English learning experiences of Indonesian primary school students: Multilevel perspectives across classroom, digital, and community contexts

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ABSTRACT

This study explores Indonesian primary school pupils' experiences in learning English across classroom, digital, and societal contexts, incorporating perspectives from teachers and parents. It addresses limitations in previous research that has largely focused on formal classroom practices, with limited attention to students' engagement in digital and community-based learning environments. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 203 students from 30 primary schools and conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis. The findings show that although students are highly motivated to learn English, only 3% regularly use the language outside school. Digital media serve as the main source of exposure, particularly YouTube (67%), games (42%), songs or music videos (38.1%), and mobile applications (5%). In contrast, the use of immersive technologies such as augmented and virtual reality is virtually absent. Community-based English learning remains sporadic and is not systematically integrated into the curriculum. Parental support varies considerably, influenced by differences in digital access and English proficiency. While teachers and parents recognize the potential of contextual, technology-supported, and community-based learning, challenges remain in sustaining such programs. This study contributes to more responsive English language pedagogy by emphasizing inclusive, home-based, community-connected, and technology-enhanced learning strategies for young learners.

Contribution/ Originality: This research contributes to uncovering the significant gap between the needs and the reality of English language learning in Indonesian elementary schools. Students, teachers, and parents alike recognize the need for richer language environments. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a community-based learning model that must be supported by all parties.

1. INTRODUCTION

As English's role as a global lingua franca (Husna, Rachmayani, Maulidya, & Fahriany, 2025) continues to strengthen, the policy of teaching English at the elementary school level in Indonesia has entered a new phase with the issuance of Ministerial Regulation No. 12 of 2024, which mandates English as a compulsory subject in elementary schools starting in the 2026/2027 academic year. This marks a substantial shift from the 2013 Curriculum,

implemented in the 2013/2014 academic year, in which English was removed from the core curriculum and only offered at school discretion, usually as local content or extracurricular activities. Despite this earlier exclusion, English remained widely taught throughout Indonesian primary schools. Many institutions, often encouraged by parents and communities, adopted English as a school-level initiative. (Iskandar, 2019) reflecting its perceived importance for academic mobility, global communication, and future employment (Bolton, Botha, & Kirkpatrick, 2020; Crystal, 2003; Olendr, Stepanyuk, Moskalyuk, Mishchuk, & Moskalyuk, 2023; Silitonga, Sujanto, Luddin, Susita, & Endri, 2020). This grassroots uptake suggests a broad societal belief in the value of early English exposure (Husna et al., 2025; Sukarno & Jinabe, 2024).

However, the significant focus on elementary school English language learning has not yet translated into improved learning outcomes. Previous research has revealed persistent systemic and pedagogical challenges, including poor teacher preparation, inconsistent teaching practices, inadequate curriculum support, and limited opportunities for students to use authentic language (Anandes, 2016; Hakiki & Hidayati, 2017; Yusrina, Setyaningsih, & Putra, 2025). Most of these studies focus on top-down perspectives, curriculum design, teacher training, or policy implementation, while research grounded in the bottom-up realities experienced by students, parents, and classroom teachers is lacking (Mujahidin, Nurhayati, Hafidhuddin, Bahruddin, & Endri, 2021).

Many researchers have demonstrated that the accessibility of digital media and mobile technology has expanded children's informal exposure to English through YouTube, online games, music, and mobile apps (Ningtyas & Amirudin, 2025). These digital spaces have been shown to influence vocabulary, pronunciation, and engagement (Sulistiyaningsih, 2024). However, the extent to which these digital spaces complement school-based learning remains unclear. While community and family environments shape learners' opportunities and motivations, research on these non-school contexts remains limited (Darma & Apriani, 2024).

