CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This section presents the detailed narrative findings gathered from the in-depth group interviews and WhatsApp follow-up sessions. In line with the narrative inquiry approach, the findings are structured by presenting the teachers' lived experiences and exact direct quotes first, followed by the researcher's interpretations to uncover the underlying pedagogical meanings.

1. Teachers' Experiences in Teaching Toddlers using the Communicative Interactive Method (RQ 1):

Theme 1: Establishing a Communicative Foundation and Minimizing Teacher Talk Time (TTT)

The teachers' experiences revealed that implementing the communicative interactive method required a fundamental shift. Teacher 2 (T2) explained that although textbooks were provided, they were not the primary focus.

"Kami di sini memakai komunikatif interaktif. Nah jadi kita itu punya textbook tapi kita tidak focus textbook-centered tapi kita fokusnya ke

conversation. Jadi gimana kita kaya mengintegrasikan materi di buku dengan kegiatan yang ada komunikatifnya, interaktifnya, pokoknya ada conversation dengan studentnya, gak hanya teacher-centered aja." (Teacher 2).

This statement demonstrates that T2 consciously prioritized genuine interaction over textbook completion. This was reinforced by Teacher 1 (T1), who established strict guidelines to avoid "Teacher Talk Time" (TTT).

"Kan ada tuh TTT. Sebisa mungkin hindari 'teacher talk too much', karena hal itu sudah tidak cocok untuk dilakukan di zaman sekarang... Jadi selama 80 menit, kami memiliki pedoman gimana supaya di dalamnya itu ada kegiatan komunikatif dan interaktif. Warmer selama 30 menit untuk membangun suasana kelas yang aktif sebelum masuk ke materi inti." (Teacher 1).

This indicates that minimizing TTT is a critical rule, and the 30-minute warmer is essential to build the toddlers' mood. T1 further detailed exactly how this warmer is conducted through direct interaction and media.

"Kegiatan membuka kelas toddler yaitu Greeting, menyapa anak-anak. Mengajak anak mengatur table bersama. Play song & video di YT. Contoh greetingnya saya bilang 'Hi, good afternoon', 'How are you today?', 'Are you happy?', 'Sleepy?'. Proses greetings dilakukan dengan cara yang interaktif

melalui tanya jawab langsung dgn student. Lagu-lagu yang diputar saat sesi pembuka yaitu Name of days dari Super Simple Song, Counting 1 to 50 dari Fun Kids English, Feelings dari Super Simple Song. Mengenai reaksinya, mereka ikut bernyanyi, meskipun terkadang bbrp Student harus dipush." (Teacher 1).



Figure 4.1. *T1 using audio visual media to build fun classroom environment*

Interpreted pedagogically, T1 uses direct questions and specific YouTube songs to bypass the toddlers' initial reluctance, creating an active environment. Similarly, T2 detailed her specific routine for Level 1 students.

"Kegiatan-kegiatan yang dilakukan sebelum memulai kelas yaitu: greeting dulu ke students setelah itu play a song 'hello how are you' dan menyanyi bersama. Lalu nanya kabar ke students 'how are you today?' Setelah itu, play a song lagi judulnya 'if you're happy' and sing it together again... contoh greeting nya itu seperti 'hello/hi!', 'good afternoon, students', 'are you ready to sing a song?'. Reaksi mereka excited karena sebelum mereka menjawab pertanyaan tersebut, mereka sudah di warm up untuk menyanyi bersama dulu." (Teacher 2).

This reveals that T2 strategically uses musical warm-ups as a psychological bridge. The singing lowers the toddlers' anxiety, providing them with the confidence to actively respond. Meanwhile, Teacher 3 (T3) took a personal conversational approach before using any media.

"Sebelum memulai kelas, biasanya saya mengobrol santai dulu dengan anak-anak misalnya menanyakan kegiatan mereka hari ini apa aja atau sudah makan belum? kalau iya, makan apa?. Beberapa pertanyaan diselingi menggunakan bahasa Inggris misalnya 'What did you eat for lunch?' Setelah itu, baru saya memulai memutar songs di youtube. Biasanya songsnya berkaitan dengan materi yang akan saya ajarkan. Misalnya, materinya tentang food... sambil ditanya, 'what food is this?'" (Teacher 3).

T3’s narrative illustrates the use of informal interaction as a strategic entry point. By slipping simple English phrases into casual chats about food, the teacher makes the foreign language feel like a natural extension of the toddlers' daily routines.

