IN-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERFORMANCES IN TEACHING YOUNG LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at investigating the teaching performances of pre-service teachers in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) when instructing young learners, as perceived by in-service teachers. Adopting a descriptive qualitative research design, data were gathered through observations and interviews conducted with 15 students enrolled in the fourth semester of the teaching English as a foreign language subject. The evaluation of the pre-service teachers' performances was based on an adapted evaluation sheet derived from the government's professional teacher development program, encompassing criteria related to the commencement, progression, and conclusion of the lesson. Participants were in-service teachers from three distinct educational institutions, selected through purposive sampling. The findings of the study indicated that the pre-service teachers received average scores ranging from 70 to 90 for each criterion, demonstrating their proficiency in teaching young learners. Descriptively, it can be inferred that the pre-service teachers exhibited competent teaching skills within this particular instructional context.
Keywords: in-service teacher, pre-service teacher, teaching performance, perspective, English for young learner

I. INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that it is becoming more and more important for every person to become fluent in this universal language, both passively and actively, in order for it to serve as a medium for verbal interaction and communication as information systems and digitization continue to advance quickly. Those who fail to recognize this potential will undoubtedly fall behind and will not be able to play a leading role in recording the history of the country's growth.

Unfortunately, Indonesia now considers English to be a foreign language. As a result, it is exceedingly challenging to discover people who speak English in Indonesia, where there are several barriers to the teaching of English. Indonesian is frequently used as the language of instruction in class for instructions, communication, and discussions regarding the teaching of English so that

Therefore, it may be said that Indonesia does not provide an environment that is conducive to learning English. Previous studies have demonstrated that teaching English as a foreign language, or EFL, in the Indonesian context has encountered substantial challenges. Low teacher competency and insufficient student motivation undoubtedly contribute to students not learning English at the required level (Sulistyo, 2015).

Panggabean (2015) discovered in his research that Indonesia's English learning and teaching methods are burdensome. Teachers continue to instruct English using the prior method, despite the fact that since the 1980s the grammar-based technique has transitioned to a functional approach. They consequently fail to establish a communicative, comfortable, and engaging learning and teaching environment. The similar thing also happens in early year education level. The complexity of the content, knowledge, and skill to understand the young learners' characteristics become the more challenging issues were also addressed by the young learners' teachers in teaching EFL.

In any level of education, teachers must build their professional knowledge to master the complexities of teaching (Kunter et al., 2013). Professional knowledge is derived from theory and practice and integrates general pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and affective-motivational components such as beliefs, values, motivation, and metacognition (Blomeke, 2017; Shulman, 1987).

To create teachers with the aforementioned professionalism criteria, higher education institutions actively implement training programs to prepare high-quality pre-service teachers who can understand all aspects of lesson preparation, implementation, and evaluation. In the execution of these activities, in-service teachers are actively involved to provide valuable input for the improvement of pre-service teachers' competencies.

Specifically, for assessing how well pre-service teacher preparation programs prepare instructors for the difficulties of teaching young learners, it is essential to comprehend the viewpoints of classroom teachers. In-service teachers play a critical role in guiding and evaluating pre-service teachers during their training period. Studying the perspectives of in-service teachers provides valuable insights into how they perceive the preparedness and effectiveness of pre-service teachers in handling the unique challenges of teaching young learners. Research by Johnson and Wilson (2019) highlighted that in-service teachers' observations and feedback were essential in facilitating pre-service teachers' professional growth and improving their classroom performance.

The preparation of pre-service teachers for teaching young learners is a significant aspect of EFL teacher education. Educators recognize the importance of equipping pre-service teachers with pedagogical strategies and content knowledge tailored to the needs and characteristics of young learners. Yang, et.al. (2022) emphasized the need for comprehensive training programs that focus on active learning, student-centered approaches, and the integration of technology to support the effective instruction of young learners.

