



# Challenges and Solutions in Student Teachers' Microteaching for English Language Teaching

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Microteaching experience is a compulsory subject as a practical training technique that provides prospective teachers with many opportunities to design their effective teaching techniques before they are involved in real classroom experiences as English teachers. However, the challenges and solutions in conducting microteaching in student teachers in English language teaching (ELT) remain under-researched. Therefore, this study addressed this issue, notably in Indonesian English as a foreign language. Three student teachers from an English study program of a private educational higher institution were recruited as the participants. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed with Thematic Analysis (TA). The research result identified themes related to the obstacles English student teachers face in teacher training and education programs when executing the microteaching process and solution. It covers their lack of conceptual knowledge of instructional design, their incapability in classroom management, their lack of understanding of the character of students, their incapability to perceive the role of reflective teaching and their lack of self-confidence. Developing a microteaching endeavour that facilitates practical teaching experiences and enables English teacher candidates to hone their teaching abilities by improving various teaching skills is advisable.

**Keywords:** English language teaching, microteaching, student teachers

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## INTRODUCTION

The English student teachers are adequately equipped to engage in practical teaching and navigate the English learning environment by emphasizing students' requirements and learning objectives in authentic contexts. Effective teaching is contingent upon more than mere academic proficiency, subject matter expertise, and technical teaching abilities; educators who are motivated, enthusiastic, and sincerely dedicated to their students' education and teaching vocation are indispensable to ensuring quality education (Heinz, 2015). Teaching English also necessitates practical experience in the classroom and the capacity to assume various responsibilities, including lesson planning, content creation, and more. Furthermore, in English language instruction, the teacher assumes many duties, including that of a facilitator, assessor, manager, or evaluator (Kumbakonam et al., 2017). The teacher is the primary determinant of variation that can affect students' learning outcomes; teachers' knowledge, actions, and concerns hold immense influence in this educational scenario.

English student teachers ought to be able to implement the pedagogical theories and methods they have gained knowledge of in institutions of higher education when instructing in schools. Nevertheless, the need for more emphasis in L2 teacher education regarding acquiring teaching skills is paradoxical. In contrast, traditional emphasis has been placed on the content itself—what educators ought to be well-versed in—and, to a lesser extent, on the instructional approach—how it ought to be delivered (Freeman, 2001). This disparity between teacher education and practice has numerous causes. Some relate to the research paradigms and methodologies utilized and valued in producing the present knowledge. These paradigms raise questions regarding the definition and study of teaching in education and the relationship between teacher education and the study of teaching (Freeman, 2001).

Formal practical instruction, like microteaching, can help close the knowledge gap between theory and practice. It is a method of instruction that best illustrates the idea that teaching is more than just imparting knowledge; it is a complex process that influences and supports learning (Ogeyik, 2009). Microteaching programs also give preservice teacher-trainees a simulated environment where they can use the theories they have studied, gain confidence, and practice teaching while giving a mini-lesson to their peers (Ismail, 2011). The experiential knowledge of aspiring teachers regarding the practical application of theory within an educational setting is critical. Hence, for an EFL teacher to be an effective instructional leader in the classroom, she or he must apply knowledge of classroom instruction in the proper format (Darwish & Sadeqi, 2016). Therefore, micro-teaching applications are indispensable for student teachers to acquire teaching skills and practical experience in the contemporary classroom setting.

Another goal of microteaching is to provide teacher candidates with more real-world experience before beginning

their clinical practicum in actual classroom settings. Teaching practices serve as the showcase wherein the teacher manifests their values, subject matter expertise in situated learning environments, and practical abilities in daily lessons (Darwish & Sadeqi, 2016). The teacher's skillful teaching assists the students in achieving the desired learning outcome. It involves the endeavor of learning the English language. Learning the basics of teaching takes more than just using the classrooms. Moreover, pedagogical proficiency—acquired through a highly regimented microteaching program—is necessary for teaching English.

This article intends to describe the English student teachers' insights related to their microteaching experience. In particular, three questions are addressed in this study: (RQ1) How do the English student teachers reflect their teaching practice from the lens of Gagne's nine instruction events?; (RQ2) What challenges do the English student teachers encounter when performing the microteaching-process?; (RQ3) How do the English student teachers overcome their challenges during the microteaching-process?

