adaptation and professional identity formation. Guided by a qualitative and an interpretive approach, the study examines reflective narratives, classroom interactions, and multimodal feedback to capture the lived complexity of microteaching beyond skill acquisition.

METHOD

The research used a qualitative inquiry design grounded in an interpretive paradigm to explore the transformative experiences of Indonesian pre-service teachers during English microteaching (Setyaningrum et al., 2025). This approach was chosen to capture the complexity of pedagogical change, reflective processes, and instructional decision-making as situated, context-bound, and meaning-making practices. The study focused on how participants navigated pedagogical adjustments, emotional engagement, and reflective refinement throughout their microteaching sessions, allowing for an in-depth understanding of personal and professional transformation.

The research was conducted in English Education Study Programs at two private universities in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Fourteen pre-service English teachers were purposively selected from a cohort of sixth-semester students enrolled in a compulsory Microteaching course (Ahmed & Saalh, 2025). Participant selection followed four explicit criteria to ensure information-rich cases: (1) active enrollment and full attendance in the microteaching course during the semester of data collection; (2) completion of at least three recorded microteaching sessions to allow observation of instructional change over time; (3) willingness to maintain reflective teaching journals throughout the practicum; and (4) consent to participate in video-based stimulated recall interviews.

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Data collection was conducted over a six-week teaching practicum cycle as a part of the regular course curriculum, involving multiple instruments to ensure triangulation. First, video recordings of each participant's microteaching sessions were collected weekly, capturing both verbal and non-verbal classroom interaction. These recordings allowed researchers to identify teaching patterns, shifts in instructional behavior, and emotional cues. Second, weekly teaching journals were collected, in which participants wrote reflections on their teaching experiences, challenges faced, decisions made, and adjustments planned. Third, stimulated recall interviews were conducted at the end of the practicum. Each participant was shown selected segments of their own teaching videos and asked to explain their thoughts, decisions, and emotions during those moments. This approach, based on Munandar's (2025) stimulated recall method, helped elicit deeper metacognitive insights not always evident in written reflections.

All data sources, including video transcripts, journal entries, interview transcripts, and observation notes, were analyzed thematically. The analysis followed a systematic three-stage coding process. First, open coding was conducted to identify recurring actions, reflections, and emotional responses, generating initial codes such as instructional adjustment, reflective awareness, emotional regulation, and identity positioning, in which emergent codes such as "real-time adjustment," "affective presence," and "identity shift" were identified. Second, axial coding was applied to examine relationships among these codes, for example, how feedback cues prompted pedagogical modification or how emotional discomfort led to reflective recalibration. Third, selective coding was used to integrate categories into overarching themes, resulting in core themes such as "pedagogical responsiveness", "reflective deepening", and "instructional agency". NVivo software supported data management, coding consistency, and theme organization. Then, the analytical framework was informed by Schon's reflective practice, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, and Wenger's Communities of Practice, which collectively guided the interpretation of how reflection, social interaction, and participation shaped pedagogical development. These theories were used as sensitizing concepts rather than rigid analytical templates, allowing themes to emerge inductively from the data.

To further strengthen the credibility and depth of the study, peer debriefing and member checking were integrated throughout the research process (Darsana, 2025). Peer debriefing involved regular consultation with two fellow researchers with expertise in teacher education and qualitative methods, who critically examined the emerging themes and provided feedback on data interpretation. Member checking was conducted by returning selected coded excerpts and thematic summaries to the participants, who were asked to verify the accuracy and relevance of the researchers' interpretations. Their feedback was incorporated to refine the thematic structure and to ensure the findings genuinely reflected their lived experiences and teaching realities.

Additionally, a reflective research journal was maintained by the primary investigator throughout the study to document procedural decisions, ethical reflections, and analytical memos. This helped ensure transparency and allowed for an audit trail, enhancing the trustworthiness of the data analysis. Given the dynamic and evolving nature of microteaching, this reflective log also captured the researcher's evolving positionality, helping to maintain critical awareness and reduce potential bias.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Pedagogical Realignment in Response to Student Misunderstanding

This analysis explores how pre-service teachers modified their lesson delivery upon recognizing student misunderstanding. The data were collected from video recordings, lesson plans, and stimulated recall interviews, capturing real-time responses to classroom challenges. The analysis revealed that six out of eight participants paused instruction to clarify misunderstood points using visual aids or L1 scaffolding. The shift from monologic

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explanation to dialogic negotiation marked a conscious pedagogical realignment. Theoretical framing draws on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, emphasizing how instructional adjustments occur in response to observed cognitive gaps (Halimi, 2025). Such transformations signify not just technical corrections, but a shift in teachers' epistemological understanding of classroom communication.

