
Digital Picture as Tools for Teaching Young Learners (Teachers' Perceptions, Expectations and Challenges)

Cyintia Kumalasari^{1*}

¹ English Education Department, Faculty of Teaching and Education,
Universitas Islam Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

Abstract

Teaching for young learners is more challenging since the characteristics of young learners are quite different from adults. Younger learners are growing up with technology and it has been integrated into their lives. They feel comfortable and confident using it. The purpose of this study is to examine the teachers' perception on learning English through technology and to identify the challenges. This study used qualitative descriptive research to perceive the use of technology in teaching young learners including the challenges and to obtain more conclusions, the researcher made an in-depth interview with a teacher in one of primary schools. The results of the research showed that the teachers are mostly agreeing to teach English for young learners by using technology, including digital picture, games, and songs. For the challenges, the teachers faced the lack of students' concentration and difficulties in saying some words because of their mother tongue. This is happened because the students are lack of exposure to English outside classroom. To overcome these challenges, the teacher should be creative making a pleasant classroom atmosphere, actively engaging students to speak English in the classroom and do self-reflection.

Keywords: technology, young learners, perceptions, expectations, challenges.

^{1*}Corresponding author, email: cyintiakumalasari@edu.uir.ac.id

Kumalasari, C. (2023). The Digital Picture as Tools for Teaching Young Learners. *JADEs Journal of Academia in English Education*, 4(2).

Submitted Sept 15th, 2023; Revised Dec 30th, 2023; Accepted Dec 31st, 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32505/jades.v4i2.7038>

©Name of University. IAIN Langsa.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has become a subject in primary school. In the middle of 2013, the government began to introduce 2013 curriculum by appointing 2.598 primary schools throughout Indonesia (M.S. Zain, 2017). Since then, the primary school students learn English subject from the first grade until the sixth grade, or also be called as young learner.

Technology has been a part of young learners in this digital era. Young learner refers to youngsters from the start of formal schooling (five to six years old) through the age of eleven or twelve. Early years of schooling are a time of rapid intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development. Children benefit from learning strategies that cater to their specific requirements as they advance through these early years and become more independent learners. Children nowadays prefer to play with gadgets or on computers than with books because they are more adaptable to numerous things and more pleasant to play on. Thus, that bigger recognizing involves children's proficiency in technology (Fajriyah, 2018). More than ever before, these young students use information and communication technology as effective teaching tools both inside and outside of the classroom. They are drawn to new technology and quickly master their use (Chosa Kastuhandani, 2014)

Children nowadays live in an era that experienced a significant transition from the pre-digital period. Therefore, it has an impact on how kids are raised and cared for in both their family and social lives. It's impossible to resist being exposed to digital technologies, especially the use of devices. As a result, they spend more time at home doing online activities than they do indulging in real social interactions with others (Sandy & Suryaningtyas, 2022). Young learners are enthusiastic about using tools from their own world and are impressed by the ultra-modern

equipment they possess and expect the teachers to use the same tools ((Ahmed, 2012). Through increasing the chances for interaction with native speakers and exposure to the target language, it can be utilized as a method to improve language learning. Typically, young children use a variety of technologies while involved in everyday activities at home. (Winkel et al., n.d., 2015). This technology, if it used properly, may help teachers in teaching English to young learner.

However, there still some challenges that has been faced by the teacher despite their expectations in teaching English for young learners.

This research will focus on acquiring technology to improve young learners' motivation and the challenges that has been faced by the teacher. Therefore, the research questions of this study can be written as follows:

- 1) What are the teachers' perceptions about the use of technology for teaching English in young learners' classroom?
- 2) How about the teachers' expectations in using technology for teaching English in young learners' classroom?
- 3) What are the challenges and what are the solutions while teaching English using technology in young learners' classrooms?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Technology in Education

Technology has altered a lot of society, including how English language training is taught and delivered. In particular, the Internet has developed into a medium where others can learn, communicate, and interact in ways that were not previously acceptable. However, an important component of how well it works is in preparing young learners to be ready to communicate and study in this online setting. We will go a long way further making technology and the internet a more rewarding

partner in the teaching and learning process if we attempt to integrate it into our academic lives with our new, refocused approach (Widiastuti, 2022).