Theme 2: Shifting from Textbooks to Concrete Visuals and Spontaneous Communication

To make the method work, abstract explanations were entirely replaced by concrete visual stimulation.

"Jadi lebih ke mengstimulate visual gitu. Kayak misal showing flash card karena kita catching attention mereka dulu, supaya mereka mau komunikasi. Kalo mereka diam-diam aja kan susah jadinya. Lalu saat Reviewing previous lesson, saya bertanya tentang macam2 animals dgn memilih video 'permainan tebak hewan di YT'. saya memberikan petunjuk tentang hewan-hewan tertentu seperti jerapah, harimau, beruang, gajah, monyet, dan singa, lalu murid-murid menebaknya." (Teacher 1).

This implies that toddlers' cognitive engagement is inextricably linked to visual media, acting as the primary trigger for communication. T1 further detailed how flashcards were categorized during the presentation stage.

"Flashcard yang digunakan berisi gambar-gambar hewan berdasarkan tempat tinggalnya. Hewan di udara ada Toucan dan Eagle. Hewan di air: Shark dan Whale. Hewan di darat ada Snake dan Kangaroo. Di Presentation selama 10 menit, Student diminta menempelkan gambar hewan sesuai dengan tempat tinggalnya seperti 'Where does the animal belong?', dan mengucapkannya bersama-sama." (Teacher 1).

T2 also detailed her exact visual stages for introducing pets.

"Dalam sesi elicitation selama 15 menit saya showing flashcard of animals to student. the picture is cat, dog, fish, bird, rabbit, hamster, turtle, lizard. I say it first then asks student to repeat it. Lalu di sesi presentation selama 10 menit saya: i shows a picture of two birds. I ask the question to students like 'how many birds can you see?', and tell them how to answer like 'i can see two birds'." (Teacher 2).

T3 utilized a mix of whiteboard visuals and real-life objects for teaching time.

"Di sesi elicitation selama 15 menit saya do activities like 'O'clock', 'minute hand', and 'hour hand', then i put pictures in the whiteboard and write down the names. Di sesi presentation selama 10 menit saya say the words in

the whiteboard one by one and students follow it like, 'what is this? it's ten o'clock'. I ask one by one to use real clock and change the timer." (Teacher 3).

These precise stages show that concrete visuals are non-negotiable. This visual approach successfully bypassed forced memorization, leading to spontaneous communication.

"Beberapa student ada yang ngomong simple English tanpa disuruh. Misal seperti bilang 'clapping', atau pas dia ingat materi sebelumnya, dia bilang 'sweet fruit' gitu. Jadi tanpa kita suruh, mereka ingat sndiri." (Teacher 1)

"Waktu itu saya banyak melakukan drill tapi di level itu ada beberapa anak yang sudah bisa ngomong intruksi seperti 'miss, may i go to toilet?', 'drink', 'miss, wash hand' gitu." (Teacher 2).

This finding is highly significant. It implies that when toddlers are visually stimulated and comfortable, language production occurs naturally, proving the effectiveness of the interactive method over passive textbook reading.

Theme 3: Integrating Physical Games and Movement to Maintain Engagement

Maintaining a communicative atmosphere required constant physical movement and intensive guidance. The teachers utilized physical games to enforce the vocabulary.

"Saat itu game yang saya gunakan adalah 'step forward or backward using rock paper & scissors' yang menang bisa langkah maju kalau yang kalah langkah mundur dan diberi flashcard tentang vocabulary." (Teacher 2).

"Permainan yang diberikan bisa berupa permainan yang mengasah motorik misalnya bermain puzzle, don't touch the colour, melempar bola, dll... Di sesi production selama 10 menit ada play a game, the game rules are losers answer the question from last meeting. I ask 'what time is it?', students say 'it's...o'clock'." (Teacher 3).

"Disesi Production selama 10 menit, Student membuat proyek kerajinan tangan yaitu membuat hewan laut dari kertas dengan bantuan guru." (Teacher 1) .



Figure 4.2 *Students making hand craft of sea animal*

These quotes reveal that kinetic movement and crafts are primary tools for memory retention. Following these games, the teachers entered a highly structured practice stage using specific books, which required intense 1 on 1 scaffolding.

"Di sesi practice selama 15 menit, Student mengerjakan buku Little Steps Level 3 by Cambridge halaman 50 dan 51, yang meliputi kegiatan mendengarkan, melingkari gambar, dan menempel stiker hewan." (Teacher 1).

"Di sesi practice selama 15 menit saya pakai book: little steps level 1 by Cambridge untuk listening, say, and trace the pets on page 64, lalu stick, count, and circle on page 65." (Teacher 2).