Table 1. Adaptive Teaching Responses Triggered by Classroom Challenges

Participant	Adjustment Strategy	Triggering Event	Instructional Response	Outcome
T1	Visual illustration	Vocabulary confusion	Drew a diagram of "sustainable tourism" on the whiteboard and labeled key concepts.	Clarified meaning
T2	L1 scaffolding	Silent response from students	Re-explained the instruction in Bahasa Indonesia: "Kita bicara tentang wisata berkelanjutan."	Re-engaged learners
T3	Questioning technique	Wrong answer	Re-framed concept with analogy such as "What would happen if tourism didn't respect the environment?" to guide reasoning.	Concept understood
T4	Peer feedback	Conflicting responses	Said, "Let's ask your group partner how they understood it, then compare your ideas."	Consensus reached
T5	Paraphrasing	Grammar error	Reworded the sentence: "Instead of saying 'She go,' let's try 'She goes.'"	Error minimized
T6	Body movement gestures	Lack of focus	Acted out the word "recycle" by miming the action of sorting and reusing materials.	Attention restored

Three participants offered direct accounts that illuminate their reasoning behind these instructional shifts. T1 stated, "When I saw blank faces after I introduced the term 'sustainable tourism,' I knew I had to switch gears. Drawing it helped them visualize the idea." This response shows awareness of cognitive scaffolding through visual representation. T2 noted, "There was a long silence after my question. I realized my English explanation was too abstract, so I repeated it in Bahasa, and they immediately reacted." Here, the use of L1 served as a strategic tool for re-engagement, confirming Vygotsky's concept of mediation within the learner's proximal development zone. Meanwhile, T3 reflected, "I didn't want to just correct the wrong answer; I tried asking another question to help them see the logic, and it worked." This indicates dialogic restructuring by allowing students to reconstruct their understanding through guided questioning. These responses reinforce that pedagogical realignment was both intentional and learner-centered.

Reflective Pattern Identification through Teaching Journals

Participants were asked to maintain weekly teaching journals, reflecting on their microteaching sessions and self-evaluation. The narrative data were coded using Schon's reflective practitioner framework, categorizing them into reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and anticipatory reflection (Wang et al., 2025). Most entries evolved from descriptive recounts to analytical insights by the fourth week, indicating a growing metacognitive awareness. Teachers not only identified what went wrong but questioned why it occurred and how to prevent it, embodying critical reflection. This change implies a re-orientation from superficial self-reporting to deep structural awareness of pedagogical dynamics. The qualitative growth was evident across all six examples through the emergence of pedagogical questioning and prospective lesson design improvement.

Table 2. Types of Reflection and Pedagogical Shifts Observed Among Participants

Participant	Journal Type	Reflection Depth	Change Over Time	Example Entry Excerpt
T1	Weekly journal	Reflection-on-action	From event focus to process	"I saw they misunderstood the text, was it my wording?"
T2	Guided reflection sheets	Reflection-in-action	Earlier recognition of issue	"I adjusted mid-sentence seeing their eyes drift."

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T3	Peer-feedback notes	Anticipatory reflection	Better lesson anticipation	"Next time I'll start with real-life examples."
T4	Self-assessment checklist	Reflection-on-action	More critical phrasing	"They were confused. Maybe I overloaded the input."
T5	Voice-recorded reflection	Reflection-in-action	Focus shifted to timing	"I spoke too fast when showing the chart."
T6	Narrative journal	Mixed reflection levels	From observation to theory	"This could relate to their L1 interference."

Each entry reflects a different dimension of teacher reflection: T1 identifies cause-effect links in misunderstanding, T2 captures spontaneous adjustment during teaching, and T3 plans ahead using peer feedback. Others like T4 and T5 show awareness of input load and delivery speed, while T6 links classroom behavior to foreign language acquisition theory. These reflections signify a gradual shift from reactive accounts to deeper theory-informed thinking as the evidence of professional maturation. During interviews, participants elaborated on how the act of journaling shaped their reflective habits. T4 expressed, "At first, I just listed what happened, but later, I started asking myself: what triggered their confusion?" highlighting the shift from surface-level observation to causal interpretation. T5 added, "Hearing my own voice in recordings made me notice my rushed tone. I never realized how timing impacts clarity until I replayed it." This aligns with reflection-in-action, where real-time teaching behaviors were re-evaluated retrospectively. T6 shared, "Journaling helped me connect their misinterpretations to L1 transfer issues. I'm now designing examples to prevent that." Such insight marks the transition from anecdotal narration to pedagogical theorization, supporting Schön's idea of professional growth through reflective cycles. These responses affirm that structured reflection promotes pedagogical awareness and adaptive planning.

