English Pre-Service Teachers' Experience During Kampus Mengajar Program: Problems and Strategies

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ABSTRACT

The Kampus Mengajar (KM) Program is a program that provides opportunities for pre-service teachers to study outside the classroom for one semester by becoming teacher partner. This research aims to find out how prospective English teachers deal with the problems they face when participating in the Kampus KM program. This study is a qualitative study using narrative inquiry method. The subjects of this study were two students majoring in English Education at a private university in Yogyakarta who had completed four months of KM teaching practice. The instrument used was an interview guideline. To collect data, the researcher used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The questions in the semi- structured interview included the general experiences of participants during the KM program. The researcher used three steps to analyze the data: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and verification. The results of the study showed that pre-service teachers encountered obstacles during the KM teaching practice period such as lack of teaching media, self-doubt, and lack of student motivation in learning English. This was influenced by several factors such as lack of school facilities, lack of teacher experience in teaching, and differences in motivation and understanding of English between students. Pre-service teachers were required to find strategies to solve problems faced during the teaching practice period; use of games, flash card media, and understanding the material. These findings highlight the importance of preparing pre-service English teachers not only with the pedagogical knowledge, but also with adaptive problem solving to face real-world classroom challenges.

Introduction

English is not considered a second language in Indonesia because many Indonesians use regional languages as their first language and Indonesian as their second language (Alrajafi, 2021). As a result, English is only used in certain situations for Indonesian as a foreign language (EFL). However, as an international language, English is very important to master, especially in the era of globalization where technological, social, political, economic and even educational activities know no boundaries. Therefore, learning English should start from elementary school (Salim & Hanif, 2021).

The Kampus Mengajar (KM) program is part of the *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) or Freedom of Learning Independent Campus policy which is controlled in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 about National Standards for Higher Education. This curriculum is governed by articles 15 and 18, which address the Learning Process Standards. This program is also one way to teach English to elementary school children. In general, the KM Program aims to provide opportunities for students to sharpen 21st century competencies (analytical thinking, problem solving, leadership, team management, creativity and innovation, and interpersonal communication) through learning development activities in primary and secondary education units.

Previous studies have shown that by integrating conceptual knowledge and training through academic internship programs, students get the opportunity to better apply their concepts in the workplace (Anjum, 2020; Suhartoyo et al., 2020; Hong et al., 2021). According to Gault et al., (2000), academic internships are a bridge to connect theory and practice by taking part in supervised and scheduled work. These internship programs not only improve students' personal skills but also enhance their professional growth and experience (Kuat, 2017). The internship program at MBKM that is in great demand by students is Kampus Mengajar. The Kampus Mengajar program is an internship activity at school that involves student participation. The Kampus Mengajar program is in line with the goal of Merdeka Belajar, which is to increase student involvement in learning (Siregar et al., 2020). Student involvement is expected to help improve the quality of learning in schools, especially in literacy, numeracy, and technology adaptation skills. Meanwhile, for students themselves, the MBKM program is expected to be able to improve soft skills and hard skills, as well as prepare students to become superior, moral, and ethical graduates (Suhartoyo et al., 2020).

This program is one of the training opportunities for pre-service teachers such as English language education students, because many teachers do not receive adequate classroom management training before starting their teaching careers and feel unprepared to face the demands of managing student behavior in their classrooms. Meanwhile, effective classroom management skills are very important for teachers.

Classroom management skills are not the only challenge faced by pre-service teachers who take part in this teaching campus program, some of the challenges faced can be socio-cultural such as adapting to local communities and language barriers (in the KM program they are spread across remote villages and what is taught is English which still sounds foreign and difficult), as for personal challenges such as lack of self- confidence, stress, and lack of experience (Al Mustaqimah & Putro, 2025; Ramadansur et al., 2024; Fathurrahman, 2023). For this reason, appropriate strategies are needed to overcome the problems mentioned.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the experiences of challenges faced by pre-service teachers while participating in the KM Program. Research conducted by Husein La Ede et al. (2022) focuses on how Pre-Service EFL Teachers perceive themselves in managing the learning process during the KM Program. Other researchers like Dwijayanti et al. (2024), Sagala & Ambarwati (2025) focused their research on the teachers' professional development.