## METHODS

This study described and focused on the phenomenon of the challenges faced by English student of teacher training and education program and the solutions in order to cope with the challenges performing the microteaching-process to senior high school students. Grounded in descriptive case study, the present study aims at depicting detailed and contextualized picture of a particular phenomenon; it is used to describe a phenomenon and contexts that occur in real life (Hollweck, 2015).

In this research, the participants were six English students of teacher training and education program from a private educational higher institution who were recruited since they agreed to participate in this research. Their ages ranged around 18 to 20 years old. In general, they communicate in national language (i.e. Indonesian) and foreign language (i.e. English). Based on gender, they were categorized into females (N = 6). They were asked to complete a questionnaire reflecting the principle of Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction (Abeygunawardena, 2022; Çetin & Solmaz, 2020; McNeill & Fitch, 2022) to portray their micro teaching experiences.

Moreover, three of them voluntarily involved in a semi-structured interview to collect data to investigate the challenges and the solutions of English students' teacher training and education programs in conducting microteaching in the ELT context. Practically, the interview was addressed to three participants. Further, the interview guidance was designed with several topics for posing questions. The topics were related to their challenges and the solutions to resolve them during their microteaching experience. Interviewing is a tool for professional development in which language teachers engage in research examining classroom realities drawn from teacher stories (Reich, 1994). Moreover, it is used to explore participants' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a particular topic.

The collected data were analyzed through Thematic Analysis (TA) as a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Byrne, 2022; Tuckett, 2005). The stages of this research method were started by familiarizing with the data, generating initial

codes, searching the themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The English student teachers' reflection on their teaching practice from the lens of Gagne's nine instruction events. The Table 1 shows how the English student teachers reflect their microteaching practice from the lens of Gagne's nine instruction events.

[Table 1. about here]

### English student teachers' lack of conceptual knowledge of instructional design

Excerpt 1

- P1 I need help effectively implementing learning concepts and theories within classroom instruction despite having developed a comprehensive framework outlining the various stages of instructional activities that I am expected to undertake. The complexity of the learning process inside the classroom setting surpasses the comprehension of the diverse learning theories previously acquired.
- P2 Managing time effectively to fulfill learning objectives can be a formidable task within the context of the learning process. I interacted with approximately 36 pupils during a classroom session, which proved to be a laborious task regarding time consumption. Integrating it with a learning management system (LMS) to facilitate completing the incomplete learning process was attempted. However, this endeavor proved unsuccessful since students perceived that meaningful learning could only occur within the confines of the physical classroom.
- P3 Occasionally, I require further elucidation of the methods to facilitate students in attaining educational goals during learning. The lesson plan I have developed frequently aligns differently with the contextual realities in the educational setting. Conducting learning evaluations might be challenging due to time constraints. (Interview transcript, Participant 1, 2 and 3, translated by the authors)

### English student teachers' incapability in classroom management

Excerpt 2

- P1 Engaging every student in the classroom in active learning poses a significant challenge for me. I also encounter challenges in engaging students with the course material since there are instances where additional motivation is required to foster their active participation in the learning process. Most individuals have a proclivity for engaging in extracurricular activities

instead of attending in-class English sessions.

- P2 Managing time effectively to fulfill learning objectives can be a formidable task within the context of the learning process. I interacted with approximately 36 pupils during a classroom session, which proved to be a laborious task regarding time consumption. Integrating it with a learning management system (LMS) to facilitate completing the incomplete learning process was attempted. However, this endeavor proved unsuccessful since students perceived that meaningful learning could only occur within the confines of the physical classroom.
- P3 Monitoring every student in the learning process presents a considerable challenge for me. Due to my primary concentration being on the learning process, I have limited availability to engage in supplementary responsibilities pertaining to classroom management. (Interview transcript, Participant 1, 2 and 3, translated by the authors)