This intricate learning environment necessitates a more thorough understanding that takes into account the entire context in which students engage, not just in the classroom but also in a variety of digital platforms and community settings. By analyzing and charting the lived experiences and viewpoints of students, instructors, and parents with regard to primary English learning in Indonesia, this study fills this gap. In the age of curriculum reform, this study provides a more responsive, inclusive, and contextual approach to English language instruction based on possibilities, difficulties, and practices across diverse learning ecologies.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Policy Shifts and the Status of English in Indonesian Primary Schools

The status of English in the Indonesian elementary school curriculum has fluctuated significantly over the past two decades. Under the 2013 Curriculum, English lost its position as a core subject and became an elective, resulting in uneven implementation across the country. Despite this policy being rolled back, many schools voluntarily continue to provide English instruction based on parental demand and community expectations (Iskandar, 2019). Public perceptions of English as crucial for academic and economic success (Bolton et al., 2020; Crystal, 2003; Olendr et al., 2023) further reinforce its unofficial spread. The enactment of Ministerial Regulation No. 12 of 2024, which reinstated English as a compulsory subject for all elementary schools, and reinforced by Ministerial Regulation No. 13 of 2025, which reaffirmed the previous regulation, reflects a renewed national commitment to strengthening basic English education.

2.2. Classroom-Based English Learning: Variability, Challenges, and Practices

In Indonesia, the majority of English language instruction still employs conventional techniques (Zein, 2017). However, due to differences in resources, teacher qualifications, pedagogical training, and administrative support, learning environments differ significantly between areas and institutions (Hartienah & Soviyah, 2024). Some schools use informal or teacher-developed materials, while others have access to established curricula and textbooks. The

efficacy of classroom-based learning is nevertheless hampered by enduring obstacles such as short learning periods, large class sizes, and inadequate teacher preparation for younger pupils (Nurfadila, Eryansyah, & Amrullah, 2024).

2.3. Digital Exposure and Informal Language Learning

Children now have more options to study English informally thanks to increased internet access and digital gadget ownership. Students frequently use resources such as YouTube videos, online games, songs, and smartphone apps to learn English. These tools can enhance vocabulary and pronunciation while igniting their enthusiasm for the language (Ningtyas & Amirudin, 2025; Sulistiyaningsih, 2024). Despite this increased engagement, it remains unclear how these digital activities relate to or differ from traditional teaching goals. Furthermore, although their use is expanding in international educational settings, immersive technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are still largely unexplored in Indonesian elementary schools.

2.4. Community and Family Influences on English Learning

Community and family environments are important dimensions of English language learning that remain under-researched. Parental beliefs, educational background, and access to resources shape children's opportunities for exposure to English outside of school (Darma & Apriani, 2024). While some students attend private English lessons or participate in language-based community activities, others face socioeconomic barriers that limit such exposure. Teachers and parents generally recognize the importance of contextual and meaningful practice, but resource constraints often limit its implementation.

2.5. Gaps in Current Research

Existing studies provide foundational insights into curriculum issues, teacher readiness, and classroom practices. However, significant gaps persist regarding:

- How do Indonesian primary school students experience English learning across classroom, digital, and community contexts?
- What roles do digital platforms play in shaping students' motivation and exposure to English?
- How do teachers and parents perceive contextual and community-based English learning?
- What are the key challenges and opportunities in expanding English learning beyond the formal classroom?

This gap underscores the need for research that adopts an ecosystemic perspective, integrating multiple learning contexts and stakeholder viewpoints to understand English learning in a more comprehensive and realistic manner.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods design to address four research questions by integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single framework. The research was conducted in 30 public elementary schools situated in urban and semi-urban areas within a district in West Java, Indonesia. Participants included 203 students from Grades 4 to 6, 30 English teachers, and 15 parents. Purposive sampling was utilized to ensure variation in school characteristics, socioeconomic backgrounds, and learning contexts. Four complementary instruments were used for data collection. The first was a student survey, which involved a structured questionnaire administered to students to gather information about classroom learning practices, use of digital platforms, exposure to community-based learning, and general learning attitudes. The survey comprised Likert-scale items and two open-ended questions, providing both quantitative and qualitative data relevant to Research Questions 1, 2, and 4. The second instrument was student interviews, involving a subsample of 10 students participating in brief semi-structured interviews. These interviews aimed to elaborate on survey responses and obtain more detailed explanations of students' motivations, challenges, and learning preferences, supporting Research Questions 1 and 4. The third instrument involved interviews with teachers and parents, conducted semi-structured to explore their perceptions of English language

