

**CHALLENGES FACED BY FORMER PPG PRAJABATAN
STUDENTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT THE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL LEVEL**

A THESIS

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

2025

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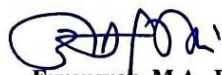
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DECLARATION

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Certify that the thesis entitled “Challenges Faced by Former PPG Prajabatan Students in Teaching English at the Elementary School Level” is my own work and I did not do any plagiarism or any inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commended by Ministry of Education of Republic of Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face court if I am found to have plagiarized this work

Palembang, Sept 2025
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DEDICATION AND MOTTOS

This thesis is dedicated to:

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, who have always supported and believed in me.

Motto:

“Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear.”
(Q.S Al-Baqarah 2:286)

“Long story short, I Survived”
(Taylor Swift)

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The Writer

Rinduani Putri Ayu

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CHALLENGES FACED BY FORMER PPG PRAJABATAN STUDENTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL

ABSTRACT

English is a key foreign language in Indonesia's education system and is increasingly emphasized at the elementary level to prepare students for global competition. To support this, the government trains English teachers through the Pre-Service Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG). This study investigates the challenges faced by alumni of the PPG Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University (FKIP Unsri), who teach English in public elementary schools in Palembang as P3K teachers. Using a qualitative approach with semi-structured written interviews, the data were analyzed thematically. Five major challenges emerged: (1) a mismatch between curriculum content and learner proficiency; (2) limited listening input and learning aids; (3) misalignment between curriculum design and classroom reality; (4) issues on cultural relevance and local adaptation; and (5) limited support. These findings highlight the gap between educational policy and classroom practice, emphasizing the need for curriculum alignment, better resources, and ongoing teacher development. The study contributes to improving teacher education and informing more effective English teaching policies at the primary level.

Keywords: *English Language Teaching, Elementary School, PPG Prajabatan, Teaching Challenges, Primary Education*

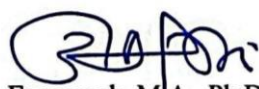
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background, the problems, the objective, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

English has become the lingua franca so mastery of English is essential for individuals who want to participate in the global community (Crystal, 2003). English also acts as a tool to access scientific knowledge and modern technology which is essential in improving competitiveness in the global market (Lauder, 2008). The mastery of English has a strategic role in various fields such as economy, diplomacy, and education (Yadnya, 2016). In the academic context, English serves as the main access to science and technology, especially through international scientific publications.

In Indonesia, although not widely used in the official sphere, English is still prioritized as the most important foreign language in the education system (Lauder, 2008). English is taught from elementary school to university levels in Indonesia, but its status is still as a foreign language (EFL) rather than as a second language (ESL) (Rahmah & Qamariah, 2023). The introduction of English from an early age aims not only to build children's linguistic competence, but also to prepare them to access science and technology globally. Thus, teaching English at an early age can be a strategy in building a generation that is able to compete in the international arena, without abandoning national cultural identity (Suyanto, 2005). The development of language skills in early childhood is an important aspect, because at this stage there is rapid development in various aspects, including physical, moral, intellectual, social-emotional, and language (Saraswati, 2013). As what has been stated by Blackledge and Crese (2010, as cited in Copland & Garton, 2014), children can learn more than one language simultaneously and often do in their home and social contexts.

The teaching of English at the primary school level in Indonesia began with the implementation of the 1994 Basic Education Curriculum, which designated English as a local content subject. Local content subject means that English as an additional subject tailored to the needs and potential of the region, rather than as a required subject at the national level. Rokhman (2012) argues that English should be positioned as local content at the elementary school level with the aim of preparing students to face the challenges of globalization while still respecting Indonesian as the national language and regional languages as valuable local cultural heritage. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 79 of 2014 (Article 2, paragraph 1), local content is a learning component that is specifically designed according to the conditions and needs of the local environment so that it is relevant and contextual for students in the region.

In 2013, English became an elective subject as regulated in the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Lie, 2023). The implication is that the teaching of English at the Indonesian elementary schools varies in each school according to its respective policy. The Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 12 of 2024 has stipulated that English will become a compulsory subject in primary schools starting from the 2027/2028 academic year. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024 (Article 3, paragraph 2, letter a), the main objective of this policy is to improve students' English language competence from an early age so that they are better prepared to compete in the era of globalization. Article 5 paragraph 3 goes on saying that the implementation of this policy is carried out in stages by considering the readiness of regions, educational institutions, and the quality of teaching staff through special training programs.