### English student teachers' lack of understanding of student characteristics

Excerpt 3

- P1 Engaging students in active participation in the learning process poses a challenging endeavor. Several of the tasks I assign have also yet to be optimized by students. For instance, when I want them to engage in English dialog practice, most of them exhibit shyness and fear of committing errors.
- P2 Some of the teaching material I presented failed to captivate student' attention, impeding their comprehension and generating boredom. This is further compounded by the students' restricted proficiency in English, characterized by a limited vocabulary and an incomplete grasp of English grammar structures. Many students encounter challenges expanding a single English sentence into a coherent paragraph.
- P3 I need help fostering interactive dialogue within the learning environment, consequently assuming a prominent position in the English classroom. A significant proportion of the student population requires further involvement with the content being taught, resulting in their participation in alternate activities or adopting a superficial appearance of attentiveness. Nevertheless, when encouraged for a response, individuals require increased engagement. (Interview transcript, Participant 1, 2 and 3, translated by the authors)

### English student teachers' incapability to perceive the

**role of reflective teaching**

## Excerpt 4

- P1 Most of the activities undertaken during the micro-teaching sessions were primarily centered around facilitating the learning process. The evaluation conducted solely aimed to assess students' competencies using formative assessments.
- P2 I am currently unfamiliar with reflective teaching and, as a result, have yet to engage in its practice.
- P3 My primary emphasis is directed toward students and the educational process. I have not conducted an evaluation process to assess my actions or the efficacy of the learning process. (Interview transcript, Participant 1, 2 and 3, translated by the authors)

**English student teachers' lack of self-confidence**

## Excerpt 5

- P1 I was afraid of making mistakes and not grasping the material while microteaching.
- P2 Occasionally, students request that I increase the volume of my speech to facilitate comprehension in a language that is accessible.
- P3 I experienced a lack of self-assurance and feelings of anxiety during the microteaching session. (Interview transcript, Participant 1, 2 and 3, translated by the authors)

The challenges of the English student teachers encounter when performing the microteaching-process. The research result identified themes related to the obstacles English student teachers face in teacher training and education programs when executing the microteaching process with senior high school students: (a) student teachers' lack of conceptual knowledge of instructional design, (b) student teachers' incapability in classroom management, (c) student teachers' lack of understanding the character of students, (d) student teachers' incapability to perceive the role of reflective teaching, and (e) student teachers' lack of self-confidence.

The English teacher candidates reflected on their pedagogical approaches in light of Gagne's nine instruction events. By introducing an attention-getting stimulus, 66% frequently ensured that students were ready to learn. Additionally, half of them still needed to communicate the course's objectives or outcomes to the students in order for them to understand what was expected of them. In certain instances, fifty percent also facilitated students' comprehension of novel information by drawing parallels to personal experiences or knowledge. Moreover, to deliver more effective instruction, 33% of the respondents occasionally employed messaging strategies.

Nevertheless, 17% of respondents still needed to provide students with comprehensive study materials. Additionally, fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they frequently

required students to fully comprehend course concepts to reinforce newly acquired skills and knowledge. Furthermore, 66% of respondents infrequently provided timely feedback on student performance to facilitate learning and enable students to recognise their deficiencies. Fifty percent infrequently assessed whether the intended learning outcomes and course objectives had been achieved. Furthermore, it is worth noting that fifty percent of the participants still needed to attempt to aid students in information retention by providing practical applications of course concepts.

The result of the English teacher candidates' reflection on their pedagogical approaches in light of Gagne's nine instruction events showed that they still need to work on dealing with the roles of English teachers. In contrast, one of the critical factors in successfully implementing an English as an International (EIL) approach to teaching English is the teacher (McKay, 2002). Additionally, they must acquire knowledge and engage in numerous activities. They must comprehend what it means to instruct English in the EIL context. Furthermore, they must be cognizant of the roles they should assume in advancing EIL pedagogy and those they should critically scrutinize if they wish to implement an English instruction methodology consistent with EIL principles. Furthermore, they must cultivate a positive attitude toward the teaching of EIL and be open to acquiring new skills and knowledge before assuming their new responsibilities in this regard (Renandya, 2009; Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Nevertheless, being an effective English teacher demands more than a mere commitment to teaching and a solid grasp of fundamental concepts. Many factors affect the efficacy of instruction. Planning for teachers is among them. The instructional design outlines how knowledge is imparted and acquired within the classroom environment (Arafah & Sihes, 2015). Furthermore, it caters to the requirements of the students through engaging and hands-on instruction that considers their environment and characteristics. The English teacher also has a role as the English instructional designer which requires their ability to performing need analysis as the initial step (Generoso & Arbon, 2020; Yundayani, 2018; Yundayani et al., 2017). As a framework that provides a structure for developing a student-centered, interactive, and facilitated English learning environment, the need analysis results support the instructional design.

