



TUTORS' CHALLENGES IN TRANSITIONING TEACHING PREPARATION FROM YOUNG LEARNERS TO CORPORATE BUSINESS ENGLISH CLASSES

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ABSTRAK

Pengajaran bahasa Inggris dalam berbagai konteks pembelajaran menuntut tutor untuk menyesuaikan pendekatan pengajaran mereka, terutama ketika beralih dari mengajar anak-anak ke kelas bahasa Inggris bisnis korporat, yang melibatkan karakteristik peserta didik, dinamika kelas, dan tujuan komunikasi yang berbeda. Banyak tutor di Rumah Kita English Course menghadapi kesulitan karena strategi yang umumnya efektif digunakan dalam pembelajaran anak-anak sering kali kurang sesuai bagi pembelajar dewasa dengan latar belakang profesional. Permasalahan ini dapat memengaruhi interaksi kelas dan menghambat tercapainya tujuan pembelajaran praktis dalam pelatihan bahasa Inggris korporat. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tantangan yang dihadapi tutor ketika beralih dari mengajar anak-anak ke pembelajar dewasa dalam kelas bahasa Inggris bisnis korporat serta mengeksplorasi strategi yang mereka gunakan untuk menyesuaikan pendekatan pengajaran mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif melalui wawancara dan observasi terhadap dua guru bahasa Inggris di Rumah Kita English Course. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tutor mengalami kesulitan dalam mengubah pendekatan pedagogis yang digunakan untuk pembelajar muda menjadi pendekatan andragogis yang lebih kolaboratif dan praktis yang dibutuhkan dalam kelas bahasa Inggris bisnis. Pembelajar dewasa cenderung lebih kritis, berorientasi pada tujuan, dan berfokus pada relevansi di dunia kerja, sementara pembelajar muda memerlukan pengajaran yang lebih interaktif dan berbasis aktivitas. Tutor juga mengalami tantangan dalam menyesuaikan suasana kelas, materi pembelajaran, dan gaya komunikasi. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, para tutor melakukan analisis kebutuhan secara mendalam, mengembangkan materi yang disesuaikan dengan konteks komunikasi di tempat kerja, serta meningkatkan kesiapan mental dan keterampilan fasilitasi mereka. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa transisi yang berhasil dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris bisnis di lingkungan korporat memerlukan pola pikir pengajaran yang adaptif, keterampilan komunikasi profesional, dan pemahaman kontekstual terhadap kebutuhan pembelajar dewasa.

Kata Kunci: *Transisi Pembelajaran, Bahasa Inggris Anak Usia Dini, Bahasa Inggris Bisnis.*

ABSTRACT

Teaching English in various learning contexts requires tutors to adapt their teaching approaches, especially when transitioning from teaching young learners to corporate business English classes, which involve different learner characteristics, classroom dynamics, and communication objectives. Many tutors at Rumah Kita English Course face difficulties because strategies that are typically effective in children's settings are often unsuitable for adult learners with professional backgrounds. This issue may affect classroom interaction and hinder the achievement of practical learning objectives in corporate English training. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the challenges faced by tutors when transitioning from teaching children to adult learners in corporate business English classes and to explore the strategies they use to



adapt their teaching approaches. This study employed a qualitative method through interviews and observations of two English teachers at Rumah Kita English Course. The findings reveal that tutors faced difficulties shifting from pedagogical approaches used for young learners to more collaborative and practical andragogical approaches required in business English classes. Adult learners tended to be more critical, goal-oriented, and focused on workplace relevance, while young learners required more interactive and activity-based instruction. Tutors also experienced challenges in adjusting to the classroom atmosphere, learning materials, and communication styles. To address these challenges, the tutors conducted in-depth needs analysis, developed materials tailored to the context of workplace communication, and enhanced their mental preparedness and facilitation skills. The study concluded that a successful transition to teaching business English in a corporate setting requires an adaptive teaching mindset, professional communication skills, and a contextual understanding of the adult learner's needs.

