



Pedagogical Competence of English Teachers in Professional Learning Communities: Evidence from ETA Pinrang Regency

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-04-07 Revised: 2026-05-19 Accepted: 2026-09-05 Keywords: Pedagogical Competence, English Teachers, Professional Learning Community, Teacher Development, Indonesi DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i2.10083 Corresponding Author: La Sunra la.sunra@unm.ac.id Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, FKIP Universitas Negeri Makassar	<i>This study investigated the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in the English Teachers Association (ETA) in Pinrang Regency, Indonesia. Pedagogical competence is a key determinant of instructional quality and student learning outcomes. Using a quantitative descriptive survey design, the study involved 50 English teachers selected through total sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering four dimensions: understanding learners, instructional planning, teaching implementation, and learning evaluation. Descriptive statistical analysis showed that respondents demonstrated a high level of perceived pedagogical competence. Across questionnaire items, 82% of responses were categorized as "Agree" and 18% as "Strongly Agree," indicating consistently positive self-assessments. Understanding learners emerged as the strongest dimension, while learning evaluation received comparatively lower scores, although it remained in the high category. The findings suggest that active participation in ETA may contribute positively to teachers' professional growth through collaboration, knowledge sharing, peer support, and reflective practice. They also highlight the value of localized professional learning communities in regional contexts where access to large-scale training opportunities may be limited. Because the study relied on self-reported data, future research should incorporate classroom observations, interviews, and mixed-method approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of actual pedagogical practices. This study offers practical insights for strengthening teacher development programs and</i>

1. Introduction

Teacher competence remains one of the most influential factors in determining the quality of educational processes and student learning outcomes. Among the various domains of teacher professionalism, pedagogical competence occupies a central position because it directly relates to teachers' ability to design, implement, manage, and evaluate effective learning experiences. In language education contexts, pedagogical competence is particularly crucial because English teachers are expected not only to master subject content, but also to apply instructional strategies that respond to students' linguistic needs, learning diversity, motivation, and classroom interaction patterns (Shulman, 1987; Richards, 2015).

Pedagogical competence generally encompasses teachers' understanding of learner characteristics, curriculum interpretation, lesson planning, classroom management, instructional delivery, use of learning resources, and assessment practices (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Teachers with strong pedagogical competence are more likely to create meaningful learning environments, adapt instruction to learner readiness, and promote higher student achievement (Hattie, 2009). In contrast, limited pedagogical competence may lead to ineffective teaching practices, reduced student engagement, and weak learning outcomes.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), pedagogical competence is even more significant due to the complexity of language teaching. English teachers frequently face challenges related to mixed proficiency classrooms, low student motivation, limited exposure to authentic language input, and resource constraints. Addressing such challenges requires teachers to make informed pedagogical decisions, integrate communicative methodologies, employ differentiated instruction, and assess language learning in valid and supportive ways (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Therefore, strengthening pedagogical competence among English teachers remains a continuing priority in many educational systems, including Indonesia.

In Indonesia, teacher competence has become a major concern within ongoing educational reform efforts. National policies emphasize professional standards, certification, curriculum adaptation, and continuous professional development to improve instructional quality. Nevertheless, previous studies indicate that disparities in teacher competence still exist across regions, particularly between urban and non-urban areas where access to professional learning opportunities may be uneven (Suyanto, 2017; Widodo, 2018). For English teachers in regional settings, participation in collaborative professional communities may therefore play an important role in bridging competence gaps.

One such professional platform is the English Teachers Association (ETA),

which functions as a collegial forum for English teachers to exchange ideas, discuss instructional challenges, share teaching resources, and develop professional expertise. Similar professional learning communities have been recognized internationally as effective mechanisms for enhancing teacher knowledge, reflective practice, and instructional innovation (DuFour, 2004; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Through sustained collaboration, teachers may strengthen their pedagogical competence by learning from peers, reflecting on classroom experiences, and engaging in ongoing professional dialogue.

Despite the recognized value of teacher communities, empirical research specifically examining the pedagogical competence of English teachers within ETA contexts remains limited, particularly in local Indonesian regencies such as Pinrang. Much existing research focuses broadly on teacher certification, professional identity, or curriculum implementation, while fewer studies investigate how teachers in professional associations perceive and demonstrate pedagogical competence in their everyday practice. This represents an important gap because local teacher communities may function differently depending on institutional support, membership engagement, and contextual needs.

Pinrang Regency provides a meaningful setting for such inquiry. As a regional area with growing educational aspirations, understanding the pedagogical competence of English teachers in ETA Pinrang may offer insights into how professional collaboration contributes to teacher development outside major urban centers. Evidence from this context may also inform more equitable teacher support policies across diverse regions.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in ETA Pinrang Regency. Specifically, the study examines teachers' perceived competence across key pedagogical dimensions, including understanding learners, planning instruction, implementing teaching strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. By doing so, the study contributes to the literature on teacher competence, professional learning communities, and English language education in decentralized educational contexts.