The instructional design framework provides a systematic approach to recognizing obstacles in teaching, transforming those obstacles into instructional strategies, achieving the intended learning objectives, and ensuring instruction quality, all while considering pertinent stakeholders' viewpoints (Raza et al., 2020). Moreover, it is an all-encompassing manual that includes explicit instructions regarding the aims and objectives, the organization and choice of educational experiences, continuous assessment, and assessment techniques critical for a successful pedagogical endeavor (Weng & Chiu, 2023). The overarching goal is for instructional design in English language teaching to establish a framework that facilitates the provision of adequate and

productive learning experiences through both preferred and supported environments.

The class manager or teacher is the most significant individual in the management course. In addition to being involved in selecting the most successful instructional methods, teachers also develop the course program. In order to maximize the use of time, an English teacher must cultivate and oversee the learning environment and the abilities of the students they teach to improve, become more focused, and become more organized (Gultom & Saun, 2016). Classroom management establishes an environment conducive to diverse learning activities encompassing intellectual, emotional, and social development.

A more convenient, interactive, dynamic, and influential learning environment can be produced by embodying the influential role of the teacher. The role of an English teacher is to establish and sustain an efficient English classroom atmosphere through the arrangement of the physical space, implementation of established rules and regulations, and encouragement of student engagement in activities and focus on lessons (Çakmak, 2019). Furthermore, effective English classroom management has been identified as a prevalent concern among English novice and experienced teachers.

When studying English as a foreign language, students are placed in an environment with limited language input and availability and with alternative forms of daily communication. It shapes the students' profiles as they learn English as a foreign language. The various components of learning academic material in a foreign language are also identified as "double the work." Learning can be made simpler or more challenging for students depending on several circumstances, including the literacy level in their first language, the duration and type of their education, and the nature of academic English (Baecher, 2011). It depends on how the teacher modifies the input to make the material understandable and organizes class activities to help the student improve their English language proficiency.

The English teacher must comprehend their students' personalities, profiles, backgrounds, and learning preferences to incorporate them into the learning plan. Another element in the effectiveness of students studying English language acquisition is the cultural responsiveness of teachers (Gay, 2015). Learning is less likely to occur when instruction, materials, and activities marginalize students' cultural experiences. Culturally responsive practice with ELLs involves familiarity with students' home languages (Fillmore & Snow, 2018). It also encourages appropriate use of the first language to mediate comprehension (Cook, 2001). Furthermore, it necessitates understanding how particular materials, texts, or activities may be challenging for a non-native student to comprehend. Difficulties with comprehension may arise from many factors, including an incapacity to establish correlations between the subject matter and oneself or with the reader's immediate surroundings. This may be due to the requirement for more excellent firsthand experience in the contexts outlined in the assigned readings. Incorporating culturally responsive

instruction activities into the classroom may involve the following: understanding the variations among individual students and group practises, utilising textbooks, bulletin boards, and materials that steer clear of stereotypical depictions, exhibiting an understanding of linguistic and cultural bias in assessment tools, providing opportunities for reading skill development through the selection of culturally relevant stories, and recognising the dual language learning nature of some students (Baecher, 2011).

The study's findings also indicate that English teacher candidates needed help comprehending the function of reflective teaching. They need to gain knowledge regarding the intended function of it. Reflective practices, which embody a purposeful and consistent approach to self-reflection regarding one's actions, are strategies implemented in response to the imperative of enhancing classroom practises for teaches within the context of reflective teaching (Toom et al., 2015; Zulfikar & Mujiburrahman, 2018). Furthermore, teachers must engage in reflective practice to reflect on and gain knowledge from their classroom experiences. Teachers can apply their implicit knowledge to solve difficulties in the classroom and develop critical thinking skills through reflective practice. Reflective practice also enables teachers to consider, assess, and react to their prior experiences. Improving decision-making during lesson planning and future teaching entails deliberate recollection and analysis (Hashim & Yusoff, 2020). Furthermore, to gain new insights into oneself and one's practice, reflective teaching should be regarded as an integral component of the learning process, consisting of three phases: reflection prior to teaching, reflection during teaching, and reflection after teaching in schools. Additionally, one could refer to the three stages as reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action.