Keywords: *Teaching Transition, English For Young Learners, Business English*

INTRODUCTION

The use of English has become increasingly common in various learning programs, both in educational institutions and in workplace training in recent years. English also plays a crucial role as a global language because many students learn English for professional communication purposes, especially in English-specific business purposes (Suri, 2024). On the one hand, many educational institutions offer English classes for children that focus on developing basic skills such as speaking, through interactive activities (Nugroho et al., 2025). In addition, companies have also begun to provide business English training for employees to support professional communication needs in the workplace. This phenomenon can be seen at Rumah Kita English Course, an English language course institution that offers several learning programs, including speaking classes for children and business English programs organized in collaboration with several companies. Through these programs, English tutors are required to have teaching skills in two different learning contexts, namely classes for young learners and business English classes for adult learners in a corporate environment. These two contexts have significantly different learning characteristics in terms of learning objectives, classroom dynamics, teaching approaches, and communication styles.

This phenomenon also shows that tutors face complex professional demands. In practice, a tutor can teach children's classes at a course center in the morning or afternoon, then continue teaching business English classes at a company within the same day. This condition indicates that English tutors are required not only to have linguistic competence but also to adjust their teaching approach to their students' characteristics. Furthermore, tutors need to adjust their teaching strategies, learning methods, materials, and communication styles to suit the different characteristics of their students. Children generally need interactive activities, the use of games, and methods that involve physical movement to make the learning process more effective and interesting (Yuqi Yang, 2024). In addition, teaching approaches for children are generally based on pedagogical concepts. This concept often emphasizes interactive learning activities involving physical movement for young learners (Indra Sudrajat, 2022). One method that is used is Total Physical Response (TPR), which allows children to learn language through physical responses to instructions given by the teacher (Latifovna, 2024). Adult learners tend to have more specific, relevant, and practical learning goals that are oriented towards their life or work needs (Soultati, 2023). Business English classes are also programs designed to meet professional communication needs in the workplace (Chan, 2020). Furthermore, adult learners



usually follow the concept of andragogy, where the learning process tends to be oriented towards experience, practical needs, and direct relevance to their lives or work (Purwati et al., 2022). The andragogy concept in English language learning for adults emphasizes learning that is relevant to learners' experiences and practical needs (Manangsa et al., 2020). In Business English classes, approaches including communicative language teaching and task-based learning are often used to train communication skills in professional situations, such as presentations, discussions, or negotiations in the workplace (Sari et al., 2024). In addition, the transition from teaching young learners to teaching business English classes not only presents methodological and material challenges but also psychological ones for tutors. Tutors need to be able to adapt in their careers to manage challenges effectively and role transitions in the learning environment (Xue, 2022). These aspects can present various challenges for tutors in managing classes, choosing the right learning strategies, and maintaining tutors' psychology and the effectiveness of the learning process in both contexts.

Previous studies have discussed English language learning for children and adult learners separately. Research on Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) generally focuses on teaching strategies that are appropriate for children's characteristics; research on English language learning for adults tends to highlight learning approaches that are oriented towards practical needs. However, there is still limited research that specifically explores the experiences and challenges faced by tutors when they have to move from one learning context to another, especially from children's classes to Business English classes in a corporate environment.

The transition of teaching preparation in this study is aligned with transformative learning theory, which explains how individuals adapt their perspectives and professional practices when facing new learning situations and professional demands (Brodowski, 2023). In language course institutions, tutors often face the challenge of teaching two different learning contexts alternately, namely, young learners' classes and Business English classes in corporate settings. This situation highlights the gap between theoretical discussions that tend to separate the two learning contexts and actual teaching practices that require tutors to adapt both professionally and psychologically between the two. Therefore, understanding tutors' experiences in such situations is important to examine how they adjust their teaching approaches and strategies to meet learners' needs in each context.