Instructional Timing Recalibration and Pacing Sensitivity

Timing and pacing emerged as a recurrent theme in observational logs and mentor feedback. Pre-service teachers often underestimated the time required for student processing, leading to rushed delivery or incomplete activities. Analysis was structured through the lens of Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, identifying intrinsic and extraneous load as factors influencing pacing (Emara, 2024). Participants began implementing pause strategies, chunking tasks, and embedding formative checkpoints to adjust timing. Such recalibrations were more frequent in weeks 4–6 of teaching practice, suggesting an adaptive process. This progression indicates that pacing sensitivity is not merely mechanical but conceptually anchored in learner psychology and instructional design.

Table 3. Pedagogical Timing Adjustments to Reduce Cognitive Load

Participant	Initial Pacing Issue	Adjustment Strategy	Cognitive Load Targeted	Result
T1	Overloading activities	Reduced task segments. Example: Originally gave students three tasks in one set of instructions. Later divided them into steps: "First, underline keywords. Then, identify tenses. Finally, summarize."	Intrinsic load	Better task completion
T2	Fast oral delivery	Inserted pauses. Example: Initially explained grammar rules in one long sentence. Later added pauses: "This is the present perfect... (pause)... used for actions with present relevance."	Extraneous load	Improved student response
T3	Unstructured sequencing	Reordered steps. Example: Used to start with abstract grammar before context. Later reversed the order: "Let's read this dialogue first… now let's analyze the verb forms used."	Both types	More coherent understanding
T4	Short time on reflection	Added buffer time. Example: Previously ended activities without reflection. Later added 2-minute	Extraneous load	Deeper reflective response

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		journal writing: "Now take a moment to write what confused you most in this task."		
T5	Too long on intro	Balanced timing. Example: Spent 15 minutes on topic introduction. Later limited it to 5 minutes: "We'll do a quick overview of narrative structure, then jump into the writing exercise."	Intrinsic load	More time for practice
T6	Abrupt transitions	Used verbal cues. Example: Previously shifted topics without warning. Later used cues: "Before we move on to pronunciation, let's wrap up vocabulary with one last example."	Extraneous load	Reduced confusion

In interviews, participants detailed how their perception of time evolved during teaching. T2 recalled, "My mentor told me I was speaking too fast, and it made sense, I was nervous. I began pausing more, and students started asking questions." This change demonstrates an awareness of extraneous cognitive load reduction through better pacing. T3 reflected, "I used to rush activities, thinking I'd run out of time. Then I realized students were skipping steps because I didn't pause between instructions." His strategy to reorder and chunk tasks reduced intrinsic load and improved coherence. Meanwhile, T4 remarked, "I now give them time to reflect after group tasks, even just a minute. It helps them process better." This intentional buffer aligns with pacing theories and supports learner-centered timing. These interview excerpts highlight that instructional pacing is not intuitive but developed through iterative feedback, reflection, and sensitivity to student processing needs.

Language Accuracy Monitoring and Error Sensitivity

Language use in microteaching was examined through audio transcripts and error logs maintained by observers. Over time, pre-service teachers began to show heightened sensitivity toward fossilized errors and spontaneous slips, often correcting themselves or rephrasing for clarity. Krashen's Monitor Theory guided the coding, identifying shifts from automatic to monitored language production (Deocampo, 2024). Teachers developed strategies such as delayed correction, contextual clarification, and selective recasts. This growth reflects not only linguistic awareness but a pedagogical prioritization of meaning over perfection. The data suggest a varied transformation where accuracy is reframed as facilitative rather than punitive.

Table 4. Common Learner Errors and Instructional Monitoring Strategies

Participant	Common Errors	Monitoring Strategy	Theory Component	Learning Outcome
T1	Tense consistency	Self-repair. Example: "He go to school yesterday... I mean, he went to school yesterday."	Monitor use	Fewer verb errors over time
T2	Preposition misuse	Recast with model. Example: Student: "She arrived to the office." Teacher: "Yes, she arrived at the office around 8."	Input modification	Student corrected in context
T3	Pluralization	Peer correction method. Example: Student A: "I see many bird." Student B (peer): "Birds." Teacher smiles and nods.	Affective filter	Increased confidence
T4	Article omission	Repetition with stress. Example: Student: "I want apple." Teacher: "You want an apple?" (emphasizing "an")	Monitor hypothesis	Noticed pattern independently
T5	Word order	Contextual rephrasing. Example: Student: "She very is smart." Teacher: "She is very smart, yes!"	Acquisition-learning	Shift to natural phrasing
T6	Pronunciation (ed)	Board annotation. Example:	Conscious learning	Applied in next lesson

