

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD MICROTEACHING IN THE
CONTEXT OF *KURIKULUM MERDEKA* IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
EDUCATION**

THESIS

Submitted by

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**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN
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in the Field of English Language Education

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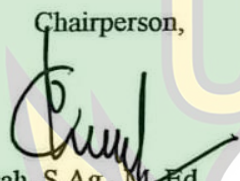
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adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sebenar-benarnya.

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ABSTRACT

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This study explores how microteaching supports the development of teaching competence, reflective practices, and professional identity in pre-service teachers, aligning with the principles of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative method and used purposive sampling to select participants who had completed the microteaching course, based on the criteria the researcher obtained 10 participants. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews in order to gain an in-depth understanding of students' perceptions. The findings reveal that most participants held positive perceptions of microteaching, particularly in terms of building confidence, developing teaching skills, fostering creativity, and appreciating the flexibility provided by *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Reflection and feedback were also considered essential in shaping their professional growth. The discussion suggests that microteaching is an effective preparatory tool aligned with the principles of *Kurikulum Merdeka*. However, its success requires structured guidance, institutional support, and realistic teaching simulations to ensure that prospective teachers are fully prepared for the complexities of real classroom environments. While microteaching supports pedagogical development and curriculum alignment, it requires further support, structured guidance, and realistic teaching simulations to optimize its effectiveness.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, and research terminology.

A. Background of Study

Microteaching is an essential element in teacher education, functioning as both a training platform and an evaluative instrument for prospective educators prior to their full engagement in real classrooms. Microteaching has been customised for several educational fields, including mathematics and language instruction, showcasing its versatility and efficacy across diverse courses (Mukuka & Alex, 2024). In Indonesia, microteaching has become a crucial component of teacher education programs, especially in preparing prospective English educators. This program provides aspiring educators with practical teaching experience in a supportive setting, significantly boosting their confidence and equipping them with essential skills for effective classroom management (Jannah *et al.*, 2023).

According to Saa (2024), Indonesia has implemented the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, a flexible and creative educational framework that prioritizes student-centered learning as educational policies evolve. This curriculum empowers educators to develop customized learning programs that cater to each student's distinct needs, thereby enhancing the quality of education. It promotes the incorporation of technology and diversified educational methodologies, thereby augmenting teaching efficacy (Mafazi, 2023).

In addition, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* has characteristics that significantly distinguish it from the 2013 Curriculum (K13) and previous curricula. K13 tends to be more structured and uniform, with an emphasis on achieving the same core competencies and basic competencies for all students, thereby limiting the space for teachers to adapt their learning approaches. In contrast, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* places flexibility and differentiation of learning as its main principles. Teachers are given the freedom to design teaching modules, methods, and assessments tailored to the needs, interests, and characteristics of their students. This curriculum also emphasises student-centred learning, project-based learning, and authentic assessment that evaluates the learning process and outcomes more comprehensively.

This approach aims to improve academic outcomes while also developing 21st-century skills, including creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and independent learning. With these characteristics, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is seen as more relevant for preparing students to face dynamic global challenges, while also providing space for teachers and prospective teachers to develop creativity, innovation, and contextual learning strategies.

The *Kurikulum Merdeka* emphasizes the role of educators as facilitators who guide students toward autonomous learning, analytical thinking, and proactive exploration of individual interests and abilities. Educators are encouraged to adopt a mentoring approach, rather than a conventional teaching style, to foster increased student autonomy in the learning process (Marlina & Soleha, 2023). This transition requires future educators to excel in subject matter and cultivate practical, student-

focused classroom management abilities. Microteaching is essential, as it provides immediate feedback to help aspiring educators recognize and develop their strengths while addressing areas for improvement (Jannah et al., 2023).