Literature Review

1. Pedagogical Competence as a Core Dimension of Teacher Professionalism

Pedagogical competence is a central dimension of teacher professionalism because it connects teachers' knowledge with the quality of classroom instruction. Shulman's (1987) concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) provides an important foundation for understanding this relationship. PCK emphasizes that effective teaching requires more than mastery of subject matter; teachers must also understand how particular content can be represented, explained, and adapted to learners' characteristics and needs. Thus, pedagogical competence can be viewed as the practical bridge between what teachers know and how they transform that knowledge into meaningful learning experiences.

Building on this perspective, subsequent scholarship has conceptualized teacher competence as a multidimensional construct involving understanding learners, planning instruction, selecting appropriate teaching strategies, managing classrooms, using learning resources, assessing learning, and adapting instruction to contextual demands (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Stronge, 2018). In contemporary learning environments, competence also involves the meaningful integration of technology into pedagogy rather than the mere use of digital tools (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). These dimensions are interconnected: teachers' understanding of learners informs instructional planning, planning shapes classroom implementation, and assessment provides evidence for adapting subsequent instruction.

Importantly, pedagogical competence should not be understood as a fixed individual attribute. It develops through continuous professional learning, reflection, experience, and interaction with other teachers. This developmental perspective establishes an important link between teacher competence and professional collaboration. Teachers who engage in collaborative learning opportunities can exchange pedagogical knowledge, reflect on classroom problems, and develop context-sensitive solutions. In this sense, professional collaboration provides a mechanism through which theoretical knowledge and pedagogical competence can be translated into improved teaching practice.

2. Pedagogical Competence in English Language Teaching

The relationship between teacher competence and instructional practice is particularly important in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. English teachers must address linguistic, cognitive, affective, and interactional dimensions of learning simultaneously. Effective language teaching therefore requires teachers to transform knowledge of language and language pedagogy into classroom practices that promote meaningful communication, comprehension, interaction, and learner participation (Richards, 2015).

EFL classrooms also commonly involve differences in learners' proficiency, motivation, confidence, and exposure to English outside school. These conditions require teachers to differentiate instruction, select relevant learning materials, provide appropriate scaffolding, and use formative assessment to monitor learning progress (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Consequently, pedagogical competence is reflected not only in teachers' knowledge of instructional methods but also in their capacity to make appropriate pedagogical decisions in response to classroom conditions.

This perspective reinforces the connection between PCK and broader teacher competence. For English teachers, pedagogical knowledge becomes meaningful when it is translated into instructional decisions that address learners' actual needs. Professional interaction with colleagues can further support this process by allowing teachers to compare teaching strategies, discuss classroom difficulties, and reflect on alternative approaches. Therefore, pedagogical competence in EFL

teaching can be understood as both an individual professional capacity and a competence that can be strengthened through collaborative learning.

3. Teacher Competence and Professional Learning in the Indonesian Context

In Indonesia, teacher competence has become a major concern within educational reform, certification, and curriculum development. National policy recognizes pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies as essential dimensions of teacher professionalism. Among these, pedagogical competence has particular relevance to classroom quality because it concerns teachers' ability to understand learners, plan and implement instruction, manage learning environments, and evaluate learning outcomes.

However, the development of teacher competence is not uniform across contexts. Differences in access to professional training, mentoring, technological resources, and instructional support may create disparities between teachers working in urban and regional areas. The literature provided for this study indicates that successful curriculum implementation requires teachers to possess pedagogical readiness, adaptability, and sustained professional support. Similarly, research on Indonesian EFL teachers suggests that pedagogical competence is associated with the quality of assessment practices. These findings indicate that formal qualifications alone do not fully explain teachers' classroom competence.

Instead, competence develops through continuous professional learning in which teachers can connect policy expectations with practical classroom challenges. This is particularly relevant in regional contexts where opportunities for centralized professional development may be less accessible. Local professional communities can therefore provide an additional layer of support by facilitating knowledge exchange, collaborative problem-solving, and reflection on teaching practice.

4. Professional Collaboration and Teacher Competence

The literature on teacher development increasingly suggests that competence is strengthened not only through individual training but also through sustained professional collaboration. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provide a framework for understanding how such collaboration can influence teaching practice. PLCs are collaborative environments in which teachers share experiences, examine instructional problems, reflect on practice, and work collectively to improve student learning (DuFour, 2004).

Research has associated effective PLC participation with improvements in instructional practice, teacher learning, and teacher efficacy (Vescio et al., 2008). The value of PLCs lies in their emphasis on continuous and practice-based learning. Rather than treating professional development as a series of isolated workshops, PLCs create opportunities for teachers to learn from colleagues who encounter similar instructional conditions.

The relationship can therefore be conceptualized as a professional learning process: collaboration provides opportunities for knowledge exchange and reflection; these processes strengthen teachers' pedagogical knowledge and decision-making; and strengthened pedagogical competence can support more effective instructional practice. This framework is particularly relevant to language teachers because collaborative discussion can address concrete issues such as instructional strategies, assessment, learner diversity, teaching materials, and curriculum implementation.

