

Exploring language assessment literacy: Indonesian pre-service English teachers' perceived readiness for classroom assessment

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ABSTRACT

Understanding language assessment literacy (LAL) is an important part of pre-service English teachers' professional development. Although interest in language assessment has increased, studies focusing on pre-service teachers' LAL in the Indonesian EFL context remain limited. A clearer understanding of how pre-service teachers view and interpret classroom assessment is therefore needed to support more effective assessment practices and improve language teaching and learning. This qualitative study explores Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers' perceived readiness for classroom assessment by examining how aspects of LAL are articulated through interview data. The study involved ten English education study program students who had completed the teaching practicum program in East Java, Indonesia. The findings indicate that, despite expressing confidence in their readiness to teach, the participants demonstrated limited and uneven understandings of key LAL components. The small number of participants and the specific institutional context limit the transferability of the findings. Nevertheless, this study suggests that closer attention to LAL within pre-service English teachers' education may help support the development of more balanced assessments.

Keywords: EFL; classroom assessment; language assessment literacy; pre-service English teacher; undergraduate students

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INTRODUCTION

For language teachers, professional development involves continuously improving their knowledge and skills to meet the demands of language classroom teaching. One important part of this process is assessment practice, since language teachers regularly evaluate students' language learning and use the results to guide instruction (Tosuncuoglu, 2018). As a result, the ability to design and use assessments appropriately has become an essential aspect of professionalism in language education.

In language education, effective assessment practice depends largely on teachers' language assessment literacy (LAL), which refers to their understanding of assessment concepts, skills, and principles. Previous studies have shown that language teachers with adequate LAL are more likely to conduct classroom assessments in meaningful and appropriate ways, particularly in second or foreign language contexts (Mellati & Khademi, 2018; Nurisma et al., 2025). Therefore, this study views LAL as a specific competence that supports professional assessment practice in language classrooms.

Developing pre-service English language teacher assessment literacy is essential. This is because their comprehension of assessment not only influences how they implement language assessment practices in the classroom but also affects the quality of their teaching (Sulistio, 2023). Therefore, before facing the real-world teaching, pre-service English language teachers need to ensure their LAL's components include knowledge, skill, and principles, to a sufficient level so that when they enter the teaching practicum agenda, they already possess the understanding of assessment (Gebril, 2017; Rezai et al., 2021; Sultana, 2019). One way to improve their assessment literacy is by offering more language assessment training (Giraldo, 2018).

However, many studies asserted that most teachers who graduated from language programs did not experience assessment training (Giraldo, 2018; Zulaiha & Mulyono, 2020). This finding contrasts with the current practice in many language education programs, which offer a language assessment course to pre-service English teachers. Although pre-service English teachers know classroom assessment from a language assessment course, the results of another previous study indicated that the level of satisfaction among pre-service English teachers regarding their LAL was inadequate (Farmasari & Herayana, 2023).

In light of these findings, pre-service English language teachers still need to further develop their LAL as part of their professional growth. Although language assessment courses are commonly offered in teacher education programs, attending such courses does not guarantee that pre-service teachers develop adequate assessment competence. Limited understanding of assessment principles, knowledge, and skills may lead to difficulties in designing, implementing, and interpreting classroom assessments. This situation suggests the need to examine more closely how assessment literacy is developed during the pre-service stage within educational contexts.

Despite growing interest in LAL, research in the context of Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers remains underrepresented (Zulaiha et al., 2020). More specifically, in the pre-service English language teacher area, it is important to know the differences in concepts and practices of assessment literacy in different environments, including aspects of assessment literacy in certain contexts (Edwards, 2017; Willis et al., 2013). Therefore, this research focuses on exploring the extent to which Indonesian pre-service English teachers understand assessment in their classrooms.