learning practices, the role of digital platforms, and the potential of community-based learning. These interviews contributed data to Research Questions 2, 3, and 4. The fourth instrument was focus group discussions (FGDs), conducted separately with teachers and parents. The discussions focused on contextual learning practices, community engagement, and perceived challenges in supporting English language learning, primarily addressing Research Questions 3 and 4.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Students' Experiences of English Learning Across Classroom, Digital, and Community Contexts

Survey findings reveal that the classroom remains the central setting for students' English learning. A large proportion of respondents reported regular engagement with structured topics, such as hobbies, animals, food, and numbers, while discussions of daily life topics in English (e.g., family, activities, meals) were less frequent. Specifically, only 21.3% of students reported "often" or "very often" engaging in such daily-life English discussions, whereas 40.1% reported doing so "sometimes," and 38.6% indicated this occurred "rarely" or "never."

Digital engagement was typical, with 51.4% of students using smartphones, tablets, or computers for English learning "sometimes" or more frequently. However, intensive digital use ("often" or "very often") was reported by just 12%, suggesting that while digital tools are widely accessible, their role in sustained learning may be limited.

Community-based English use was reported far less frequently. Speaking English at home or with friends occurred "sometimes" or more for only 41.2% of students, with the majority (58.4%) engaging in such interactions "rarely" or "never." Similarly, participation in English extracurricular activities was minimal, with 73.5% of respondents indicating that they had never participated in such programs. Table 1 summarizes the frequency of student engagement across classroom, digital, and community contexts.

Table 1. Frequency of students' English learning engagement (n = 203).

Context/Activity	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Very Often (%)
Discussing daily life topics in English (Classroom)	7.4%	31.2%	40.1%	18.8%	2.5%
Using digital devices for English learning	15.4%	33.3%	39.3%	10.9%	1.1%
Speaking English at home or with friends	18.3%	40.1%	36.1%	5%	0.1%
Participation in English extracurricular activities	73.5%	-	26.5%	-	-

These findings suggest that while the classroom offers the most consistent opportunities for structured English learning, digital tools serve as a supplementary resource rather than a primary driver of language use. Community-based engagement remains an underdeveloped area, pointing to a potential gap between formal learning and real-world language application.

4.2. Roles of Digital Platforms in Shaping Motivation and Exposure

Data from student and parent questionnaires reveal that YouTube, educational games, and mobile applications, such as Duolingo, are the most widely used tools for learning English. Many students reported intense enjoyment in learning English through videos or games, while parents confirmed that such activities often take place outside formal study hours. Students described YouTube videos as "fun" and "easy to follow," while educational games were seen as competitive and engaging, motivating them to practice vocabulary. Songs and music videos were also popular for pronunciation practice and cultural exposure, with students often singing along or imitating phrases.

Teachers reported incorporating digital media to present materials, stimulate motivation, and, in some cases, assess learning outcomes. However, the use of AR/VR technology was limited due to a lack of resources and infrastructure. The platforms are most frequently used, and their reported motivational effects are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Digital platforms used for English learning and their reported effects.

