



## The Teachers Perceptions and Challenges in TEYL Elementary Schools in East Lombok Indonesia

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v11i6.5946>

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to identify teachers' perception and to describe what are teachers' challenges of teaching English in elementary school. Besides, this study is use qualitative a qualitative study design as the purpose of this research is to find out the teacher perceptions of english teachers on teaching english for young learners and the subject of this study were from four teachers from four schools that teach for young English learners. As a concern, there are teachers from four elementary schools in Pringgasela district. the study concludes that teachers were not prepared to run English for Young Learner class because of (1) the lack of training for teaching young learners, (2) shortage of school facilities for teaching young learners and (3) absence of parental support. Pertaining on the second research question, i.e., what challenges do teachers face in teaching English to young learners at elementary schools, teachers faced challenges in teaching English to young learners, such as making English interesting, adapting to the curriculum, and maintaining student motivation.

**Keywords:** *Perception; Challenges; TEYL*

### **Introduction**

Through the globalized world, when English became the lingua Franca, teaching English to learners became massively exposed, starting with age-appropriate. Learning in children's context needs development as its concern. Regarding the needs that are constantly changing and up to date, the educational curriculum should consider the member's needs; thus, conditions must be regarded as early as possible, though many scholars believe that early age before they turn 12 years old was assumed as learning a language. At this age, the learner will be best at acquiring language through educating and learning English, which still operates under the premise that early language acquisition is preferable. This implies that children learn English more effectively while still young; the earlier they start learning the language, the better developed they will be.

Early learners for young learners describe children whom between the ages of 2 year until 7 years old. Children's language development is at its peak during this time. They can study any language during this time, such as the original speakers, by educating young learners in school from an early age. So, young learners in early education refer to the fact that in most countries, children learn English.

Early learning in ASEAN countries, English is compulsory in the early primary grades (Roger M, 2007), on his survey of teaching English to young learners from 55 countries worldwide English for young learners (EYL) programs are expanding as a result of parents' increasing desire to give their kids access to more excellent educational and career opportunities

In line with EYL policy which has introduced into the educational program for primary education in Indonesia through Presidential Decree Number 28 in 1990 Vol. 5, No. 3,229. Diyanti, & Madya (2021) through decree specified English are taught in primary schools as a local content subject in the primary school curriculum. Grades 4, 5, and 6 had opportunities for lessons in English (Zein, 2012). As a local subject, elementary English instruction may be regulated by the provincial government (provinces, cities, or regencies) per their particular circumstances and requirements. As long as they managed the EYL pedagogical practice, schools could provide English lessons to their student as elective courses furthermore, Curriculum 2013 was implemented, English was designated as an optional (elective) course instead of a local content topic.

Consider problems that refer to teachers' qualifications, where the lack of underqualified teachers mainly characterizes the policy of EYL in other ASEAN nations thus affected by limited EYL pedagogical skills and language proficiency. According to Zein (2012) and Nguyen. (2011), most EFL primary English teachers in Vietnam and Indonesia are qualified to instruct in secondary schools. However, they need to gain experience in working with young learners. Those teachers need to be equipped to provide service to children. In 2021 Indonesian produce policy on acquisitions of independent curriculum (Merdeka Belajar) based variety of content to gain optimal time expectation to derive on concepts and brief competence, regard on teacher sufficient time to select teaching activities forward the needs and interest for learners. Thus, argued to creates learning quality embedded on students social.

Regarding to minister of education asserted on the Minister of Education and Culture's Advanced School Program will create learning outcomes above the expected level with a safe, comfortable, inclusive and enjoyable learning environment. "Through student-centered learning, thus goals to create program planning based on self-reflection and teacher reflection. The goals of School Program are a refinement of the previous school transformation program. The driving school program is 1). Collaboration program between the Ministry of Education and Culture and Regional Government where the commitment of the Regional Government is the main key, 2). Interventions are carried out holistically, starting from school human resources, learning, planning, digitalization and assistance to the Regional Government, 3). A program that has a scope that covers all school conditions, not just superior schools, both public and private, 4). Assistance is carried out for 3 academic years and the school continues its transformation efforts independently, and 5). The programs carried out are integrated with the ecosystem so that all schools in Indonesia become driving schools.