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		Teacher writes: "watched" on board → underlines "-ed" → models correct pronunciation: /wɒʧt/		

Interview data enriched the understanding of how pre-service teachers negotiated between fluency and accuracy in real-time. T1 shared, "When I caught myself saying 'He go to school yesterday,' I repeated it properly: 'He went.' I wanted them to hear the right form." This self-monitoring reflects Krashen's concept of the learned system regulating output when conscious attention is engaged. T4 explained, "I emphasized the article 'a' when I repeated their sentence:'He is a teacher.' I didn't correct them directly, just let them hear it again." This aligns with selective recasting, aiming to reduce affective filters while reinforcing form. T6 added, "After class, I wrote the wrong pronunciation on the board and repeated it the right way. They repeated after me." This delayed correction strategy minimized real-time disruption while supporting conscious learning. These responses suggest a growing ability to balance pedagogical timing, language monitoring, and emotional climate within the classroom.

Real-Time Feedback Processing and Adaptive Listening

Feedback was analyzed using video-stimulated recall, highlighting moments when students' verbal or nonverbal cues triggered teacher adaptations. Drawing on van Lier's ecological language learning theory, teacher responses were seen as co-constructed with learners. Rather than treating feedback as post-lesson, many participants responded in real time through content re-clarification, humor, or simplified input (Sak & Gurbuz, 2024). Six examples demonstrated how adaptive listening became central to moment-by-moment pedagogical decision-making. The implication is that listening, when pedagogically framed, can become a formative instructional strategy, not just a social courtesy.

Table 5. Real-Time Adaptive Teaching Strategies in Response to Learner Cues

Example	Feedback Cue Type	Adaptive Strategy	Learner Reaction	Instructional Gain
T1 - Example: After explaining "ecosystem services," the teacher noticed puzzled looks. She rephrased using simpler words like "benefits from nature," prompting students to nod and take notes.	Confused expressions	Simplified vocabulary	Nods, note-taking	Concept clarified
T2 - Example: When a student said, "I don't get it," the teacher joked, "Maybe my handwriting needs a dictionary," and paraphrased the explanation. Students laughed, and the classroom became more relaxed.	Verbal "I don't get"	Humor + paraphrase	Laughter + engagement	Lowered anxiety
T3 - Example: Hearing side whispers, the teacher paused and said, "Let's all take a look at this part together." Students refocused on the task immediately.	Whispering peers	Group redirection	Focused attention	Restored flow
T4 - Example: After asking a question and seeing blank stares, the teacher waited longer and said, "Take your time." This led to students slowly starting to respond.	Blank stares	Extended wait time	Hesitant answers	Encouraged participation
T5 - Example: Seeing students avoid eye contact during a grammar explanation, the teacher circled back to the previous example on the board. Students looked up and paid closer attention.	Eye contact avoidance	Revisited prior content	Silent concentration	Reinforced understanding
T6 - Example: When a student asked, "Is this like what we did last week?" the teacher replied, "Great connection!	Side questions	Integrated as examples	Interactive discussion	Deepened comprehension

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Let's compare them," and turned it into a class discussion.

Three participants articulated how in-the-moment learner signals influenced their instructional shifts. T2 recalled, "When a student said 'I don't get it,' I made a joke about my messy handwriting and rewrote it. They smiled and paid more attention." This example underscores how humor lowered the affective barrier, as proposed by van Lier. T5 noted, "I saw one girl avoiding eye contact, so I asked the class if I should explain again. That helped me know if I lost them." This reflects an attunement to subtle cues and an openness to recalibrate. T6 reported, "When a student asked a side question, I used it as a new example. It made the class more alive." Integrating spontaneous feedback into the instructional flow reveals an emergent co-construction of learning. These accounts demonstrate that adaptive listening is not reactive, but a formative and ecological teaching practice rooted in sustained attention to classroom dynamics.

Sociocultural Engagement in Communicative Tasks

This analysis explores how pre-service teachers adapted communicative activities to align with learners' sociocultural backgrounds and lived experiences. Using narrative interviews and classroom observation notes, six participants demonstrated varying levels of contextualization in their speaking and writing tasks, drawing implicitly on Funds of Knowledge theory (Yeh, 2025). Teachers who integrated culturally familiar topics such as local food, social norms, or religious festivities elicited higher student engagement and verbal output. Analysis also revealed that those who lacked cultural alignment often experienced communicative breakdowns or disengagement, underscoring the necessity of culturally responsive pedagogy. As the teaching practicum progressed, a shift emerged toward more inclusive lesson content, signaling a deeper understanding of learner identity and relevance in language tasks. These findings affirm that sociocultural awareness is not supplementary but integral to effective communicative English teaching in Indonesian classrooms.