Recognizing that there is limited research on how EFL pre-service teachers specifically manage the learning process in KM Programs, they may have unique contextual challenges and strategies compared to the practicum environments. Most of the researchers focused on the EFL Pre-service teachers' experiences in KM Program (Arso Kusuma & Kurniawan, 2023; Ramadhani & Mahmudah, 2024) and the integration technology in the EFL classroom during KM Program (Sa'idah, 2021).

To fill the gaps in previous research, this research explores further the challenges faced by pre-service teachers and how they handle these challenges while running the KM Programs. By addressing this research gap, future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of pre-service teachers' experiences during the KM Program. This, in turn, can inform the design of more effective training and support mechanisms to improve teaching practices and the professional growth of teachers.

Research Question

1. What problems do pre-service teachers face when teaching English at Kampus Mengajar program?

2. What are the factors causing the problems faced by pre-service teachers when teaching English at Kampus Mengajar program?

3. What strategies do pre-service teachers use to overcome the problems while teaching English at Kampus Mengajar program?

Method

The researcher employed the narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to describe the participants' experiences in KM Program. Those who employ narrative inquiry believe that researchers can learn how individuals make sense of specific experiences and occurrences by telling stories that are crucial to their understanding. Narrative inquiry is particularly suited for this research as it emphasizes the significance of lived experience, reflection, and personal meaning-making—elements that are central as pre-service teachers.

A. Research Subject

The participants are English Language Education students who have finished their internships as pre-service teachers in junior high and high schools in KM program and they are Jasmine and Rosaline (pseudonym). Jasmine and Rosaline participated in the sixth batch of the KM program in 2023 with teaching experience in 2022. Rosaline is one of the student recipients of a scholarship

with a final GPA of 3.70 and often takes part in seminars, competitions and also takes part in EDSA (English Department Students Association) and also IMM (Muhammadiyah Students Association). Jasmine is also a student who is active in organizations. Jasmine joins the same organization as Rosaline, EDSA and her GPS is at 3.75, which is quite a high number.

B. Research Instruments

According to Sugiyono (2010), a research instrument is a tool used to measure observed natural and social phenomena. Qualitative techniques use interviews, diaries, notebooks, observations, and open-ended questionnaires as primary data collection, analysis, and interpretation tools (Zohrabi, 2023). This study employed interview guideline to interview the research subjects. In this research there are twenty questions which include questions about own decision making, questions about views on the chosen program, as well as questions about the obstacles, factors and strategies faced. These questions are used to dig deeper into the experiences of English pre-service teachers who participate in the KM program. To ensure data trustworthiness, the researchers validated the instrument by expert judgment and completed a member checking stage to mitigate subjectivity.

C. Data Collecting Technique

According to Creswell (2014), collecting data involves creating study limits, conducting unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documenting visual materials, and developing a procedure for recording information. The researchers collected data through a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research approach that incorporates self-conscious spoken conversation with persons while following a partially structured methodological course (Longhurst, 2012). The semi-structured interviews contained questions about the experiences of pre-service teachers who faced problems during KM program activities, such as self-image, self-esteem, task perspective, work motivation, future perspective, factor, problems and strategies which were tailored to the participant's situation. The purpose of open-ended questions is to allow participants to express themselves, elaborate on their responses, and allow the researcher to investigate emergent themes (Barkhuizen et al., 2014).

D. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique employed in this research refers to data analysis stage developed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which is separated into data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. The researchers employed thematic data analysis to condense and choose the material.

Discussion

A. Findings

1. Story of Rosaline

Rosaline (22), pursued her dream of becoming a teacher by entering the English Language Education study program at a private university as a student receiving a full cover scholarship. Rosaline has dreamed of becoming a teacher since childhood. This ideal was influenced by his elementary school teacher who had extraordinary patience and sincerity when teaching his students.