5. ETA as a Localized Professional Learning Community

Within this framework, the English Teachers Association (ETA) can be positioned as a localized professional learning community for English teachers. Through meetings, peer discussion, resource sharing, collaborative planning, workshops, and professional dialogue, ETA provides opportunities for teachers to learn from one another and respond collectively to instructional challenges.

The significance of ETA lies in its contextual proximity. Whereas national policies and centralized professional development programs provide broad standards and expectations, local teacher communities allow teachers to interpret and adapt those expectations to their own classroom realities. For English teachers in Pinrang Regency, collaboration within ETA may therefore function as a link between broader professional standards and context-specific pedagogical practice.

The conceptual relationship can be represented as:

ETA participation → professional collaboration and knowledge exchange → development of pedagogical competence → improved instructional practice

This pathway should be understood as a conceptual framework rather than a claim of causal relationships established by the present study. The current research focuses specifically on measuring English teachers' pedagogical competence and examining its relationship with collective efficacy among teachers participating in ETA Pinrang. Nevertheless, the PLC perspective provides a theoretical explanation for why local professional communities may constitute an important context for teacher learning and competence development.

6. Regional and Southeast Asian Perspectives on Teacher Competence

The importance of pedagogical competence is also reflected in regional perspectives on teacher professionalism. Southeast Asian competency frameworks have emphasized areas such as pedagogy, assessment, classroom management, and continuous professional development as important dimensions of effective teaching. These perspectives indicate that teacher competence is not simply an individual qualification but an ongoing professional capacity that must respond to changing educational demands.

More recent UNESCO discussions similarly emphasize that educational transformation requires teachers to receive sustained professional support, particularly as technology and curricular reforms reshape classroom practices.

Teachers need opportunities to integrate technology meaningfully, adapt instruction to learner needs, and develop pedagogical responses appropriate to local contexts. This reinforces the importance of professional learning environments that allow teachers to continually develop their competence rather than relying solely on one-time training.

For Indonesia, and particularly for regional areas such as Pinrang, these perspectives strengthen the rationale for examining teacher competence within local professional communities. Local collaboration may provide a practical mechanism for translating broad professional standards into teaching practices that are responsive to local learners and educational conditions.

7. Research Gap and Conceptual Positioning of the Study

Previous studies have established the importance of pedagogical competence for instructional quality and have identified professional learning and collaboration as important mechanisms of teacher development. Research has also examined teacher competence in relation to certification, curriculum reform, assessment practices, and professional development in Indonesia. However, an important gap remains in the empirical measurement of pedagogical competence within local teacher communities.

More specifically, relatively limited research has examined the pedagogical competence of English teachers who participate in localized professional associations such as ETA, particularly in regional Indonesian settings. Much of the existing literature addresses teacher competence at the level of national policy, formal professional development, school performance, or general teacher professionalism. Consequently, less is known about how pedagogical competence is manifested among teachers working within community-based professional networks and how this competence relates to other collective dimensions of teacher professionalism.

This gap is theoretically important because the literature suggests a connection between teacher knowledge, professional collaboration, pedagogical competence, and instructional practice, but empirical evidence from localized teacher communities remains limited. ETA provides a relevant context for examining this relationship because it creates opportunities for teachers to exchange knowledge, reflect on instructional experiences, and collectively address pedagogical challenges.

Accordingly, the present study positions ETA as a localized professional learning context and pedagogical competence as a key dimension of teacher professionalism. The study specifically examines the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in ETA Pinrang Regency and investigates its relationship with collective efficacy. By focusing on a local teacher community, the study extends existing research beyond broad national or institutional perspectives and provides empirical evidence from a regional Indonesian context.

The conceptual positioning of the study can therefore be summarized as follows:
PCK and teacher knowledge → professional collaboration within ETA → pedagogical competence → teaching practice and potential instructional effectiveness

At the same time, because the present research employs a correlational design, the proposed framework is used to explain the theoretical relationship among the constructs rather than to establish a causal effect of ETA participation on pedagogical competence or teaching effectiveness.

2. Method

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design to investigate the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in the English Teachers Association (ETA) of Pinrang Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. A survey design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to obtain a systematic description of teachers' self-perceived pedagogical competence across multiple dimensions without manipulating variables or implementing experimental treatment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The descriptive approach enabled the researcher to identify prevailing competence patterns among participants and to generate context-specific evidence regarding teacher professionalism within a local professional learning community.

Research Setting

The study was conducted in Pinrang Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The research setting was the English Teachers Association (ETA) of Pinrang Regency, a local professional community that provides opportunities for English teachers to exchange teaching experiences, discuss instructional challenges, share learning resources, and participate in professional development activities.

The ETA context was considered relevant because professional collaboration provides teachers with opportunities to discuss pedagogical practices and respond to instructional challenges within their local educational environment. Examining teachers in this setting therefore provides context-specific evidence regarding pedagogical competence within a local teacher professional community.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants consisted of 50 English teachers who were registered members of ETA Pinrang Regency during the data collection period. They represented teachers from various junior high schools, senior high schools, and vocational schools across the regency.

