



## PROCEEDINGS

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# Enhancing Professionalism in Teaching English to Young Learners (EYL)

**Tintin Susilowati<sup>1\*</sup>, Alifia Rahmadita<sup>2</sup>, Raygina Ayu Mardani<sup>3</sup>, Dhea Putri Hemalia<sup>4</sup>, Fifirina Novia A<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>English Education Program, Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari Ponorogo

Correspondence e-mail: [tintinsusilowati@uinponorogo.ac.id](mailto:tintinsusilowati@uinponorogo.ac.id);

## Abstract:

Building professionalism among English for Young Learners (EYL) teachers has become increasingly important as English will become a compulsory subject in Indonesian elementary schools starting in 2027. As a global language, English requires teachers who possess both language proficiency and pedagogical competence suited to young learners' developmental characteristics. Prospective EYL teachers need to understand children's cognitive and social development, create engaging instructional media, and implement interactive and contextualized teaching practices. Without adequate professional competence, young learners may experience low motivation and difficulties in language learning. This study aims to explore the development of professional competence among prospective elementary English teachers by addressing three questions: (1) What are the steps in creating a pop-up book? (2) What components should be included in an eclectic lesson plan? and (3) What teaching skills are needed to build interactive EYL classrooms? This qualitative study involved 16 students from the TBI.D class of 2025. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews to examine participants' ability to design instructional media and eclectic lesson plans, and through classroom observations to evaluate their teaching performance. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, while trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation and participant validation. The findings show that prospective EYL teachers develop professional competence by designing visual and tactile pop-up books, preparing eclectic lesson plans that combine various teaching approaches, and applying learner-centered, interactive teaching strategies. These competencies support meaningful, engaging English learning for young learners and offer practical insights to strengthen EYL teacher education programs in preparation for implementing compulsory English instruction in Indonesian elementary schools.

**Keywords: A Pop-Up Book; An Eclectic Lesson Plan; Interactive English Teaching Skills**

## Introduction

Teaching English to young learners for nowadays contexts refers to preparing young learners for their future lives. English is still one of the most demanded languages in global life; people with English proficiency may reach more prosperity since work fields require English mastery. Only professional EYL teachers can guide English classes appropriately to meet the young students' needs. It requires specialized language knowledge, skills, and attitude. The professional EYL teachers elaborate appropriately on the learning atmosphere to meet the students' needs. Professional teachers make intentional decisions based on how young children develop and learn (Redekamp, S., & Copple, C. (Eds.). (1997).

Teacher professionalism refers to the quality, attitude, competence, and responsibility a teacher in carry out the role as a tutor optimally in accordance with professional standards. Conceptually, teacher professionalism is based on the view that teaching is a profession, not just a job (Hamid, n.d.). As a profession, teaching requires certain academic qualifications, clear competency, and social and moral responsibility. One of the main aspects of teacher professionalism is competency. In Indonesia, teacher professionalism is realized through 4 main competencies, namely pedagogical competence, professional competence, personality, and social competencies. Apart from competence, teacher professionalism also reflects on compliance with professional codes of ethics. The teacher's code of ethics functions as a behaviour guideline that regulates the relationship between teachers and students, fellow teachers, educational institutions, and the community. Thus, the concept of teacher professionalism reflects the overall attitude, ability, and commitment of teachers in carrying out their profession with dignity. Professional teachers play an important role in improving the quality of education and creating a learning process that is effective, meaningful, and oriented towards the holistic development of students. Because of it, professional teachers should have knowledge of young learners' nature and characteristics.

Considering the facts, young learners have different characteristics; therefore, teaching English for young learners requires special treatment to maximize learning outcome in an EYL class. The young students can use English in a real context communicatively. Professional young learner English teachers understand children's physical and psychological needs, provide care, support learning, and show pedagogical competence alongside sensitivity to learners' developmental characteristics (Aghni, 2022, p. 18)

English has been taught since the 1990s up to now; however, teaching English to young learners has not yielded satisfactory results. Many English for EYL teachers have limited skills in teaching English to young learners, as indicated by failure in teaching English as a means of communication found as a consequence. Many EYL teachers lack sufficient training and effective strategies, limiting instructional quality, learner engagement, and opportunities for meaningful English communication (Albustomi et al., 2025, p. 5). Many EYL teachers face limitations due to insufficient training, limited access to technology, lack of time, or inadequate institutional support. As a result, teachers may depend on textbooks alone, which often fail to address young learners' need for concrete and playful learning experiences.