The results of this research are expected to provide useful information in the field of assessment literacy in the context of English classes. The urgency of this research lies in its potential to inform the preparation of language teachers who are competent in classroom assessment. Thus, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the views or beliefs of pre-service English teachers regarding assessment in the classroom?
2. How do pre-service English teachers construct their assessments in teaching at school?
3. How do pre-service English teachers implement their assessments in the schools they teach?
4. How do pre-service English teachers follow up on assessment results in teaching English?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher readiness in educational contexts

Readiness is the state of being prepared to react or respond in a particular manner to a circumstance (Slameto, 2013). In educational contexts, this concept is commonly discussed as teacher readiness, including pre-service teachers' preparedness to implement instructional practices. Teacher readiness covers a broad body of knowledge and is understood as a multidimensional construct. Previous studies identify three main dimensions of teacher readiness: behavioral, psychological, and situational

readiness (Britt et al., 2016; Holt et al., 2007; Nakata, 2011; Weiner, 2009). Behavioral readiness relates to teachers' competencies, including their knowledge and skills to apply principles or strategies in practice. Psychological readiness refers to teachers' willingness to adjust to new approaches, which involves self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation. Situational readiness, meanwhile, includes external supporting factors such as the environment and infrastructure that facilitate change. These dimensions of teacher readiness provide a useful framework for understanding pre-service teachers' readiness in specific domains, such as classroom assessment and language assessment literacy.

A combination of internal and external factors influences teacher readiness. Dalyono (2007), as cited in Mulyani (2013), identifies internal factors such as health, intelligence, interest, talent, and motivation. These personal factors shape how teachers respond to professional demands. External factors include family, school environment, and the wider community, which can support or constrain readiness development. Beyond these factors, readiness is guided by several key principles. Slameto (2013) explains that different aspects of development influence one another. Teacher readiness also requires physical and psychological maturity to benefit from experience. Experience plays a positive role in strengthening readiness over time. Therefore, teacher readiness is not formed instantly but develops gradually through continuous learning and practice.

Language assessment literacy: Conceptualization and evolution

The concept of LAL has evolved significantly from its initial focus on psychometric principles to a more holistic, socio-constructivist view (Coombe et al., 2020; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Initially, LAL was primarily concerned with the technical knowledge required to construct and interpret standardized tests, emphasizing concepts like validity, reliability, and statistical analysis (Popham, 2009). However, contemporary conceptualizations, particularly those relevant to classroom-based assessment, expand LAL to include the teacher's ability to critically evaluate assessment practices, understand their ethical implications, and use results for instructional improvement (Babaii & Asadnia, 2019; Tsagari & Rousoulioti, 2025). This shift reflects a growing recognition that LAL is a dynamic, context-dependent competence, not a static set of skills (Xu & Brown, 2016).

The core components of LAL are generally categorized into three domains: knowledge, skills, and principles/beliefs (Giraldo, 2018). Knowledge involves understanding assessment terminology and theory. Skills relate to the practical ability to design, administer, score, and analyze various assessment instruments. Crucially, the principles and beliefs component addresses the teacher's philosophical stance on assessment, which dictates why and how they choose to assess (Coombe et al., 2020). The theoretical contribution of recent LAL research lies in its move toward a critical LAL framework, which encourages teachers to question the power dynamics and potential biases embedded in assessment practices, thereby linking LAL directly to issues of social justice and equity in education (Al-Akbari et al., 2025).

Language assessment literacy in the Indonesian EFL context

Research on LAL among Indonesian EFL teachers consistently highlights a significant disparity between the perceived importance of assessment and the actual level of LAL demonstrated in practice (Damayanti & Setyaningsih, 2024; Zulaiha & Mulyono, 2020). This issue is particularly acute in the Indonesian context due to the national curriculum's emphasis on authentic and performance-based assessment, which requires a high level of LAL that many teachers have not been adequately trained for (Hoinbala et al., 2025). Empirical studies further reveal that Indonesian EFL teachers often struggle with technical aspects of LAL, including measuring validity and reliability and designing assessments that adequately cover all four language skills, particularly speaking and listening (Nurisma et al., 2025). These challenges indicate that, despite policy expectations, teachers' assessment knowledge and skills remain insufficient to meet curricular demands.

Methodologically, many of these studies employ mixed-methods designs to capture both teachers' self-reported confidence and their objectively measured assessment knowledge, revealing a recurring pattern: teachers tend to report higher levels of LAL than their actual competence supports

(Cirocki et al., 2025). This phenomenon, often described as an “illusion of competence,” constitutes a critical challenge for professional development initiatives, as teachers may fail to recognize their own training needs (Chang et al., 2024). Moreover, LAL challenges in Indonesia are frequently exacerbated by contextual constraints such as large class sizes, limited resources, and insufficient institutional support for sustained LAL training (Isnawati, 2023). As a result, teachers often rely on traditional and easily administered assessment formats, which may not accurately reflect students' true language proficiency, underscoring the need for context-sensitive LAL interventions (Hoinbala et al., 2025).