> *"I was impressed by the teacher who taught me in elementary school, he was very patient and sincere when teaching his students, that's why I wanted to be a teacher like him, so I decided to take FKIP."*

Rosaline ultimately decided to take English education as her study program. Apart from her love of English since childhood, at that time Rosaline felt that children's interest in learning English was very low. Considering that many elementary schools have not yet made English a compulsory subject, coupled with the position of English in Indonesia which is only EFL (English for Foreign Language) which is only studied as a foreign language without being used for daily communication, this results in the ability and Indonesian children's interest in learning English is lagging behind. For Rosaline, becoming an EFL teacher is not easy, but Rosaline is determined to teach English to children, because as we now know English is an international language that has been used as a means of communication globally.

While studying at PBI FKIP, Rosaline was active in the EDSA and the IMM. Her involvement in the organization was a form of developing social skills and teamwork. Even though Rosaline was active in various organizational activities, even two organizations at once, Rosaline's academic grades remained stable. Apart from organizing, Rosaline was also active in various seminars and webinars held on campus and outside campus. She was active in community service. Everything Rosaline did was to improve her social skills.

> *"Teachers have to talk a lot, it's like, so you have to have good public speaking. I take part in organizations and community activities, actually to practice, so I don't stutter in front of lots of people."*

But even so, Rosaline still felt dissatisfied with this. Rosaline seemed thirsty for knowledge and experience, even though she had passed the teaching practicum in her second year of study, Rosaline was still not satisfied. Rosaline looked for information about programs that might quench her thirst. Until one day, Rosaline accidentally clicked on a post from the Ministry of Education and Culture about the sixth wave of campus teaching programs. At that time, Rosaline immediately studied the KM Program further.

In fact, Rosaline was interested in joining this program from the opening of the fourth batch of the KM program, but Rosaline did not qualify at that time. However, Rosaline did not give up, she registered again at the opening of the sixth batch and Rosaline passed on that occasion.

Students who take part in this program will be distributed to all regions in Indonesia as teams who will work together to build and develop education in the schools they attend. Rosaline and her team of five people found an elementary school in a mountainous area in Central Java. Being a teacher in a remote area is not easy. Rosaline encountered various obstacles while carrying out her duties.

The school occupied by Rosaline has inadequate facilities and infrastructure. The school lacks books and the library is not lively. It is very rare for students to come to the library to read, apart from the limited availability of books, the students there also lack interest in reading books. One of the work programs of KM students at that time was to open book donations and revitalize the library. This was done so that the children there would have an interest in reading books and visiting their library.

Apart from the lack of reading books that can be used as a medium for teaching English, Rosaline felt that the signal and Wi-Fi connection were unstable.

> *"Sometimes I teach using slideshows or watching short films, so if, for example, in the middle of explaining the material and the Wi-Fi or the signal disappears, I have to rack my brain to find a solution so that the lesson continues."*

The next day, when Rosaline started teaching English in class, she discovered a new problem. At that time, she doubted her ability to teach English because of her lack of experience in teaching a class. At that time, Rosaline taught children from grades 1 to 6, where they only had English lessons once a week. *"Here, they* learned *English once a week, so when they learn English every day with me, they seem to be in shock and like they're not interested in learning.".* Of course this resulted in clueless children learning English. Moreover, the school where Rosaline works is still quite remote so their thinking about English is still very old-fashioned. Many parents still think that learning English is not important, resulting in their children not having the motivation to learn English. This is what makes Rosaline doubt herself as an English teacher.

However, this did not discourage Rosaline. Instead of giving up, Rosaline looked for ways to overcome the problems she faced during her KM program. Facing this, she consulted with her tutor. The first step that Rosaline took was to convince herself repeatedly that she was capable of carrying out the duties of being a pre-service teacher. Rosaline admitted that before she entered the class and started the lesson, she would study the material she was going to teach seriously. This was done so that Rosaline could master the material to be taught. This method is enough to make Rosaline calm and confident in herself. Additionally, after consulting with her tutor, Rosaline gained enough insight to know the characteristics of the children there. The result showed that

children were more interested and focused when learning while playing. An idea appeared in Rosaline's head. By taking advantage of the school's spacious and beautiful grounds, Rosaline often brought her students to study outdoors. This was done so that children can also train their motor and sensory skills. By letting them explore the natural surroundings, Rosaline hoped that the children would continue to enjoy their learning period without forgetting their playing time. Rosaline did not just let them play and run here and there, *"The front yard of the school is an area of plantations and rice fields. So, I let them explore and mention whatever objects they encounter, then we will translate them into English."*

On other occasions, Rosaline used flashcards and pop-up books as teaching media. This was done so that children do not get bored while learning English. Occasionally Rosaline also used games as icebreakers or just to recall material that had been taught. Rosaline put this ice breaking at the end of the lesson and turned it into a small competition. *"Just for fun, sometimes I give prizes of candy or small snacks to those who win the game or successfully answer my questions."* As a result, children were more interested and enthusiastic when learning English. Rosaline admits that the idea of small gifts are actually not good if they happen too often, but with these gifts the children become enthusiastic every time they learn.