Professional EYL teachers are required to scaffold young learners in learning English actively and communicatively. EYL teachers should have some basic criteria like fluency in using English, the ability to design learning media like a pop-up book, composing an eclectic lesson plan, and skills in doing interactive EYL teaching and learning.

A pop-up book is worth applying in EYL classes since this media builds students' engagement during the learning process. A pop-up book is a book that has a 3-dimensional design and provides an interactive impression with a movement mechanism (folding, pulling, or wheels) that appears when the book is opened or moved. According to Faradilla & Rahmawati, (2024), various forms of pop-up books are an important medium in increasing interest and effectiveness in learning. Pop-up books are learning media that convey teaching materials in the form of images or symbols in three dimensions (Khadijah et al., 2021). Pop-up books attract students' sympathy to interact, feel the sensation of moving elements in the book, and are able to understand the material being taught (Faradilla & Rahmawati, 2024). Pop-up books are considered effective in developing the speaking skills of lower-grade elementary school students (Wulan & Astutik, 2023). Based on these findings, interactive Pop-Up books are an effective learning medium for increasing students' engagement in learning. Pop-Up books are relevant media to maximize young learners' performance in learning English synergized in the eclectic approach in learning.

English a foreign language for Indonesian learners; therefore, it is necessary to use various methods and learning techniques. According to Palmer, teachers should not only focus on a single approach, but also adopt two or more different approaches and systematically combine them into learning programs that are organized properly, so the various approaches can carry out the functions proportionally. This principle is reflected to Eclectic Approach that emphasizes teachers to integrate various method in language learning. In the context of learning module design in language teaching, the eclectic approach provides a theoretical foundation for organizing instructional components flexibly and systematically. The principle of multiple lines of approach supports the integration of various methods, techniques, and learning activities within a learning module. Based on the elective module, the EYL teachers should be taught meaningfully by considering the young learners' principles.

EYL has basic principles for the foundation of learning that are related and based on developmental aspects and how children naturally absorb language. In learning, children should be involved in meaningful and enjoyable activities, with clear goals related to their daily lives. Activities such as games, songs, chants, or storytelling can capture children's attention, making them more easily understood and motivated. Furthermore, in the learning process for Young Learners, meaning must come before learning grammar rules. Children must first understand what they want to express. After that, grammar will develop as they increasingly use language in meaningful and real-life contexts. Children in the pre-operational and concrete operational stages need visual support to understand the meaning of new words or sentences (Pinter, 2019). Therefore, the use of visual media such as Realia, pictures, or illustrations is very useful to support learning. Children have

short attention spans and concentration, learning that is too monotonous, long, or without variation will reduce children's motivation to learn (Scott & Ytreberg, 2011). Teachers must create interesting, varied, and alternating activities to ensure that children are always engaged and developing. Teachers act as facilitators to guide and help children to be actively involved in the process of inputting their English. Teachers also act as models in learning; simple language according to the child's ability should be the main priority in learning. In addition, teachers must also use clear instructions and facial expressions so that children will easily understand the meaning.

Teachers must involve interesting, varied, and alternating activities to ensure that children are always engaged and developing. Teachers act as facilitators to guide and help children to be actively involved in the process of improving their English. Teachers also act as models in learning; simple language according to the child's ability should be the main priority in learning. In addition, teachers must also use clear instructions and facial expressions so that children will easily understand the meaning (Harmer, 2005). Overall, EYL teaching must be designed as interesting, meaningful, and appropriate to the children's learning stages.

This research is conducted to address the following questions: 1. What are the steps in composing a pop-up book? 2. What components should be covered in an eclectic lesson plan? 3. What skills should be acquired to build interactive EYL teaching?

