

FIELD EXPERIENCE AND THE READINESS OF PRE-SERVICE PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS TO TEACH ENGLISH: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine how field experience supports the readiness of pre-service primary school teachers in PGSD programs to teach English. A Systematic Literature Review was conducted by identifying empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 through ERIC, Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, ResearchGate, and institutional repositories. The screening followed PRISMA procedures, with inclusion criteria focusing on generalist pre-service teachers' teaching field experiences and exclusion of studies involving in-service or English-major pre-service teachers. Data from the selected studies were synthesized based on five analytical dimensions: pedagogical competence, teaching self-efficacy, understanding of primary classroom contexts, lesson-planning skills, and overall readiness to teach English to young learners. The review found that field experience contributes positively to classroom management, instructional adaptation, confidence building, contextual awareness, and gradual improvement in planning skills. However, these benefits were inconsistent due to uneven mentoring quality, weak school–university coordination, and limited opportunities for structured reflection. Importantly, field experience alone was insufficient to ensure readiness for English teaching, as PGSD students lacked exposure to TEYL-focused coursework and sufficient English proficiency. The findings suggest that strengthening curricular support, mentoring systems, and TEYL integration is essential to optimize field experience in preparing PGSD pre-service teachers to teach English effectively.

Keywords: field experience, pre-service teachers, PGSD, English teaching readiness

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menelaah bagaimana pengalaman lapangan mendukung kesiapan mahasiswa calon guru sekolah dasar dalam program PGSD untuk mengajar Bahasa Inggris. Studi ini menggunakan metode Systematic Literature Review dengan mengidentifikasi penelitian empiris terbitan 2015–2025 melalui ERIC, Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, ResearchGate, dan repositori institusi. Proses penyaringan mengikuti prosedur PRISMA, dengan kriteria inklusi yang berfokus pada pengalaman mengajar di lapangan oleh mahasiswa pre-service PGSD, serta mengecualikan studi yang melibatkan guru in-service atau mahasiswa dengan latar belakang pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Data dari studi terpilih disintesis berdasarkan lima dimensi analitis: kompetensi pedagogis, efikasi mengajar, pemahaman konteks kelas sekolah dasar, keterampilan perencanaan

pembelajaran, dan kesiapan mengajar Bahasa Inggris bagi peserta didik usia dini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman lapangan berkontribusi positif terhadap kemampuan manajemen kelas, adaptasi instruksional, peningkatan kepercayaan diri, kesadaran konteks, dan perkembangan bertahap dalam perencanaan pembelajaran. Namun, manfaat tersebut tidak merata akibat kualitas pendampingan yang bervariasi, koordinasi sekolah–kampus yang lemah, dan terbatasnya kesempatan refleksi terstruktur. Selain itu, pengalaman lapangan belum cukup memastikan kesiapan mengajar Bahasa Inggris karena kurangnya pembelajaran berbasis TEYL dan keterbatasan kompetensi bahasa. Temuan ini menegaskan perlunya penguatan kurikulum, sistem pendampingan, dan integrasi TEYL untuk mengoptimalkan pengalaman lapangan dalam mempersiapkan mahasiswa PGSD mengajar Bahasa Inggris secara efektif.

Kata Kunci: pengalaman lapangan, mahasiswa pre-service, PGSD, kesiapan mengajar Bahasa Inggris

A. Introduction

The teaching of English in primary schools plays a pivotal role in equipping young learners with foundational linguistic competencies that support their long-term academic development. Given the cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics of children at the primary-school level, effective English instruction requires developmentally appropriate pedagogical approaches. However, the implementation of English instruction in Indonesian primary schools continues to face persistent challenges, including insufficient teacher preparation, limited access to English for Young Learners (EYL) training, and substantial disparities in instructional quality across schools. These challenges are further

exacerbated by multilingual classroom environments and inconsistent language policies, which often create tensions among the use of English, the mother tongue, and exam-oriented instructional practices (Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013). Prior research also highlights that teaching English in primary classrooms requires context-sensitive and practical instructional knowledge, as teachers must continually adjust their pedagogy to the needs and realities of young learners (Chou, 2008). Altogether, these complexities underscore the need for teachers who possess robust pedagogical foundations and the capacity to navigate the realities of primary classroom practice.