Students aspiring to become English teachers should be cognizant of the significant professionalism required in this field. As it enhances their professional competence, which is critical for performing their position as an English teacher, they must develop professionally throughout their careers. However, according to the research findings, English student teachers need more self-confidence, particularly during teaching practice. In fact, in carrying out their responsibilities, teachers must have unwavering self-confidences (Rokhyati, 2015). Their confidence showed their presences which are justified for the English course.

Additionally, prospective English teachers ought to demonstrate their capability to discern the learning patterns of their students. These patterns were somewhat correlated with the students' motivational dispositions, specifically, a distinct vision of their ideal future selves and predominantly influenced by their emotional states, e.g., anxiety versus enjoyment (Saito et al., 2018). Furthermore, the self-confidence of English language teachers has been discovered to be a significant factor in students' achievement. It has demonstrated their belief in their capability to organize and execute courses of action required to accomplish a specific

teaching task in a particular context successfully (Gol & Aaleabbas, 2016). English teachers who possess self-confidence teach their students with greater assurance. With unwavering confidence, they deliver instruction in the classroom. One may ensure that they comprehensively understand the subject matter they instruct. They demonstrate the significance of the material they elucidate and warrant the students' focus. The students become persuaded to learn by teachers who exude confidence. The student's knowledge is regarded as significant and demand serious study.

The results of the interview analysis employing thematic analysis are presented in Table 2. The themes identified in the analysis are further subdivided into various sub-themes.

[Table 2. about here]

## CONCLUSIONS

Student teachers can develop their evaluation, feedback, and teaching practice competencies in a secure and encouraging learning environment by using microteaching as a potential treatment strategy. However, lecturers who are knowledgeable and assured in its application must facilitate it, just like any other instructional method. A well-designed lesson design that addresses the various responsibilities of student teachers within the English learning environment is also essential. This research aimed to identify the challenges and solutions associated with microteaching among student teachers. Consequently, the results of this research support those who argue for the awarding of microteaching applications. In addition to providing new insights into previously conducted research, these findings emphasize the functions of microteaching and draw attention to its significance in various English language teaching courses. Conversely, when student teachers inquire about the difficulties and remedies associated with microteaching, it reveals their comprehensive understanding of the program.

As indicated by research findings, English student teachers encounter various difficulties during microteaching practice. These challenges include inadequate conceptual understanding of instructional design, difficulties managing the classroom, insufficient comprehension of student personalities, failure to recognize the value of reflective teaching, and low self-assurance. Nevertheless, to surmount the obstacles, the English student teachers devised several strategies by enhancing their understanding of the students' personalities, refining their pedagogical expertise to comprehend the significance of reflective teaching, augmenting their self-assurance, and honing their conceptual ability in instructional design.

Additional research and practical implementations of microteaching could be a suggestion. The microteaching program should be strategically structured to afford student teachers practical teaching experience, given that it functions as a professional development instrument that molds the ideal

English teacher. Incorporating student teachers' perspectives regarding their teaching experiences is an additional critical aspect of implementing continuous evaluation processes that demonstrate progress.

In order to further refine the implementation of this pedagogical approach, higher education institutions should incorporate current developments and information. Additionally, the sessions should be conducted earlier in the program to give each student more opportunities to complete microteaching. We advise others to consider incorporating microteaching into their English education study programs for now in light of the dearth of relevant literature and empirical evidence that supports this claim.