Language assessment literacy development in pre-service English teacher education

The development of LAL during pre-service teacher education is paramount, as university programs are responsible for laying the foundational knowledge and skills for future professional practice. However, a pervasive finding across international and Indonesian contexts is that pre-service teachers frequently enter their teaching practicum with insufficient LAL, a deficit that is often not remedied by a single, isolated language testing course. The theoretical issue here is the disconnect between theory and practice (Yin, 2019). University courses often focus on abstract psychometric theory, failing to provide the practical, hands-on experience required for classroom assessment (Uysal, 2025). Consequently, pre-service teachers may struggle to translate theoretical knowledge into practical skills, such as designing contextually appropriate rubrics or analyzing assessment data for instructional purposes. This failure to integrate theory and practice is a key methodological critique of current teacher education models (Fairbrother et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, the LAL of pre-service teachers is a critical area of investigation because their initial training heavily influences their long-term assessment habits (Cirocki et al., 2025). The substantive findings from this area of research often point to a high degree of self-efficacy (the belief in one's ability to perform a task) that masks a low level of technical competence. This ‘illusion of competence’ is a major challenge for teacher educators, as it necessitates a pedagogical approach that not only imparts knowledge but also fosters critical self-reflection and a realistic appraisal of one's own LAL. The current study, by providing a detailed qualitative exploration of the LAL components among Indonesian pre-service English teachers, seeks to contribute to this body of literature by offering granular insights into the nature and extent of this critical gap, thereby informing the design of more effective, integrated LAL curricula.

METHOD

Research design

To address the research questions, this study employed a descriptive-qualitative research design, which aims to explore Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers' perceived readiness for classroom assessment. This approach aligns with the study's goal to ‘understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subjects, for example, behavior, perception, motivation, and action, holistically, and by means of description in the form of natural words and by utilizing various natural methods.’ (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, by using descriptive research methods, researchers described the facts in the field about how pre-service English teachers perceive assessment in the classroom, how to design it, implement it, and follow up on the results of assessment in the classroom. This study emphasizes how LAL is owned by pre-service English teachers. To find out how pre-service students' beliefs about their LAL, the researchers used the theory by Giraldo (2018) adopted from previous research. The LAL components put forward by Giraldo (2018) were used as an analytical lens to interpret how teachers conceptualize and justify their assessment practices (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Three Components of LAL for Language Teachers

LAL components	Dimensions
Knowledge	1. Awareness of applied linguistics 2. Awareness of theory and concepts 3. Awareness of own language assessment
Skills	4. Instructional skills 5. Design skill for language assessments 6. Skill in educational measurement 7. Technological skills
Principles	8. Awareness of and actions towards critical issues in language assessment

Participants

The participants of this study were 10 pre-service English teachers, or EFL students at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, Indonesia. They were selected using purposive sampling. The inclusion criterion was that the participants were eighth-semester pre-service English teachers who had completed their field experience practice (FEP) at schools. Teaching experience reported in this study includes formal teaching practice during FEP as well as informal teaching, such as private tutoring. As pre-service teachers, none of the participants held formal teacher certification at the time of the study. The participants' demography is presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1

Participants' Demographic Information

Participants	Gender	Teaching Experience	Academic Degree
S1	Female	5 years (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S2	Female	5 years (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S3	Female	1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S4	Female	1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S5	Female	3.5 years (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S6	Female	4.5 years (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S7	Female	1 year (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S8	Female	1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S9	Female	5 years (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)
S10	Female	3 months (private tutoring); 1 month (PPL)	Bachelor of English Education (in progress)

Research instruments

The primary instrument of this qualitative study was the researchers themselves, who played a central role in designing, conducting, and interpreting the data in accordance with the naturalistic inquiry approach ([Creswell & Creswell, 2017](#)). Meanwhile, a semi-structured interview guideline served as the supporting instrument for collecting data. The use of semi-structured interviews enabled an in-depth exploration of pre-service English teachers' LAL while allowing flexibility to probe participants' responses based on their individual experiences and teaching contexts.