"Di sesi practice selama 15 menit, saya pakai book: little steps level 3 by cambridge. The students answer worksheet from pupil's book page 98 and some pinterest. saya ask one by one 'what time is it?'. Toddler ini harus benar-benar dibimbing. Kadang ada beberapa siswa yang harus one by one dengan saya gitu ngerjakannya." (Teacher 3).

This indicates that toddlers cannot work independently after general instructions. The teacher must provide continuous 1-on-1 scaffolding to ensure comprehension and motor skill execution. Finally, all three participants provided the exact same narrative regarding their unified closing routine.

"Setelah selesai mengerjakan exercises pada stage 'practice', teacher akan checking every student's worksheet dan memperbaiki jika terdapat jawaban yang kurang tepat. Lalu, teacher akan memutarkan lagu yang berjudul 'clean up' sambil mengajak students untuk tidy up alat tulis dan be ready for going home. Setelah teacher memastikan semua barang-barang students rapi dan tersimpan di tasnya masing-masing, teacher gives high five to each student and they can go home." (Teacher 2).

This unified routine implies that closing a toddler class requires as much structure as opening it, ensuring the children leave in a positive, orderly state.

Table 4.1

Summary of Teachers' Experiences (RQ 1)

Theme	Focus Area	Key Teaching Practices	Participant
Theme 1	Communicative Foundation	Minimizing TTT, 30-min warmers, Q&A greetings, specific YT songs, casual chats	T1, T2, T3
Theme 2	Concrete Visuals	Habitat flashcards, puzzles, real clocks, spontaneous speaking, elicitation stages	T1, T2, T3
Theme 3	Games & Scaffolding	"Rock, Paper, Scissors", crafts, 1-on-1 scaffolding in *Little Steps* books, "Clean Up"	T1, T2, T3

2. Challenges Faced by the Teachers in Implementing the Method (RQ 2)

Theme 4: Navigating Emotional Volatility, Social Withdrawal, and the "Silent Period"

The primary challenge faced by the teachers was not linguistic, but psychological. T2 detailed the extreme difficulty of initiating the method with Level 1 students.

"Kebetulan saya ngajar toddler level 1, awal banget. Mereka kan belum kenal satu sama lain. Jadi tantangannya adalah approaching terhadap murid-murid baru. Karena mereka saat itu belum saling kenal, belum mau berteman, belum mau mengeluarkan suara, sedangkan kita pakenya metode komunikatif interaktif. Jadi approach terhadap murid saat itu saya lumayan struggle. saya harus bener-bener harus deket banget dengan mereka dan bikin mereka comfort." (Teacher 2).

This narrative clearly illustrates the "silent period." The interpretation is that toddlers require absolute emotional security before participating. T1 faced similar roadblocks regarding moods.

"Challengenya lebih ke student itu sendiri kalo menurut saya. Saya kan ngajar toddler level 3-5. Misalnya ada murid yang badmood. Jadi harus cari cara supaya mood murid itu jadi bagus. Ada juga yang pemalu sampai

harus didampingi mamanya untuk masuk ke dalam kelas. Fokus mereka itu pendek. Sedikit hal terjadi, bisa macam-macam gitu." (Teacher 1).

This indicates that the teacher is frequently forced to pause the English lesson to function as a caregiver, stabilizing the child's mood.

Theme 5: Managing Hyperactivity and Unpredictable Classroom Dynamics

In contrast to withdrawn students, the teachers also struggled to control hyperactive toddlers and older students' protests.

"Kadang ada juga murid yang terlalu aktif" (Teacher 1).

"Tantangannya lebih ke student itu sendiri, apalagi saya ngajar di level 6. Ada murid yang sudah bisa speak up their mind. Jika mereka tidak suka sesuatu mereka tidak sungkan bilang tidak suka." (Teacher 3).

This implies that as toddlers develop cognitively, they become highly critical and expressive, challenging the teacher to constantly improvise to prevent a breakdown in participation.

Theme 6: Bridging the Gap Between Advanced Materials and EFL Realities

T3 faced significant pedagogical difficulties regarding the curriculum's complexity.

"Trus karena sdh level tinggi, materinya juga semakin challenging, yaitu gimana supaya mereka bisa relate gitu misalnya seperti istilah-istilah asing bagi mereka. Waktu itu kami pake buku yang lbh condong ke English for second language sedangkan mereka pake English for foreign language jadi agak susah untuk mengenalkan kosakata baru." (Teacher 3).

