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## Teaching non-traditional students: EFL teacher's experiences, challenges, and future recommendations

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### Abstract

This qualitative case study aimed to identify the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers at the first class correctional institution for children in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia, while teaching English to young inmates. The participants included two high school English teachers from this institution. Data collection was conducted through interviews to obtain in-depth descriptions of the difficulties encountered. A thematic analysis was employed to evaluate the data and highlight the specific difficulties faced by the English teachers. The findings revealed four primary challenges experienced by the teachers in their efforts to teach English to young inmates: 1) issues related to time management, 2) students' negative attitudes, 3) a lack of available textbooks, and 4) inadequate classroom conditions. These challenges significantly impact the effectiveness of English instruction within this unique educational environment.

### Keywords

Correctional institution for children, EFL teaching difficulties, juvenile offenders

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## Introduction

Humans who commit crimes must all be held accountable, including those committed by children. Children who commit crimes and are sentenced to prison are often influenced by their juvenile delinquency. Experts have presented several definitions related to the meaning of this term. Heilbrun et al. (2005) defined juvenile delinquency as the antisocial behavior of a child that does not align with the norms established by society, particularly concerning drug use, violence, political upheaval, and other related issues. The understanding of juvenile delinquency by researchers varies. Children who have committed juvenile delinquent acts and violated the law must face the consequences. According to Article 1, Item 2 of Law Number 3 of 1997, children or delinquents are defined as those who are under 18 years of age and have committed crimes prohibited by law in accordance with statutory regulations or other legal standards applicable in the community. Children facing incarceration are entitled to receive an education and deserve the opportunity for a bright future. Numerous laws support this principle, including Law Number 23, Chapter 1, Article 1, Paragraph 2 (2003), which states that child protection encompasses all activities aimed at guaranteeing and safeguarding children and their rights to live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity, while also receiving protection from violence and discrimination.

The United Nations Children's Fund (2007) has established free, compulsory primary education for all children as a prerequisite for the development of secondary education. This initiative includes measures to ensure accessibility for all, as well as equitable access to higher education. Furthermore, there is a responsibility to provide basic education for individuals who have not completed their primary education. English has become an essential asset in education, a fact that cannot be denied or overlooked, as it serves as the universal language for communication with others around the world (Verghese, 2007). Therefore, irrespective of the circumstances, English education is essential for all students, including those in prison. Given that English is a vital component of human development, the importance of English language teaching cannot be overstated. Teachers play a crucial role in the success of English language teaching. They should undergo thorough preparation before beginning to instruct their students, as they bear significant responsibilities towards them and will encounter numerous challenges. This study specifically examines teachers in correctional institutions designed for young inmates, focusing on the difficulties they face in environments where activities are heavily controlled and regulated.

Thomas and Thomas (2008) highlighted numerous challenges encountered in correctional institutions, including cultural conflicts among prisoners, low productivity among students, psychiatric disorders affecting inmates, difficulties in assigning academic credit for students' achievements, requests for legal assistance, issues related to offensive body odor, the presence of hostile learners, and rival gangs. Correctional educators often grapple with philosophical dilemmas as they become familiar with their environment and students, adapting their approaches from conventional teaching methods. The Indonesian government has

implemented various programs aimed at educating young inmates during their incarceration, as these individuals retain the right to receive an education. Given that high school represents the culmination of the compulsory education system, teachers face increased responsibilities and obstacles to prevent students from reoffending in the future. Thus, we have chosen to closely examine the experiences of educators to identify the challenges associated with teaching English to delinquent children.

### **Literature Review**

This literature review explores key theories, concepts, and previous studies related to teaching English in a correctional institution for children. By identifying gaps, trends, and debates in the existing literature, this review provides a foundation for the current study and highlights the relevance of these topics in addressing the difficulties faced by teachers within the correctional institution.