Perspectives of in-service teachers on pre-service teacher performance evaluation provide essential feedback for program improvement and assessing the readiness of pre-service teachers to enter the teaching profession. Zheng and Wang (2018) explored in-service teachers' perceptions of evaluation criteria for pre-service teachers and found that effective classroom management, student engagement, and adaptable instructional strategies were highly regarded attributes.

Studying the perspectives of in-service teachers regarding pre-service teachers' classroom practices can offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of instructional techniques and the impact on young learners' learning outcomes. Kim and Lee (2017) examined in-service teachers' perceptions of pre-service teachers' implementation of communicative language teaching approaches in young learner classrooms and found that positive perspectives were associated with improved student engagement and language acquisition.

Collaboration and mentorship between in-service and pre-service teachers have been recognized as crucial factors in supporting the professional development of novice teachers. Studies by Zhang and Zhu (2023) emphasized that in-service teachers' guidance and support during the pre-service teaching period enhanced pre-service teachers' confidence and ability to navigate challenges in young learner classrooms.

In conclusion, the perspectives of class teachers play a critical role in assessing the effectiveness of pre-service EFL teachers when instructing young learners. This study aims to enhance pre-service teacher preparation programs and instructors' readiness to address the challenges of teaching English to young learners by examining their viewpoints. The study's findings will contribute to improving the quality of language instruction for young learners and will be valuable for teacher educators, policymakers, and practitioners involved in EFL teacher education. From the vantage point of experienced class teachers, this research is expected to provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of EFL pre-service teachers' abilities in instructing young learners. By identifying areas that require more attention and growth, the findings will aid in the enhancement of pre-service teacher training programs. The advice and recommendations of class teachers will be instrumental in refining teaching methods, classroom management strategies, and overall pedagogical approaches in EFL teacher education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW
a. *Pre-service teacher training*
Pre-service teacher training is a critical phase in preparing future educators to meet the challenges of diverse and dynamic classrooms. A comprehensive training program that focuses on content knowledge, pedagogical skills, classroom management, and reflective practices can empower pre-service teachers to become effective and reflective practitioners. Integrating technology and providing meaningful field experiences are essential in enhancing the quality of teacher preparation. Addressing the challenges and adopting effective approaches in pre-service teacher training is pivotal to ensure the success and impact of teachers in their professional careers. Darling-Hammond (2006) emphasized that pre-service teacher training plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education in schools. It influences the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of future teachers, directly impacting student learning outcomes. Zeichner and Conklin (2005) argued that well-designed pre-service teacher training programs lead to the development of reflective and competent educators who are better equipped to meet the diverse needs of learners. Research by Shulman (1986) emphasized the importance of developing both subject matter expertise and effective pedagogical strategies to deliver content effectively. Studies by Emmer and Stough (2001) highlighted the significance of equipping pre-service teachers with classroom management techniques to create conducive learning environments.

b. *In-service teacher perspectives*
The perspectives of in-service teachers play a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape. Their insights, experiences, and beliefs influence classroom practices, curriculum development, and school policies. This literature review explores research related to in-service teacher perspectives, focusing on their attitudes, challenges, professional development needs, and impact on student learning. Hargreaves (1996) emphasized that in-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs significantly impact their instructional decisions and interactions with students. Positive attitudes towards professional growth and reflective teaching practices have been associated with improved student outcomes. Pajares (1992) discussed the role of self-efficacy beliefs in teaching effectiveness. In-service teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to take on challenging tasks and persist in the face of difficulties. Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) emphasized the importance of targeted professional development programs that align with in-service teachers' specific needs and classroom contexts.

c. Teaching Performance
Teaching performance refers to the implementation of the teaching planning into action. This study adapted the teaching rubric used in the Teacher Professional Education Program (2022) within several criteria. Here are the basic criteria used in the instrument which were henceforth divided into 18 criteria.