Within this landscape, field experience has long been recognized as a

cornerstone of teacher education. It provides pre-service teachers with opportunities to integrate theoretical coursework with authentic classroom practice, develop pedagogical reasoning, and engage in reflective decision-making processes (Kantelinen, Sokka-Meaney, & Pogolian, 2008). Through direct exposure to instructional settings, pre-service teachers gain practical insights into classroom management, instructional adaptation, and the diverse needs of young learners—competencies that cannot be cultivated through coursework alone (Huling, 1998). Field experience contexts also function as early sites of professional identity formation, as pre-service teachers negotiate their roles, expectations, and beliefs about teaching. These identity-building processes are closely linked to teaching self-efficacy, which shapes how pre-service teachers interpret challenges and respond to instructional demands (Lemon & Garvis, 2013). Evidence further suggests that field experience settings influence pre-service teachers' emerging self-concept as English educators, shaping their perceptions of strengths, limitations, and readiness

to teach (Rachmawati, Emilia, & Lukmana, 2017).

Recent studies additionally demonstrate that field experience plays a central role in shaping pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and overall teaching confidence. Constructive mentoring, guided practice, and consistent feedback have been identified as key factors that strengthen pre-service teachers' sense of instructional competence (Çelik & Topkaya, 2017). More recent evidence shows that participation in school-based field experience enhances self-efficacy through engagement in authentic teaching tasks and interactions with students. Yet, pre-service teachers frequently report persistent challenges, including insufficient mentor support, limited opportunities for pedagogical reflection, and ongoing difficulties in connecting university coursework with classroom realities (Altarawneh, Alkhazaleh, Alkhazaleh, & Tarawneh, 2023). Studies also reveal mixed perceptions of teaching practice courses, with inconsistencies in supervisory practices and unclear expectations often diminishing the developmental benefits of school

placements (Baştürk, 2016). Complementary findings show that pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching, formed during field experience, significantly shape how they approach instruction and interpret classroom challenges. Moreover, readiness for field experience is strongly influenced by the extent to which pre-service teachers receive adequate support, structured opportunities for practice, and alignment between university and school expectations (Kebritchi, 2018).

The quality of field experience is also shaped by mentor–mentee dynamics and broader institutional structures. Research indicates that pre-service teachers often struggle to translate theoretical understanding into practice, while mentor teachers may lack familiarity with contemporary pedagogical frameworks needed to provide targeted guidance (Genç, 2016). These misalignments highlight systemic weaknesses in field experience design, particularly in relation to collaboration between teacher education institutions and placement schools. Strengthening institutional coordination is crucial, as fragmented supervision and variable

school expectations can significantly undermine the developmental value of field experience placements (Ismail & Jarrah, 2019). Contemporary teacher education research further emphasizes the need to prepare pre-service teachers to navigate students' socio-emotional needs, including trauma-related experiences—an expectation that reinforces the importance of supportive and well-structured field experience environments (Reddig & VanLone, 2022).

Another critical dimension of field experience concerns lesson planning, where many pre-service teachers struggle to align learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessment strategies with the developmental needs of primary learners. These difficulties are particularly pronounced during early exposure to field experience and highlight the need for structured scaffolding and reflective opportunities that support the development of coherent and adaptive instructional planning skills (Şahin-Taşkın, 2017).

In the Indonesian context, structural challenges within teacher education

further complicate the preparation of pre-service primary teachers to teach English. Teacher education institutions (LPTK) have not consistently integrated TEYL (Teaching English to Young Learners) competencies into the curriculum for students in the Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) program, resulting in limited exposure to English pedagogy, insufficient teaching experience, and weak English proficiency (Zein, 2012). As generalist pre-service teachers, PGSD students are trained to teach all primary-school subjects yet are increasingly expected to teach English without adequate preparation in language pedagogy or EYL methodologies. This structural mismatch places an additional developmental burden on PGSD students during field placements and raises concerns about their readiness to teach English effectively.