#### ***The concept of correctional institution for children***

Crimes committed by children who broke the law must be sentenced to prison to face jail time. However, even in prison, a child should still receive an education through guidance from a correctional institution. According to [Paige et al. \(2002\)](#), in correctional facilities, they provide financial support to educational programs and also to the school districts involved in collaboration with the locally operated correctional facility. These facilities will provide them with knowledge and skills for after their time in prison in order to make a successful transition. [Bosworth \(2005\)](#) also stated that there were a range of educational activities available in prisons, jails, juvenile justice facilities, and various other community-based settings. The classes there were made to seek learning experiences that will help them during their sentence after release into society. He also explained that the focus of correctional education should be changing the behavior of offenders through planned learning experiences and learning environments to seek enhancement of knowledge and skill and to create a constructive manner. In Indonesia, the purpose of education itself has taken root in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution in the fourth paragraph, which quoted, "to educate the nation's life." Educators and teaching staff became one of the spearheads of such implementation. Meanwhile, children who find themselves in legal trouble cannot get the rights they deserve; thus, the criminal justice system is built on the idea that those children should be treated differently with full protection. They are entitled to special considerations that should be obliged by all countries to make sure that those children grow, develop, and get their rights. That is why the justice system must be designed to adhere to these rights.

#### ***Correctional institution system in indonesia***

This education system for the correctional institution is affiliated with other schools outside of the institution to make the system successful at all levels of education. [Costelloe](#)

and Warner (2014) stated that since 2014 in Indonesia, all child prisoners of the Correctional Institution for Children have had access to basic and secondary education and other educational activities like training and vocational skills programs. When a child prisoner enters the prison for the first time, they will be interrogated about their previous educational journey and suggested to access the correctional institution for children that suits them. After they are sentenced to their perfect pick, they are obligated to finish the school program until they receive a certificate regarding their completion of the school program. This research was conducted at the First Class Correctional Institution for Children in Palembang. It is a place where children under the age of 18 who have committed crimes can finish their education and get a school degree so that later on they can get a job and make amends for their future life. The First Class Correctional Institution for children is called first class because it is held in the capital city of South Sumatra and also has the biggest capacity for young inmates. This research focuses on the formal educational program at the high school level of the English subject. The formal educational system in the first-class correctional institution for children in Palembang is an affiliated system where they cooperate with Senior High School number 11 Palembang. The English teachers of Senior High School number 11 Palembang were given the task of teaching there in classes two times a week. The formal education is the same as a normal school, but this time it is held in an unconventional setting, which is in a prison/correctional institution.

### *Juvenile offenders in correctional institutions*

The involvement of children under 18 years old who had done criminal acts such as murder, being included in a brawl, sexual harassment, and other law-breaking activity indirectly makes them face the law. This was explained by Law Number 11 (2012) concerning the Sistem Peradilan Pidana Anak concerning children in conflict with the law. According to Bosworth (2005), youthful transgressions against criminal law were managed through a generalized system of prohibitions and punishments. Children who committed crimes were believed to be acting with criminal intent and were consequently punished in much the same manner as adults. Law relating to child protection is stipulated, such as in Undang-undang No. 11 tahun 2012 on the Child Criminal Justice System. Article 85 is by fostering children in Institutions for Special Child Development or LPKA, where children who committed crimes were accompanied, nurtured, and equipped with skills. Furthermore, it can restore the value of the child as the future of the nation's generation. Implementing coaching for juvenile delinquency in Indonesia is found in 20 institutions for correctional institutions for children spread in various regions of the Indonesian provinces.

### *English teaching at correctional institutions for children*

Compared to normal mainstream education, teaching English in an unconventional setting like prison is completely different. Even though the materials of English and

educational lessons are almost the same as normal schools, there are many things that need to be considered. Kuchah and Shamim (2018) stated that before teaching English, there are many things that have to be considered, such as technique and method. Games are not considered since women in prison are competitive and do not like to lose. However, when using food for lessons, motivation towards learning English increased. Teaching English plays a vital role in the law even with various obstacles along the way, as it functions as one of the subjects to be completed to receive their certification of completion.