- Lesson Planning: Evaluation of the candidates' ability to plan clear and structured lessons, including learning objectives, teaching strategies, instructional materials, and assessment methods.
- Subject Matter Mastery: Assessment of candidates' proficiency in mastering the subjects they teach, including in-depth understanding of the content and the ability to explain it accurately.
- Interaction with Students: Observing how candidates interact with students, whether they can create positive relationships, listen to students, and respond to their questions and feedback.
- Use of Teaching Methods and Strategies: Assessment of the candidates' use of diverse teaching methods to create engaging and interactive learning experiences.
- Classroom Management: Evaluating candidates' ability to effectively manage the classroom, create a conducive learning environment, and address potential disruptions or issues in the classroom.

- Use of Media and Technology: Observing how candidates utilize media and technology in teaching and to what extent it supports student learning.
- Learning Assessment: Assessing candidates' ability to evaluate students' understanding, provide feedback, and make adjustments to instruction if necessary.
- Creativity and Innovation: Evaluating the candidates' level of creativity and innovation in creating engaging and relevant learning experiences for students.

d. Teaching Young Learners

Teaching for young learners is a crucial stage in early childhood education that lays the groundwork for lifelong learning and development. Effective pedagogical approaches, such as constructivism and scaffolding, align with the developmental needs of young learners. Piaget (1964) emphasized the significance of hands-on, experiential learning for young children. Constructivist approaches that encourage active exploration and discovery align with the developmental needs of young learners. In addition, Vygotsky (1978) in Pendergast (2011) introduced the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), highlighting the importance of scaffolding and support from teachers to facilitate children's learning and problem-solving abilities. Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2009) found that high-quality teacher-student interactions in early childhood classrooms were associated with greater social and emotional development in young learners. Furthermore, Ali et al. (2018) mentioned that children learn 'naturally' through play, with the teachers facilitating opportunities for play in the environment they are exposed to. Children taught at an early age usually benefit in the following ways such as improved social skills, lesser or no need for special education instruction during subsequent school years, better grades, and enhanced attention spans.. Play-based activities were found to promote creativity, problem-solving skills, and language acquisition.

III. METHODS

The research employed a qualitative approach, utilizing observation and interviews to gather data from in-service teachers who observed the teaching performances of EFL pre-service teachers in young learner classrooms. This study collected the in service teachers' perceptions from PAUD Kumara Bhuana II Denpasar Utara, TK Negeri Pembina Denpasar, and SD Negeri 1 Jagapati Badung. Purposive sampling were used to select these three schools in which they teach English for the students, have special English teacher, represent both private and public schools, and involved under MoU with the university. Specifically, they observed the pre-service teachers who wore coming from the fourth semester of English Language Education Department who were currently taking Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Class I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar Hindu State University. The data were collected by using questionnaire with a number of criteria which had been adjusted to teacher assessment instrument issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. It consisted of 18 questions about teaching performances during pre-activity, whilst activity, and post activity. In addition, an interview was done to find out the more comprehensive reasons and situation to confirm   Furthermore, the data were analyzed and described descriptively for each item.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the present research objective to explore the perspectives of in-service teachers on the performances of EFL pre-service teachers in teaching young learners through a descriptive qualitative research design, the data from the observation sheet and interview were displayed and analyzed as follows.

Table 1. Pre-service Teachers' Performances during Pre-Activity

No	Criteria	Average Score
1	**Prepare students physically and mentally (Q1)** Includes student seating arrangements, and mental, direct teaching, delivering greetings, praying, asking about student conditions, and attendance.	85
2	**Motivate students (Q2)** Convey the benefits of studying the material to be studied, with employment, technology, etc.); generate students' interest/motivation to study	85
3	**Give apperception (Q3)** Increasing students' attention (for example by doing demonstrations), asking questions that relate previous knowledge to the material to be studied, related to everyday life, associated with current issues	80
4	**Deliver learning objectives (Q4)** In accordance with the theme/sub-theme, relevant to the indicators, can be implemented in learning	85
5	**Convey material coverage (Q5)** In the form of main material and delivered sequentially	85

Based on the result of the observation checklist filled by the in-service teachers, it was found that the pre-service teachers showed great performances in opening the lesson. By having average score above 85, the students can be considered having good competency in preparing the students physically and mentally; motivating the students, delivering the learning objectives, and conveying the material coverage. Here is the result of the interview with the in-service teacher 1 in kindergarten.