## Methods

This is a qualitative article with an exploratory case study design. The research was conducted at TBLD 2023 of the English Department involving 16 students: 13 girls and 3 boys. It explored experiences in the English Young Learners Course. The course prepared the students to be English teachers for young learners; hence, the course provided the students with skills in developing English learning media, such as: (1) pop-up books, (2) eclectic lesson plans integrated with materials, methods, techniques, and media to maximize the students' acquisition and motivation in learning English as a means of communication, and (3) skills in conducting EYL teaching. The study was conducted for eight meetings during the process of learning in the classroom (Table. 1). The data collected through (1) documentation 1 to record the materials and process in making pop-up books, (2) documentation 2 to record the teaching components used and the process in making eclectic lesson plans, teaching skills rubric to assess the students' teaching performance. The analysis used thematic analysis to organize materials needed in making pop-up books and eclectic lesson plans. Besides, interactive analysis was also used to systematize the selected data from documentation 1 and 2, and performance tests. Trustworthiness data derived from: (1) Triangulation used multiple data sources such as: (a) Classroom observations, (b) Teacher reflective journals, (c) Lesson plans and pop-up book products, (d) Interviews or focus group discussions, (2) Member checking was conducted by reading relevant references and sharing interpretations provided with its findings with participating teachers to confirm accuracy and meaning.

Table 1. Teaching English to Young Learners Procedure

| Meeting | Activity                                                                             | The Teacher's Roles                                      | The Students' Roles                           |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1       | Overview                                                                             | Explaining the course description                        | Listening and questioning the relevant points |
| 2       | Elaboration of the tasks                                                             | Guiding the course to scaffold the students              | Presenting their viewpoints                   |
| 3       | Preparation for designing a pop-up book                                              | Checking the preparation                                 | Reporting the preparation                     |
| 4       | Designing pop-up books                                                               | Guiding the design process                               | Designing pop-up books                        |
| 5       | Preparation for designing an eclectic lesson plan                                    | Checking the preparation Report the preparation          | Reporting the preparation                     |
| 6       | Designing an eclectic lesson plan                                                    | Guiding the design process                               | Designing an eclectic lesson plan             |
| 7       | Preparation for teaching practice using the developed media and eclectic lesson plan | Checking the preparation Report the preparation          | Reporting the preparation                     |
| 8       | Teaching practice using the developed media and eclectic lesson plan                 | Observing the students' performance in teaching practice | Conducting the teaching practice              |

## Results and Discussion

### Findings

#### 1. The Steps in Composing a Pop-Up Book

The data findings reveal that pop-up book media has an important role in helping young learners learning. It can be seen that students are more interested when they are taught with pop-up book media. The students are more engaged in learning using visual techniques and colorful objects found in pop-up books. Pop-up books are great learning media for developing language skills, such as vocabulary, storytelling, and pronunciation. The pop-up book, as an interactive medium with 3D design, helps students remember and understand new words easily because vocabulary is presented in clear, easy-to-understand visuals. With pop-up books, students can understand vocabulary by connecting images with words. Pop-up books are more engaging because students interact with the book, such as pulling, folding, and opening it directly. Pop-up books are like Pandora's boxes; no one knows their contents until they open them. Pop-up books are an effective, interactive, and multisensory learning medium for strengthening vocabulary.

To develop a pop-up book, the first step is to identify learning objectives and choose a theme and storyline appropriate for the elementary school level. In a pop-up book, the students must choose the language to master. The student uses vocabulary, simple sentences, or themes like animals, family, colors, or rooms. Ensure the objectives

are age-appropriate and aligned with the EYL curriculum. Considering the age-appropriateness of the pop-up book for learning, this book is easily understood by students. Pop-up books help students describe and understand the materials. For example, with the theme of rooms and adjectives, students can name rooms and describe them using simple adjectives. The theme and storyline are equally important in creating pop-up books. Choose a theme that is familiar and meaningful for young learners, such as daily life, fairy tales, or nature themes. Likewise, the storyline must be created coherently; the most frequently appearing and interesting things are images that can move or suddenly appear.