Computers and internet facilities help learners to communicate efficiently in educational contexts. Computer Assisted Language Learning and Mobile Assisted Language Learning have provided new opportunities for English learners to increase collaboration and performance in learning language skills. Technology also affects and challenges learners' emotions, whether it is positive or negative (Wei, 2022).

Even though technology affects and challenges the learners' emotions, educators should supervise their students while using technology as a tools for learning. This is to prevent the students from opening the unrelated application.

Trucano (2005) argued that technology use has the potential to transform teaching and learning processes from a more teacher-centered to a more student-centered approach. Even though considerable research has been done on teaching in an ICT-integrated setting, there is still a significant research gap to be filled, as the difficulties and implications of teaching language in different student groups differ (Rathnasena U. Dodantenna A.Jayakody ,. Hettiaratchy 2013).

2.2 The Use of Digital Picture in Teaching English for Young Learners

Technology is the practical application of scientific knowledge to solve reveal problems and improve human welfare. As English teachers in the 21st century, it is more important than ever for us to learn to use multimedia technology in the classroom, model its extensive use, and seek relevant and purposeful teaching strategies to attract learners and learn to the maximum (Fatimah, A. S., & Santiana, S.,2017).It means that when adopting such a new technology, the teacher should be creative in

engaging learning environment. Teaching through using technology such as digital picture is viewed positively by numerous scholars, educators, and teachers because it has a beneficial effect on English teaching and learning (Rafika, 2016). The teacher should be ready to integrate technology, and to prepare an effective integration. Teachers and students participate in the very complicated teaching and learning activity referred to as teaching. It is highly recommended for professional instructors to be able to expand their understanding of the subject matter, students, curriculum, pedagogy, and teacher performance within a learning process (Sudrajat & Apriliani, 2022).

In practical terms, the use of technology in today's on-site teaching environments to support primary students learning can be achieved through the use of audio-visual effects and highly interactive, diverse software, hardware, and media that can generate their interest in learning, guiding them to actively learn and integrating their diverse learning experience. In addition, children often conform to the teaching methods and plans created by teachers while engaging in learning activities that include electronic picture books (Chen, L.& Chen, T.L, 2018). Technology integration in the learning process will enhance student motivation, improve the acquisition of fundamental skills, encourage inquiry and exploration, and prepare people for the impetus of the technological world (Hidayati, 2016). Abas, Fong, Yu, Lee, Tay, Nair, and Lim (2010) presented examples of how a digital storytelling approach was utilized in a primary school. Young students (aged 7 to 8) can be directed into tablet computers, a kind of notebook computers, to create digital stories using words, images, simple animations, and their own voices utilizing easily available presentation software. One of the most modern ways of implementing technology into the curriculum is through the instructional

usage of social media, whereas research on the subject has demonstrated inconsistent outcomes (Ventouris, A.2021). Some teachers use game-based technology as a teaching method to encourage students. Whenever games are employed in the classroom, language teachers may gain much from them. Students are encouraged to study the language when they are playing the game, which is one of the benefits. Students are inspired by and drawn into games' competitive elements when they play them (Saputra et al., 2021).

These improvements will improve the quality of education for students. There are some strategies that the teachers' do, such as:

1. Clearly defining the course's instructional philosophies and learning objectives, as these factors will affect the method, content, and drill choices.
2. Identifying the websites along with additional technology tools that are accessible to both students and staff.
3. Align the goal of learning with relevant resources; establish a clear content profile to prevent duplication or overlaps.
4. Establish a clear goal that is documented for students as well as teachers (Setya & Ningrum, 2012)

3. METHODS

3.1 Research design

This study was conducted in a primary school at SDIP YLPI Pekanbaru. The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative descriptive. The quantitative method is used to collect the teachers' perceptions to obtain detailed conclusions. The researcher also conducted a depth interview with the teacher to analyze data. The participants of this research were six English teachers who have currently teach English to young learners at a primary school at SDIP YLPI Pekanbaru. Besides,

the researcher also made a depth interview with three English teacher who teach at grade I, II and III.

4. RESULTS

The Teachers' Perception About the Use of Technology for Teaching Young Learners

The findings of the study are elaborated under three headings, namely the teachers' perceptions on the use of technology in teaching and learning process; the expectations of integrating technology (e.g. Google classroom, using video, making games, e-book, presentation) and also challenges on integrating them in young learners' classroom.