### *English teacher's difficulties*

Mallart et al. (2018) stated that difficulties are addressing the negative aspects of a situation and enhancing information richness in the process. They included time management, environment roles, and students' misbehavior. Time is a valuable resource limited to the learning activity. Time management was a major challenge to their academic performance and social life that students of tertiary institutions faced. Kaushar (2013) said that the secondary level is where poor management and lack of organizing skills started. Unlike high school students who were fully taught and supervised by their teachers, university- or college-level students take their own responsibility in terms of studying and finishing tasks. Time management is an inseparable element of a school organization. Time management is an art of arranging, scheduling, and budgeting one's time that is inseparable from a school organization (Edwards et al., 2003). Hafiz et al. (2016) identified four key time management behaviors: time assessment, self-awareness, planning, and monitoring. Time assessment involves past, present, and future orientations, while planning involves setting goals and prioritizing tasks. Kayode and Ayodele (2015) described that teachers' time management has significant impacts on students' performance; that is why a good teacher must make effective use of his time.

### *Environment roles*

The condition in which the class takes place can affect the teacher's teaching quality and can cause difficulties. Brown (2001) described that teachers may be put in adverse circumstances because of the environment. Compromising with the institution can occur due to various factors such as large classes, poor classroom conditions, administrative constraints, test-focused courses, and limited individual power. Teachers must uphold discipline and respect from students to foster motivation, activeness, and dedication. However, many educators in prison lack training for their psychological needs, highlighting the need for improved educational environments and support for educators in prison. Classroom condition or learning environment has a significant effect on the level of learners' language proficiency. According to Kiatkheeree (2018), student and teacher interaction in a classroom, as part of the learning environment, was regarded as an important factor in promoting students' achievement. This is in line with what Lodhi et al. (2019) said, which explained that the

classroom is where the transfer of knowledge between teachers and students happens, fulfilling the academic needs and achieving the outcomes of learning. In addition, textbooks have become an important tool for education that teachers must have for their teaching and learning process (Diniah, 2013). Teachers tend to use the textbook without selecting and adapting appropriate materials for their students. That is why textbooks can be a medium that teachers use for effective teaching and learning processes. Richards (2001) was in agreement that textbooks are a key component in most language programs.

### *Student's misbehaviors*

According to Reed and Kirkpatrick (1998), student misbehaviors such as disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teachers, defiance, and hostility, ranging from infrequent to frequent and mild to severe, were a thorny issue in everyday classrooms. Different terms have been used to describe problematic behaviors of students. For instance, Stewart et al. (1998) referred to student misconduct as disciplinary violations in school, such as tardiness, vandalism, fighting, stealing, and drinking on campus. Any violation of explicit rules and regulations within the school and classroom vicinity falls into the category of "misbehavior or misconduct or discipline problem." However, some problematic behavior may not be seen as rule breaking, only as inappropriate or disturbing in the classroom setting. Purvis (2008) identified common student behavior in class, including disobeying teacher or administrative requests, not completing class assignments, tardiness without an acceptable reason, and hygiene or body odor problems. Disobedience to instructions can reinforce the idea that students can manipulate teachers and staff. Teachers should be firm in addressing tardiness to ensure students arrive on time. Addressing these issues requires addressing the student-teacher relationship and addressing personal reasons for non-compliance. Addressing these issues can improve the overall learning environment. Therefore, teachers need to recognize these problems and understand how the learners can be supported in their learning process. Deshler and Schumaker (2006) stated that the teachers be aware of how the learners behave and how they can be supported in their learning as well as recognizing their strengths and weaknesses.