The interview questions were adapted from and informed by established frameworks and empirical studies on language assessment literacy, particularly those proposed by [Giraldo \(2018\)](#), [Sultana \(2019\)](#), and [Yan et al. \(2018\)](#) (Appendix 1). [Giraldo's \(2018\)](#) conceptualization of LAL as comprising knowledge, skills, and principles provided the primary analytical framework for structuring the interview questions. [Sultana's \(2019\)](#) work informed the formulation of questions related to teachers' beliefs, perceived readiness, and understanding of classroom assessment practices. In addition, the study by [Yan et al. \(2018\)](#) contributed to the development of questions addressing contextual and experiential factors influencing assessment practices, particularly during teaching practicum. Moreover, to ensure the clarity, relevance, and content validity of the interview protocol, the questions were reviewed and validated by two experts in the field.

Data collection procedure

The data collection procedure of this study was conducted through several systematic stages. First, the researchers contacted prospective participants, namely pre-service English teachers who were in their eighth semester and had completed approximately one month of teaching practicum. After identifying eligible participants, the researchers explained the purpose of the study and requested their voluntary participation. Once consent was obtained, interview schedules were arranged based on the participants' availability, and all interviews were conducted face-to-face (offline) to facilitate richer interaction and more natural responses.

The semi-structured interviews were carried out gradually and iteratively. Each interview session lasted approximately 45–60 minutes, depending on the depth of participants' responses. With the participants' permission, all interviews were audio-recorded using offline recording devices to ensure accurate data capture. The interviews focused on exploring pre-service English teachers' beliefs about their knowledge, skills, and principles of language assessment literacy (LAL), as well as how they followed up students' assessment results in classroom contexts during their teaching practicum.

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the data, the researchers conducted follow-up interviews after the initial interview sessions. After reviewing and transcribing the interview data, the researchers re-contacted several participants through online interviews or telephone communication to clarify ambiguous responses, confirm interpretations, and ensure consistency in participants' statements. This process functioned as a form of member checking, allowing participants to verify that their views and experiences were accurately represented. Multiple interview interactions also enabled the researchers to probe emerging themes more deeply and refine their understanding of participants' assessment practices.

Data analysis

The data analysis method used was inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), ensuring that the themes were deeply rooted in the data. First, the interview recordings were transcribed, then the transcript was reread several times, highlighted, and margin notes were taken about initial ideas or impressions of the participant's answers. Second, the transcript was broken down into meaningful units (sentences, phrases, or short paragraphs relevant to the research question), and important sections were coded. Third, similar codes were grouped to create common themes. Fourth, all the interview quotes were double-checked under each theme to make sure they were consistent and made sense as a pattern of experience. Fifth, the themes were named briefly and concisely, with participants' experiences described based on the interview data. Sixth, a narrative of the results was developed: each theme was explained, linked to the research question and relevant theory, and illustrated using direct quotes from the interview transcripts.

FINDINGS

As the data were generated solely through interviews, the findings primarily reflect teachers' articulated assessment knowledge and beliefs rather than directly observed assessment skills. This study poses four research questions. The research data will be described based on the following problem formulation:

Pre-service English teachers' beliefs regarding classroom assessment

The interview data show that pre-service English teachers expressed different beliefs about classroom assessment, especially regarding their understanding of assessment concepts. The results indicate that pre-service English teachers demonstrated limited understanding of classroom assessment. This was reflected in their restricted familiarity with different types of assessment, as most participants referred only to multiple-choice and essay formats. When asked about proficiency, diagnostic, placement, and achievement tests, many participants reported having heard of these terms but were unable to explain how such assessments are conducted. For example, one participant stated:

"I know diagnostic test known by name, but I have not known yet about other types of tests. Perhaps, it is already included in the book material given by my lecturer, but I did not know clearly about each type." (S1)

Another added:

"I haven't known about the types of assessment in the English classroom." (S3)

Furthermore, when asked about statistical calculations, participants described familiarity mainly with basic calculations and expressed uncertainty about more complex statistical procedures. One participant noted:

"I don't know how to measure whether the test is valid or reliable or not". (S7)

while another mentioned:

"I haven't known how to measure the reliability and validity of the test, so when I was doing a teaching attempt, I asked a teacher at that school to check the test item. It was because I hadn't learnt how to measure before". (S3)

This limited understanding also extended to the assessment of specific language skills, with one participant stating:

"I can assess students' speaking, writing, and listening, but I have difficulties in assessing students' listening skill and I haven't tried to assess it since in that school there are no sufficient facilities in doing listening test." (S3)

Table 2 summarizes the participants' reported knowledge of classroom assessment. Most participants indicated limited understanding of test variety, which they attributed to minimal exposure to assessment-related content during their studies. Overall, the table suggests that participants' understanding of classroom assessment concepts remains limited and uneven.