Based on this explanation, this study focuses on the experiences of tutors in facing challenges when teaching in two different learning contexts, namely classes for young students and Business English classes in a corporate environment for adult learners. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the challenges faced by tutors when switching from teaching children to adult learners, and to explore the strategies they use to adapt their teaching approaches in both contexts. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of teaching in various learning contexts and contribute to the development of English teaching practices in language courses and workplace training institutions.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach to deeply understand the challenges tutors face when transitioning from teaching children to adult learners, and to explore the strategies they use to adapt their teaching approaches in both contexts. The researchers observed the phenomenon of tutors' transition between Young learners' classes and corporate business English classes to understand tutors' challenges and strategies during the transition process, which aligns with qualitative research that emphasizes social phenomena based on human



perspectives and experiences (Lim, 2025). This study employed a phenomenological approach to explore tutors' experiences when transitioning from teaching young learners to Business English corporate classes. Through a phenomenological approach, the researchers interpreted the tutors' experiences, challenges, and perspectives related to the phenomenon being studied (Yusanto, 2020). This research was conducted at Rumah Kita English Course. Located in Demaan Village, Kudus Regency, Central Java. The researcher chose this institution because it offers several English language learning programs, including English-speaking classes for young learners and business English programs organized in collaboration with several companies. This research was conducted in March 2026, and determining the research setting is crucial for providing a clear overview of the research and the time period. So that the research can be understood in accordance with the conditions underlying the implementation of the research.

The Participants in this study were English tutors at Rumah Kita English Course who taught in the learning programs available at the institution. Sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, in which participants were selected based on specific predetermined criteria of the study. This technique was chosen because this study required participants who had direct experience related to the phenomenon being studied. The participants in this study consisted of 2 tutors who taught at Rumah Kita English Course and had experience teaching in both learning contexts in the same period. In this study, only two participants were selected because, among all tutors at Rumah Kita English Course, only these two tutors truly met the criteria, namely teaching both young learners classes and corporate Business English classes within the same teaching period or on the same day. The researchers uses three data collection techniques to obtain the information presented in this study, namely interviews, observation, and documentation. The researchers collect the data on the tutors' experiences through the in-depth interviews. Researchers can gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives regarding the phenomenon under study through interviews (Lim, 2025). In addition, this study also shows the data related to the tutors' implementation in teaching strategies and how they adapt their teaching approaches in various learning contexts. Observation was conducted to understand the behaviors, activities, and classroom situations occurring in both young learners' classes and corporate business English classes (Fadli, 2021). This study also provides additional data sources, including learning materials and activities. In this study, documents can serve as additional data sources that help researchers understand the phenomenon under study more comprehensively (Fadli, 2021). To ensure the data is obtained accurately, this study employed triangulation to compare data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentations. The triangulation technique used for verifying data validity by combining data from various sources (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023). In addition to analyzing the data, the researchers conducted the data analysis with various stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, data interpretation, and conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1994). With this technique, the researchers can analyze the collected data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this study are presented based on the main findings obtained through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation in the form of lesson plans from tutors at Rumah Kita English Course who teach in two different contexts, namely young learners' classes and business English classes in a corporate setting. The findings of the study



presented the challenges faced by tutors when transitioning from teaching Young learners to corporate business English classes, as well as the strategies they used to address them.

Difficulty in Adjusting Teaching Mindset and Classroom Atmosphere

The difficulty in adjusting tutors' teaching mindset and classroom atmosphere in transitioning from Young learner classes to business English classes is the main challenge. The differences in learner characteristics require tutors to apply different teaching approaches, which can be mentally demanding. Especially when the classes are scheduled close together. One of the tutors explained the difficulty of switching between teaching contexts because she had the transition with only one hour in between. Therefore, tutors need career adaptability, self-esteem, and social support to have a reciprocal relationship among EFL/ESL teachers (Xue, 2022). Based on the study by (Shi et al., 2025) Teachers have three interrelated stages in facing a challenge, namely the initial stage, exploration stage, and renewal stage, which are shaped by interactions between the individual and social. This finding was also supported by classroom observations. In Young learner classes, the tutor began the lesson with simple questions and interactive activities to attract students' attention. But in business English, the tutor started the lesson by connecting the topic with the real context of business. This difference indicates that tutors need to quickly adjust their teaching style and communication approach depending on each learning context.