Despite significant progress in English language education in Indonesia, there remains a significant research gap concerning the specific challenges and effective strategies for teaching English to young learners in this context. While studies have explored general language education issues in Indonesia and specific aspects of English language teaching (ELT) at various levels, the focus on young learners in Indonesian educational settings presents unique challenges that require targeted investigation. Zein (2016) in Indonesia selection procedures identifying who can attend training programmes is a problem which can impact a teacher's chance of gaining access to training. And the delivery of effective teaching English for young learners (TEYL) was knowledge base and experience of the teacher trainers themselves.

In Indonesia, the main focus of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) is on school children learning the language as a second or foreign language. Three groups of young learners are identified by Ersoz (2007). First, the youngest students are typically between three and six. Second, younger learners' range in age from 7 to 9 years old, while older or later young learners are in the 10-to-

12-year age range. This study focuses on TEYL in Indonesia, a period of rapid child development from about seven to 10 years old.

In primary state schools, which refers to the Merdeka curriculum, English learning are operates from class 1 until class 6, which is intended for the age circle 6-12 years old. Based on the experts classified above, the writer will collect data from elementary school teachers who have conducted teaching EYL at the age of 6 years old up to 12 years old in 4 elementary schools which invloved 2 teachers of each school as repondents data in peringgasela distric, East lombok. Leading by those issues above this study specifically aimed to look forward to answer the following research questions on 1). The teachers' perceptions of teaching English in elementary school? And 2). The challenges do teachers face in teaching English to young learners at elementary schools?

### **Method**

This case study are driven in form of case study. A case study are a problems that was solve. regarding with the phenomena of what the teachers experinces, motivation, reaction and others (Craswell, 2012). a qualitative study design as the purpose of this research are to find out the teacher perceptions of english teachers on teaching english for young learners. The method logically were represented the data by collecting and analysing data and drawing a conclusion explored by description. Hence, Linclon and Gube (1986) Qualitative data are measured from the proper authority of the research data. Hence, qualitative data were interpreted flaxible based on the current data on TEYL in elementary schools.

The subject of this study is four teachers from four schools that teach young English learners. As a concern, there are teachers from four elementary schools in Pringgasela in the academic years 2023/2024. This study uses purposeful sampling based on school which introducing into jargon schools of transform (sekolah penggerak) were conducted in the Pringgasela district, East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Indonesia.

No	Name of elementary schools	Address
1	SD Negeri 2 Aik dewa	Jl.Pendidikan peringgasela
2	SD Negeri 3 Peringgasela selatan	Jl.veteran peringgasela
3	SD Negeri 2 Jurit	Jl.pemuda,pengadangan
4	SD Negeri 3 Jurit Baru	JL.jurit -lendang nangka

The standard data used in this paper were collected in natural settings and within response sources such as observation and interview. Moreover, the data will obtaines through in-depth interviews and questions based on the teachers of EYL in the Pringgasela district. Observation was constructed to gather data on perception of the teachers on teaching English to young learners and refers to challenges were grasp from interview.

### **Result and discussion**

This data gathered from four responden which act as teacher for young learners at Elmentary schools, three instrument on observation, interviews and document are presented in this chapters along with in depth analysis of finding. The aims of this chapter throught teachers perceptions, the challenges faced by teachers on teaching English for young Learners in the classroom

## Result

### 1. Teachers Perception on Teaching English for Young Learners

The research aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of teaching English to young learners in elementary schools. Through qualitative interviews and surveys, three predominant themes emerged: a lack of training for teaching young learners, insufficient school facilities, and inadequate parental support. These findings highlight the challenges faced by teachers in effectively delivering English language education to elementary school students. From the data analysis, the researcher classified the findings into 3 major findings, (1) Teachers' Lack of Training for Teaching Young Learners, (2) Shortage of School Facilities for Teaching Young Learners, (3) Absence of Parental Support. The following is the explanation for the three findings.

#### A. Lack of Training for Teaching Young Learners

The teachers said that their training before they started working didn't prepare them well enough to teach English to kids. There is a need for more specific training for teaching young students since most teacher education programs focus on general teaching methods or teaching older students. In the same way Mr. X put it, "*We don't know much about how to teach English to young people.*" Because of this problem, he found it hard to make good lesson plans.