Rosaline carried out her duties well. During those four months, Rosaline gained meaningful insight and experience in the world of teaching. From the KM program, Rosaline knew that being a teacher, especially teaching children, was not just about providing the material that children need, but also having to understand each child's learning style which has different characteristics.

> *"After KM, I became more confident in becoming an English teacher. During my four month assignment, I gained a lot of new knowledge and new experiences in the world of teaching children. In the future, I will apply what I discovered during KM and of course I will continue to learn and develop myself."*

For Rosaline, joining the Teaching Campus program was the right decision. Even though after graduating Rosaline admitted that she would not immediately serve as a teacher, she said that after graduating Rosaline would look for another job first, according to her, to hold the teaching profession you have to take pre-service teacher education for one semester and the costs required are not small. The low monthly salary is the main reason Rosaline pursues pre-service teacher education. For that reason, Rosaline plans to collect money to use as educational expenses for pre-service teachers. Even so, Rosaline will still teach English to children in the form of tutoring. For Rosaline, teaching is a profession that she has always wanted, but becoming an honorary teacher is still very difficult for her to undertake.

2. Story of Jasmine

Growing up in a community where access to quality education was limited, he witnessed first-hand the transformative impact that a dedicated teacher can have. With the state of education on

her island still lagging behind, Jasmine came to Java to pursue her dream of becoming a teacher. She was also in the same educational institution as Rosaline. Like Rosaline, Jasmine had liked and been good at English since childhood.

Even though she was motivated to enter English education, Jasmine admitted that she had no expectations when she first entered the English Language Education study program. She still had doubts about all her life decisions. However, seeing the development and growth of children who were more often accompanied by social media and gadgets, Jasmine's heart was moved to contribute to the development of knowledgeable children. *"A country is seen in terms of its education first, if it is good it means the quality of its human resources is good."* This was reinforced by her desire to increase interest in learning English in Indonesia. According to Jasmine, interest in learning English in Indonesia is relatively low. Children are not interested because they think that learning a foreign language is troublesome. Meanwhile, for Jasmine, learning a foreign language will be fun if you find the right way to learn.

In her first year, Jasmine did not encounter any significant difficulties during her studies. However, Jasmine felt that there was too much new information and knowledge about the world of education that had to be absorbed. However, this did not make Jasmine laze around, in fact, Jasmine felt challenged to adapt to her new academic environment. While at FKIP, Jasmine was also active in the same organization as Rosaline. For Jasmine, participating in organizational activities helped Jasmine develop her soft skills such as leadership, communication and teamwork. For Jasmine being part of an organization is a form of self- development.

Jasmine's academic life ran monotonously. Jasmine took part in seminars, organizations and community activities that have nothing to do with developing her teaching abilities. Jasmine had only participated in pre-service teacher internship 1 which was provided as a practicum course by the campus.

> *"I felt there was something lacking in practical experience teaching in the field. From there I started looking for programs that could support this. I looked for information from social media and also asked seniors who were in the same study program, then I came across the Teaching Campus Program."*

Just like Rosaline, Jasmine also took the KM program at the opening of the sixth batch. Her decision was based on Jasmine's thirst for self-development. Jasmine still feels very lacking in terms of teaching experience. During her studies, Jasmine only received teaching theory, not real practice. In her first practice in her second year, it only lasted for one week without teaching practice. During the first pre- service teacher internship period, English language education students were distributed to various middle and high schools. At this school they were only asked to make observations of the English teachers at the school. Jasmine felt that it was a waste of time.