Table 2

Summary of Pre-service English Teachers' Beliefs about their Knowledge in Classroom Assessment

Participant	Key Findings on Knowledge (LAL Component: Knowledge)
S1, S3, S5, S7, S8, S9	Limited understanding of assessment types: Some participants were familiar mainly with multiple-choice and essay tests and were unfamiliar with the forms and procedures of proficiency, diagnostic, placement, and achievement tests.
S3, S7	Limited understanding of reliability and validity: Some participants were unsure how to evaluate test validity and reliability and reported relying on cooperating teachers for guidance during the teaching practicum.
S3, S7	Limited understanding of assessing all English skills: Some participants expressed confidence in assessing reading and writing, but were uncertain about assessing listening and speaking, citing limited training and inadequate facilities.
S5, S9	Limited theoretical foundation: Some participants felt that the Language Testing course was insufficient, lacking in-depth and detailed material, leading to a lack of theoretical knowledge.
S2, S4, S6, S10	Reported basic understanding: Some participants described the Language Testing course as providing a basic foundation, while also acknowledging the need for continued self-study and improvement.

Overall, the findings show that participants' assessment knowledge was uneven and mostly limited to familiar classroom practices. From an LAL perspective, this suggests that their assessment knowledge was still developing and not yet clearly linked to broader assessment purposes and concepts.

Pre-service English teachers' classroom assessment preparation

The interview data illustrate how pre-service English teachers described their preparation for

classroom assessments. Participants discussed various assessment-related activities, such as designing assessment rubrics, preparing test items, conducting formative and summative assessments, and providing feedback to students. Many participants reported familiarity with these basic classroom assessment procedures and were able to explain how they carried out such activities. For example, one participant noted their ability to design tests, stating:

"I can design tests, but the test types I only mastered are multiple choice and essay; other types I haven't learnt yet". (S2)

Another confirmed this limited scope:

"I haven't had the ability to design tests in many ways, but I can design multiple choice, essay, true-false, and matching". (S4)

Regarding rubrics, a participant stated:

"I haven't had the ability to design a rubric; sometimes I use a rubric from the internet". (S8)

while another specified:

"I can design a rubric for scoring, but it is only for speaking and writing skills; I cannot for other skills" (S9)

They also showed an understanding of the importance of a variety of assessment methods to accommodate students' various learning styles, with one noting:

"I can calculate students' scores in Ms. Excel, like mean, sum, and basic statistics." (S7)

However, although participants described familiarity with basic assessment procedures, several reported feeling more confident in assessing certain English skills, such as reading and writing, than others, particularly speaking and listening. This shows that their understanding of how to assess different English skills was uneven. Table 3 summarizes participants' self-reported assessment skills and shows that they faced particular difficulties in areas such as test design.

Table 3

Summary of Pre-service English Teachers' Assessment Skills

Participant	Key Findings on Assessment Skills (LAL Component: Skill)
S2, S4, S8, S9	Limited test design skills: Participants reported being able to design only basic test formats, such as multiple-choice, essay, and true/false questions, and expressed uncertainty about designing more varied or complex test types.
S2, S8, S9	Limited rubric design skills: Participants reported difficulty designing rubrics independently and tended to rely on the Internet or use rubrics mainly for speaking and writing assessments.
S7, S10	Basic statistical skills: Participants described familiarity with basic statistical calculations, such as calculating the mean and sum, usually using MS Excel.
S1, S5, S9	Use of technology: Participants reported using digital tools like Quizizz, G-Form, and Wordwall for assessment.
S3, S7	Limited understanding of validity and reliability: Participants expressed uncertainty about how to measure the validity and reliability of their assessment instruments.
S1, S3, S6, S9	Contextual adaptation of assessment: Participants reported adapting test content to the lesson material and students' levels (SMP/SMA), but some expressed limited confidence in the authenticity of their self-made questions.

Although participants described familiarity with basic assessment procedures, their interview responses suggest that these skills were mainly procedural. In terms of LAL, this shows that assessment skills were not always supported by clear assessment knowledge.