Platform/Tool	% of students using	Main purpose	Reported impact on motivation
YouTube	67.8%	Listening, pronunciation	Highly entertaining and easy to follow, it encourages repeated exposure to English.
Educational games	42.6%	Vocabulary in context	High — perceived as fun and competitive; increases willingness to practice vocabulary.
Songs/music videos	38.1%	Pronunciation, cultural exposure	Moderate to high — enjoyable and memorable; promotes informal repetition of phrases.
Duolingo/other apps	5%	Vocabulary, grammar drills	Moderate — provides structured tasks and progress tracking, but is less socially engaging.

4.3. Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of Contextual and Community-based English Learning

Findings from the student survey indicate that opportunities to use English in community settings were limited. Only 8.4% of respondents reported participating in community- or school-organized events (e.g., English competitions, cultural exchange activities) more than once per semester. In comparison, 42.6% stated they had never engaged in such events. Informal conversations in English outside the classroom were also infrequent, with the majority reporting that they "rarely" or "never" spoke English in public spaces such as markets, parks, or community gatherings.

Parent questionnaires revealed that while 36.5% occasionally encouraged their children to greet or interact in English with relatives, friends, or neighbors, most reported relying on school-based activities to provide exposure to English. Parents cited lack of community programs, limited local English-speaking environments, and their own low proficiency as key barriers.

Teacher interviews highlighted a strong desire to integrate real-world English use into lessons through project-based tasks, but logistical constraints, such as transportation, scheduling, and funding, often hindered school-community collaboration. Some schools partnered with local cultural centers or tourism initiatives, but such opportunities were sporadic and reached only a small portion of students. Table 3 summarizes the reported frequency of English use in various community contexts.

Table 3. Frequency of students' English use in community contexts (n = 203).

Context/Activity	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Very Often (%)
Speaking English during community events	42.6	38.9	15.1	3.4	0.0
Interacting with foreigners in public places	57.1	29.1	11.3	2.5	0.0
Using English with friends outside school	36.8	41.2	18.4	3.4	0.2
Participation in English clubs/Competitions	51.7	30.6	14.8	2.9	0.0

Overall, the data suggest that community-based English learning remains an underutilized resource, with most students experiencing limited exposure to authentic communication outside formal education. This gap aligns with teacher and parent feedback, underscoring the need for more structured school-community initiatives to create meaningful, real-world opportunities for English practice.

4.4. Challenges and Opportunities for Expanding English Learning Beyond the Classroom

Building on the findings in Section 3.3, which highlighted students' varied engagement with English across classroom, digital, and community contexts, this section presents the perceived challenges and opportunities for extending English learning beyond formal lessons. Insights were drawn from both parents' and teachers' open-ended responses, offering complementary perspectives on barriers and potential support.

Parents most frequently reported that limited English proficiency made it difficult to guide or assist their children's learning at home. This challenge was compounded by students' limited vocabulary knowledge and lack of

confidence in pronunciation, often resulting in hesitation to speak due to fear of making mistakes. Low motivation or interest in English was also mentioned by several parents, along with the perception that English is inherently complex. Teachers confirmed these concerns and further noted that unequal access to digital devices and stable internet connectivity restricted opportunities for sustained learning outside school.

Despite these constraints, respondents identified several pathways for improvement. Many parents suggested providing supplementary English lessons, either within the school or in community settings, combined with interactive and creative learning materials that are also accessible to parents. They emphasized the value of resources such as simple guides, engaging videos, and conversation exercises that could be practiced at home. Teachers also recognized the potential of embedding English activities in local festivals, cultural events, and school-organized clubs, as well as creating public "English speaking corners" to encourage informal practice. In both groups, there was a shared belief that routine exposure to basic English in varied contexts would help sustain student engagement and improve learning outcomes. Table 4 summarizes these findings by grouping the challenges and opportunities identified across respondents.

Table 4. Challenges and Opportunities for Enhancing English Learning Beyond the Classroom.