Because the total number of active ETA members was manageable and accessible, the study employed a total sampling technique, in which all available members were invited to participate (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This technique was selected to maximize representativeness within the association and

minimize sampling bias.

Participants varied in teaching experience, academic qualifications, and school contexts, allowing the study to capture a broader picture of pedagogical competence within the local teacher community.

Instrumentation

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure teachers' pedagogical competence. The instrument was developed based on Indonesian teacher competency standards and relevant literature on pedagogical competence (Shulman, 1987; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The questionnaire consisted of 20 Likert-scale items using a five-point response format ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The items measured four core dimensions:

1. Understanding Learners (e.g., recognizing student differences, learning needs, and motivation)
2. Instructional Planning (e.g., lesson objectives, material selection, activity sequencing)
3. Teaching Implementation (e.g., instructional strategies, classroom interaction, classroom management)
4. Learning Evaluation (e.g., assessment methods, feedback, monitoring progress)

Higher scores indicated stronger self-perceived pedagogical competence.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The validity of the questionnaire was established through content validation by three experts, consisting of two senior lecturers in English education and one experienced school supervisor. The experts reviewed the items in terms of relevance to the construct of pedagogical competence, clarity of wording, appropriateness of the indicators, and contextual suitability for English teachers in Indonesia. Based on their feedback, several items were revised to improve clarity and alignment with the intended dimensions.

A pilot test was subsequently conducted with 20 English teachers from a neighboring district who were not included in the main study. The pilot test was used to evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaire before its administration to the main participants.

The reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .87, indicating a high level of internal consistency and exceeding the commonly accepted minimum threshold of .70 (Taber, 2018). This result indicates that the 20 questionnaire items consistently measured the intended construct of pedagogical competence.

The content validation and reliability procedures provided evidence that the instrument was appropriate for the main data collection.

Important reporting note: The available instrument information does not include numerical item-level validity results, such as Pearson item-total correlation coefficients or *r*-values. Therefore, no numerical validity coefficient is reported here without the corresponding statistical output. If an item-validity test was conducted, its results should be added to this subsection.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected over a four-week period through scheduled ETA meetings and online questionnaire distribution for members who were unable to participate in person. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study.

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their responses would be treated confidentially and used solely for research purposes. Participants completed the 20-item questionnaire, which required approximately 15 minutes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles of educational research were observed throughout the study. Participants received clear information regarding the study objectives, voluntary participation, anonymity, and the right to withdraw at any time without penalty (BERA, 2018).

No sensitive personal data were collected. Questionnaire responses were coded numerically and stored securely for research purposes only.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation, using SPSS.

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the distribution of respondents' responses and competence categories. The percentage was calculated using the following formula:

$$P = f/N \times 100\%$$

where:

- **P** = percentage;
- **f** = frequency of respondents in a category; and
- **N** = total number of respondents.

Mean scores were calculated to determine the overall level of pedagogical competence and the level of competence for each dimension. The mean score was interpreted using a five-category scale based on the five-point Likert response range:

Mean Range	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very Low
1.81–2.60	Low
2.61–3.40	Moderate
3.41–4.20	High
4.21–5.00	Very High

The interpretation was applied both to the overall pedagogical competence score and to each of the four dimensions: understanding learners, instructional planning, teaching implementation, and learning evaluation.

A higher mean score indicated a higher level of teachers' self-perceived pedagogical competence. In addition to the mean, standard deviation was reported to indicate the extent of variation in teachers' responses.

Because the primary purpose of this part of the study was to describe the existing level and distribution of pedagogical competence, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data. The analysis was therefore focused on identifying patterns and levels of competence rather than establishing causal relationships.

3. Result

This section presents the results of the survey on the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in the English Teachers Association (ETA) of Pinrang Regency. The findings are organized into two parts: (1) the overall response distribution and level of pedagogical competence (2) the mean scores across the four dimensions of pedagogical competence: understanding learners, instructional planning, teaching implementation, and learning evaluation.

1. Overall Level of Pedagogical Competence

Descriptive statistical analysis showed that participants reported a generally high level of pedagogical competence. Across all questionnaire items, most responses were concentrated in the categories of **Agree** and **Strongly Agree**, indicating positive self-perceptions regarding their instructional capabilities.

Table 1. Overall Response Distribution on Pedagogical Competence

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Agree	820	82%
Strongly Agree	180	18%
Total	1000	100%

Note. Based on 20 items × 50 respondents = 1000 responses.

As shown in Table 1, 820 responses (82%) were categorized as *Agree*, while 180 responses (18%) were categorized as *Strongly Agree*. No responses were recorded in the neutral or negative categories. This distribution indicates a consistently positive perception of pedagogical competence among the participants.

The overall mean score was 4.14 (SD = 0.53), which falls within the high interpretation category. The mean provides additional evidence that the positive response pattern was not limited to a small number of items but was generally distributed across the questionnaire.