The interpretation is that relying on advanced ESL textbooks forces the teacher into an exhausting struggle of translating foreign concepts for EFL learners who lack the necessary background knowledge.

Table 4.2

Summary of Challenges Faced by the Teachers (RQ 2)

Theme	Focus Area	Identified Challenges	Participant
Theme 4	Emotional Volatility	The "silent period", separation anxiety, bad moods	T1, T2
Theme 5	Unpredictable Dynamics	Hyperactivity, extremely short focus, vocal	T1, T3

		protests (Level 6)	
Theme 6	Material Complexity	ESL textbooks mismatching with the EFL learners' daily reality	T3

3. Teachers' Strategies in Overcoming the Challenges (RQ 3)

Theme 7: Accommodating Parental Presence to Build Emotional Security

To resolve the crippling separation anxiety, the teachers strategically compromised strict classroom rules.

"Kalo dari saya untuk murid yg harus didampingi orang tua, saya bolehkan mamanya ikut walaupun tidak full 80 menit mendampinginya, yang penting mamanya ikut dulu di awal-awal supaya anaknya merasa aman dan secure. Kalo anaknya udah merasa nyaman, baru boleh ditinggal." (Teacher 1).

This indicates that T1 prioritizes psychological safety above all else. T2 applied an even more extreme accommodation for Level 1.

"Ada murid yang mamanya itu nemenin anaknya dari awal kelas mulai sampai berakhir karena kalo anaknya ditinggal, anaknya nangis. Ada juga anak yang agak susah untuk didekati, nah jadi saya lebih pay attention ke anak yang itu. Jadi saya fokuskan perhatian ke anak tersebut tanpa mengabaikan murid lain." (Teacher 2).

The interpretation is that T2 balances extreme individualized emotional care for the distressed student while ensuring the rest of the class continues receiving equal learning opportunities.

Theme 8: Utilizing Casual Bilingual Communication to Restore Moods

When faced with toddlers in a bad mood, T3 acts dynamically to calm the situation.

"Misalkan ketika mereka habis bangun tidur, itu moodnya jelek banget. Kalo saya langsung mulai pelajaran dengan kondisi mereka begitu kan malah bisa bikin makin badmood, jadi saya ajak ngobrol santai aja dulu, sambil saya campur2 dengan Bahasa inggris. Jika moodnya sudah semakin bagus, saya perlahan-lahan masuk ke materi." (Teacher 3).

The pedagogical meaning is that T3 consciously sacrifices formal lesson time to focus on emotional recovery, using bilingual chats to seamlessly maintain English exposure and restore the student's readiness.

Theme 9: Deploying "Realia" and Short Duration Media to Sustain Attention

To handle short attention spans and boredom, T1 used short educational video and utilized real-life objects (realia).

"Untuk catching attention, saya pake showing video, cari video yang asik, yg durasinya gak kepanjangan. kalo kepanjangan kaya 3 menit mereka bosen, tapi kalo yg 1-2 menit mereka mau dan fokus. Selain showing video, ada juga sing a song together, showing flashcard, atau bawa benda sungguhan/real object. Saya ada ngajar tentang fruit, jadi saya bawa buah yang asli. Trus misal belajar cara mengikat tali sepatu, jadi saya bawa tali2an, dan print-an sepatu. Trus tentang animal, misalkan tentang chicken, chicken tu kanada egg, nah itu telur beneran saya bawa." (Teacher 1).

Keeping digital media under two minutes prevents cognitive overload. Furthermore, bringing actual fruits, physical shoelaces, and real chicken eggs transforms abstract vocabulary into concrete, tangible experiences, successfully anchoring the toddlers' scattered attention.

Table 4.3

Summary of Teachers' Strategies (RQ 3)

Theme	Focus Area	Applied Strategies	Participant
Theme 7	Emotional Security	Accommodating parents in the classroom to calm anxious students	T1, T2
Theme 8	Restoring Moods	Using casual bilingual chats to recover students' bad moods	T3
Theme 9	Sustaining Attention	Using short videos (1-2 mins) and *realia* (real eggs, shoelaces, fruit)	T1

B. Discussion

This section discusses the research findings by synthesizing the teachers' classroom practices, challenges, and strategies with the theoretical framework of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Sociocultural Theory, and Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL).