Although prior research has explored various dimensions of field experience and teacher education, existing studies remain fragmented and have rarely examined how field experience specifically prepares pre-service primary-school teachers from generalist programs—such as PGSD

students—to teach English. The majority of studies focus on pre-service English majors, leaving limited understanding of the developmental needs, challenges, and classroom experiences of PGSD pre-service teachers who must teach English in multilingual and resource-constrained environments. These gaps collectively demonstrate the need for a systematic synthesis of recent empirical evidence. Therefore, this systematic literature review examines studies published between 2015 and 2025 to analyze how field experience supports the development of PGSD pre-service teachers' pedagogical competence, teaching self-efficacy, understanding of primary classroom contexts, lesson-planning skills, and overall readiness to teach English to young learners.

B. Methodology

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review to synthesize empirical evidence on how field experience supports the readiness of pre-service primary-school teachers in PGSD programs to teach English. Relevant studies were systematically searched through ERIC, Google

Scholar, Semantic Scholar, ResearchGate, and institutional repositories using Boolean combinations of keywords such as “pre-service teacher,” “PGSD,” “generalist primary teachers,” “field experience,” and “primary English teaching.” Empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025, written in English or Indonesian, and focusing on generalist pre-service teachers’ field experience were included, while studies on in-service teachers or English-major pre-service teachers were excluded. The screening followed PRISMA procedures, involving title–abstract screening and full-text eligibility checks. Data from eligible studies were extracted into a structured matrix related to pedagogical competence, teaching self-efficacy, understanding of primary classroom contexts, lesson planning, and structural challenges.

C.Result and Discussion

Result

This section presents the results of the systematic literature review by synthesizing empirical evidence on how field experience supports the

professional development of PGSD pre-service teachers. The findings are organized according to the five analytical indicators established in the review protocol: (1) pedagogical competence, (2) teaching self-efficacy, (3) understanding of primary classroom contexts, (4) lesson-planning skills, and (5) overall readiness to teach English to young learners. These indicators represent core developmental domains for generalist pre-service teachers who are increasingly expected to teach English in Indonesian primary schools. The synthesis highlights recurring themes across studies, identifies persistent challenges, and clarifies the extent to which field experience facilitates or constrains the preparation of PGSD pre-service teachers.

A total of nine empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 met the inclusion criteria for this review. Although these studies vary in disciplinary focus—ranging from generalist primary teacher education to English language teacher preparation and field-experience-focused research—they share a common emphasis on examining the

contribution of field experience to pre-service teachers' competence and readiness. The following subsections present the synthesized findings for each indicator.

1. Pedagogical Competence

Across the included studies, field experience consistently contributes to the development of pre-service teachers' pedagogical competence. Field experience placements allow PGSD pre-service teachers to apply theoretical coursework in authentic classroom contexts, supporting growth in classroom management, instructional adaptation, and understanding learner diversity (Kantelinen et al., 2008; Huling, 1998).

Baştürk (2016) shows that field experience activities provide meaningful opportunities to practice pedagogical strategies; however, the depth of competence gained is strongly shaped by the quality of supervision and the structure of teaching practice courses. Studies by Genç (2016) and Chou (2008) further highlight that competence develops more effectively when mentoring is explicit and when pre-service teachers

have access to systematic observation of expert teachers.

Collectively, the evidence indicates that field experience strengthens pedagogical competence, but highly uneven mentoring quality and weak campus–school alignment limit the extent of this development for many PGSD pre-service teachers.

2. Teaching Self-Efficacy

Teaching field experience plays a key role in developing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. Mastery experiences gained through direct teaching, classroom interaction, and instructional decision-making consistently emerge as the strongest contributors to improved self-beliefs (Lemon & Garvis, 2013).

Çelik and Topkaya (2017) demonstrate that structured mentoring and constructive feedback substantially enhance pre-service teachers' confidence. Similarly, Altarawneh et al. (2023) report that self-efficacy grows when pre-service teachers independently handle instructional tasks and face authentic classroom challenges.