Category	Issue/Opportunity	Frequency of mention
Challenge	Low parental proficiency in English	12
Challenge	Students' limited vocabulary and confidence	10
Challenge	Low student motivation or interest	8
Challenge	Unequal access to devices and the internet	6
Challenge	Limited English exposure in community environments	5
Opportunity	Supplementary English lessons (in school or community)	10
Opportunity	Providing interactive, creative, and parent-friendly materials	9
Opportunity	Using local festivals or events for English activities	7
Opportunity	Establishing public "English-speaking corners."	6
Opportunity	Forming English clubs or regular conversation sessions	5

The findings from the surveys, interviews, and FGDs revealed that Indonesian primary school students' engagement with English learning occurs across three interconnected contexts: classroom, digital, and community, each contributing unique affordances and challenges. Classroom learning was characterized by structured instruction, clear goals, and teacher guidance, but was often constrained by limited exposure to authentic communicative use. Digital platforms offered flexible and engaging opportunities for vocabulary expansion and pronunciation practice; however, unequal access to devices and the internet limited participation for some students. Community-based learning, while offering rich possibilities through cultural events, public spaces, and peer interaction, remained underutilized due to low parental English proficiency and limited local English-speaking environments. Across these contexts, recurring themes included the need for more interactive and contextually relevant learning materials, stronger home–school collaboration, and the sustainable integration of English into everyday activities, both online and offline.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Integration of Classroom, Digital, and Community Contexts

The findings indicated that students' engagement with English occurred across three main contexts: classroom instruction, digital media use, and community-based activities, yet these contexts often functioned in isolation rather than in a coherent learning ecosystem. While classroom learning provided structured exposure to grammar and vocabulary, students frequently reported that these skills did not seamlessly transfer to real-life communication. Digital engagement, primarily through games, videos, and social media, provided richer input but lacked guided interaction, thereby limiting its pedagogical value. Community contexts, such as local events or informal conversations, were mentioned far less frequently, revealing missed opportunities for authentic language use.

This fragmentation aligns with previous research on Indonesian EFL settings, which highlights the dominance of decontextualized classroom practices and the underutilization of out-of-school environments (Zhai, 2015). The absence of integration is significant because learning transfer, applying language knowledge from one context to another, is central to developing communicative competence (Herrington & Oliver, 2000). Without strategic connections among contexts, students' exposure risks remaining compartmentalized, thereby slowing the transition from receptive to productive skills.

Addressing this gap is not merely a matter of increasing exposure; it requires designing deliberate linkages so that classroom instruction primes students for digital engagement, and community activities reinforce what has been learned formally. Such integration has been shown to enhance motivation, deepen comprehension, and sustain language use beyond the school (Jessica, 2020; Nguyen & Boers, 2019). Therefore, the present findings underscore the urgency of developing context-bridging strategies within primary English programs, ensuring that learners experience English as a continuous, connected practice rather than a series of unrelated encounters.

5.2. Digital Engagement and Its Pedagogical Potential

The findings revealed that digital media was a prominent source of English exposure for students, with most reporting daily interaction through online games, YouTube videos, and social media. This engagement provided access to authentic language input, contemporary vocabulary, and global cultural references. However, much of this exposure occurred without teacher guidance, making it largely incidental and entertainment-driven. While students often remembered phrases or expressions from these platforms, they rarely applied them in structured communicative tasks or academic contexts.

This pattern aligns with studies indicating that unmediated digital engagement can enhance receptive skills and vocabulary recognition, but provides limited support for productive and academic language use (Guo & Lee, 2023; Lai & Sundqvist, 2026; Sockett, 2014). The absence of instructional scaffolding means that students are less likely to notice grammatical structures, develop discourse competence, or transfer expressions into broader communicative contexts (Godwin-Jones, 2019). The gap between informal and formal learning also reflects concerns in Indonesian EFL research, where digital resources remain under-integrated into curricular design (Jakaria, Saripah, Saepudin, & Yahya, 2025; Mulyono, Falah, Suryoputro, & Ibarra, 2024).