Nevertheless, the absence of neutral and negative responses requires cautious interpretation. Because the instrument relied on teachers' self-reported perceptions, the results may be influenced by social desirability, self-enhancement, or acquiescence bias. Teachers may have been inclined to report positively about their own professional competence, particularly when the questionnaire addressed desirable professional behaviors. Therefore, the finding that all responses were positive should not be interpreted as evidence that all participants demonstrate equally high competence in actual classroom practice.

The relatively small standard deviation (SD = 0.53) also indicates limited variation around the overall mean. This suggests that respondents' ratings were relatively homogeneous rather than widely dispersed. However, the low variation may partly reflect the strong concentration of responses in the positive categories. Consequently, the result demonstrates consistency in teachers' perceptions, but it provides limited evidence about differences in actual pedagogical performance among individual teachers.

2. Pedagogical Competence by Dimension

To obtain a more detailed understanding, responses were analyzed across the four dimensions of pedagogical competence.

Table 2. Mean Scores by Pedagogical Competence Dimension

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Understanding Learners	4.21	0.47	Very High
Instructional Planning	4.18	0.51	High
Teaching Implementation	4.12	0.54	High
Learning Evaluation	4.05	0.58	High
Overall Mean	4.14	0.53	High

The results show that all four dimensions were rated positively. Understanding Learners obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.21, SD = 0.47) and was the only dimension classified as *Very High*. This finding suggests that the

participants perceived themselves as particularly capable of recognizing students' characteristics, learning needs, motivation, and differences. The relatively low standard deviation also indicates that perceptions in this dimension were comparatively consistent across respondents.

Instructional Planning ranked second ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.51$), followed by Teaching Implementation ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.54$). Both dimensions were classified as *High*. These results suggest that the teachers generally perceived themselves as capable of preparing instructional activities and translating those plans into classroom practice.

In contrast, Learning Evaluation recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.58$). Although this score remains within the *High* category, its relatively lower position compared with the other dimensions suggests that assessment-related practices may represent a comparatively less confident area. The higher standard deviation in this dimension also indicates greater variation in teachers' perceptions than in the other dimensions.

The difference between the highest dimension, Understanding Learners ($M = 4.21$), and the lowest, Learning Evaluation ($M = 4.05$), is relatively small. Therefore, the findings should not be interpreted as indicating a substantial weakness in evaluation. Rather, they suggest a relative difference in perceived strength, with learner understanding emerging as the strongest area and learning evaluation as the comparatively weaker area.

Table 3. Selected Items: Understanding Learners

Item	Mean
I recognize differences in students' learning abilities.	4.30
I consider students' motivation in lesson delivery.	4.22
I adjust teaching strategies based on student needs.	4.11

The highest item mean was related to recognizing differences in students' learning abilities ($M = 4.30$). This suggests that respondents placed considerable emphasis on learner diversity. The item concerning students' motivation also received a high mean ($M = 4.22$), while adapting teaching strategies to student needs recorded a comparatively lower mean ($M = 4.11$).

The pattern may indicate that teachers feel confident in identifying learner differences but may perceive somewhat less confidence in consistently translating that understanding into differentiated instructional strategies. This distinction is important because recognizing learner diversity and adapting instruction to that diversity represent related but not identical pedagogical processes.

4. Instructional Planning

Participants also reported strong competence in planning lessons systematically.

Table 4. Selected Items: Instructional Planning

Item	Mean
I prepare lesson plans before teaching.	4.26
I formulate clear learning objectives.	4.18
I select materials relevant to student needs.	4.09

The highest-rated item concerned lesson preparation ($M = 4.26$), indicating strong perceived adherence to systematic instructional preparation. Formulating clear learning objectives also received a high score ($M = 4.18$). The comparatively lower score for selecting materials relevant to student needs ($M = 4.09$) may indicate that contextualizing instructional materials to learner needs is somewhat more challenging than completing formal planning activities.

Thus, the results suggest a distinction between procedural aspects of planning, such as preparing lessons, and adaptive aspects of planning, such as selecting materials according to specific learner needs.

5. Teaching Implementation

The teaching implementation dimension also showed favorable results.

Table 5. Selected Items: Teaching Implementation

Item	Mean
I use varied teaching methods in class.	4.15
I manage classroom interaction effectively.	4.09
I encourage student participation.	4.12

The results indicate positive perceptions across the three selected aspects. The use of varied teaching methods received the highest mean ($M = 4.15$), followed by encouraging student participation ($M = 4.12$). Classroom interaction management recorded the lowest mean ($M = 4.09$), although it remained within the high category.

These findings suggest that teachers perceived themselves as employing relatively varied and participatory instructional practices. However, the results should be understood as teachers' perceptions of their classroom implementation rather than direct evidence of observed teaching behavior.

6. Learning Evaluation

Although evaluation obtained the lowest mean among the four dimensions, responses still reflected a positive level of competence.