Determining the type or model of pop-up books to be used, such as V-folds, box folds, pull-tabs, or flaps, has been proven to support the storyline. Moving animals, opening doors, or buildings that appear above. For children's books, ensure they are easy for children to play with and are not difficult to prevent damage and remain sturdy. The text also uses pop-up models, such as pulling a string so that the text can change in turn, or rotating the text so it appears one by one, and so on. Sketching each page that includes visual elements with a particular theme, like "House Parts" (Figure 1), placing text and images, and avoiding overcrowding make the book's contents easier to understand. Bright colors and easy-to-read letters increase visual appeal. Images such as cartoon animals or things that children like help students memorize and understand easily. Short and repetitive sentences help students memorize more easily. For example, "This is a bedroom." The bedroom is big. These patterns help young learners understand language structures naturally. The illustration design is clear and culturally appropriate to increase student engagement. The neat process of cutting and assembling pop-up books will make them more durable and safe for children to use.

Pop-up media is appropriately applied at pre-, whilst-, and post-reading activities to teach language skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing and to teach language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. These activities make pop-up books not only visual products, but also interactive learning tools.

Pop-up books help young learners visualize English concepts, making learning interactive, engaging, and memorable, which improves understanding, motivation, vocabulary development, and overall learning experiences effectively.

### **Discussion for Research Question 1**

A pop-up book is a three-dimensional prop that can stimulate students' imagination and add knowledge, so students find it easier to understand the depiction of an object, enrich vocabulary, and improve understanding of the materials. Pop-up book aligns with young learners' cognitive development because in this stage, students think concretely, rather than abstractly (Islami et al., 2024). The students find it easier to understand the material because they see and hold the object directly. The students learn through direct experience and interaction with the objects around them. Thus, pop-up books are not only use as a visual media, but also as a learning tool that is appropriate to children's characteristics

A pop-up book supports multisensory learning because it involves the children's various senses, such as visual, tactile, and kinesthetic. The use of a pop-up book as a learning medium allows students not only to see the interesting picture but also to touch

and move parts of the book, so the learning process becomes more active and meaningful (Nengsi & Munandar, 2020). This multisensory input can help strengthen memory and understanding, because the information received through more than one sense tends to be stored more easily in long-term memory. Besides that, young learners can learn language effectively when they can see, touch, and manipulate learning media, because direct experience can help them to associate words with real meaning.

Pop-up books make language input easier to understand because pop-up book elements can illustrate the vocabulary, actions, and story sequences clearly and concretely (Nurkumala et al., 2024). Young learners can immediately see the relationship between words and meaning through the visuals that appear, so there is no need to imagine abstractly. The visual context reduces cognitive load and helps students focus on understanding the meaning, which is important in learning EYL. Pop-up books also support to understanding simple grammar, such as prepositions (on, under, in), verbs, and adjectives, because students can immediately see examples of its use in real situations.

Pop-up books can increase the motivation and engagement of young learners because they naturally arouse curiosity and enthusiasm through their unique appearance and visual surprises when the pages are opened. Interactive elements in a pop-up book, such as parts that can be moved or lifted, help maintain children's attention spans, which tend to be short, so they can stay focused and interested throughout the learning process (Setiyanigrum, n.d.). Joyful learning can foster a positive attitude toward language learning, because students can feel that study is not a burden, but rather an interesting and entertaining activity.

Pop-up books support children's language learning through storytelling and developing narrative skills in young learners because pop-up book composition helps clarify the sequence of the story, from the beginning, middle, to the end, visually and concretely. This media can also encourage students to predict the storyline, retelling, and do the role playing, so their speaking skills develop naturally through communicative and joyful activity (Indrianto & Kurniawati, 2020). Moreover, the visual story in a pop-up book can help students to understand the whole story even though their vocabulary is still limited, because the pictures and pop-up scenes provide strong context to the meaning. Thus, pop-up books become effective media to practice storytelling ability and improve language understanding in young learners.