Table 6. Integrating Local Themes to Enhance EFL Task Engagement and Learning Outcomes

Participant	Local Theme Used	Task Type	Student Response	Examples	Outcome
T1	Traditional snacks	Group speaking	High participation	Students discussed their favorite snacks like pisang goreng and lemper.	Improved speaking fluency
T2	Local transportation	Descriptive essay	Moderate interest	Students wrote about angkot and motorbikes in their city.	Vocabulary application
T3	Urban youth slang	Role-play dialogue	Mixed engagement	Some students used slang like "gabut" in a scripted skit.	Surface-level interaction
T4	Family ceremonies	Storytelling	Strong emotional sharing	Students told stories about "arisan keluarga".	Enhanced narrative coherence
T5	Local legends	Comic scripting	Enthusiastic responses	Students created comics about Malin Kundang.	Increased creativity
T6	School life problems	Opinion writing	Realistic discussion	Students wrote about exam stress and cheating in school.	Improved argument structuring

Three teachers reflected on the role of cultural content in boosting engagement. T1 shared, "When I asked them to talk about traditional snacks, everyone had something to say. It became more than just practice and it was personal." This reflects effective activation of local knowledge, increasing ownership and fluency. T4 observed, "I used a story about a family ceremony and saw them nodding and adding their own versions. It was a real dialogue." This supports Moll's notion that integrating lived experiences fosters authentic communication. In contrast, T3 confessed, "I thought using urban slang would be fun, but they didn't connect with it. Maybe it wasn't relevant to their environment." This misalignment highlights the importance of authentic context. These examples affirm that sociocultural alignment is not incidental but crucial for optimizing participation, relevance, and communicative success.

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Professional Identity Formation in Classroom Interaction

This analysis investigates how microteaching facilitates the construction of pre-service teachers' professional identity through interactional behavior, self-presentation, and authority negotiation. Drawing from Wenger's Communities of Practice framework, identity is interpreted as a dynamic process shaped through legitimate participation and feedback (Hasib & Pratiwi, 2025). Teachers exhibited identity shifts when transitioning from scripted performance to spontaneous responses, particularly in managing discipline, feedback, and questioning. Observation logs and focus group discussions revealed increased confidence, consistency in tone, and more intentional positioning as knowledge facilitators. Notably, six cases illustrate how identity markers evolved from uncertainty to assertiveness as participants navigated classroom power structures. These developments suggest that identity formation is not merely about role acquisition but is dialogically co-constructed within teaching events.

Table 7. Identity Shifts and Communicative Strategies during Microteaching

Participant	Identity Marker Shift	Triggering Situation	Communicative Strategy	Student Response	Identity Development
T1	Uncertain → authoritative	Students talking over teacher	Used hand-raise rules and pauses	Students took turns	Emergent leadership role
T2	Passive → assertive	Interrupted by a loud student	Firm tone: "Please let me finish"	Immediate silence	Assertive presence
T3	Formal → relational	Student appeared nervous	Shared personal school story	Student smiled, spoke more	Relational educator persona
T4	Vague → intentional	Students confused about task	Repeated instructions with examples	Students asked relevant Qs	Purpose-driven teaching
T5	Imitative → adaptive	Lesson copied from peer failed	Modified steps to fit class pace	Students followed smoothly	Strategic professional stance
T6	Hesitant → confident	Couldn't answer a question	Said "Let's find out together"	Students participated openly	Authentic identity negotiation

These examples show that identity transformation is driven by in-the-moment communication choices. T1 gained authority through rule-setting, while T3 built rapport using personal storytelling. T6 turned hesitation into authenticity by acknowledging knowledge gaps. Collectively, these shifts reflect how responsive classroom interaction fosters confident, adaptive teacher identities. T1 stated, "At first, I felt awkward telling students to listen, but when I clearly set the rules, they followed. It felt empowering." This suggests a shift from passive to authoritative stance, indicating internalization of role expectations. T3 commented, "I used to be very formal, but then I shared a story about being nervous in school. They laughed and opened up more." This reflects identity negotiation toward a relational educator persona, consistent with Wenger's view of identity as practice-based. T6 said, "When I didn't know the answer, I said, 'Let's find out together.' It felt more honest than pretending." This instance of authentic admission supports trust and shows that confidence and vulnerability can coexist in professional identity. These reflections indicate that identity development in teaching is both reflective and interactional to shape through experience, relational dynamics, and discursive choices.