The pedagogical potential of these digital practices lies in reorienting them from passive consumption to interactive, purposeful engagement. For instance, integrating students' favorite games or videos into lesson tasks, encouraging content creation in English, or using social media challenges can bridge informal and formal learning spaces (Reinders & Benson, 2017). Such strategies would not only harness students' intrinsic motivation but also provide opportunities for guided output, collaborative work, and reflection, critical elements in sustaining language acquisition. Thus, while digital environments already play a central role in students' English exposure, which can help bridge interactive language practices and formal curriculum to create holistic learning experiences for language learners (Imsa-ard, 2025; Tran & Miralpeix, 2024), their full educational value can only be realized through intentional pedagogical alignment.

5.3. Community-Based Language Opportunities

The findings indicated that English learning opportunities within the community were sporadic and largely informal. Parents and teachers consistently reported that students' English use outside school was limited to brief exchanges with peers, encounters with tourists in certain areas, or exposure during local events featuring foreign guests. While some community centers and religious groups occasionally incorporated English songs or greetings, these practices were not sustained, structured, or systematically connected to school curricula. Teachers further noted that attempts to organize extracurricular English clubs often suffered from inconsistent attendance, lack of facilitation, and minimal parental involvement.

These results underscore a gap between potential and actualized community engagement in English learning. Despite the recognition of community spaces as potential extensions of the classroom (Darma & Apriani, 2024; Penderi, Petrogiannis, & Gavriilidou, 2017), the study suggests that without systematic planning, facilitation, and alignment with school objectives, such opportunities remain underdeveloped. One promising implication is the role of home-based support. Encouraging English exposure and practice within the family environment, through parents' encouragement, provision of learning resources, and integration of English into daily routines, may serve as a practical alternative or complement to school and community initiatives (Darma & Apriani, 2024; Susanty, Sholihah, Pramesworo, Telaumbanua, & Basir, 2021). This aligns with previous research highlighting parental involvement as a critical factor in sustaining language learning motivation and outcomes (Halommi & Stevens, 2023; Susanty et al., 2021).

This scarcity of structured community-based opportunities aligns with previous research in Indonesian EFL contexts, which highlights the dominance of school-based instruction and the underutilization of local resources for language practice (Anandes, 2016). However, the community remains a potentially rich site for authentic, culturally embedded language experiences, particularly in regions where tourism, international trade, or cultural exchanges create real communicative needs (Chung & Long, 2024). When such opportunities are intentionally cultivated, through partnerships between schools, local governments, and community organizations, they can extend the authentic learning environment beyond the classroom and foster more sustained engagement (Karlik, 2023).

The potential here lies in leveraging existing cultural and social events as language-learning platforms. For example, integrating English into local festivals, setting up public "English speaking corners," and hosting community storytelling or theatre in English could provide low-cost, high-impact opportunities. Importantly, these initiatives require coordination and commitment from multiple stakeholders, as well as alignment with students' proficiency levels to ensure accessibility and relevance. Without such intentional design, community-based exposure risks remaining incidental, offering minimal contribution to long-term language development.

5.4. Challenges And Opportunities for Expanding English Learning Beyond the Classroom

The findings revealed an apparent tension between the potential for integrating classroom, digital, and community contexts for English learning and the persistent barriers that limit such integration. Across FGDs with parents (n = 8) and teachers (n = 8), three primary challenges emerged. First, unequal access to digital devices and reliable internet constrained students' participation in online learning and extracurricular activities. This digital divide was especially pronounced in households with multiple school-aged children sharing a single device. Second, low parental English proficiency limited parents' capacity to support language practice at home, leading to reliance on school-based input and peer interactions. Third, the absence of sustained English-speaking environments in the community meant that any exposure outside school tended to be incidental and short-lived.