"I joined KM because I wanted to have more teaching experience and also to hone the pedagogical skills I gained theoretically in my courses. Apart from that, I also want to know how a teacher lives at school, how they give material, make material, and how they master the class. "The thing is, I still feel like my experience in teaching is really lacking."

Just like Rosaline, Jasmine and her team were placed in an elementary school in a Yogyakarta village. Located 12 KM from the busy city of Yogyakarta, Jasmine had to travel half an hour to get to the school. Even so, this did not reduce Jasmine's enthusiasm for teaching the children there. Jasmine felt that this was a form of a teacher's efforts to educate the nation.

During her KM program, Jasmine was involved in many activities. Apart from teaching in class, Jasmine also had to carry out her team work program. Jasmine also revealed that she and her team had to be involved in managing students' extracurricular activities and managing the library. In Jasmine's first week of teaching, she encountered her first obstacle. Jasmine revealed that she had to adapt to the new environment and new school cultural customs. This made him a little uncomfortable. A feeling of awkwardness enveloped Jasmine's heart.

"At first it was difficult because I had to adapt to the new environment, had to know the cultural customs of the school, and had to adapt to the teachers there. Basically, you have to adapt and that is difficult, the fall is like a culture shock. Apart from that, I also have to adapt to the students."

However, as a teacher, Jasmine must be able to act professionally. Jasmine was required to hide these feelings so that the children would still want to learn. Jasmine felt that at the beginning she had handled a full class, her heart was pounding violently. Jasmine doubted that she lacked experience in teaching. *"I was nervous and scared when I first entered class, thinking about a lot of things. I'm afraid that children won't be interested in the material I present."*

On another occasion, Jasmine revealed that she had difficulty managing a class with a large number of students. For Jasmine, it was an energy-draining job because Jasmine was teaching a class with a large number of students for the first time and all students had different learning styles.

"I have difficulty managing the class, in one class there are more than 20 students and they all have different learning styles, different learning motivations, so they need different handling too. From there I looked for ways so that the children could receive proper treatment."

These difficulties did not make Jasmine just give up. Jasmine was looking for a way out to overcome all the problems that bother her. The first step that Jasmine took was to consult with her tutor. After consulting, Jasmine also discussed and exchanged opinions with her teammates. From the results of this discussion, Jasmine found a way out.

> *"I teach elementary school children, so after consultation and discussion I had an idea to create interactive learning, such as using flashcard media and playing games. The children are very enthusiastic when we play games. The game I used at that time was 'the hanging man', they liked it."*

Children were much more enthusiastic about learning English when using games or flash cards. This was also influenced by the lack of school facilities which did not provide sufficient and appropriate learning media for children. The flash card media used by Jasmine did not belong to the school, but Jasmine provided it independently using subsidy money provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Apart from providing interesting teaching media, Jasmine also admits that she always prepares herself by studying the material she will teach. This is done so that Jasmine can teach more calmly and is able to master the material.

After completing her KM program, Jasmine experienced growth in both her professional and personal aspects. This means that Jasmine was increasingly convinced that she loved being a teacher and will continue her career in the world of education as a teacher. This was due to her four month experience in facing and overcoming the problems she encountered while teaching English to children at the elementary school where she was assigned.

> *"Participating in this KM Program has increased my self-confidence. I also feel that my ability in teaching has developed rapidly. Even though I still need to learn a lot more, for now I feel that's enough. In the future, I will continue to develop myself and become a qualified teacher."*

Jasmine also felt the positive impact of the KM program. However, just like Rosaline, Jasmine will not immediately become a teacher. Jasmine said that being a teacher in Indonesia feels hard because many people are not appreciated and often receive unfair treatment by superiors and students. Thus, Jasmine made the teaching profession her second choice. Just like Rosaline, Jasmine will also use her teaching abilities, not as a teacher who teaches in class but as a tutor.

B. Discussion

1. Pre-service Teachers Problem during the KM Program

a. Lack of teaching media

The problem that pre-service teachers often face when participating in the KM program and being placed in remote areas is limited technology and school facilities. From the narratives of the two pre-service teachers, it can be concluded that the school they work in has many limitations including limited technology and inadequate facilities. From Rosaline and Jasmine's narrative, the two schools where they run the KM program have limited learning facilities which hinder the teaching and learning process. Based on research findings, both of them were involved in a work program to revive school libraries by opening book donations to fill school libraries that lacked reading books and books for learning media. In Rosaline's case,

limited learning facilities and Wi-Fi problems were the main obstacles in the teaching and learning process.