Several teachers said they would like to keep learning how to teach English to young students and would like to have chances for participating in the professional development. In this case, Mrs. N said, "*I think it's important to get more training to make us update our ways of teaching.*" She stressed how important it is to have classes, seminars, and courses that give useful information and tactics. Mr. Y agreed by saying, "*One of the biggest problems is that we teachers don't get enough training. When I was learning how to be a teacher, I mostly learned about general ways to teach, but not how to work with young students.*" Overall, these teachers talked about how hard it is to keep young students interested and driven while also controlling them.

The above problem is made worse by a lack of training in how to teach kids in ways that are right for their age. "*The facilities are not enough,*" Miss T said. "*Computers and projectors are technology tools that we don't have, so we can't make lessons that are interesting and challenging.*" She explained that the teaching tools were old and not right for young students. "*It's hard to keep the kids interested with such few resources,*" Mrs. N said about the same idea.

Participants kept saying that their training before they started working did not prepare them well enough to teach English to young people. Mr. X said that most of his training had been in general teaching methods or teaching older students, so he didn't have much training in how to teach young kids specifically. Miss T agreed and said that her training didn't specifically teach her how to teach English to young people. Mrs. N talked about the need for ongoing professional development and how important it is to go to classes and courses on how to teach English to young kids. She said that since she finished college, there haven't been many chances to keep learning.

#### B. Shortage of School Facilities for Teaching Young Learners

All teachers interviewed reported that their schools lacked enough technological resources, such as computers, projectors, and language labs, which are essential for interactive and engaging English lessons. The absence of these resources limits the variety of teaching methods they can employ. Mrs. N said, "*The facilities are quite inadequate. We don't have enough technological resources like computers or projectors, which are essential for interactive lessons.*" Mrs. T said similarly, "*Even the teaching materials we have are outdated and not suitable for young learners. It's hard to keep the children interested with such limited resources.*" These teachers also pointed out the scarcity of appropriate

teaching materials, such as textbooks, storybooks, and audio-visual aids, which are crucial for teaching English effectively to young learners. Often, available materials are either outdated or not suitable for the age group. These conditions make it difficult to implement interactive and student-centered teaching practices, which are vital for young learners.

### C. Absence of Parental Support

Participants of the study reported that many parents are not actively involved in their children's English education. This lack of involvement can hinder students' progress, as reinforcement of language skills at home is crucial for young learners. Mr. X said, "*Many parents don't seem to understand the importance of learning English at a young age.*" In the same way, Mr. Y added, "*They never want to know their children's language development, and some of them are even do not care about their progress.*" These comments show that some parents do not fully understand the importance of learning English at a young age, leading to a lack of encouragement and support for their children. Teachers wanted the parents to improve their involvement. According to these teachers, parents' socioeconomic factors often affect parental support. In lower-income families, parents might lack the time, resources, or education to assist their children with English learning. This disparity contributes to unequal learning opportunities among students. A misunderstanding of the importance of learning English at a young age was another key issue. Mr. X pointed out that some parents do not care about their children's progress in English, while Miss T noted that many parents do not see the value in supporting their children's English education.

The above findings reveal significant challenges faced by teachers in elementary schools regarding the teaching of English to young learners. Addressing these issues requires a multiple approach, including enhancing teacher training programs, improving school facilities, and increasing parental involvement. By tackling these areas, schools can create a more supportive and effective environment for young English learners.

## 2. Challenges Teachers Face in Teaching English to Young Learners

Related to challenges in the teaching of English to elementary school children, the first challenge is related to the students' characteristics. Teachers should learn how to make English become interesting subject. Miss T explained that young learners were easily distracted. She considered that without proper training in special teaching techniques, it was difficult to find ways to maintain their interest throughout the lesson. Mrs. N added another factor, "*The classrooms are overcrowded. We have 30 students in one class. This makes me difficult to implement interactive activities. It's not an ideal class for teaching a foreign language.*" Mr. Y concluded, "*I think that training from Diknas is crucial to stay updated with effective teaching methods.*"