1. Discussion on Teachers' Experiences in Teaching Toddlers

The findings regarding the teachers' extensive use of 30-minute interactive warmers and the deliberate avoidance of Teacher Talk Time (TTT) strongly reflect the core principles of CLT. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Nunan (1991), CLT prioritizes meaningful communication and fluency over absolute grammatical accuracy or traditional teacher-centered drills. By utilizing interactive greetings, casual chats (e.g., "What did you eat for lunch?"), and YouTube songs ("Name of Days," "If You're Happy"), the teachers successfully created a learner-centered environment. Furthermore, this practice aligns perfectly with Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (2002), who state that incorporating daily communicative routines and nursery rhymes provides toddlers with predictable language input in a stress-free environment, transforming English into a natural medium for social interaction.

The teachers' shift from abstract textbook explanations to concrete visual stages and physical games highlights the cognitive realities of TEYL. Piaget (1964) notes that toddlers are transitioning from the sensorimotor to the early pre-operational stage, meaning they understand the world primarily through physical actions and sensory experiences. This explains why the teachers' use of tangible *realia* (physical clocks), habitat flashcards, and kinetic crafts (making paper sea animals) effectively triggered spontaneous

communication. According to Pinter (2006) and Slattery and Willis (2001), young learners absorb language naturally when it focuses on meaning and is directly connected to what they can see, touch, and do. Additionally, the use of physical games (e.g., throwing balls, "Rock, Paper, Scissors") validates Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response (TPR) approach, demonstrating that physical movement is an excellent communicative tool for toddlers to show comprehension before producing verbal output.

The intensive 1 on 1 guidance provided by the teachers during the practice stages directly embodies Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory. Vygotsky asserts that learning occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) through social interaction with a more knowledgeable other. By actively scaffolding the toddlers, it means providing direct instruction, breaking down puzzle tasks, and giving prompts, so that the teachers fostered cognitive and linguistic growth that the toddlers could not have achieved independently.

2. Discussion on the Challenges Faced by the Teachers

The severe separation anxiety, bad moods, and the "silent period" experienced by Level 1 students vividly illustrate the psychological barriers central to TEYL. According to Cameron (2001), teaching young learners

differs significantly from teaching adults because children learn implicitly through active engagement. When toddlers feel emotionally insecure or disconnected from their environment, this active engagement completely breaks down. The students' initial refusal to speak or interact confirms that cognitive language learning cannot occur without a supportive, stress-free social environment.

Behaviorally, the unpredictable classroom dynamics such as hyperactive personality, short attention spans, and Level 6 toddlers vocally rejecting activities validate Scott and Ytreberg's (1990) and Brown's (2000) developmental theories. Toddlers inherently possess very short attention spans and cannot concentrate on a single task unless it is highly engaging, sensory-rich, and frequently varied. The toddlers' disruptive behaviors act as natural responses to cognitive fatigue, proving that rigid lesson plans are ineffective for this age group.

Pedagogically, the teachers' struggle with advanced English as a Second Language (ESL) textbooks highlights a critical limitation when applying CLT in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. According to Hymes (1972) and Pinter (2006), communicative competence fundamentally involves using language appropriately within meaningful, immediate social contexts. Because the ESL textbooks contained foreign

concepts that did not match the EFL toddlers' immediate environment, the language lacked a tangible goal. Consequently, authentic communication broke down, forcing the teachers into an exhausting struggle to contextualize the vocabulary.

3. Discussion on the Teachers' Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

The spontaneous strategies utilized by the teachers demonstrate profound pedagogical adaptation based on Sociocultural and TEYL principles. By accommodating parental presence inside the classroom to deal with separation anxiety, the teachers actively manipulated the social environment to build trust. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) premise that learning is a social process optimized through interactions with caregivers. The parental presence provided the initial emotional scaffolding necessary to pull the anxious toddlers into a state of learning readiness.

Moreover, T3's strategy of using casual bilingual communication to restore a toddler's bad mood functions as an application of strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) and Sociocultural scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978). Rather than forcing a monolingual English drill that would further distress the child, the teacher utilized bilingual chats as a strategic tool to overcome a communication breakdown. This social interaction served as

temporary instructional support, gently guiding the upset student back into the ZPD without causing academic pressure.

Finally, the strict limitation of digital media to micro-durations (1-2 minutes) and the deployment of tangible *realia* (such as real chicken eggs, actual fruits, and physical shoelaces) precisely addresses the cognitive limitations discussed by Piaget (1964) and Scott and Ytreberg (1990). To combat short attention spans, the learning approach must heavily integrate play (Moon, 2000). By replacing two-dimensional textbook exercises with highly concrete *realia* and brief, joyful multimedia, the teachers successfully anchored the toddlers' sensory experiences. This strategy sustained their motivation and allowed natural language acquisition to take place effectively in a play-based environment.