Nonetheless, several studies reveal inconsistent growth in self-efficacy due to inadequate mentoring, unclear expectations, or unsupportive school environments (Baştürk, 2016; Ismail & Jarrah, 2019). These findings emphasize that improvements in self-efficacy depend more on the quality of the field experience environment than on its mere presence within the curriculum.

3. Understanding of Primary Classroom Contexts

Field experience significantly enhances pre-service teachers' understanding of the complexities of primary classroom environments. Studies highlight that field experience exposure introduces pre-service teachers to heterogeneity in student abilities, varying socio-emotional needs, and multilingual learning settings—contexts particularly salient for English instruction in Indonesia (Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013).

Reddig and VanLone (2022) extend this understanding by showing that classroom context also involves recognizing trauma-related behaviors, attending to student well-being, and navigating external influences that

affect learning engagement. Through these experiences, PGSD pre-service teachers develop a more realistic understanding of school conditions, including resource constraints, large class sizes, and exam-oriented cultures.

This contextual awareness forms a foundational component of teaching readiness, especially for generalist teachers who must adapt English instruction to real and often challenging school environments.

4. Lesson-Planning Skills

Lesson planning emerges as one of the most challenging skill areas for pre-service teachers. Şahin-Taşkın (2017) reports that many pre-service teachers struggle to align instructional objectives, learning activities, and assessment tasks. These challenges intensify when they must tailor lesson plans to accommodate diverse primary learners.

However, studies indicate that lesson-planning skills improve when pre-service teachers receive structured guidance and engage in reflective practice. Ismail and Jarrah (2019) found that repeated practice,

accompanied by mentor feedback, enables gradual improvements in planning coherence and instructional sequencing.

Despite this progress, lesson planning remains the weakest domain among the indicators, suggesting that PGSD programs require more explicit scaffolding and model-based instruction to support planning for English lessons.

5. Overall Readiness to Teach English to Young Learners

Field experience contributes positively to pre-service teachers' readiness to teach English, primarily by strengthening general teaching skills such as classroom management and interaction with young learners. However, readiness for English teaching remains limited due to structural gaps in the PGSD curriculum.

Zein (2012) highlights that Indonesian teacher education institutions have not fully integrated TEYL competencies into PGSD programs, resulting in insufficient exposure to English pedagogy. Studies by Rachmawati et al. (2017) and Kebritchi (2018) confirm

that many PGSD pre-service teachers feel linguistically and pedagogically underprepared, even after field experience participation.

Thus, while field experience enhances overall readiness, it cannot compensate for inadequate TEYL training, limited English proficiency, and the absence of EYL-focused coursework.

Tabel 1 Summary of Indicator-Based Findings

Indicator	Supporting Studies	Key Conclusion
Pedagogical Competence	7/9	Strengthened by field experience; dependent on effective mentoring and theory–practice alignment.
Teaching Self-Efficacy	6/9	Improves through mastery experiences and feedback; inconsistent when support is weak.
Classroom Context Understanding	6/9	Deepened through exposure to multilingual, socio-emotional, and resource-limited environments.
Lesson-Planning Skills	5/9	Improves with guidance, but remains a persistent challenge for most pre-

Indicator	Supporting Studies	Key Conclusion	
Readiness to Teach EYL	5/9	service teachers. Field experience supports readiness, but limited by curriculum gaps and insufficient TEYL preparation.	structured, expectations are clear, and campus–school collaboration is coherent. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that the transfer of pedagogical theory into classroom practice is not automatic but depends heavily on guided apprenticeship and model-based learning (e.g., Genç, 2016). For PGSD students—who are trained as generalists without specialized preparation in English pedagogy—field experience becomes even more critical, as it provides rare opportunities to enact instructional strategies in real classrooms. However, inconsistent mentoring quality and limited exposure to exemplary English instruction hinder the full development of pedagogical expertise.
Discussion			
The findings of this systematic review demonstrate that field experience plays a significant yet uneven role in supporting the professional development of PGSD pre-service teachers as they prepare to teach English in primary schools. While field experience contributes positively to pedagogical competence, teaching self-efficacy, contextual understanding, and lesson-planning skills, its impact remains constrained by structural and curricular limitations within Indonesian teacher education. This section discusses these patterns by interpreting the synthesized evidence in light of broader theoretical and contextual considerations. First, the review highlights that pedagogical competence develops most strongly within field experience environments where mentoring is			
Second, the findings on teaching self-efficacy reinforce Bandura’s argument that mastery experiences serve as the strongest source of efficacy beliefs. Pre-service teachers who received meaningful feedback and assumed authentic teaching responsibilities showed notable growth in confidence. Yet, this growth was far from uniform. Studies reporting stagnant or declining self-efficacy illustrate the vulnerability of pre-service teachers when field			