The second challenge is about teachers' difficulty to adapt to the curriculum for English for young learners. Mr. X stated that he felt constrained by a rigid curriculum that did not cater to the individual needs of students. He said, "*I find it challenging to apply curriculum that does not meet the local need.*" With the same reason, Mrs. N expressed her difficulties to make assessments for young learners. Miss T added, "*I struggle with understanding and implementing the curriculum effectively because I have little experience and training.*"

The third challenge deals with students' motivation. Mr. Y and Mrs. N noted that the students' motivation is the main factor that influenced the implementation of teaching English for young learners. Mr. X said similarly. "*Keeping young learners to be motivated all the time is hard. If we are not able to make our lesson interesting, they will be distracted to do other things.*" This statement is in line with Mr. Y's opinions. "*I have difficulties to make lessons consistently interesting.*" Similar thinking was said by Mrs. N and Mis T. They had difficulties to create varied and interesting lesson plans that attracted students' attention.

The challenges faced by Mr. X, Mr. Y, Mrs. N, and Miss T highlight the complexity of teaching English to young learners. These challenges are multifaceted, involving classroom management, student engagement, language proficiency levels, resource availability, parental involvement, and curriculum constraints. Addressing these issues requires targeted professional development, access to better resources, and stronger support systems both within and outside the classroom.

## ***Discussion***

Results of the study show that teachers perceived that problem they faced in teaching English to young learners is complex and influential to the teachers' experiences. The findings show the lack of training for teaching young students may hinder teachers from teaching English appropriately. This finding is in line with Cahyono's findings (2006). It was said that teachers' lack of training leaves little room for adaptation, which is crucial for meeting the diverse needs of young learners. This lack of training can disturb teachers' ability to address individual learning styles and proficiency levels effectively. Teachers often struggle to balance the need to meet curriculum requirements with the desire to implement creative and engaging teaching methods. Research by Lee and Buxton (2010) indicates that time constraints and the pressure of standardized testing can limit teachers' ability to employ innovative teaching strategies. This focus on standardized testing often results in a narrow approach to teaching, where achieving test scores takes precedence over holistic language development.

A misalignment between what is taught and what is assessed can hinder effective learning. Black and Wiliam (1998) highlight that inconsistent standard and the focus on summative assessments over formative ones can lead to inaccurate measures of students' understanding and skills. Formative assessments, which are essential for providing ongoing feedback, are often underutilized, impacting the ability to tailor instruction to meet students' needs.

The overemphasis on summative assessments is a recurring issue. Andrade and Cizek (2010) emphasize the importance of formative assessments in supporting student learning. However, the dominance of summative assessments can overshadow these formative practices, limiting their effectiveness in guiding instructional adjustments and promoting student growth.

Limited access to diverse assessment tools and inadequate professional development opportunities are significant barriers. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), teachers require a variety of assessment tools to cater to different learning styles and abilities effectively. Additionally, ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to stay updated on best practices in curriculum implementation and assessment strategies.

Ensuring that the curriculum and assessments are inclusive and culturally relevant is critical. Tomlinson (2001) discusses the importance of differentiated instruction in addressing the diverse needs of learners. Adapting materials and assessments to be inclusive and culturally relevant requires additional resources and expertise, which many teachers may lack.

The challenges in curriculum and assessment identified through the experiences of Mr. X, Mr. Y, Mrs. N, and Miss T highlight the need for more flexible, creative, and inclusive approaches in education. Addressing these challenges requires a systemic shift towards providing teachers with adequate resources, continuous professional development, and the support necessary to implement effective assessment strategies. By aligning curricula with the diverse needs of young learners and emphasizing formative assessments, educators can create a more supportive and effective learning environment.

## Conclusion

As regards the first research question, what are teachers' perceptions of teaching English in elementary school, the study concludes that teachers were not prepared to run English for Young Learner class because of (1) the lack of training for teaching young learners, (2) shortage of school facilities for teaching young learners and (3) absence of parental support. This lack of training makes it difficult for them to make good lesson plans and keep young students interested. Additionally, the lack of technological resources, such as computers, projectors, and language labs, limits the variety of teaching methods they can employ.

Pertaining on the second research question, i.e., what challenges do teachers face in teaching English to young learners at elementary schools, teachers faced challenges in teaching English to young learners, such as making English interesting, adapting to the curriculum, and maintaining student motivation. Teachers struggle with creating varied and interesting lesson plans that attract students' attention.

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