Pre-service English teachers' classroom assessment principles

The interview results indicate a limited understanding of classroom assessment principles among the pre-service English teachers. Only two participants referred to underlying assessment concepts. One stated:

"My principle in assessment is that I use a rubric in speaking, but I don't have a theory, yet about who does it, but I believe that a rubric for speaking skills is important." (S6)

Another mentioned:

"In my assessment, I must consider the value of justice and professionalism" (S10)

In contrast, most participants reported having no clear theoretical basis to guide their assessment practices. For example, one participant stated:

"I don't have any theories that I use in assessing students in class. It is because during the learning process in the language testing course, it was not optimal; there was a lot of material given, including the learning method, and the test in class, so there were very few theories that I learned." (S3)

Another echoed this sentiment:

"I don't have a theory that I hold in depth to implement in class, I just go with the flow. When it's time for a test, I make a test like that, because I think the material given during the language testing lectures is not extensive and detailed enough, so it hasn't stuck in my brain." (S5)

Table 4 presents the summary of pre-service English teachers' reported assessment principles and shows that four participants were unable to identify any theoretical principles guiding their classroom assessment practices.

Table 4

Summary of Pre-service English Teachers' Assessment Principles

Participant	Key Findings on Assessment Principles (LAL Component: Principles)
S3, S4, S5, S7, S8	No explicit theoretical principles: Some participants explicitly stated that they did not use any specific assessment theory to guide their classroom assessment. They attributed this to the Language Testing course being "not optimal," "not detailed enough," or to relying on routine practices and "going with the flow."
S6, S10	Emerging assessment principles: A small number of participants referred to principles such as fairness, professionalism, or the importance of rubrics, without identifying theoretical sources.
S9	Student-focused considerations: One participant described adjusting assessment tasks based on what students had been taught and understood.
S1	Use assessment for support: One participant reported using assessment results to identify students who needed additional support.

Most participants rarely referred to assessment principles. When such principles were mentioned, they were not clearly linked to assessment theory, suggesting that this aspect of LAL was still limited.

Pre-service English teachers' classroom assessment follow-up

In interviews, most pre-service English teachers emphasized the importance of following up on students' assessment results in the classroom. They described using assessment results to identify students' weaknesses and strengths, so that teaching methods can be adjusted to meet individual needs. These pre-service teachers also stated that follow-up activities included providing constructive feedback to students and planning more appropriate learning strategies in the future. Table 5 presents the summary of pre-service English teachers' assessment follow-up.

Table 5

Summary of Pre-service English Teachers' Assessment Follow-up

Participant	Key Findings on Assessment Follow-up (LAL Component: Follow-up)
S1, S2, S4, S5, S8, S9, S10	Evaluation of teaching: Participants reported using students' assessment results to reflect on their teaching methods and learning materials (e.g., S1).
S1, S2, S3, S9	Feedback and remedial actions: Participants described providing oral feedback, giving additional tasks to low-scoring students, and reviewing material when many students performed poorly (S1, S3, S9).
S1, S8	Motivation and encouragement: Some participants reported giving rewards to high-scoring students and providing encouragement to students with lower scores.
S2, S4, S8, S9, S10	Transparency and communication: Participants reported sharing assessment results with students and, in some cases, with cooperating teachers or parents via the school app (S6).
S5	Student-focused follow-up: One participant described asking students directly what they did not understand to improve the next lesson.
S3	Reported constraints: One participant (S3) reported not planning to follow up directly due to time/resource constraints, but remained committed to quality teaching.

Specific follow-up actions mentioned were giving feedback, teaching evaluation, giving motivation, and assessment evaluation. Below are the students' extracts when they were interviewed.

"I give feedback orally. I think the feedback I give is enough for students. I inform students where their weaknesses and strengths are." (S9) - Giving Feedback

"The grades I get are not only to measure student grades but also to evaluate learning in class. Why are students lazy? It turns out that it is also from teachers who are not yet effective in conducting learning in class." (S1) - Teaching Evaluation

"When the assessment score has been calculated, I give rewards to students who have high scores, in addition to motivating students who have low scores to improve their learning." (S1) - Giving Motivation

"I will read the students' grades. After that, I ask which part is not understood, so it can be used as an evaluation for all students in the class, and I use the students' grades as an evaluation. And I also use it as a reference (to determine) whether my assessment in class is appropriate or not." (S2) - Assessment Evaluation