"…*the pre-service teachers mostly entered the classroom full of excitement and they also managed their tone, voice and gesture to fit in the students' ages. The use implementation of simple games and songs at the beginning seemed helping the students to be more relax during the class activities*".

Interestingly, the in-service teacher 2 also mentioned that *"... every pre-teacher used different games and make-up songs from one to another"*. The only problem encountered during this opening session was the time management. According to the in-service teacher 3 as well as the class teacher in interview, she said "…*the students really enjoy the games and request for more and it was permitted by the pre-service teachers. It takes long time. Too long.*". The in-service teacher 2 from the kindergarten was also impressed by the way the pre-service teachers who were immediately switch their English-full teaching into dual language use in giving instruction. It helped the young learners a lot in following the activities. The other weakness found by the teacher was in form of the way the students were given appreciation. According to the class teachers, young learners preferred to be announced for their achievement and it was not widely done by the pre service teacher.

Furthermore, the following table will present the pre-service teacher in conducting the main activity in which it will be classified into two categories, namely the material mastery

and the implementation of the model, strategy, techniques, or methods. Their performances on material mastery were considered very good by the class teachers since their average score shows 83. Only one teacher put notes on the observation sheet which is about the pronunciation of the students. The pre-service teachers were still caught to be mispronounced some words in the classroom. According to the teacher, the students are following the mispronunciation of them because they are in the middle of drilling the words and phrases.

Table 2. Pre-service Teachers' Performances during Whilst Activity

No	Criteria	Average Score
	Material mastery	
6	**Delivering material (Q6)** In accordance with the learning objectives of the RPP, concepts are conveyed correctly, systematically (from easy to difficult, from concrete to abstract, from those close to the student's environment to far), and linking material with other relevant knowledge	83
7	**Applying the concept of learning materials to life (Q7)** Providing real examples, relating to the latest information, relating to themes (science, environment, technology, and society)	70

The previous table also shows the creativity of the pre-service teachers in applying the concept of learning materials to life is quite good since the average score shows 70. This item implied the way and and initiative of them in linking and integrating the materials with other subjects. Teacher 1 mentioned that

> *"The pre-service teachers were lack in connecting the materials with other subject. They mostly focus on the introduction of the vocabularies and expressions. The students were actually active in the classroom with lots of activities; however it was not integrated to other subjects so that it was not considered very beneficial by the students".*

In term of the use of the teaching procedures, here is the table that summarizes the result of the observation sheets filled by the class teachers.

Table 3. The implementation of models and methods

No	Criteria	Average Score
8	**Implementing active learning (Q8)** Carrying out learning steps reflects active learning (encouraging students to experience hands-on activities: observing/conducting experiments, inviting students to interact, discussing difficult words, making inferences, stimulating students' ability to think at a higher level, fostering joy)	90
9	**Cultivating positive habits (Q9)** Familiarize students to act in discipline, work together, encourage students to dare to argue or ask questions, accustom students to communicating politely, give appreciation appropriately and proportionately.	80