A pop-up book plays an important role in building classroom interaction and social learning because this medium encourages interaction between the teacher and students during learning activities. A pop-up book can be used in various activities such as group work, shared reading, and guided discussions, which allow students to actively exchange ideas and opinions interactively. In addition, the use of pop-up books fosters cooperative learning and peer support, so that the students learn to work together, share roles, and help each other in understanding stories or vocabulary. It refers that pop-up books not only increase language ability, but also develop social ability and work together in class.

## 2. Components of an Eclectic Lesson Plan

Future EYL teachers should have the ability to design an eclectic lesson plan (Figure 3), since this lesson plan reflects the learning process for young learners that involves the integration of some learning components at once. Findings demonstrate that the eclectic lesson plan not only uses a single method but also integrates various methods, techniques, and media, for example, Total Physical Response, storytelling, basic speaking practice, and the use of media, such as visual and audio-visual. The teacher makes adjustments to the approach based on the characteristics of learners through activities such as movement, repetition, and direct interaction. This approach indicates that the eclectic lesson plan in the module reflects methodological flexibility, child-centred learning, and meaningful interaction in the learning process.

Based on the analysis of the module, it can be identified that learning planning is arranged through various components that support the implementation of eclectic approaches. The table below describes the essential components from the module that reflect methodological flexibility, child-centred learning, and meaningful interaction (Table 2.).

Table 2. The Components of Eclectic Lesson Plan to Young Learners

| No. | Components                                | Description                                                                                                                              |
|-----|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Identity of the Module                    | Contains School level, Topic, Time allocation, and Teacher's name as a fundamental of administrative and contextual aspects of learning. |
| 2.  | Learning Outcomes and Objectives          | Learning outcomes and objectives are formulated clearly measurable and observable                                                        |
| 3.  | Learner Characteristics                   | Describe the age, developmental stage, language proficiency level, and learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic)                  |
| 4.  | Learning Materials / Content              | Materials contain vocabulary, expressions, and simple sentences that are contextual, repetitive,                                         |
| 5.  | Eclectic Teaching Approach                | Integrated various methods such as Total Physical Response (TPR), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)                                  |
| 6.  | Learning Activities                       | Learning activity arranged by combining pre-, whilst-, and post-activity phase                                                           |
| 7.  | Learning Methods and Techniques           | Applying various methods and learning techniques                                                                                         |
| 8.  | Learning Media and Resources              | Utilize visual media (flashcards), audio(songs, chants), audio-visual (videos), (toys, puppets), and interactive media.                  |
| 9.  | Learning Environment Classroom Management | Organize the classroom environment through seating class rules, time management                                                          |

|                               |                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10. Assessment and Evaluation | Authentic and formative assessment through observation, oral performance, and games. |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Discussion for Research Question 2

A lesson plan with an eclectic approach can accommodate the diversity of learning styles of students, because young learners have different learning preferences, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (Febriyanti et al., 2018). With a combination of various methods, techniques, and learning media, an eclectic lesson plan ensures that students get appropriate learning opportunities that suit their learning style and needs, since this lesson plan is apt to be designed for EYL classes for its contextual and communicative language learning experiences. The lesson plan provided by pictures, songs, movement, games, or other interactive activities makes the learning process more effective and meaningful for all. Hence, the students have a chance to learning according to their strengths and needs naturally.

The eclectic lesson plan approach is suitable for the characteristics of child development, because young learners can learn effectively through playing, moving, and concrete experiences that involve their body and emotions (Cahyada, n.d.). Children are not ready for learning that is too abstract or centered only on verbal explanations, so teachers need to give them a variety of active and fun methods. By combining various methods such as Total Physical Response (TPR), storytelling, games, and songs, learning becomes aligned with children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. Moving activities can help students naturally understand the meaning of language; stories stimulate imagination and understanding of context, while games and songs can create a pleasant and emotionally safe learning atmosphere. Through this approach, students not only learn language, but also develop as a whole according to the stage of development.