However, there was one participant who had a different view regarding the follow-up of student assessment results. This participant stated that she did not plan to follow up on the assessment results directly. The reasons given were time and resource constraints that often hinder effective follow-up processes. Nevertheless, this participant was still committed to providing quality teaching, even without structured follow-up of the assessment results. In general, participants viewed feedback and follow-up as important for learning, but their interview responses showed variation in how follow-up practices were carried out. These differences suggest that assessment knowledge, skills, and principles were not yet well integrated. Overall, the findings indicate that participants' LAL developed unevenly, with greater emphasis on basic procedures than on theoretical understanding.

DISCUSSION

This study examined pre-service English teachers' perceived readiness for classroom assessment through their interview responses of assessment knowledge, skills, principles, and follow-up practices. Overall, the findings suggest that participants demonstrated limited and uneven LAL. Although all participants had completed a teaching practicum, their interview responses showed restricted familiarity with assessment purposes, test types, and key concepts such as validity and reliability. These

results indicate that practicum experience alone does not necessarily lead to well-developed assessment literacy. Similar patterns have been reported in previous studies, which note ongoing challenges in LAL development among both pre-service and in-service language teachers (Roslan et al., 2022; Sultana, 2019; Tian et al., 2021; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). It is important to note that the findings reflect participants' articulated understanding and perceived readiness rather than their actual classroom performance.

In response to the first research question, participants' beliefs about classroom assessment appeared to be shaped by a narrow understanding of assessment knowledge. Most participants associated assessment mainly with testing and grading and relied on familiar formats such as multiple-choice and essay questions. Their limited awareness of diagnostic, placement, proficiency, and achievement tests suggests that assessment purposes were not clearly differentiated. This finding is consistent with earlier research in the Indonesian EFL context, which reports that pre-service teachers' assessment knowledge is often fragmented and remains at a surface level (Anam & Putri, 2021; Prastikawati et al., 2020). From a readiness perspective, these patterns indicate that participants' cognitive readiness for classroom assessment was still developing.

With regard to assessment preparation and construction (RQ2), participants described basic procedures for designing and administering assessments, including scoring and the use of digital tools. However, these practices were largely limited to simple and familiar test types. Many participants relied on internet-based materials or assistance from cooperating teachers when designing tests and rubrics. Although participants frequently expressed confidence in their assessment skills, their descriptions suggested limited experience in designing varied assessments or applying concepts such as validity and reliability. Since these skills were reported rather than observed, they are best understood as perceived behavioral readiness rather than demonstrated competence. This finding supports earlier research showing that pre-service teachers may feel confident about assessment while lacking a strong theoretical foundation (Isnawati, 2023).

Participants' understanding of assessment principles (RQ3) further illustrates this gap. Only a small number of participants referred to principles such as fairness, professionalism, or the use of rubrics, and these references were often not linked to formal assessment theories. Most participants described their assessment practices as intuitive or situational, rather than theory-driven. This suggests that assessment principles had not been systematically integrated into their practice. Similar findings have been reported in other EFL contexts, where assessment principles tend to receive less attention than technical aspects of testing in pre-service teacher education (Giraldo, 2018; Tajeddin et al., 2022).

When viewed through a teacher readiness framework, a clear imbalance emerges across dimensions of readiness. Participants generally expressed confidence and willingness to assess students, indicating relatively strong psychological readiness. However, this confidence was not consistently supported by cognitive or behavioral readiness. Such uneven development helps explain why participants perceived themselves as ready to assess while simultaneously demonstrating limited assessment knowledge and principled understanding. This pattern aligns with previous research suggesting that different aspects of readiness may develop at different rates during teacher education (Slameto, 2013).

Despite these limitations, findings related to assessment follow-up (RQ4) present a more positive picture. Most participants emphasized the importance of providing feedback, reflecting on teaching, and adjusting instruction based on assessment results. Practices such as giving oral feedback, motivating students, and reviewing lesson effectiveness indicate an emerging understanding of assessment as a tool for learning rather than merely for grading. This supports arguments in the LAL literature that assessment literacy also involves reflective and ethical use of assessment to support learning (Babaii & Asadnia, 2019; Pastore, 2023).