## **Methodology**

### *Research design, site, and participants*

A qualitative case study research method was employed for this study. Ary et al. (2010) stated that qualitative research has its roots in the social sciences, as it describes and interprets a phenomenon or process while seeking to understand participants' perspectives. Geographically, the First Class Correctional Institution for Children is situated on Inspector Marzuki Street, KM 4.5, West Ilir I District, Palembang City, South Sumatra Province. This institution was established in 1967 on a land area of 59,735 square meters, and its construction was carried out in stages. In 2015, in accordance with the mandate of Law Number 11 of 2012

concerning the Criminal Justice System for Children, the Child Prison was required to transition into a Special Child Development Institution.

The participants in this research consisted of two English teachers from the First Class Correctional Institution for Children in Palembang. The sampling method employed was purposive sampling, which was utilized to intentionally select participants and sites to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Several justifications were provided for the selection of these participants. Firstly, the participants had to be officially designated teachers at the First Class Correctional Institution for Children in Palembang. Secondly, they were required to be English teachers. Lastly, it was imperative that they possess teaching experience at the First Class Correctional Institution for Children in Palembang. The selected teachers were chosen as a sample to investigate the challenges they faced while teaching young inmates.

### ***Data collection and analysis***

Interviews were utilized to obtain the data for this study, as they represent one of the most effective methods for data collection. Interviews are considered the richest source of information that researchers can gain (deMarrais & D. Lapan, 2004). Kothari (2004) elaborated that interviews are a type of method for collecting data that involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and responses in the form of oral-verbal replies. In alignment with this perspective, Best and Khan (1993) described interviews as an oral questionnaire in which, instead of providing written responses, interviewees offer their answers orally and face-to-face. In this study, the interviews were conducted via phone with the participants. The interview consisted of 25 main questions derived from Khuchah and Shamim (2018), Brown (2001), Thomas and Thomas (2008), and the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 81A of 2013 on the implementation of the curriculum. Aspects such as lesson plans and student engagement were explored during the interviews.

The data analysis employed was thematic analysis, following the six-step framework outlined by Creswell (2012). Initially, detailed data was collected from interviews, which included both transcriptions and typed notes. Subsequently, the transcribed data was input into computer files. Next, the data received was systematically coded; during this process, we meticulously reviewed all transcriptions and began coding the data relevant to the research questions posed in this study. Following this, interconnected themes were developed from the coded data. Creswell (2012) also emphasizes that the creation of interconnected themes involves the researcher linking these themes to illustrate a chronology or sequence of events, ultimately leading to the generation of a theoretical or conceptual model in qualitative research. Finally, we derived a personal interpretation from the themes and codes, which served as the concluding summary of this research in relation to the research question. Additionally, member checking was employed as a method to assess trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba,

1985), wherein researchers invite one or more participants from the study to verify the accuracy of the findings.

### Findings and discussion

Based on the research results, four primary difficulties were identified that teachers faced while instructing English at the First Class Correctional Institution for children. The table below outlines these difficulties.

**Table 1.** *EFL teachers' difficulties in teaching juvenile offenders*

Themes	Codes
Issues related to time management	The teachers expressed concern regarding their insufficient teaching time, as they were allocated only 20 minutes per meeting.
Students' negative attitudes	Most students believed that learning English was unnecessary. Most students exhibited a lack of good manners and predominantly disrespected their teachers. The teachers faced difficulties in maintaining discipline within the classroom. The students frequently failed to pay attention during lessons.
A lack of available textbooks	The absence of available textbooks hindered the teachers' ability to prepare effective lessons.
Inadequate classroom conditions	The teachers also felt uncomfortable conducting classes due to poor classroom conditions.