In collecting data, researcher was using questionnaire by Likert scale to know their perception about the use of technology to teach English speaking to young learners. The result as follows:

Table 1 The teacher perceptions about the use of digital picture in young learner classroom

No	Criteria	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	Utilizing digital picture is important to young learner classes.		67	33		
2	I have easy access to use digital picture I would like to use		33	50	17	
3	I still need help when I face technical problems.	17	33	17	33	
4	The use of digital picture will provide students with more practical and useful knowledge		67	33		
5	I make my students more motivated by using my presentation.	50			50	
6	Students are motivated in learning English through digital pictures		67	33		

From the table above, it shows that most of the teachers said that using digital picture is important in young learner class. Teachers could add variative methods such as creating digital storytelling, digital pictures, simple presentation, and another method to attract students' attention. While sometimes, the teacher still needs help when they get some technical problems.

The Teachers' Expectations About the Use of Technology for Teaching Young Learners

Table 2 Teachers' expectations about the use of technology in young learner classroom

No	Criteria	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I hope the use of digital picture will help me to teach more efficiently.		67	33		
2	By using digital picture, I can handle the class well			83	17	
3	Sometimes, I find some applications that can make students' mood better		50	50		
4	I create more engaging activity among the students with an application	50	17	33		
5	I make my students more motivated by using attractive applications.		50		50	
6	Students are motivated in learning English through digital picture		33	67		

The table sum up that the teacher expect much to the use of technology, even the fact that they get some difficulties when handled the class just by using technology.

The Teachers’ Challenges About the Use of Technology for Teaching Young Learners

Table 3 Teachers’ challenges about the use of technology in young learner classroom

No	Criteria	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
1	I have challenges in teaching using digital picture to young learner classes.		50	17	33	
2	I was constrained by a crowded class in teaching using digital picture to young learner class			33	67	
3	I have problems in determining strategies to teach using digital picture to young learner class.		33	17	33	17
4	Students have boredom problems in learning English in young learner class.		50	17	33	
5	Students have learning motivation constraints in learning English in young learner class.		33	67		
6	Students have lack of concentration during English class without using digital picture.		50	17	33	

The teacher said that some of them got challenges in determining strategies to teach using technology. This is because of young learners’ characteristics, such as more egocentric, love to discover some new things, they prefer concrete activities, more imaginative than adult learner, and they learn by imitate adults.

5. DISCUSSION

From the table above, we can conclude that many teachers agree that the use of technology will help them encourage students. Besides that, the

researcher was also made an interview to some of English teachers. They shared their point of view about technology based on teaching, their expectations and challenges.

“Sometimes I use technology, such as showing the video to teach English on my classroom, because it can make learning process will be more interactive, but I have some difficulties to engage students. They got bored easily, so I invite them to sing together.” (Teacher 1).

From the statement above, it can be concluded that the teacher is able to use technology in classroom because it makes the learning process more interactive. Whereas she still gets some difficulties to handle the class.

“The challenges I found is that every time I should have to teach, but the students have lack of concentration. I prefer to invite their concentration by using digital picture book and PowerPoint slides rather than games simulation, because they may be tempted to explore unrelated application” (Teacher 2).

Challenges are always there, but the teacher should be ready and make a friendly approach to attract students' concentration.

“Technology can be used to support students with diverse learning needs. It can offer alternative ways to access content and facilitate communication between teachers and students. While the challenges I found is that not all the students have such a good literacy. They still need guidance in the learning process” (Teacher 3).

The teacher said that she agrees with the technology-based approach in teaching. Unfortunately, because the students still lack literacy, the teacher must guide every process.

“Some of the students find it difficult to understand my instruction. They still lack an understanding of vocabulary. Sometimes the crowd happened while teaching. So, I use digital picture book to increase their motivation in learning English” (Teacher 2).

The teacher succeeded in overcoming students' problems by motivating them using a digital picture book. The digital picture helps her to get the students' attention.