10	**Utilizing tools, media, and technology (Q10)** Effectively and efficiently (performed properly and safely, skillfully using tools/materials/media/ICT, fostering active student participation in learning, strengthening student understanding, attracting student attention)	85
11	**Classroom management (Q11)** Skilled in guiding students classically, in groups and individually, the class remains conducive, always provides reinforcement and motivation, can attract students' attention to stay focused in carrying out activities, teacher mobility in the class has purpose, eye contact with students awake.	75
12	**Language use (Q12)** Sentences are clear and easy to understand, the choice of words or sentences of greeting is in accordance with the psychological maturity of the students (eg calling students with the word you, not you, etc.), words/sentences that do not contain SARA and/or bullying, intonation and tone according to needs, volume of voice is clear; use polite language.	80
13	**Evaluating learning process (Q13)** Go around monitoring student learning progress, asking questions to monitor student achievement, motivating students to achieve higher development, carrying out process assessments according to plan.	80
14	**Evaluating learning outcomes (Q14)** Conduct assessments according to purpose, carry out assessments according to plan, use rubrics to assess, follow up on assessment results during learning.	85
15	**Social awareness (Q15)** Demonstrate empathy for students, care for students' needs, and care for environmental conditions; be open to differences in student conditions.	80
16	**Personalities (Q16)** Have an open attitude (saying thank you/sorry in the right circumstances; showing friendly gestures; admitting mistakes/shortcomings gracefully; neat appearance, clean, and polite; enthusiastic	80

There are 9 items about the step by step activities done by the pre-service teachers in the classroom about the implementation of model and methods which are viewed from several aspects including operational procedure, social awareness, and personalities. Based on the previous table that it clearly shows that the pre-service teachers get the highest average score in implementing active learning. Furthermore, the teacher 2 confirmed the result by stating

> *"The pre-service teachers are eagerly conducting games, competition, and singing songs for engaging the students. The variety of the activities is also high in which the students were using group work, class discussion, group discussion, talk show, role play, and presentation in the teaching learning process."*

In addition teacher 3 also mentioned

> *"Even though the students are young learners, they seem being fully motivated by the pre-service teacher. They majorly used 21st century learning model which are emphasizing on communication, collaboration, creative and critical thinking, namely problem based learning, project based learning, and cooperative learning".*

The teacher 2 also mentioned that the students are highly motivated because of the media used by the teachers. Both physical media and technology-based media made by the pre-service teacher are very useful to stimulate active learning in the classroom in which most of the students are actively participating in the class activities.

The lowest average score was seen in term of the classroom management. Classroom management includes the strategies used by the pre-service teachers in managing the classroom and control the students' behaviors so that the activities can run well in accordance of the lesson plan. It was 70 in average according to the class teachers and a number of reasons were stated by the teachers in the observation sheets. First, the pre-service teachers still find it difficult to refocus the students when the students are doing transition from one activity to another activity. They also mentioned that the pre-service teachers have no special strategies in drawing students' attention. Because of that, it was considered time consuming since it was taking few minutes to refocus the students. Besides, the teacher highlights the way the pre-service teachers responds to the misbehavior in the classroom. Some of them did not take it seriously about the trouble makers in the classroom. It also affects the class situation since the other students are distracted and provoked by them. Some teachers also mentioned that they need to help the pre-service teacher in grouping the students because some of them still confused to find groups. Some of them mentioned that the overall management is quite good only some aspects need to be improved as being stated previously.

The other two components which are gaining big average score as 85 are utilizing media and technologies in the classroom and evaluation the students' learning outcomes. In term of using media and technology, all pre-service teachers are using media in their teaching learning process in form of presentation slides, videos, games, and flash cards. They also use self-generated worksheets which are designed to be fancy to be adjusted to young learners' characters. The other teachers also added that this factor made the students enjoy finishing the task without pressure. In line with this, the evaluation carried out at the end of the lesson were already done by the pre-service teacher in which according to the notes from the class teacher on the observation sheets, they were using small quiz or general question and answers. The type used in the quiz are is very simple is which more likely games. The students did not find it difficult because the students thought they were still playing which can be seen from their excited facial expression.

In term of the way the pre-service teachers cultivate the positive habits in the classroom can generally be categorized as good for showing average score 80. The similar value was gained for language use, the ongoing assessment, social awareness, and personalities. The class teachers mentioned that some of the pre-service teachers' positive attitude during class

activities motivated the students to the similar thing, however, for some are still struggling to maintain the positive attitude especially in responding students' behaviors. The other thing needs to be improved is about the language use which is previously being mentioned, particularly about the pronunciation and the use mostly English by some pre-service teachers. Nevertheless, the students in kindergarten level were given instruction bilingually which is also assisted by pictures. However, for the students who are already in primary schools especially who are in higher level were given instruction which are mostly delivered in English. It becomes another highlight of the class teachers to be more aware on students' condition.