Instructional Language Repertoire Development

This analysis explores how participants expanded and refined their instructional language repertoire to balance clarity, tone, and scaffolding strategies. Data from transcribed microteaching sessions and peer observations were analyzed through Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL), focusing on interpersonal and ideational metafunctions. Participants shifted from rigid textbook English to more flexible, learner-responsive language that included hedging, rephrasing, and emphasis (Li et al., 2025). Effective teachers demonstrated control over teacher talk functions such as eliciting, redirecting, and modeling language use in real-time. Six cases illustrate evolving language strategies that increased comprehensibility and rapport without sacrificing instructional precision. These findings

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highlight that instructional language use is not fixed but grows contextually through reflective microteaching.

Table 8. Pedagogical and Their Impact on Student Engagement and Language Development

Participant	Initial Pattern	Adjusted Repertoire	Targeted Function	Student Effect	Language Development Focus
T1	Monologic explanation	Questioning + feedback. Example: "Instead of saying This is a noun, I asked, What kind of word is this?"	Elicitation	Increased response rate	Dialogic scaffolding
T2	Scripted instruction	Rephrased examples. Example: "I changed ecosystem is... to Imagine a forest where animals and plants live together."	Clarification	Better conceptual grasp	Pragmatic flexibility
T3	Over-corrective tone	Hedging + suggestion. Example: "Instead of That's wrong, I said, Maybe try another way to say it."	Affective engagement	Lower anxiety	Affective register expansion
T4	Textbook English	Paraphrasing. Example: "I changed globalization affects society to The world is more connected now."	Comprehensibility	Better listening	Functional language control
T5	Overloading input	Chunking + signaling. Example: "I said, First, we read. Then, we discuss. Finally, we write."	Information sequencing	Reduced confusion	Metadiscourse awareness
T6	Limited scaffolds	Modeling sentence stems. Example: "I provided: I agree with this idea because... for them to complete."	Academic framing	More structured output	Instructional modeling fluency

Interview data revealed the intentional linguistic adjustments made by participants. T2 shared, "I used to follow the textbook word for word, but when I saw students weren't getting it, I started giving simpler examples in my own words." This reflects the ideational metafunction of language, where meaning-making becomes contextual and responsive. T3 commented, "When students made mistakes, I tried not to sound too sharp. I used words like 'maybe' or 'you could try' instead of direct corrections." This hedging strategy reflects an affective linguistic shift, improving student receptiveness. T5 explained, "I used to say everything in one go. Now I say, 'First… next… finally…' so they follow better." This shows the development of metadiscourse awareness, aiding learners' cognitive processing. These responses confirm that expanding one's instructional repertoire is a deliberate and evolving practice, supported by feedback, reflection, and student interaction.

Affective Presence and Emotional Resonance in Teaching

This analysis addresses how emotional presence and affective resonance impacted classroom climate and learner responsiveness during microteaching. Drawing from theory of emotional intelligence and the concept of affective transactions (ElSayary & Mohebi, 2025), this analysis identifies moments where teachers' emotional tone significantly shaped student interaction. Emotional presence manifested in tone modulation, facial expressiveness, and humor, which influenced learner comfort and engagement. Participants moved from emotionally flat delivery to affectively responsive teaching as they learned to read classroom affect cues. Each of the six examples illustrates how changes in affective presence created emotionally safe environments that facilitated interaction and language production. Thus, cultivating emotional resonance is not peripheral but central to teaching effectiveness in EFL contexts.

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Table 9. Affective Teaching Strategies and Their Impact on Student Engagement

Participant	Emotional Cue Used	Classroom Moment	Affective Strategy	Student Behavior	Affective Teaching Outcome
T1	Smiling, eye contact	A student struggled to answer a grammar question	Reassurance (smiled and nodded)	Student attempted again	Safe participation climate
T2	Laughter	A student made a funny mistake in vocabulary use	Humor integration	Class laughed, stayed focused	Reduced affective filter
T3	Soothing tone	A shy student hesitated to speak	Empathic framing (gentle voice)	Student shared thoughts	Trust-building moment
T4	Energetic intonation	Before starting a group game	Positive reinforcement	Students participated actively	Increased enthusiasm
T5	Facial expressiveness	Class looked tired after break	Exaggerated gestures (raised eyebrows, wide eyes)	Students smiled, re-engaged	Affective engagement spike
T6	Tone adjustment	Students were confused by instructions	Calming explanation (slowed down tone)	Students regained focus	Emotional regulation observed

Participants reflected on how their affective presence evolved and how it impacted student behavior. T1 stated, "I used to just explain with a straight face, but when I smiled and looked them in the eye, they started asking more questions." This shift signals the emergence of emotional safety, where positive facial affect encouraged student risk-taking. T2 noted, "A student gave a funny answer, and I laughed with them instead of correcting immediately. The whole class relaxed after that." This shows how shared humor reduces anxiety and fosters group connection. T3 added, "One student looked very nervous, so I spoke slowly and gently. She started answering after that." This demonstrates empathic framing, confirming the teacher's ability to regulate classroom affect and promote inclusive participation. These experiences illustrate that emotional responsiveness is not spontaneous kindness alone: it is an intentional pedagogical act grounded in awareness and relational skill.