#### *Issues related to time management*

Time management has emerged as a significant challenge for educators. The teachers expressed a sense of inadequacy regarding time allocation, as they were assigned only 20 minutes per meeting for instructional purposes. This limited timeframe hampers effective teaching and learning. Time allotment is a crucial component of a teacher's daily lesson plan, essential for the successful progression of the teaching and learning process. However, if it is not estimated correctly, difficulties may arise. Both teachers, YS and YU, reported experiencing challenges with time management. YS stated during an interview, "Then there is the time allocation where we only teach for 20 minutes for one lesson. But because there are only 20 minutes, we don't really have enough time. However, in a normal school, there are 45 minutes for one lesson." This aligns with what YU said in the interview: "Only 40 minutes; if we teach at the school, it's 2 hours and 15 minutes. If we teach in jail, the 2 hours is 40 minutes." Based on the statements made by YU and YS, there exists a notable discrepancy in the time allocation between conventional schools and prison schools. Young inmates receive only 20 minutes of English instruction, which poses significant challenges for teachers in the long term. For instance, YS remarked, "No, it was not

*enough. That's why we had to select the easier materials.*" YU echoed this sentiment, stating, *"It's only an agreement between the teacher and the person who is familiar with the curriculum. I believe that it depends on the situation, and the curriculum is flexible."* In summary, the time allocation is a consensus among the institution, teachers, and the curriculum. Nevertheless, most educators feel that this duration is insufficient for students to engage in meaningful learning; consequently, they resort to providing simple, short, and easy materials.

### ***Students' negative***

Moreover, there is a noticeable lack of motivation among students regarding their English language learning. Some students exhibit low motivation, which leads to poor conduct in the classroom and creates a disruptive learning environment. One teacher has reported difficulties in maintaining discipline, as many students do not listen or pay attention during lessons. The primary factor contributing to this issue is the students' attitudes. YS has expressed this sentiment, stating, *"Yes, because they do not understand English and feel it is not important to them."* According to YS's explanation, students at the correctional institution lack both motivation and purpose in learning English, as they do not perceive it as necessary and tend to act as they please. Another concerning issue is their lack of manners, frequently mentioned by all teachers as a significant problem when teaching these young inmates. The students' attitudes and behaviors were predominantly described in the interviews with both participants.

Teachers face significant challenges when coping with unruly student behavior. YS expressed her frustrations regarding multiple issues, stating, *"They are unruly, stubborn, and lack respect because they feel like they are scumbags."* She further noted, *"When we try to remind or admonish them, the students are difficult to manage; it is hard for them to obey the teacher under any circumstances."* YS articulated the difficulties in maintaining order in the classroom, as many students refuse to adhere to established rules, leading to disruptions. Similarly, YU reported experiencing challenges due to these negative behaviors. She remarked, *"There are many problems; if they want to study English, it requires practice. They are lazy, so we teach them only at a basic level, similar to what we teach in primary school."* YU added, *"When we enter the classroom, they do not pay attention to us."* She emphasized, *"Not only do they not want to listen, but they also fail to pay attention."*

In discussing the difficulties, YU articulated the frustration of dealing with unresponsive students. He noted, *"They do not provide the information we request."* He elaborated by mentioning that when information is sought regarding student evaluations, some students disrupt their peers. YU described the rationale behind expressing anger towards these students, stating, *"They are merely mischievous children, and transforming their behavior requires time and patience."* He expressed a sense of exhaustion, remarking, *"When I step outside the classroom, I feel as though I am teaching in a prison."* YU conveyed that encountering apathetic or unruly students can lead educators to feel unmotivated themselves. *"They do not pay attention to us. In fact, I often feel lazy about teaching them."* He emphasized that many students display a lack of diligence and care, which complicates the teacher's role, as no matter what efforts are made, the students remain

disengaged. Furthermore, YU shared his observations regarding discipline in the classroom, reiterating, *"What purpose would it serve to express anger? They are just naughty children. It takes time to change them."* He concluded with a reflection on the emotional toll of teaching in such an environment. YU explained that it was very hard to discipline the students when they did not obey the rules as they should have. He also expressed how it was tiring to tell the students to follow the rules.