In addition, Rosaline and Jasmine must provide learning media independently. As stated by both of them, they provide learning media such as flash cards and pop-up books independently. Limited school facilities and infrastructure as a problem faced by prospective teachers has been proven by Syahputra (2022) in his research which found limited school facilities and infrastructure as an obstacle to learning.

b. Self-Doubt

The next problem comes from doubts within pre-service teachers. From both narratives it can be concluded that both of them have doubts within themselves. This is due to Rosaline and Jasmine's lack of experience in teaching English and their mastery of the classroom is also very poor. This is caused by disconnect between the program components organized by universities and the actual needs of elementary schools as explained by Zeichner et al. (2010). Universities provide theory without real practice with actual needs in elementary schools. From Jasmine's narrative, it can be concluded that she was surprised when she first went to the elementary school where she ran the KM program. Jasmine has to adapt to the school environment and real school conditions that she has never encountered before.

From what Rosaline and Jasmine revealed in the research findings, they both felt afraid and nervous the first time they taught a full class. The feeling of fear of not being accepted and the material provided creates its own pressure. This was caused by Rosaline and Jasmine's lack of ability to manage the classroom, giving rise to doubts in both of them. The lack of experience in processing classrooms has been proven in research conducted by Husein La Ede, et al (2022).

c. Lack of motivation

Low student motivation to learn is a problem often faced by pre- service teachers. In Rosaline's narrative, the students have low interest in learning English. This is caused by the lack of English language learning in schools which only provide English language material once a week. So many children don't understand and tend to be lazy in learning English. Apart from that, language limitations are another reason students are not interested in English. The low motivation of students in learning English has been proven by Syahputra (2022) in his research. It was stated that there were problems faced by students, such as the low number of hours of English lessons and lack of concentration in class.

2. The factors causing the problems faced by pre-service teachers during the KM Program

a. Lack of school facilities

Factors that often cause problems for pre-service teachers are limited infrastructure and facilities. Placement of pre-service teachers who take part in the KM program according to the

Directorate General of Higher Education (2020) decided to place pre-service teachers in schools in remote areas in order to realize equal education throughout the country.

The targeted schools have many shortcomings, such as a lack of human resources (teachers), limited facilities such as classrooms, inadequate technology, and limited learning facilities used. With the KM program, it is hoped that students who take part can take advantage of and improve existing limitations, but this actually causes a lot of harm to pre-service teachers. Limited facilities and infrastructure become obstacles and make it difficult for pre-service teachers during the learning process. Limited school infrastructure and facilities as a problem faced by pre-service teachers is in line with research conducted by Marlina and Muhdar (2022) which found limited school facilities and infrastructure as the main obstacle.

b. Lack of teachers' experience

The next factor is the lack of experience of pre-service teachers in teaching. This can happen if universities do not provide sufficient practice for education students. Even though Rosaline and Jasmine's college provided teaching practice at school, for both of them it was not enough and the teaching practice they underwent before joining the KM program did not reflect the actual situation at school.

For pre-service teachers, being provided with a professional learning centre in the workplace to understand the realities of daily school life is the first step to gaining meaningful teaching experience. Such professional experience creates opportunities to align ideas and theories learned at university before entering a KM program. Field experience itself is a meaningful and practical teaching skill that is considered the basic need for pre-service teachers. The lack of experience of pre-service teachers during classroom processing is in line with research conducted by Cheng et al. (2010) and Kwenda et al. (2017) regarding teacher professionalism which is the gap between teachers in conveying knowledge theoretical and practical in class.

c. Multi-Level Group

The next factor is multi-level groups which result in low student learning motivation. Many elementary schools do not include English as a compulsory subject and only provide English language material to students once a week. Schools that do not set English as a compulsory subject usually do not implement an independent curriculum as their learning curriculum.