Table 6. Selected Items: Learning Evaluation

Item	Mean
I assess students regularly.	4.08
I provide feedback on student performance.	4.02
I use assessment results to improve teaching.	4.04

The results show that regular assessment received the highest mean ($M = 4.08$), while providing feedback recorded the lowest ($M = 4.02$). The item concerning the use of assessment results to improve teaching obtained a mean of 4.04.

The relatively lower score for Learning Evaluation may indicate that teachers perceive routine assessment as somewhat more established than the subsequent pedagogical use of assessment information. In other words, teachers may be confident in conducting assessments but somewhat less confident in using assessment results and feedback systematically to modify subsequent instruction. This interpretation should be considered cautiously because the difference between dimensions is relatively small.

The relatively higher standard deviation for Learning Evaluation ($SD = 0.58$) compared with Understanding Learners ($SD = 0.47$) also suggests greater variation in teachers' perceptions of assessment-related practices. This dimension may therefore warrant greater attention in future professional development and further investigation.

7. Summary and Interpretation of Findings

Overall, the findings demonstrate a high level of self-perceived pedagogical competence among the English teachers participating in ETA Pinrang Regency. The overall mean of 4.14 ($SD = 0.53$) indicates that teachers generally rated their pedagogical competence positively.

However, the dimension-level analysis provides a more nuanced picture than the overall percentage distribution alone. Understanding Learners was the strongest dimension ($M = 4.21$), suggesting that teachers perceived themselves as particularly capable of recognizing learner characteristics and needs. Learning Evaluation was the weakest relative dimension ($M = 4.05$), although it remained within the high category. This indicates that assessment and the pedagogical use of assessment information may be an area in which further professional development could be beneficial.

The variation in the results was relatively limited, as reflected in the standard deviations ranging from 0.47 to 0.58. This pattern indicates relatively

homogeneous perceptions among participants. At the same time, the complete absence of neutral and negative responses raises an important methodological consideration. The pattern may reflect genuinely strong professional confidence, but it may also be influenced by the self-report nature of the instrument and possible response tendencies such as social desirability or acquiescence.

Therefore, the findings should not be interpreted to mean that every teacher necessarily demonstrates equally strong pedagogical competence in observed classroom practice. Rather, they indicate that the participating teachers consistently perceive their own pedagogical competence positively. Future research could strengthen the evidence by combining self-report questionnaires with classroom observations, interviews, teaching portfolios, or other performance-based measures.

Finally, although ETA provides a professional context for collaboration and teacher learning, the present descriptive findings do not establish that ETA participation caused or directly produced the reported level of pedagogical competence. The results instead provide evidence of the competence perceptions of English teachers who belong to this local professional community. This distinction is important for maintaining alignment between the interpretation of the findings and the descriptive research design.

4. Discussion

This study examined the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in the English Teachers Association (ETA) of Pinrang Regency. The findings indicate a high level of self-perceived pedagogical competence, with an overall mean score of 4.14 (SD = 0.53). Across the four dimensions examined, Understanding Learners obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.21, SD = 0.47), followed by Instructional Planning (M = 4.18, SD = 0.51) and Teaching Implementation (M = 4.12, SD = 0.54). Learning Evaluation recorded the lowest mean (M = 4.05, SD = 0.58), although it remained within the high category.

The findings provide evidence that the participating teachers generally perceive themselves as capable of understanding learners, planning instruction, implementing teaching activities, and conducting learning evaluation. However, because the data were obtained through a self-report questionnaire, the findings should be understood as evidence of perceived pedagogical competence rather than direct evidence of classroom performance.

Pedagogical Competence as Professional Capacity

The high level of pedagogical competence found in this study supports the view that teacher competence is a professional capacity that can be developed through experience, reflection, and professional learning. Shulman (1987) conceptualized effective teaching through the integration of subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, particularly through pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). From this perspective, effective teachers need not only to

understand what they teach but also to determine how particular content can be made meaningful and accessible to particular learners.

The findings of the present study are consistent with this perspective. The high scores across learner understanding, instructional planning, and teaching implementation suggest that participants perceived themselves as capable of translating pedagogical knowledge into instructional decision-making. In an English language teaching context, this capacity is particularly important because teachers need to respond simultaneously to linguistic, cognitive, affective, and interactional aspects of learning.

The findings are also consistent with the broader understanding of teacher professionalism proposed by Darling-Hammond (2006), which emphasizes the importance of continuous professional learning in developing teacher effectiveness. Pedagogical competence should therefore not be understood as a fixed characteristic acquired solely through formal teacher education. Rather, it can develop through continued experience, reflection, collaboration, and engagement with professional learning opportunities.

In this context, the high competence reported by ETA members may reflect not only individual teaching experience but also the professional environment in which these teachers interact. However, the present study does not directly measure teachers' prior professional development or the extent to which ETA participation contributes to their competence. Therefore, this possible explanation requires further empirical investigation.

Strongest Dimension: Understanding Learners

Among the four dimensions, Understanding Learners emerged as the strongest dimension ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.47$). This finding indicates that the teachers expressed particularly strong confidence in recognizing students' characteristics, learning needs, motivation, and differences.