However, the study conducted by Ardaya et al., (2022) reported that the implementation of Curriculum 2013 at one state primary school in Gresik still included English as part of extracurricular activities. In line with this, Purandina (2022) also reported that elementary schools in Bali, especially at Marga sub-

district, Tabanan, applied English as a local content learning. English was also taught as a local content at SDN 97 Inpres Tellupanuae, Mallawa District, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi (Hambali et al., 2021). These studies reflect that policies regarding the teaching of English at the primary school level in Indonesia still vary and adjust to the conditions and policies of each educational institution.

Numerous studies have reported the challenges in teaching and learning of English at the elementary school level in Indonesia. The challenges cover the linguistic and non-linguistic challenges, limited English language teaching (ELT) resources such as textbooks and audiovisual media (Bayuaji, 2010), the students' low interest in English, lack of support from parents and the environment, and limited teacher competence in teaching English at the rural schools (Harlina & Yusuf, 2020), and the management of large and unconducive classes, which can hinder effective interaction between teachers and students (Hartienah & Soviyah, 2024). The challenges in teaching English at the primary level in Indonesia are also concerned with the selection of appropriate materials and activities that consider the diversity of student and developing effective teaching strategies to improve students' understanding and language skills (Muzaki, 2023). Furthermore, the students' lack of prior knowledge of English, low motivation to learn, and negative perceptions that English is a difficult subject, limited learning time, lack of learning media, unfavourable classroom conditions, and students' anxiety in using English are also reported as the challenges (Pertiwi et al., 2022). Overall, challenges in teaching English in primary schools in Indonesia vary greatly depending on the geographical context, the availability of resources, as well as the limited teacher competence in teaching English.

As previously highlighted in the previous paragraph, one of the challenges in teaching English at the elementary school level in Indonesia is concerned with the teachers who have the inadequate knowledge of English teaching while as Hidayah et al., (2024) underline, teachers hold an important key in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, having teachers that have the competence to teach English and have been professionally trained is very important. Indonesian government has done its effort in relation to this issue through the program of

Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG) Prajabatan or Calon Guru. This program is a professional education program to produce *Generasi Baru Guru Indonesia* who have a calling to become teachers, are professional, committed to being a role model, love the profession, and are lifelong learners (Education, Directorate of Teacher Profession, 2024). *PPG Prajabatan*, which is now addressed as *PPG Calon Guru*, has been implemented since 2022 and is held for undergraduate or applied undergraduate graduates and Diploma IV from both education and non-education majors for prospective teachers to obtain an educator certificate.

The assignment of the alumni of PPG *Prajabatan* Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education within Sriwijaya University has answered the sort of teachers with English education background teaching English at the elementary schools. The previous related studies have reported the challenges teachers have faced in teaching English at the primary schools. Similarly, this present also study focused at the same thing, that was, the challenges of teaching English at the primary school levels. However, this present study specifically viewed it from the perspective of the alumni of *PPG Prajabatan* program of Universitas Sriwijaya who have been assigned to teach at the elementary schools through the P3K (*Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja*).

1.2 The Problem of Study

The problem of this study is formulated in the following research question: *What challenges do alumni of the PPG Prajabatan Program of FKIP Unsri face in teaching English at the elementary school level in Palembang?*

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In accordance with the research question, the objective of this study is to *identify the challenges faced by PPG Prajabatan alumni of FKIP Unsri in teaching English at the elementary school level in Palembang.*

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The objective of this study which was to investigate the challenges of English teaching at the elementary school level in Indonesia can unfold the new perspectives as experienced by the alumni of Program PPG *Prajabatan*, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education within Sriwijaya University of 2022 who passed the P3K (*Pegawai Pemerintah dengan Perjanjian Kerja*) and have been assigned to teach at the elementary schools in Palembang. Having studied at the Program PPG for 2 semesters, they have undergone pedagogical training designed to help them become a professional teacher. Therefore, conducting this study is significant since it can fill in the gap in the field of the English teaching at the elementary schools in Indonesia based on the experiences of teachers who have been taught to be professional teachers.

The importance of these findings also lies in their contribution to the development of more relevant and effective training programs, as well as providing insights into alumni preparedness and adaptability in dealing with different situations. The results of this study are expected to provide useful recommendations for educational institutions and educational policies, so that alumni can be better prepared to carry out their duties and responsibilities in primary schools. Thus, both alumni and educational institutions will benefit from the results of this study.

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