To address this challenge, tutors need to apply a strategy. Teaching strategy refers to the use of a scheme for achieving learning objectives, consisting of methods, techniques, or procedures that encompass various components and elements of learning that must be addressed (Ramdani et al., 2023). Many teachers face challenges in ELT, especially in adjusting strategies and overcoming pedagogical problems (Boy Jon et al., 2021). In this study, tutors' preparation includes reviewing the materials, understanding the students' characteristics, and mentally preparing for the different classroom situations. Tutors also prepare different teaching approaches for each class to ensure that the learning activities match the learners' needs and expectations.

Differences in Learner Characteristics and Learning Needs.

This study also found that the challenge faced by tutors was the difference in learner characteristics between Young and adult learners. Tutors explained that Young learners often have shorter attention spans, and children's focus can easily shift. So, the tutor needs to make sure each student stays focused and not distracted. Children tend to learn through concrete activities that involve interactive visual and motor experiences during the learning process (Mathias et al., 2022). Therefore, tutors used Total Physical Response (TPR) to teach Young learner classes. This method allows students to understand language through physical responses to instructions given by the teacher (Suri, 2024). In contrast, adult learners in Business English classes have more specific learning objectives related to their professional needs. Learning for adults is usually oriented towards practical needs that are relevant to their lives or work (Nallaluthan et al., 2023). They also tend to participate more actively in discussions and may ask critical questions during the learning process, and generally have more specific and practical thinking of learning objectives related to their work (Loeng, 2023). The observational data support these findings: adult students are more active in expressing their opinions and participating in discussions, while young learner students are more enthusiastic about game-based activities.

To address these differences, tutors adapt their teaching styles and roles within the classroom. In Young learner classes, tutors primarily act as instructors who guide activities and ensure student engagement. In Business English classes, tutors serve as facilitators who



encourage discussion and collaborative learning. Because children who are learning are still at a stage of cognitive development where their thinking tends to be simple and more self-centered (Rahman et al., 2025). These adjustments allow tutors to better accommodate the learning characteristics of each group.

Adapting Teaching Materials to Professional Contexts

Another significant challenge for tutors is adapting teaching materials to meet the professional needs of ESP Business English learners. ESP refers to a language learning approach designed to face the learners' specific needs in a particular field (Navarro et al., 2024). Learning in ESP centers on the needs of learners, whether related to the purpose of language use, communication situations, or skills required in specific contexts (Warti, 2020). The adult learners usually improve professional communication skills, giving presentations, or interacting with colleagues in an international business environment in ESP (Shakhnoza, 2023). Unlike classes for younger learners, which focus on basic language skills, Business English classes require teaching materials relevant to workplace communication. Tutors explained that teaching materials need to be tailored to their work needs, including writing formal emails, participating in meetings, or giving presentations. An analysis of lesson plans confirmed that the material used in Business English classes covers topics such as business problem analysis, writing emails, scheduling appointments, and team communication. These topics reflect the practical communication needs of employees in a corporate environment.

To address these challenges, tutors conduct a needs analysis before designing learning materials. In addition, the company and the management of Rumah Kita English Course are also doing research related to the students' level and needs. By understanding the students' job roles, communication tasks, and workplace situations, tutors can select or adapt materials relevant to their professional context. This approach is consistent with the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which highlights the importance of adjusting language instruction to the specific needs of students.

Maintaining Engagement in a Professional Learning Environment

Another challenge faced by the tutors is maintaining student engagement in Business English classes while preserving a professional atmosphere. Unlike classes for younger students, where games and physical activities are often used, adult learners may prefer activities relevant to real-world workplace communication. However, the tutors also explained that adult learners still need engaging learning activities to keep the class interesting. Tutors use presentations, mini-debates, opinion sharing, and occasionally games to keep the class from becoming too formal. Observation data indicate that tutors use role-playing and meeting simulations to create interactive learning experiences that mirror real-world workplace situations. These activities allow learners to practice their communication skills in meaningful contexts.