Ha and Nguyễn (2024) explain that in English language education, microteaching is a vital instrument that allows prospective teachers to hone skills centred on effective communication. Teaching English presents distinct challenges; educators often encounter students with limited vocabulary and grammar proficiency, which can hinder effective communication. Microteaching enables prospective English teachers to participate in organized mentoring activities that significantly improve both teachers' and students' reading and comprehension skills, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure, and thematic comprehension (Al., 2023). Furthermore, microteaching in English language education facilitates the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* by enabling prospective educators to explore communicative and contextual learning methodologies. By integrating effective microteaching approaches, prospective English educators can develop skills that foster active and engaging communication among their students, aligning with the objectives of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

Despite the growing body of literature on microteaching and its application in English language education, there remains a limited research base that explicitly examines prospective teachers' perceptions of microteaching within the framework of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in Indonesia. Most existing studies either focus on microteaching in general teacher education contexts or discuss the *Kurikulum Merdeka* without linking it to practical teacher preparation strategies. As a result,

there is a lack of empirical understanding of how microteaching contributes to equipping future English teachers with the competencies required to implement student-centered learning as envisioned by the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

This study is important to align teacher preparation programs with the pedagogical demands of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which emphasizes flexibility, creativity, and student autonomy in learning. Given that the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is still in its early stages of implementation, understanding how prospective English teachers view and experience microteaching can provide valuable insights for curriculum designers, teacher educators, and policymakers. These findings provide a foundation for enhancing microteaching practices, ensuring that they effectively prepare teachers to create engaging, meaningful, and contextually relevant learning experiences aligned with the goals of the new curriculum.

Therefore, this study explores students' perceptions of microteaching in the *Kurikulum Merdeka* framework in English language education, with a focus on its role in preparing future educators for student-centered teaching. Emphasizing flexibility and learner autonomy, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* aligns with microteaching's capacity to develop practical teaching skills, address language learning challenges, and foster contextual and communicative strategies. By providing structured practice and feedback, microteaching equips prospective teachers with the competencies to implement effective, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences. This research evaluates how microteaching supports the *objectives of the Kurikulum Merdeka* and informs improvements in teacher preparation programs.

B. Research Question

What are students' perceptions on the implementation of microteaching in the context of *Kurikulum Merdeka*?

C. Aim of Study

This research investigates students' perceptions of the implementation of microteaching in the context of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

D. Significance of The Study

1. Researchers

This study's results are expected to provide insights into students' perceptions of micro-teaching within the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, a new educational policy in Indonesia. It examines the effectiveness of microteaching in enhancing the competence of prospective English teachers while identifying challenges and opportunities for improvement. Additionally, the findings contribute to educational literature and help the researcher develop analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving skills in education.

2. Lecturers

The study underscores the pivotal role of microteaching as an innovative approach to preparing future educators for roles in higher education. The insights from this research can assist educators in crafting more targeted and relevant curricula and training programs. By appreciating the value of microteaching in developing practical skills, professors are better equipped

to deliver constructive and impactful feedback throughout the learning process.

3. Educational institution

Educational institutions can utilize the findings of this study to assess and enhance their teacher training programs. This research provides empirical evidence on the efficacy of microteaching in improving teaching quality. Utilizing these insights, educational institutions can enhance the learning environment and facilitate ongoing professional growth for educators.

E. Research Terminology

1. Students' perception

Student perception refers to how individuals interpret and respond to their educational experiences, which are influenced by various factors, including teaching methods, curriculum, and personal feelings. In this research, student perception refers to the process by which a person interprets, understands, and gives meaning to the experience of implementing microteaching activities within the context of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

2. Microteaching

Microteaching is a focused teaching training method that involves short, small-scale teaching sessions designed to enhance the teaching skills of prospective educators. This approach allows for practical application and feedback in a controlled environment, making it a valuable tool in teacher education. In this research, microteaching leads to one of the courses that

focuses on teaching training to improve the teaching skills of prospective teachers.

3. *Kurikulum Merdeka*

Kurikulum Merdeka refers to an educational approach that emphasizes flexibility and autonomy in designing and implementing curricula tailored to students' needs. In this research, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* refers not only to the school curriculum studied by students but also to the educational framework applied when designing and practicing microteaching, as reflected in their selection of teaching methods, instructional approaches, activity design, assessment strategies, and attitudes as prospective teachers.