These findings align with broader structural constraints identified in prior Indonesian EFL studies, where socio-economic inequalities, infrastructural limitations, and inadequate home-based language support hinder the continuity of learning beyond school walls (Hartienah & Soviyah, 2024; Nurfadila et al., 2024). Addressing these challenges requires not only material resources but also community-level capacity building, including parental literacy programs and accessible digital learning hubs.

Conversely, both parents and teachers recognized several opportunities for expanding English learning beyond formal instruction. These included: (1) integrating English into local festivals and cultural events, enabling students to use language in authentic, socially meaningful contexts; (2) establishing public "English speaking corners" in libraries, parks, or community centers to create low-cost spaces for informal practice; and (3) forming community-based English clubs led by volunteers or older students, thereby fostering peer-to-peer learning and leadership skills. Such initiatives align with the principles of authentic and community-based learning, which emphasize meaningful

interaction, social engagement, and contextually relevant language use (Bondarchuk, Dvorianchykova, Yuhan, & Holovenko, 2024; Herrington & Oliver, 2000).

However, translating these opportunities into sustained practice demands systemic collaboration among schools, parents, local governments, and community organizations. Without this multi-stakeholder coordination, the envisioned integration of classroom, digital, and community learning risks remaining fragmented and unsustainable.

5.5. Overall Implications for Pedagogy and Policy

The integration of classroom, digital, and community contexts in primary school English learning offers significant potential to enrich students' language experiences. However, the study's findings underscore that this potential can only be realized through deliberate pedagogical adaptation and supportive policy frameworks. From a pedagogical perspective, teachers need to move beyond a textbook-driven approach toward contextualized instruction that leverages students' lived experiences, digital tools, and community resources. This requires professional development not only in technology integration but also in designing tasks that bridge formal and informal learning environments, ensuring that language use remains purposeful and authentic.

At the policy level, sustained investment in infrastructure and equitable access to digital resources are essential to close the gap between students with and without reliable technology. Policymakers should prioritize the creation of school–community partnerships that provide accessible spaces for language practice, such as community learning centers or local libraries with language-focused programming.

Additionally, policies could incentivize collaboration between schools and community organizations to host English-related events, thereby normalizing language use in everyday settings and promoting intergenerational engagement.

Both pedagogical and policy shifts must be grounded in the recognition that English learning is a socially situated process, shaped by learners' cultural contexts, socio-economic conditions, and opportunities for real-world communication. By aligning classroom practices with digital and community-based initiatives and embedding these in supportive policy measures, stakeholders can create a coherent ecosystem where English is not only learned but lived.

6. CONCLUSION

This study explored how Indonesian primary school students engage with English learning across classroom, digital, and community contexts, drawing on perspectives from students, teachers, and parents. The findings reveal that while the classroom remains the primary site of structured learning, students increasingly encounter English through digital platforms and, to a lesser extent, community-based interactions. Teachers play a central role in bridging these contexts, yet their ability to do so is shaped by their access to resources, professional readiness, and institutional support.

Parents, although highly supportive, often face limitations in proficiency and confidence, which can affect the degree to which English is reinforced at home.

The study also identified persistent challenges, such as unequal digital access, limited authentic exposure, and low parental English skills, alongside clear opportunities, including integrating English into local cultural events, creating public speaking spaces, and strengthening school–community partnerships. These insights highlight the need for a more integrated and equitable English learning ecosystem, where meaningful digital engagement and authentic community experiences complement classroom teaching. By combining contextualized pedagogy, targeted teacher training, and enabling policies that address infrastructure gaps, stakeholders can enhance both the reach and quality of English learning.

Such an approach not only aligns with Indonesia's goals for global competence but also ensures that English becomes a lived language for young learners, one that is relevant to their everyday realities.

Future research could expand on these findings by tracking longitudinal changes in students' engagement across contexts and examining the impact of specific interventions, such as community-based language programs or immersive technology use.

Ultimately, this study confirms that English learning for young learners is most effective when it is integrated into the full spectrum of their social, digital, and cultural environments.

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