Lesson plan documents also indicate that learning activities employ a communicative and problem-based learning approach. Activities such as role-playing, discussions, presentations, and email writing are frequently used to help learners practice practical communication skills. By combining communicative and practical learning activities, the tutors are able to maintain learner engagement while remaining focused on professional communication skills.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that tutors face several pedagogical challenges when transitioning from teaching young learners to Business English classes in a corporate setting. These challenges are primarily related to differences in teaching approaches, learner



characteristics, and the need to adapt instructional materials to a professional context. On the other hand, tutors have developed various strategies to address these challenges, including conducting needs assessments, adapting teaching styles, and implementing communicative learning activities.

One of the main findings of this study is the difficulty tutors face in adjusting their mindset and teaching style when switching between different teaching contexts. Teaching young learners requires an energetic and interactive approach, whereas Business English classes demand a more professional and practical learning environment. This finding supports the idea that teaching strategies must be tailored to the characteristics of the learners. According to (Livingston & Cummings-Clay, 2023) Effective language teaching requires teachers to adapt their classroom management and teaching strategies based on students' age, motivation, and learning objectives. Therefore, tutors need to develop flexibility in their teaching practices to manage different classroom contexts successfully.

Another key finding of this study is the difference in student characteristics and learning needs between younger and adult learners. The results indicate that younger learners require more interactive and engaging activities to maintain their attention, while adult learners in Business English classes are more focused on practical communication related to their professional duties. These findings align with the concept of adult learning theory proposed by Malcolm Knowles, who argued that adult learners tend to be focus on self collected evidence and prefer learning activities relevant to their daily problems and life tasks (Malcolm S. Knowles, 1977). In this study, adult learners actively participated in discussions and asked questions about communication in the workplace, indicating that they expect practical and meaningful learning experiences.

These findings also highlight the importance of tailoring instructional materials to the learners' professional contexts. Unlike general English classes, Business English instruction requires materials that reflect real-world workplace communication, such as writing emails, participating in meetings, and delivering presentations. These results support the principles of English for Specific Purposes, which support the relevance of the future career (Muliasari, 2023). Therefore, language instruction must be designed based on learners' specific needs and the context in which the language will be used (Alharbi, 2022). In this study, the tutors addressed this challenge by conducting needs analyses and designing materials relevant to the learners' professional responsibilities. In addition, this study found that communicative and practical strategies with learning activities play a crucial role in the teaching of Business English (Hulu, 2024). Instructors use activities such as role-playing, discussions, presentations, and meeting simulations to provide the opportunities for students to practice using the language in real-life professional situations. This approach emphasizes the importance of developing communicative competencies through meaningful interactions and real-life communication tasks.

These findings indicate that tutors' professional preparation and development are crucial to the success of Business English instruction. Furthermore, thorough preparation also ensures that Business English instruction is not influenced by teaching styles intended for young learners. Tutors reported the importance of preparing materials, understanding learners' needs, and continuously improving their teaching skills. Teaching Business English requires not only competence in language instruction but also an understanding of the context of professional communication (Bugreeva, 2019). Therefore, tutors need to continuously develop their knowledge and teaching strategies to effectively support learners in corporate settings while also continuing to teach young learners using appropriate contexts and styles. Overall, this study



highlights the importance of flexibility, contextual understanding, and communicative teaching strategies in helping tutors successfully transition from teaching young learners to Business English classes in a corporate setting.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study indicates that a tutor's transition from teaching young learners to Business English classes in a corporate setting requires significant pedagogical adjustments, particularly in terms of changes in teaching approaches, learner characteristics, and the adaptation of learning materials to the professional context. The differences in learning objectives and communication needs between children and adult learners present a major challenge, requiring tutors to be more flexible in managing the classroom, selecting teaching methods, and adapting their communication style. To address these challenges, tutors employed various strategies, such as conducting needs assessments of participants, adapting their teaching styles to be more professional and facilitative, using communicative and contextual learning activities such as discussions, role-plays, and workplace simulations, and conducting thorough preparation before teaching. These findings indicate that the success of Business English instruction depends not only on the tutor's language proficiency but also on their ability to understand the context of professional communication and the specific needs of participants. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to serve as a point of reference for language training institutions in developing the competencies of tutors, especially in the teaching of English for Specific Purposes, and to open opportunities for further research to explore more effective Business English learning models within the context of workplace language training.

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