Technology-Aided Microteaching Reflection

This analysis explores the use of technology tools to support reflective practice in microteaching, emphasizing asynchronous self-review and multimodal feedback. Participants used screen recordings, peer-reviewed video comments, and digital journals to analyze their teaching sessions beyond immediate delivery. Theoretical grounding draws on experiential learning cycle and multimedia learning principles to evaluate reflection depth and medium effectiveness (Hizriani et al., 2025). Teachers reported heightened awareness of gesture, voice modulation, and lesson flow after reviewing recordings, enabling more precise self-correction. Six cases exemplify how technology served not as a passive tool but as an active dialogic partner in reflection and professional growth. This finding underscores the affordances of multimodal technology in elevating reflective teacher education.

Table 10. Reflective Tools and Instructional Adjustments in Microteaching Practice

Participant	Tool Used	Reflection Type	Insight Gained	Instructional Change	Tech Reflection Value
T1	Screen recording. Example: Used phone to record herself and saw she waved hands too much when explaining.	Visual self-review	Gesture overuse	Calmer body language. Example: Practiced standing still with calm gestures.	Increased physical awareness
T2	Google Docs journal. Example: Reflected in Google Doc: "I kept	Written summary	Over-talking issue	Added wait time. Example: Paused 5	Improved pacing awareness

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	talking without letting students respond."			seconds after asking questions.	
T3	Peer video comments. Example: "You didn't notice two students raised hands."	Dialogic critique	Missed student cues	Eye contact adjustment. Example: Looked around more during tasks to check engagement.	Real-time engagement growth
T4	Slide narration replay. Example: Heard herself sounding monotone while narrating slides.	Voice tone analysis	Flat intonation noticed	Greater vocal variety. Example: Practiced using rising and falling intonation for key points.	Enhanced vocal modulation
T5	Screencast with captions. Example: Saw that her speech was too fast for on-screen text.	Text-speech mismatch	Fast delivery recognized	Slower speech and pause. Example: Spoke slower and added pauses after bullet points.	Better audio-text alignment
T6	Padlet feedback wall. Example: Multiple peers noted repeated explanations.	Collective reflection	Redundant examples	Streamlined explanations. Example: Removed repeated sentences and used one clear example.	Improved content economy

Participants emphasized how technological tools changed the way they processed and improved their teaching. T1 explained, "When I rewatched my recording, I saw I was moving too much, and it was distracting. I learned to stay calmer." This self-discovery aligns with Kolb's reflective observation stage and demonstrates how visual data fosters bodily awareness. T4 said, "I didn't realize my voice sounded so flat until I listened to my recording. Now I practice using more intonation." This response illustrates how multimedia review enhances awareness of paralinguistic features. T6 reflected, "Using Padlet, I could see how others noticed I kept repeating the same phrase. That helped me be more concise." This shows the power of collaborative feedback loops in refining instructional delivery. These reflections confirm that technology-mediated reflection deepens teacher self-awareness and supports iterative improvement in both form and function.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the development of reflective habits among pre-service teachers progressed from surface-level documentation toward critical pedagogical introspection, particularly through sustained engagement with teaching journals. In the early stages of the microteaching program, participants' reflections were predominantly descriptive, focusing on lesson procedures, student responses, and task completion without interrogating underlying pedagogical rationales. This pattern is consistent with novice teachers' tendency to prioritize observable classroom events over interpretive analysis. However, by the fourth week, a noticeable shift occurred as participants began engaging in reflection-on-action (Hawar, 2025), critically examining causal relationships between instructional choices and learning outcomes. This transition suggests that structured reflective journaling, when embedded within iterative teaching practice, functions as a catalyst for metacognitive development and intentional pedagogical refinement.

The linguistic features evident in participants' journal entries further illustrate this progression in reflective depth. The increasing use of metacognitive markers such as "I realized...," "I questioned whether...," and "Next time, I will..." signals a movement beyond retrospective narration toward anticipatory and forward-looking reflection. This shift reflects Schon's notion of reflection-for-action, wherein teachers use reflective insight to inform future instructional planning rather than merely evaluating past performance (Kim et al., 2024).