The pre-service teachers are also assessed in closing the lesson. Here is the summary of their performance.

Table 4. Pre-service Teachers' Performances during Post-Activity

No	Criteria	Average Score
17	**Concluding the lesson Q17** By involving students, guiding students in making summaries through recalling (discussing what play activities students have played and what they like most), and providing feedback come back.	80
18	**Reflecting the lesson and conducting follow up (Q18)** Reviewing the concept of material that has been taught, guiding students to carry out self-evaluations to find benefits, providing feedback on the learning process, assigning assignments, informing activity plans lesson for the next meeting.	80

Based on the table 4, the pre-service teachers performances shows quite good performance as 80 shown in the average value. According to the teacher, they actually conclude the lesson and reflect the activities at the end. However some of the students directly conclude or review the process by their own because the students were being quiet. It is expected that the pre-service teacher can generate simpler questions or connected to their experiences, so the students can be involved in the discussion freely.

The results revealed that the pre-service teachers' performances in young learner class settings received average scores ranging from 70 to 90. Notably, their engagement of students through active learning strategies earned them the highest average score of 90. This suggests that the pre-service teachers demonstrated proficiency in creating dynamic and interactive learning experiences for young learners, enhancing their overall engagement and participation in the classroom.

Conversely, several aspects were identified as areas that could benefit from improvement. These included strategies for integrating materials with other subjects and real-life situations, as well as classroom management techniques. The scores in these areas indicated the need for pre-service teachers to develop more effective ways to contextualize lessons and maintain a condusive learning environment for young learners.

This findings align with previous studies that emphasize the significance of active learning strategies in engaging young learners effectively. The high average score obtained by pre-service teachers in this aspect reinforces the importance of promoting student-centered approaches in EFL classrooms. It is in line with Fayombo (2012) who investigated the relationships between the active learning strategies (discussion, video clips simulation, game show, role – play, five minute paper, clarification pauses, group work) and the students'

learning outcomes and found out that the use of Video emerged the best active learning strategy.

The pre-service teachers were mostly implemented games in their teaching activities which is displayed with highest average score in active learning among other criteria. By integrating games with the learning process, educators aim to motivate students and foster a deeper understanding of the subject matter. This approach not only creates an enjoyable studying environment but also offers opportunities for practical application of acquired knowledge (Munna and Kalam, 2021; Torrente et al., 2011; Pho and Dinscore, 2015).

Meanwhile, the lowest performance was found in the criterion of connecting the lesson with real life situation. It is probably caused by a number of factors, such as lack of practice and students' characteristics. Lack of teacher training in designing real-life connections may hinder effective implementation (Webster, 2019). The limited information about the students' characteristics and background will probably lead the lack performance of the pre-service teacher.

Understanding the factors influencing pre-service teacher performance, utilizing effective assessment methods, and providing comprehensive pre-service teacher training are essential in preparing future educators to excel in their professional roles. By addressing the challenges in assessing pre-service teacher performance and continuously improving training programs, teacher education institutions can contribute to the development of highly competent and effective teachers who positively impact student learning outcomes.

V. CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into the perspectives of in-service teachers on the performances of EFL pre-service teachers when teaching young learners. While acknowledging the areas for improvement, the research reveals that the pre-service teachers' overall performance meets the expectations set by the government's teacher evaluation sheet. The findings underline the importance of refining instructional strategies, particularly regarding material integration and classroom management, to enhance the overall learning experience for young learners in EFL settings.

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this research, which focused on a singular class of EFL pre-service teachers over a limited period. Future investigations should explore the potential influence of gender, the diverse background levels of students, and the willingness of in-service teachers to share their perspectives more comprehensively.

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