The eclectic lesson plan approach can increase students' engagement and motivation to learn because various methods and media are used to prevent boredom and help maintain children's relatively short attention spans. Young learners are more likely to lose focus if learning is monotonous, so using several activities becomes very important (Sukci & Kristianto, 2024a). Interactive media, such as a pop-up book, puppets, and video, can stimulate arouse curiosity and bring joy in learning, so students feel interested and enthusiastic to participate in every activity. The students tend to be active English users when they feel motivated and enjoy the learning process by answering questions, imitating vocabulary, singing, or telling a story. Thus, students' motivation may be stimulated through an eclectic approach, which has a direct impact on students' active engagement and language learning process.

The eclectic lesson plan approach is very supportive in meaningful language learning because language is presented in a real context, not as separate or isolated elements. By using story, game, simple dialogue, and visual media, students can naturally understand the language meaning according to the situation shown (Kusumaningsih & Anita, 2018). Besides that, using a variety of learning techniques leads students to understand the meaning first before focusing on the form of language, such as grammatical structure or pronunciation, which aligns with how children naturally learn

language. Thus, students can be able to connect new language with their everyday life experiences and situations, such as in home, school, or when they are playing, so that the language learned become more relevant and easier to remember, and can be used functionally in their real communication.

The eclectic lesson plan approach can increase students' comprehension and retention, because students gain repeated explanation to the material through various learning methods (Marentek et al., 2024). Vocabulary or the same expressions can be introduced through stories, songs, games, body move, and visual media, so the information is processed from various angles. Visual experiences and hands-on activities help students to build strong associations between words, meaning, and real experience, so that vocabulary and expressions learned more easily are remembered and last longer in memory. Thus, the use of an eclectic approach not only helps students understand the material better, but also ensures more lasting learning outcomes.

The eclectic lesson plan approach encourages students to be actively involved in learning because the planning focuses on Student Centered Learning (CLT). In this learning, students not only become passive listeners, but also are directly involved in several activities such as playing a role, simple discussion, language games, and using learning media (Sukci & Kristianto, 2024b). Through an eclectic approach, students can interact actively with teachers, friends, and materials, creating a communicative and collaborative classroom atmosphere. These interactions directly develop students' communication skills, either in understanding or using simple English language, and help them to build their confidence to participate in learning activities.

The eclectic lesson plan approach plays an important role in building a positive attitude towards learning English, because learning is designed to be fun and interactive, which can reduce anxiety and fear of making mistakes. A relaxed classroom atmosphere, full of play activities, songs, stories, and interesting media, makes children feel safe and comfortable when trying to use English actively and communicatively (Krisbiantoro & Pujiani, 2021). When children connect their English learning experience, they feel happy and successful, they are also more confident and motivated to conduct active participation. These things foster long-term motivation, because children have self-confident that English is not a difficult or scary lesson, but an interesting and meaningful means of communication.

### **3. Skills to Create Interactive EYL Teaching**

Based on EYL teaching practices and EYL books, we can see that teaching English to young children and adults is significantly different. Teaching English to young children requires active involvement between teachers, students, and peers for effective learning. The use of engaging learning media also has the potential to increase learning effectiveness, as well as prevent one-way instruction. Therefore, teachers, as learning models, are expected to be able to design and create a learning environment that is meaningful, interactive, enjoyable, and, most importantly, appropriate to the students' levels and characteristics. Here are 9 key points namely: 1. Using Child-Friendly Language 2. Questioning and Eliciting Responses 3. Modelling and Demonstration, 4. Facilitating Students' Interaction, 5. Using Interactive Media and Materials, 6. Giving Positive Feedback and Reinforcement, 7. Classroom Management through Interaction, 8.

Scaffolding Learning, 9. Encouraging Meaningful Language Use in building an interactive classroom to encourage children's participation and create an interactive learning environment:

#### 1. Using Child-Friendly Language

The most basic thing a teacher should do is use child-friendly language; this is because children are not yet able to understand difficult explanations or expressions. Teachers are expected to use repetition and facial expressions, body movements, and other visual supports so that children understand the language more easily. Children have difficulty maintaining their focus for a long period of time, so teachers must provide simple and clear instructions so that children will be motivated to continue learning, and children also more easily understand the objectives of the activity. In learning, teachers must also adjust the level of language used, teachers must also assist (scaffolding) to children if they still have difficulty. If it is felt that the child is more developed, teachers are expected to reduce assistance (scaffolding) gradually until the child is more capable. In this way, effective English learning can be improved through the use of short, clear, repetitive language, with body movements, and aligned with the child's level.