The finding is theoretically relevant to Shulman's (1987) PCK framework because effective pedagogical decision-making requires teachers to understand how learners respond to particular content and instructional approaches. Richards (2015) similarly emphasizes that effective language teaching requires teachers to understand learners' linguistic backgrounds, needs, motivation, and learning difficulties.

The strongest individual item within this dimension concerned recognizing differences in students' learning abilities ($M = 4.30$), followed by considering students' motivation during lesson delivery ($M = 4.22$). These results suggest that teachers are particularly attentive to learner diversity.

Nevertheless, an important distinction should be made between recognizing learner differences and adapting instruction to those differences. The item concerning adjustment of teaching strategies according to student needs obtained a comparatively lower mean ($M = 4.11$). This may suggest that teachers perceive

greater confidence in identifying learner characteristics than in consistently translating such knowledge into differentiated instructional practices.

This finding provides a more nuanced interpretation of the overall high result. High awareness of learners does not necessarily guarantee equally effective differentiation in classroom practice. Therefore, professional development could build upon teachers' existing strength in learner understanding by focusing more specifically on differentiated instruction, adaptive teaching strategies, and responsive assessment.

Instructional Planning and Teaching Implementation

Instructional Planning was the second-highest dimension, with a mean of 4.18 (SD = 0.51). The strongest item in this dimension concerned preparing lesson plans before teaching (M = 4.26). This result suggests that systematic instructional preparation is a well-established aspect of teachers' perceived professional practice.

Effective planning is particularly important in English language teaching because lessons need to integrate learning objectives, language skills, instructional materials, classroom activities, and assessment. Teachers must therefore organize instruction in ways that provide meaningful opportunities for learners to develop communicative competence.

The relatively lower mean for selecting materials relevant to student needs (M = 4.09) is also noteworthy. It suggests that while teachers may feel confident in completing formal planning activities, adapting instructional materials to specific learner characteristics may require greater pedagogical flexibility. This distinction is important because effective planning involves not only preparing lessons but also making context-sensitive decisions about content, materials, activities, and learner needs.

Teaching Implementation also demonstrated a high level (M = 4.12, SD = 0.54). Participants reported positive perceptions regarding the use of varied teaching methods (M = 4.15), encouraging student participation (M = 4.12), and managing classroom interaction (M = 4.09).

These findings are broadly consistent with communicative orientations to language teaching, which emphasize interaction, participation, and meaningful language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). They also suggest that teachers perceive themselves as moving beyond a purely teacher-centered instructional approach. However, these findings must again be interpreted cautiously because the study did not directly observe classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions of using varied methods or encouraging participation may differ from what occurs during actual classroom interaction. Consequently, classroom observations would be necessary to determine the extent to which these self-reported practices are reflected in teaching behavior.

Learning Evaluation as the Lowest Dimension

Although all four dimensions were rated positively, Learning Evaluation obtained the lowest mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.58$). This does not indicate low competence. Rather, it identifies learning evaluation as the comparatively less-developed dimension among those measured.

The selected items showed that teachers reported regularly assessing students ($M = 4.08$), providing feedback ($M = 4.02$), and using assessment results to improve teaching ($M = 4.04$). The relatively lower scores for feedback and the use of assessment results suggest that assessment may be more established as a routine activity than as a systematic source of information for instructional improvement.

This distinction is important because effective assessment involves more than measuring achievement. Assessment should also provide information that teachers can use to identify learning difficulties, provide feedback, adapt instruction, and plan subsequent learning activities. Black and Wiliam (2009) emphasize the importance of formative assessment in supporting learning through the effective use of evidence generated during instruction.

The relatively higher standard deviation for Learning Evaluation ($SD = 0.58$) also indicates greater variation in teachers' perceptions in this dimension compared with Understanding Learners ($SD = 0.47$). This variation may suggest differences in teachers' confidence or experience with assessment practices.

Therefore, Learning Evaluation represents an important area for continuing professional development. ETA activities could provide opportunities for teachers to share assessment practices, develop formative assessment strategies, construct appropriate rubrics, provide effective feedback, and discuss how assessment evidence can inform subsequent teaching.

ETA as a Local Professional Learning Community

An important contribution of this study is its positioning of ETA as a localized professional learning community (PLC). DuFour (2004) describes PLCs as collaborative environments in which teachers engage in continuous learning and collectively focus on teaching and student learning. Vescio et al. (2008) similarly highlighted the potential of collaborative teacher communities to support professional learning and instructional improvement.

From this perspective, ETA provides a potentially important social context for teacher learning. Through meetings, professional discussions, resource sharing, peer interaction, and collaborative problem-solving, teachers may gain access to forms of professional knowledge that are closely connected to their classroom realities.

The relationship can be conceptually represented as:

ETA → professional collaboration → knowledge sharing and reflection → pedagogical learning → potentially stronger pedagogical competence.