Apart from that, the different backgrounds of students make this factor a factor that quite often hinders pre-service teachers in carrying out teaching practices. The reason is, many parents do not provide preschool learning to their children. English is a subject that is often forgotten by parents, they think that learning English is not very important because they think English does not have much influence on their children's future. In fact, English is a language

that has an influence on global progress. Therefore, many students are not interested in learning English. This problem is in line with research conducted by Nunan (2019) regarding diversity within a student group which will cause serious problems. Such diversity includes different motivations, different learning styles, different first languages, and especially different proficiency. Therefore, teachers must be able to deal with children with these differences. To address differences in proficiency levels, they must design materials and tasks that vary in difficulty.

3. **The strategies used by pre-service teachers during the KM Program**

   a. **Games**

   Games are one of the interactive learning media that are widely used by teachers (Putra & Parasmita, 2023). Like what Rosaline and Jasmine did during class. The use of games as a teaching medium was considered very effective by Rosaline and Jasmine, this was proven by the students' enthusiasm for learning that was visible during the learning process. Apart from that, the use of games as a teaching medium also has a significant impact in increasing students' vocabulary skills. This is in line with research conducted by Budianto et al. (2022) regarding the use of games to teach English vocabulary to students. However, this finding has not been proven in previous research on pre-service teachers' strategies in teaching English in KM programs.

   b. **Media Flashcard**

   Flashcard is a type of learning media in the form of a small card with images, usually made from photos, symbols, or images that are installed on the front and back sides and contain words and examples of sentences using the word making flashcard a popular learning media among English teachers.

   From the findings in this research, Rosaline and Jasmine revealed that they used flashcards as a teaching medium. The use of flashcard media is considered effective in learning English because flashcards remind or direct students to something related to the image. This has been proven by Husein La Ede (2022) in his research on EFL Pre-Service Teachers in Managing the Learning Process during the KM Program. It is said that pre-service teachers who experience difficulties in teaching English use flash cards as a teaching medium. This finding is in line with research conducted by Norhidayah, et al., (2023) regarding the effectiveness of flashcards as a medium for teaching English to children.

   c. **Comprehend the Material**

   Understanding the learning material that will be taught is an important task for a teacher. In finding, it can be concluded that Rosaline and Jasmine prepare themselves by understanding the material they will teach before they enter the class. This was done so that Rosaline and

Jasmine would regain their confidence, so that when a student asked about something related to the material, Rosaline and Jasmine would easily give the right answer. This finding has not been found in previous research and has not been proven by any research

4. Implications of the Study

The findings of this study highlight the importance of preparing pre-service English teachers not only with pedagogical knowledge but also with adaptive problem-solving and reflective skills to face real-world classroom challenges. The Kampus Mengajar (KM) program, while demanding, serves as a transformative platform for teacher development, particularly in building self-confidence and classroom resilience. Therefore, teacher education programs should integrate more field-based experiences and reflective practices to better equip future teachers for diverse and resource-limited educational settings. Additionally, stakeholders such as universities and schools must collaborate more closely to ensure that pre-service teachers receive adequate support, mentoring, and teaching resources during practicum placements.

Conclusion

The study's findings indicated that pre-service teachers faced challenges throughout the KM teaching practice phase, including insufficient teaching resources, self-doubt, and a lack of student interest in learning English. This was influenced by other factors, including inadequate school facilities, insufficient instructor experience, and varying levels of motivation and comprehension of English among pupils. Pre-service teachers were mandated to identify solutions to address challenges encountered during their teaching practice, including the utilization of games, flashcard media, and comprehension of the subject matter. This affected the self-development of prospective teachers in terms of problem solving and self-confidence.

This study was limited by its small sample size, involving only two pre-service English teachers. As a result, the findings may not fully represent the broader experiences of Kampus Mengajar participants across different institutions or regions. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data through interviews may introduce subjectivity and limit the depth of insight into actual classroom practices. Future research should involve a larger and more diverse group of participants from various universities and teaching locations to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced in the Kampus Mengajar program. Incorporating classroom observations and reflective journals could also enrich the data and provide deeper insights into teaching strategies and identity development. Furthermore, teacher education programs are encouraged to integrate structured mentoring and targeted training in adaptive teaching methods to better prepare pre-service teachers for field realities, particularly in under-resourced schools.

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