#### 2. Questioning and Eliciting Responses

The use of simple and open-ended questions can encourage children to be more confident and active. Teachers can ask children simple questions like "What is this?" or "What color is it?" and, instead of demanding a perfect answer, give them time to answer to the best of their ability. For example, a teacher might ask, "What room is this?" while pointing to a pop-up book or a picture. Students might answer, "Bedroom." The teacher asks a simple follow-up question, "Is it tidy or messy?" and allows students to answer, "A tidy bedroom." This demonstrates that simple, short questions can foster students' confidence and gradually develop their responses.

#### 3. Modeling and Demonstration

Further findings indicate that teachers act as primary models before students imitate. During modeling, teachers demonstrate actions while giving commands to students in English or the target language. For example, the teacher might say, "Touch your head!" while pointing to their head, followed by all students. Other commands include "Point your finger up," "Open the door," and "Touch the table." Through TPR, children learn language through movement, not from translations or books. The essence of TPR is to combine language with movement, resulting in enjoyable and stress-free learning for children.

#### 4. Facilitating Student-Student Interaction

In addition to being a role model, teachers must also be able to facilitate interactions between students through various group and pair activities. With interaction between students, it is hoped that they will be actively involved in the learning process. Group or pair activities should be fun and interesting, such as singing songs, chants, vocabulary games, role-play, or picture classification, so that each student has a turn to speak (turn-taking), and most importantly, they can work together. With activities like this, learning activities are more fun, meaningful, and natural, and children are more confident, relaxed, and motivated.

### 5. Using Interactive Media and Materials

The use of interactive media and materials such as pop-up books, puppets, flashcards, or media that children can touch, move, and respond to can increase children's engagement in learning. Songs, videos, and digital games can also be fun learning tools for children. Teachers should utilize these to foster children's motivation in learning English. With activities like these, learning will not be passive; children will learn in a fun, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate way.

### 6. Giving Positive Feedback and Reinforcement

To create a safe environment for children, positive feedback and reinforcement are necessary to build curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. Positive feedback is not only aimed at children who answer correctly, but also at children who make mistakes in learning. This shows that the teacher appreciates the child's efforts. Teachers can recognize children's efforts with verbal encouragement such as "good job," "well done," "great," etc. In addition, teachers can also provide non-verbal support, such as giving simple rewards; as stickers, applause, or smiles. With simple and warm feedback and reinforcement, children will perceive mistakes as a natural learning experience, and they will not be afraid to try. A supportive atmosphere makes children more courageous in trying many things and triggers them to develop their potential optimally.

### 7. Classroom Management through Interaction

Supportive classroom management, based on routines and not relying on punishment, is emphasized in EYL classroom management through interaction. Using chants, signals, and routines is expected to enrich children's language skills and also improve order in the classroom. Teachers also use attention-getters such as call-and-response; for example, the teacher asks, "Are you ready?" then the children answer, "Yes, I'm ready." In addition, teachers also use daily routine patterns such as opening and closing greetings. Children have a short attention span, so teachers must create a variety of activities to reduce boredom and make learning fresh and fun. Moving from one activity to another, teachers use consistent routines, signals, and language. This way, the class remains organized, children stay focused, and do not waste time. With this, the learning process will be more orderly, organized, and effective.

### 8. Scaffolding Learning

Scaffolding learning stems from Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is the range between what a child can do independently and what they can do with a more capable person, such as a teacher or a more capable peer. This concept helps children to understand things more easily because teachers provide support such as hints, visuals, and modeling. As a child's understanding and confidence increase, support is gradually reduced in completing the tasks.