This framework integrates the individual perspective of teacher competence with the social perspective of professional learning. Shulman's (1987) framework explains the knowledge required for effective teaching, while the PLC perspective explains how teachers may continue to develop that knowledge through interaction with colleagues.

However, the present study does not establish a causal relationship between ETA participation and pedagogical competence. The study did not measure frequency of participation, quality of ETA activities, duration of membership, or differences between ETA members and non-members. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to conclude that ETA directly caused the high level of competence reported by the participants.

Instead, the findings indicate that a group of English teachers situated within this local professional community reported high levels of pedagogical competence. The ETA context provides a theoretically relevant setting for understanding how teacher competence may be embedded within collaborative professional learning.

Overall Interpretation

Overall, the findings demonstrate that English teachers participating in ETA Pinrang Regency reported a high level of self-perceived pedagogical competence. Understanding Learners emerged as the strongest dimension, while Learning Evaluation was the comparatively lowest dimension, although it remained within the high category.

The findings support the view that pedagogical competence is a professional capacity associated with knowledge, experience, reflection, and professional learning. They also highlight the potential importance of localized professional communities in creating opportunities for teachers to exchange knowledge and reflect on pedagogical practice.

However, the highly positive response pattern must be interpreted critically because the data were self-reported and showed limited variation. The study therefore provides evidence of teachers' perceptions of their pedagogical competence, rather than definitive evidence of their actual classroom effectiveness.

This study investigated the pedagogical competence of English teachers participating in the English Teachers Association (ETA) of Pinrang Regency. The findings demonstrated a high level of self-perceived pedagogical competence, with an overall mean score of 4.14 (SD = 0.53).

Among the four dimensions examined, Understanding Learners obtained the highest mean (M = 4.21, SD = 0.47), followed by Instructional Planning (M = 4.18, SD = 0.51) and Teaching Implementation (M = 4.12, SD = 0.54). Learning Evaluation obtained the lowest mean (M = 4.05, SD = 0.58), although it remained within the high category.

The findings indicate that the participating teachers generally perceive themselves as capable of understanding learners, preparing instruction, implementing classroom activities, and conducting learning evaluation. The

particularly high score for Understanding Learners suggests strong perceived awareness of learner diversity, motivation, and learning needs. Meanwhile, the comparatively lower score for Learning Evaluation indicates that assessment, feedback, and the use of assessment evidence may represent areas for continued professional development.

The study also contributes to the understanding of pedagogical competence by situating it within a localized professional learning context. ETA may provide opportunities for teachers to exchange instructional knowledge, reflect on classroom experiences, and engage in collegial learning. Nevertheless, because the present study did not measure the intensity or quality of ETA participation, the findings cannot establish that ETA participation caused the high level of pedagogical competence.

The highly positive response pattern should also be interpreted cautiously. Since the data were based on self-reports, social desirability and response bias may have contributed to the positive results. Therefore, the findings represent teachers' perceived pedagogical competence rather than objectively measured classroom competence.

Theoretically, the study contributes by connecting pedagogical content knowledge, teacher competence, and professional learning communities within a localized Indonesian context. It suggests that pedagogical competence can be understood not only as an individual professional capacity but also as a capacity that may be developed within collaborative professional environments. Overall, the study highlights the potential value of local teacher associations as complementary spaces for continuing professional learning while emphasizing the need for further empirical research using observational, longitudinal, and comparative approaches.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings suggest several implications for English teacher development. First, ETA can be strengthened as a practice-oriented professional learning community through peer mentoring, collaborative lesson planning, lesson study, classroom case discussions, and sharing of teaching resources.

Second, the strong performance in Understanding Learners can be used as a foundation for developing more advanced learner-centered practices, particularly differentiated instruction and adaptive teaching strategies.

Third, the relatively lower score in Learning Evaluation indicates the need for greater emphasis on formative assessment, authentic assessment, feedback, rubric development, and the use of assessment results to inform subsequent instruction. Finally, educational authorities and teacher education institutions should consider supporting sustainable local professional communities rather than relying exclusively on one-time centralized training. Localized professional development may be particularly valuable because it allows teachers to address pedagogical

issues that emerge from their own educational contexts.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should extend the present study in several ways. First, researchers should combine self-report questionnaires with classroom observations, interviews, teaching portfolios, peer assessment, or student feedback to reduce the limitations associated with self-reported competence.

Second, comparative studies across different regencies and provinces would help determine whether the high level of perceived pedagogical competence observed in Pinrang is also evident in other Indonesian contexts.

Third, future studies should examine ETA participation more directly, including frequency of participation, length of membership, types of professional activities, quality of collaboration, and perceived usefulness of ETA programs. This would allow researchers to investigate whether and how participation in a professional learning community is associated with pedagogical competence.

Fourth, longitudinal research could examine changes in teachers' pedagogical competence over time and determine whether sustained professional collaboration is associated with professional growth.

Finally, because Learning Evaluation emerged as the comparatively lowest dimension, future research should investigate English teachers' assessment literacy in greater depth, particularly their ability to provide formative feedback and use assessment evidence to adapt instruction.

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