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**Tabel 1 /** Student teachers' microteaching experience

<b>Gagné's Nine Events of Instruction</b>		<b>Always</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Never</b>
a.	I Ensure students are prepared to learn by presenting an attention-grabbing stimulus.	0	66%	17%	17%	0
b.	I inform students of the objectives or outcomes for the course for they to comprehend what is expected of them.	0	0	33%	17%	50%
c.	I assist students in understanding new information by relating it to something they already know or have experienced.	0	33%	50%	17%	0
d.	I use strategies to convey material to provide more effective instruction.	17%	17%	33%	33%	0
e.	I provide students with all information to guide students on how to study.	0	17%	33%	33%	17%
f.	I instruct students to employ what they have learned to reinforce newly acquired skills, knowledge by demonstrating a firm grasp of course concepts.	0	50%	33%	17%	0
g.	I provide timely feedback on student performance to facilitate learning, so they enable to identify their shortcomings.	0	0	17%	66%	17%
h.	I examine whether the specified course objectives have been attained based on the expected learning outcomes.	0	0	33%	50%	17%
i.	I assist students in storing information by providing opportunities to apply course concepts in the real world.	0	0	17%	33%	50%

**Table 2 /** Student teachers' microteaching experience

Dimension	Themes	Subthemes
The obstacles English student teachers face in teacher training and education programs when executing the microteaching process with senior high school students	Student teachers' lack of conceptual knowledge of instructional design	The complexity of the learning process inside the classroom setting surpasses the comprehension of the diverse learning theories previously acquired. Ensuring students' acceptance of instructional content poses a challenge due to their tendency to exhibit passivity despite triggers such as questions The developed lesson plan frequently aligns differently with the contextual realities in the educational setting.
	Student teachers' incapability in classroom management	Engaging every student in the classroom in active learning poses a significant challenge Managing time effectively to fulfill learning objectives can be a formidable task within the context of the learning process. Monitoring every student in the learning process presents a considerable challenge.
	Student teachers' lack of understanding the character of students	Engaging students in active participation in the learning process poses a challenging endeavor Some of the presented teaching material failed to captivate student' attention, impeding their comprehension and generating boredom Being difficult in fostering interactive dialogue within the learning environment, consequently assuming a prominent position in the English classroom
	Student teachers' incapability to perceive the role of reflective teaching	The evaluation conducted solely aimed to assess students' competencies using formative assessments. Being unfamiliar with reflective teaching Not conducting an evaluation process to assess my actions or the efficacy of the learning process.
	Student teachers' lack of self-confidence	Being afraid of making mistakes and not grasping the material while microteaching. Students request to increase the speech volume to facilitate comprehension in a language that is accessible. Experiencing a lack of self-assurance and feelings of anxiety during the microteaching session.
The solution of obstacles English student teachers face in teacher training and education programs when executing the microteaching process with senior high school students	Enriching student teachers' conceptual knowledge of instructional design	Actively engage with news about policy changes in the field of educational pedagogy and in numerous webinars focused on acquiring and developing the English language. Being engaged in numerous dialogues with mentor teacher regarding educational progression. Creating a broader range of instructional resources, such as incorporating technological tools inside the educational framework.
	Optimizing student teachers' competence in classroom management	Creating schedules of the preparation for learning and the activities that need to be completed before, during, and subsequent to the learning process. Acquiring knowledge about the principles of classroom management, namely through the utilization of online educational resources such as YouTube. Being actively engage students in various learning activities.
	Establishing student teachers' competence related to understanding the students' character	Making a concerted effort to interact with students beyond the designated class hours. I am inquiring for insights from my student teachers regarding the character traits students exhibit in the classroom setting. Being actively stay informed on contemporary trends, music, and relevant phenomena that align with the students. Providing sufficient time to engage in meaningful interactions with every student. Being proactively inquire about students' comprehension of the subject matter, potential inquiries, and any challenges they may encounter.
	Increasing student teachers' pedagogy competence to perceive the role of reflective teaching	Reviewing daily learning experiences by dedicating a portion of time after each lesson to document my thoughts and observations. Recording the learning activities that occur with the cell phone to memorialize the learning to be improved. Recording what having done during the learning process, as well as the students' responses to the learning activities that have been conducted.
	Increasing student teachers' self-confidence	Prior to commencing the instructional process, undertaking necessary preparations. Being responsible for creating educational resources and designing pedagogical activities for implementation. Developing contingency plans, labeled Plan A and Plan B, in order to proactively address potential deviations from the desired outcomes of the established activity plan. Being engage in the activity of practicing spoken English by utilizing a mirror. Being engage with other scholarly sources, such as articles, newspapers, and magazines, to be informed about current events and relevant phenomena.