### 9. Encouraging Meaningful Language Use

Children are more engaged in learning English through real-life experiences. When learning activities are linked to the children's interests, real-life experiences, and social world, they will have the intention to speak, leading to more natural language production. Teachers also provide opportunities to express needs, feelings, and ideas, such as expressing preferences, sharing experiences, and asking for help. With this concept, English is more connected to children, so that communication is not just about the subject

matter, but also supports their oral skills. The professional EYL teachers should have interactive skills in guiding the EYL class .

Table 3. Interactive Skills for Teaching an EYL Class

| No. | Item                                       | Description                                                                 |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Using Child-Friendly Language              | Giving simple, clear instructions                                           |
| 2.  | Questioning and Eliciting Responses        | Asking simple, open-ended questions                                         |
| 3.  | Modeling and Demonstration                 | Demonstrating actions based on instruction                                  |
| 4.  | Facilitating Students Interaction          | Organizing pair and group activities                                        |
| 5.  | Using Interactive Media and Materials      | Visual and touchable                                                        |
| 6.  | Giving Positive Feedback and Reinforcement | Praising effort and giving encouragement                                    |
| 7.  | Classroom Management through Interaction   | Creating a safe space to make mistakes                                      |
| 8.  | Scaffolding Learning                       | Temporary support that is gradually reduced as learners' gain independence. |
| 9.  | Encouraging Meaningful Language Use        | Using English to talk about real life and share thoughts and feelings.      |

An interactive English teacher builds communication, confidence, and critical thinking through engaging activities, real-life practice, personalized feedback, and student-centered lessons that motivate learners to speak, listen, read, and write actively.

In an interactive teaching class, the teacher creates a communicative learning atmosphere by engaging students simultaneously, guiding them to develop inner motivation, focus, and confidence, so they actively participate, interact, and speak English through meaningful, supportive, and collaborative classroom activities.

### Discussion for Research Question 3

In English for Young Learners (EYL) classrooms, teaching should be highly interactive and learner-centered, encouraging children to actively participate in meaningful (Brown, 2015), engaging, and enjoyable learning experiences (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). Lessons should be designed with clear objectives that connect to the learners' everyday lives, allowing them to understand the practical value of using English in familiar contexts. Instead of focusing primarily on grammar rules and language forms, teachers should prioritize helping children understand and communicate meaning. Young learners naturally acquire language more effectively when they are exposed to authentic communication and opportunities to use English in purposeful situations. Interactive activities such as games, songs, chants, storytelling, role-playing, and collaborative tasks provide enjoyable ways for children to develop their language skills while maintaining their interest and enthusiasm. These activities create a positive classroom atmosphere where learners feel confident to participate and make experiment

with new vocabulary, and express themselves without fear of making mistakes (Harmer, 2015). Furthermore, incorporating age-appropriate and enjoyable materials helps sustain children's attention, enhances comprehension, and increases motivation to learn. By emphasizing meaningful communication and engaging learning experiences, teachers can foster not only language development but also learners' confidence, creativity, and positive attitudes toward English, laying a strong foundation for their future language learning journey.

## Conclusion

Professionalism in teaching English to Young Learners (EYL) is fundamental to empowering children's ability to use English actively and communicatively. Effective EYL instruction requires teachers to create interactive learning atmospheres that engage learners through meaningful, contextualized experiences. Such environments encourage natural enthusiasm for learning English and support the development of communicative competence from an early age. The use of interactive media, such as pop-up books, has proven particularly beneficial, as their three-dimensional and contextual nature provides concrete scaffolding that helps young learners understand and use language more effectively. Moreover, the implementation of eclectic lesson planning allows teachers to integrate various teaching methods, techniques, and media within a single learning scenario. This approach accommodates the diverse characteristics and learning styles of young learners, ensuring that instruction remains inclusive and developmentally appropriate. Emphasizing learning by doing further enhances language acquisition, as hands-on activities enable learners to engage cognitively and emotionally, increasing the likelihood of long-term memory retention. Therefore, EYL teachers must possess a solid understanding of the principles of teaching English as a foreign language, recognizing that young learners require instructional approaches distinct from those used at higher educational levels.

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