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Through this process, participants began to reposition themselves from passive reporters of classroom events to active agents of pedagogical decision-making. Reflection thus became an instrument for instructional agency, enabling teachers to consciously redesign their teaching approaches based on reflective insight.

Importantly, the mode of reflection also shaped the nature and depth of participants' professional learning. Multimodal reflective practices, including written journals, voice-recorded reflections, and peer-mediated feedback, generated distinct yet complementary forms of insight. Voice-recorded reflections, for instance, heightened participants' awareness of instructional timing, pacing, and tone through auditory self-observation, aspects that were often overlooked in written reflections. Peer feedback, meanwhile, fostered dialogic reflection by enabling participants to anticipate potential instructional challenges and reconsider lesson sequencing. These findings corroborate Hizriani et al. (2025), who argue that reflective modality significantly influences the quality of professional learning, particularly during early stages of teacher development when external perspectives play a crucial scaffolding role.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings align strongly with constructivist and sociocultural views of teacher learning, which conceptualize reflection as a socially mediated and contextually embedded practice rather than an isolated cognitive activity. As participants engaged in reflective journaling, they negotiated meaning not only internally but also through interaction with peers, mentors, and institutional expectations. Teaching journals thus functioned simultaneously as cognitive tools for sense-making and dialogic spaces for professional identity construction. This supports the argument that reflection is a recursive, socially situated process through which teachers construct pedagogical knowledge and professional self-understanding (Anis & Hasan, 2025).

The data further underscore the integral role of emotional intelligence in reflective teacher development. Participants' reflections increasingly revealed heightened awareness of their emotional responses to instructional success, confusion, and learner disengagement. These affective reactions often served as triggers for deeper pedagogical inquiry and subsequent instructional adjustment. Moments of discomfort, such as ineffective explanations or visible student confusion, became reflective turning points rather than sources of discouragement. This finding resonates with Rakerda et al. (2025), who emphasize that emotionally intelligent teachers demonstrate greater self-regulation, empathy, and adaptability. In this sense, reflection emerges not solely as a cognitive endeavor but as an affective process that encourages teachers to confront uncertainty, embrace vulnerability, and cultivate resilience, all of which are central to the formation of a professional teaching identity.

Interview data further reinforced that sustained reflective writing fostered increased sensitivity to student perspectives, classroom unpredictability, and instructional intentionality. Over time, participants began using journals not merely to identify errors but to interrogate deeper assumptions about teaching, learning, and learner diversity. This shift signifies movement toward professional maturity, where reflection serves as a means of epistemological inquiry rather than procedural correction. Such findings highlight that effective reflective practice does not emerge through routine documentation alone but requires purposeful, theory-informed engagement with lived classroom experiences.

Taken together, the discussion demonstrates that structured reflective journaling, particularly when scaffolded by reflective frameworks such as Schon's and supported through multimodal feedback, plays a critical role in shaping adaptive, critical, and learner-responsive educators. Reflection in microteaching contexts thus functions as a transformative mechanism that integrates cognitive analysis, emotional awareness, and identity development. These insights contribute to the broader discourse on teacher education by positioning reflective practice not as an ancillary activity, but as a central pedagogical strategy for fostering sustainable professional growth among pre-service English teachers.

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CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study demonstrated that microteaching functions not merely as a technical training exercise but as a transformative pedagogical space for Indonesian pre-service English teachers. The findings revealed that sustained engagement in microteaching, supported by reflective journals, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interviews, facilitated a shift from routine, procedural teaching toward more adaptive, reflective, and student-centered instructional practices. Participants developed heightened pedagogical awareness, improved instructional decision-making, and greater sensitivity to classroom interaction, emotional climate, and sociocultural dynamics. These changes indicate that microteaching can meaningfully contribute to reflective depth, pedagogical adaptability, and emerging professional identity when implemented as a reflective and dialogic practice. Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the small sample size of fourteen participants limits the generalizability of the findings beyond similar institutional and cultural contexts. Second, the study was conducted within two private universities in North Sumatra, which may not represent the diverse conditions of teacher education programs across Indonesia or other EFL settings. Third, the relatively short duration of the microteaching practicum restricted the ability to observe long-term pedagogical transformation or sustained identity development beyond the microteaching phase. Future research is therefore recommended to involve larger and more diverse participant groups, extend data collection across longer teaching periods, and include post-microteaching classroom experiences. Further studies could also examine the role of institutional support, mentor scaffolding, and cross-cultural classroom dynamics in shaping reflective microteaching outcomes. By addressing these areas, future investigations may help bridge the gap between microteaching performance and real classroom practice, ensuring that reflective engagement translates into sustained, context-responsive, and impactful pedagogy in English language education.

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