### ***A lack of available textbooks***

Another significant difficulty encountered in educational settings is the limited availability of teaching materials, such as textbooks. The absence of appropriate teaching resources exacerbates these challenges, complicating lesson preparation and delivery. As a result, there are no textbooks available for educators to utilize, which hinders both instructors and students from achieving their educational goals. YS expressed, *"I have to say it's difficult. Everything is very limited, so it's not easy to teach here. For example, there is no textbook, so I have to prepare by copying the materials."* She elaborated that, due to the lack of available textbooks, she must independently prepare the instructional materials in accordance with the curriculum. Furthermore, these materials need to be simplified to ensure they are accessible for the students. The limited availability of teaching materials posed a significant hindrance to the educational process. Consequently, she had to print all the materials herself. This aligns with YU's statement: *"I find it very challenging to teach the content available at the school. Consequently, I have taught them as if I were instructing primary school students."* YU continued, *"I genuinely want to provide the materials similar to what I taught in school, but it is quite difficult for us. To me, teaching all the materials is relatively easy for them. Therefore, when faced with options between the easiest and the most difficult materials, we had to select the easiest ones based on their needs."* He further explained, *"For the materials, I sourced content from other books, focusing on simple guidance and reading. I merely ask them to modify the simple sentences."* YU also recounted having a similar experience, as both educators indicated that they had to create their own simplified versions of the materials since they had not received any textbooks from the institution.

### ***Inadequate classroom conditions***

Another teaching difficulty faced by the English teachers in the correctional institution is the inadequate condition of the classroom. The physical environment of the classroom is far from ideal. One teacher has reported experiencing discomfort while teaching, primarily due to insufficient ventilation, which detracts from the overall learning experience. YS firmly identified this as a significant issue, noting that the classroom lacked proper airflow. She stated, *"Yes, it definitely disturbs me because it is somewhat unpleasant, and there is no ventilation in the classroom."* YS particularly recognized this problem after the students participated in their physical education class without changing their clothes, as required by protocol. They retained their used clothing, which led to an unbearable odor in the enclosed space, causing significant disruption to the teacher's comfort and concentration during lessons.

## Discussions

The results of this study contribute significantly to the understanding of teaching English at a correctional institution. These findings support theories related to the challenges that teachers encounter in such settings, suggesting that educators at the correctional institution face difficulties when teaching English to young inmates. The study revealed four difficulties mentioned by the teachers from the correctional institution. The most frequently cited issue is the students' poor attitudes. Unlike other students, these young inmates approach learning English with distinct challenges. They have experienced breaking the law by committing serious acts of delinquency that have resulted in their incarceration. According to [Rutter et al. \(1998\)](#), delinquency is an antisocial behavior that a child may acquire throughout their life. They stated that the causes of dissatisfaction, disagreement, and disapproval of culture stem from antisocial behavior. Deviant behavior, based on the results, serves as a means for students to escape the problems they encounter due to their inability to meet the dominant cultural values. This behavior raises frustration and revolt, prompting individuals to seek out alternative groups that possess differing values. Their negative attitudes create challenges for teachers, making it difficult for them to teach effectively. Disruptive behavior in the classroom consumes the time and energy of teachers, as they are consistently interrupted during the learning process, which adversely affects the academic achievement of all students. Furthermore, classroom behavior problems can develop into more serious delinquent behavior. Consequently, this issue has been identified as one of the most frequently mentioned difficulties faced by teachers of young inmates.

The next challenge mentioned by two of the participants pertains to time management. The findings of this study indicate that time allocation poses significant difficulties for teachers, as there is insufficient time to cover all the necessary materials for young inmates. This aligns with research conducted by [Ololube and Prince \(2013\)](#), [Hashimoto and Nguyen \(2018\)](#), and [Pike \(2004\)](#). They assert that time allocation is a crucial component of the learning process, particularly in the context of English language instruction. In addition to the materials and practice, time allocation is also a factor that needs to be considered ([Ololube & Prince, 2013](#)). [Pike \(2004\)](#) further emphasizes that policies must be implemented within educational departments to maintain a balance between time and activities during lessons.