experience environments lack psychological safety, pedagogical guidance, or well-defined roles. These disparities indicate that field experience can function either as a catalyst or a barrier to professional formation, depending on the mentoring conditions provided.

Third, understanding primary classroom contexts emerged as a critical developmental area, especially given the heterogeneity and multilingual realities of Indonesian classrooms. Exposure to these authentic conditions helps PGSD pre-service teachers develop realistic expectations and adaptive teaching dispositions. The inclusion of trauma-informed perspectives (Reddig & VanLone, 2022) further illustrates how classroom context encompasses not only cognitive and linguistic diversity but also socio-emotional and environmental challenges. These findings highlight a mismatch between the complexities of real classrooms and the largely theoretical coursework offered in PGSD programs, indicating a need for curricula that better prepare pre-service teachers for the realities of Indonesian schools.

Fourth, lesson-planning skills remain one of the weakest competencies observed across studies. Although improvement occurs with practice and mentor support, many PGSD pre-service teachers struggle to design coherent English lessons that align objectives, activities, and assessment. This difficulty reflects broader structural gaps: PGSD programs generally do not provide specialized training in language lesson planning, leaving students to adapt general pedagogical knowledge to a domain for which they have little theoretical grounding. This suggests that enhancing lesson-planning competence requires explicit TEYL-focused instruction, not merely additional field experience hours.

Finally, overall readiness to teach English to young learners remains limited despite the developmental benefits of field experience. The core issue is not field experience itself but the absence of TEYL content within PGSD curricula, as highlighted by Zein (2012). Field experience can compensate for some weaknesses by building classroom confidence and practical understanding, but it cannot replace foundational knowledge in

English language pedagogy or linguistic proficiency. This gap explains why many pre-service teachers report feeling more prepared to manage classrooms than to teach English effectively. Thus, improving readiness requires systemic changes in pre-service teacher education, including integrating TEYL coursework, strengthening English proficiency development, and ensuring that field experience placements offer exposure to English teaching models.

Viewed as an integrated whole, these five dimensions demonstrate that the contributions of field experience, while meaningful, are insufficient to ensure full pedagogical readiness, thereby underscoring the need for strengthened curricular and institutional support within PGSD teacher education.

E. Conclusion

This systematic literature review analyzed nine empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 to examine how field experience contributes to the professional development of PGSD pre-service teachers in teaching English to young

learners. The findings demonstrate that field experience plays a meaningful role in strengthening several core competencies, including pedagogical skills, teaching self-efficacy, classroom context understanding, and lesson-planning abilities. Through authentic teaching exposure, field experience allows pre-service teachers to apply theoretical knowledge, engage with real classroom challenges, and develop early professional identity. However, significant variability in mentoring quality, field experience structure, and school–university collaboration limits the consistency of these developmental gains.

Despite the benefits of field experience, the review reveals that PGSD pre-service teachers remain insufficiently prepared to teach English due to systemic gaps within teacher education programs. The absence of TEYL-focused coursework, limited English proficiency, and weak pedagogical grounding in language teaching constrain their readiness to teach English effectively. Thus, while field experience enhances several aspects of professional growth, it cannot fully

compensate for foundational weaknesses in curriculum design and institutional support. Strengthening TEYL integration, improving mentor preparation, and providing structured reflective opportunities are essential to ensure that field experience contributes optimally to the readiness of PGSD pre-service teachers to teach English in primary schools.

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