At the same time, follow-up practices were often described in general terms and lacked clear planning. One participant explicitly mentioned time and resource constraints as obstacles to conducting systematic follow-up. This highlights the role of situational readiness and suggests that contextual factors, such as workload and school conditions, can limit how assessment knowledge is

put into practice. Previous studies have similarly noted that institutional constraints often hinder teachers' ability to implement assessment practices effectively, even when they hold positive beliefs about assessment (Koh et al., 2018; Willis et al., 2013).

Overall, the findings show an imbalance in the development of pre-service English teachers' LAL. Although participants expressed positive intentions toward using assessment to support learning, their theoretical understanding and technical skills were still limited. This suggests that LAL develops gradually and cannot rely on practicum experience alone. Similar patterns have been reported in other contexts. However, this study provides additional qualitative evidence from the Indonesian EFL setting. It shows how perceived readiness, assessment knowledge, and contextual constraints interact in shaping pre-service teachers' assessment practices. These findings suggest that greater attention to LAL within pre-service English teacher education may be beneficial.

CONCLUSION

This study explored Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers' perceived readiness for classroom assessment through interview data on key aspects of LAL. The findings reveal a gap between participants' confidence and their understanding of assessment concepts and principles, with LAL appearing limited and uneven, particularly in theoretical knowledge and the assessment of speaking and listening skills. Consistent with previous research, these results suggest that practicum experience alone may not be sufficient to support comprehensive LAL development. Although based on a small, single-site sample, this study offers qualitative insight into how pre-service teachers in one Indonesian context understand classroom assessment. The findings suggest that clearer and more systematic attention to LAL within pre-service teacher education may help strengthen assessment knowledge and practice. Future research with larger and more diverse samples is needed to further examine how LAL develops across contexts.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT:

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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Appendix 1

Semi-Structured Interview Guideline

Asking about Experiences

1. What do you feel at the first meeting of the teaching practicum? Do you feel ready to assess your students?
2. Before entering teaching practicum what material you get from the campus about the language assessment? Do you ever join an assessment workshop before teaching practicum?

RQ1:

1. Do you know what kind of assessment is used in language teaching? Could you mention those types?
2. What assessment types do you usually use?
3. How do you measure students' scores? Do you use rubric for scoring? Please mention the type of rubric in scoring.
4. In what skill do you use a rubric?
5. Do you know about placement, diagnostic, and achievement? Please explain it
6. Do you know the difference between Portfolio, self-assessment, and peer-assessment? Please, explain it.
7. Could you measure the validity of the test? How?
8. Could you measure the reliability of the test? How?
9. Do you use authenticity in developing tests?
10. What English skills do you master to assess?
11. Do you know the standard of assessment in the Indonesian context classroom?
12. How do you conclude your language assessment literacy level currently?

RQ2:

1. How do you develop your assessment? Did you consider whether the test is reliable, authentic, fair, ethical, practical, and interactive?
2. Do you consider the time allocation and environment for the test? Why?
3. Is the way you measure the test valid or not? Reliable or not?
4. How do you conduct an assessment/test?
5. How do you analyze your students' test results?
6. Did you incorporate your assessment through technology? What technology did u use?
7. Do you know multiple assessment methods? What are they?
8. Did you give students motivation in assessment experiences? What is your motivation, give example.
9. Can you operate Excel for calculating test scores? What are your skills in Excel?
10. Could you design an English test? Could you design a different type of test?
11. What kind of assessment test do you usually use? Why?
12. How do you measure the assessment results?
13. Could you design the rubric for a specific English skill? Please give an example.

RQ3:

1. Which approach or theories work as guiding principles in your language teaching and testing practice?
2. How many types of assessment do you use in evaluating the students?
3. Did you apply specific types of assessment? What and why?
4. Did you treat your students during the assessment with respect? Give an example.
5. Did you ensure transparency in implementing the language assessment practice? How?

RQ4:

1. After you gained assessment results, did you use the assessment results to improve the teaching and learning process? Please explain and give an example.
2. After knowing the assessment results, did you use those results to monitor your students' learning? Please explain and give an example.
3. After knowing the assessment results, did you give feedback to students based on information from the test/assessment to improve students' performance? Please explain and give an example.
4. After knowing the assessment results, did you evaluate your language assessment implementation? Please explain and give an example.

Adapted from [Giraldo \(2018\)](#), [Sultana\(2019\)](#), and [Yan et al. \(2018\)](#).