Another significant difficulty encountered in correctional institutions is the lack of available textbooks for both teachers and students. Educators often find themselves without the necessary resources to effectively teach English in the classroom, leading them to print lesson materials independently. This shortage affects the teaching of all essential English skills, including grammar, listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Consequently, teachers are burdened with the responsibility of preparing their own materials, which demands considerable time, energy, and financial resources. This situation aligns with the findings of [Oaks and Saunders \(2002\)](#) from their national and international research, which underscores the overall educational importance of textbooks and instructional materials. In California, textbooks and instructional materials are considered essential as the primary means through

which students gain access to the knowledge and skills specified in the State Content Standards, the heart of California's K-12 education system. This perspective aligns with the assertions made by UNESCO (2016), which state that textbooks play a crucial role in improving learning outcomes in countries with low income, where large class sizes, a high proportion of unqualified teachers, and limited instructional time are prevalent. In addition to having an engaged and prepared teacher, utilizing well-designed textbooks is one of the most effective and straightforward ways to enhance learning. In summary, having a textbook available for use during lessons is beneficial.

Lastly, poor classroom conditions represent a significant obstacle that hinders teachers from effectively teaching English in the classroom. One teacher strongly emphasized how inadequate classroom conditions impede the teaching process, particularly due to the lack of ventilation. These poor conditions have been shown to diminish the quality of both teaching and learning, as teachers often feel uncomfortable during class. According to Fisk (2013), ventilation systems are frequently utilized in classrooms with high humidity levels, serving the essential function of exchanging and refreshing the air within. The accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the classroom can lead to increased humidity, which becomes trapped indoors. Furthermore, Rosbach et al. (2013) note that classroom ventilation systems often fail to meet building standards, despite being deemed crucial for improving indoor air quality. Poor indoor air quality is believed to significantly influence both children's health and academic performance. A review of the literature indicates that inadequate indoor air quality (IAQ) can adversely affect students' performance, as evidence suggests a correlation between ventilation rates and students' attention and performance, ultimately facilitating a more effective learning process. An observational study highlighted a relationship between ventilation and student achievement on standardized tests, proposing a linear connection between poor classroom ventilation and diminished academic outcomes. Consequently, inadequate ventilation in classrooms has become a barrier for educators during the teaching and learning process within correctional institutions.

In practical terms, the outcomes of this study provide valuable insights for policymakers within correctional institutions. These insights enhance understanding of the realities surrounding the English learning processes in these environments. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, particularly concerning the sample sizes, which restrict the generalizability of the findings. To improve the impact of this research, future studies should consider expanding the sample size to include a more diverse range of correctional institutions. This approach would help ensure that the findings are representative of various contexts within the correctional system. In conclusion, it is essential to address the limitations of this study and consider avenues for future research. By doing so, we can foster a more comprehensive understanding of the English learning processes within correctional institutions and ultimately improve the educational outcomes.

### Conclusion and suggestions

This study revealed that the educational program in the first-class correctional institution for children in Palembang has been a crucial support for young inmates in obtaining English education to open more opportunities after their release from prison. However, various difficulties emerged during its implementation. The findings identified four primary challenges faced by teachers in instructing English to young inmates: issues related to time management, students' negative attitudes, a shortage of available textbooks, and inadequate classroom conditions. These challenges require immediate attention. By implementing targeted strategies and fostering supportive educational environments, it is possible to enhance the learning experiences of these young inmates and promote their educational success. As educators and administrators should work collaboratively to address these challenges, they can make significant strides in providing effective English instruction to young inmates. To maximize the impact of English instruction, teachers should tailor their approaches to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of young inmates. This may involve employing differentiated teaching methods, utilizing technology, and incorporating relevant materials that resonate with their lived experiences. Administrators should facilitate these educational initiatives by ensuring that adequate resources, training, and support are provided to teachers. In addition, future research should focus on expanding the sample size of participants in studies related to English instruction for young inmates to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the issues associated with this educational endeavor. This broader perspective can inform policy decisions and lead to the development of more effective instructional practices tailored to the unique circumstances of young inmates.

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