6. CONCLUSION

The result of the research projected that most teachers have positive view towards the use of technology in young learner classes. Technology, if it is used properly, will boost teachers' attitudes and confidence regarding the use of technology in the classroom for young learners. It also serves to motivate students by allowing teachers to be more inventive, creative, and collaborative. The teaching and learning process gets better by interest and skills. The challenges are the teachers are struggling to handle the class. On the other hand, asking the school to provide technical support is a method to overcome a problem or difficulties with the technology. In this study, students and their teachers face expected challenges and obstacles. Besides, it is better for schools to supervise the children against improper Internet and digital use of devices while maintaining the ability to contribute to instruction, learning, and social interaction. Future studies are expected to investigate specifically about the use of technologies such as multimedia and another online application that can influence young learners' development in learning progress.

REFERENCES

- Abas, S., Fong, Y. K., Yu, S. H. S. & Lee, C. B. (2010). A case study of how digital storytelling was used in a lower primary English classroom. In L.Y. Tay, C. P. Lim & M. S. Khine (Eds.), *A School's journey into the future: Research by practitioners for practitioners*. 89-109. Singapore:Pearson

- Ahmed, P. S. (2012). The Way we Teach, the Way they Learn. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 47, 1554-1557. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.860>
- Chen, L., & Chen, T.L.(2018).Preschool Teachers' Perception of the Application of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in Taiwan.*MDPI*, 11(1),114. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11010114>
- Chosa Kastuhandani, F. (2014). *Technology and Young Learners*. 17(1). <https://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/LLT/article/view/258>
- Fatimah, A. S., & Santiana, S. (2017). Teaching in 21st Century : Students-Teachers' Perceptions of Techology Use in The Classroom. *Script Journal: Journal of Linguistic and English Teaching*, 2(2), 125. <https://doi.org/10.24903/sj.v2i2.132>
- Fajriyah, L.& Fauziyah, P.(2018). The Role of ICT to Develop Early Literacy of Children in Digital Era. *Atlantis Press : Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*.112-116.
- Hidayati, T. (2016). Integrating ICT In English Language Teaching and Learning In Indonesia. *JEELS*. 3(1).38-62.
- M. S. Zein (2017). Elementary English education in Indonesia: Policy developments, current practices, and future prospects: How has Indonesia coped with the demand for teaching English in schools?. *English Today*.33(1)
- Rafika (2022).*An Analysis on Teachers' View Toward the Use of ICT for Teaching English for Young Learners*. Skripsi, Tarbiyah dan Keguruan.UIN Antasari
- Rathnasena, U. Dodantenna & Jayakody (2013).How ICT Can Be Used Effectively to Enhance English Language Learning in Tertiary Education.*SAITM Research Symposium on Engineering Advancements*.20-23.
- Sandy, F., & Suryaningtyas, A. A. (2022). *Research Takeaways: The Benefits of Digital Literacy in the Early and Middle*. <https://jurnal.uns.ac.id/impresi/index>
- Saputra, A. D., Septiani, L., Adriani, R., & Sundari, H. (2021). Game-Based English Learning for Young Learners: A Systematic Review. *JEdu: Journal of English Education*, 1(3), 109-122. <https://doi.org/10.30998/jedu.v1i3.4752>
- Setya, A., & Ningrum, B. (2012). *Using Internet Resources In Teaching English To Young Learners*. http://www.decidenet.nl/Publications/Web_Based_Learning.pdf
- Sudrajat, I., & Apriliani, H. (2022). Teachers' Strategies and Challenges in Teaching Speaking To Young Learners.. *The Journal of English Language Teaching*, 4(1).
- Sugiyono. (2005). *Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: CV. Alfabeta

- Trucano, M. (2005). Knowledge Maps: ICT in Education. Washington, DC: InfoDev/ World Bank. Retrieved March 7th, 2017 from <http://www.infodev.org/en/Publication.8.html> [4]
- Mishra, P. & Koehler, M.J. (2006). Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge. *Teachers College Records*. Vol. 8(6), 1017- 1053
- Ventouris, A., Panourgia, C., & Hodge, S. (2021). Teachers' perceptions of the impact of technology on children and young people's emotions and behaviours. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100081>
- Wei, Y.(2022).Toward Technology-Based Education and English as a Foreign Language Motivation : A Review of Literature.*Frontiers in Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.870540>
- Widiastuti, O.(2022). ICT Media in English For Young Learner Class. Retrieved from : core.ac.uk/reader/297842010
- Winkel, H., Zhou, J., Li, Z., Mei, G. X., Peart, E., & Booth, K. (2015). Challenges of Foreign Language Learning in Early Childhood.*Deep University Press*, 1-8