



## Investigating The Challenges and Solutions in Teaching: A Case Study at A Rural Public Primary School in An Giang Province

Trung Q. Tran<sup>1\*</sup>, Thuy Thanh T. Le<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Vinh Chanh A Primary School, Phu Hoa Commune, An Giang Province, Vietnam

<sup>2</sup>Nguyen Khuyen High School, Phu Hoa Commune, An Giang Province, Vietnam

**ABSTRACT:** Teaching English has become a necessity for every country in the current era of globalization. However, teaching English in rural Vietnam, especially in An Giang province still faces various challenges. This study aims to investigate the challenges encountered by English teachers and the solutions they employ to address these challenges at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. A case study was employed, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews with three EFL teachers at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. Based on the data collected from teacher interviews, the results revealed that teachers encountered major challenges such as students' limited vocabulary, lack of English practice environment, overcrowded classrooms, and low parental support. To overcome these obstacles, they implemented strategies such as using digital resources, organizing interactive speaking activities, motivating students through games and rewards, and cooperating with parents and local authorities to enhance facilities. The findings provide a clear picture of challenges and solutions in rural EFL teaching, and suggest that improving teacher training, assigning more resources, and increasing community involvement are essential steps to promote effective English instruction in rural Vietnamese primary schools.

**Corresponding Author:**

**Trung Q. Tran**

**Published Online:**

**May 20, 2026**

**License:**

This is an open access article under the CC BY 4.0 license:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

**KEYWORDS:**

EFL, teaching challenges and solutions, rural primary schools, Vietnam.

**Cite the Article:** Tran, T.Q., Le, T.T.T. (2026). *Investigating The Challenges and Solutions in Teaching: A Case Study at A Rural Public Primary School in An Giang Province*. *International Journal of Human Research and Social Science Studies*, 3(5), 401-413. <https://doi.org/10.55677/ijhrsss/10-2026-Vol03105>

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, English has become an essential tool for international communication, education, and career development (Crystal, 2003). English education has gained great importance in many non-English-speaking countries in the world. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) plays a key role in helping students communicate and connect globally (Richards, 2015). In countries where English is not used in daily life, English lessons at school are often the main way for students to be exposed to the language. Therefore, teachers play a crucial role not only in delivering lessons but also in building students' confidence and motivation to use English for real communication (Harmer, 2001).

In Vietnam, English education has received increasing attention, especially at the primary level. Teachers in Vietnam have to ensure that students not only meet academic expectations but also develop personal competencies and communication skills to use English effectively in the future. According to Derakhshan (2015), understanding what students learn, how they study, and how it affects them is crucial for long-term success. This requires ongoing professional development for teachers to stay updated with modern methods that address evolving student needs, particularly in rural areas where challenges are more pronounced. Thus, teaching English as a foreign language is especially demanding in contexts where learners have limited exposure to English (Khan, 2011). These challenges include large class sizes, limited resources, and lack of teacher training, which hinder both teaching and students' ability to practice English. Therefore, identifying both the challenges and effective solutions in English teaching is vital for improving educational quality in rural areas.

However, little is known about how EFL teachers in rural primary schools perceive these challenges and what strategies they use to overcome them. In addition, little research has explored how professional development can solve these specific needs in rural EFL classrooms. Moreover, few studies have examined how primary EFL teachers in rural Vietnam cope with these difficulties in

their daily practice. Based on the above challenges, this study aims to investigate the challenges encountered by English teachers and the solutions they employ to address these challenges at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. The findings of this study may provide valuable insights into enhancing English teaching and learning in An Giang province and other similar rural contexts in Vietnam.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Teaching English**

English Language Teaching (ELT) is still complex and continues to develop over time. Firstly, the way people use English has expanded, and it is now used for many various purposes worldwide, such as in schools, workplaces, and communities (Crystal, 2003). Thus, English has even become a second or official language in some countries such as Singapore and Malaysia. Moreover, the methods for teaching and learning English have also changed. Teachers no longer rely on a single method, as traditional approaches are not always effective in contemporary classrooms. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), these methods lack flexibility and ignore the wider learning environment. Finally, many countries have changed their policies on how English is taught, introducing English to younger students (Nunan, 2003). Teachers need new skills and training to meet their students' needs, especially with varying levels of ability.

### **2.2. Challenges in teaching English**

#### **2.2.1. Severe shortage of training**

In many countries, there is a significant shortage of trained English teachers, especially in rural areas. This shortage often results in teachers taking on the responsibility of teaching English without adequate training, either in the language itself or in teaching methodologies (Garton et al., 2011). Moreover, the basic training that many teachers receive focuses mainly on teaching theory and practical skills, which are often insufficient for managing classroom challenges (Butler, 2005; Littlewood, 2007). Consequently, teachers may face difficulties in applying effective teaching methods, compounded by their limited English proficiency and lack of subject specialization (Emery, 2012). This issue is even more serious in rural areas, where access to appropriate teaching resources is limited (Mishra, 2015). Therefore, the shortage of qualified English teachers continues to hinder the improvement of English education quality in these regions.

#### **2.2.2. Crowded class**

One of the main challenges English teachers face is overcrowded classes, which significantly impact teaching and learning effectiveness. Nurkamto (2003) also points out that classroom size is a challenge when teaching English. In addition, Baker and Westrup (2000, p. 2) describe several issues in large classes, such as "desks and chairs being hard to move, students sitting close together in rows, limited space for movement, and thin walls causing noise that disturbs other classes." Because of these, teachers may struggle to meet students' needs and achieve learning goals. Therefore, large class sizes remain a persistent obstacle to effective English instruction in rural schools.

#### **2.2.3. Lack of vocabulary**

One of the biggest challenges students face in learning English is acquiring new vocabulary. According to Hasan (2016), learning vocabulary is among the most difficult tasks for language learners. Students often lack sufficient vocabulary because they may perceive some words as unnecessary or irrelevant to their daily communication, which reduces their motivation to learn them (Hoa & Mai, 2016). As a result, English as a foreign language learners are limited by their restricted vocabulary and grammar knowledge, making it difficult for them to comprehend learning materials (Chung, 2016). Hence, vocabulary acquisition remains a crucial barrier to students' English proficiency.

#### **2.2.4. Lack of English exposure**

Teaching English as a foreign language is challenging in areas where students have limited exposure to English. Khan (2011) explains that insufficient exposure discourages students from practicing and understanding the language because they lack background knowledge. Furthermore, it becomes difficult for teachers to motivate students to use English actively due to this limited exposure. Thus, when students seldom encounter English in their daily lives, they have fewer opportunities to develop their language skills.

#### **2.2.5. Limited resource accessibility**

Another challenge in teaching English is the lack of resources. In many countries, appropriate English textbooks are either unavailable or not effectively used in classrooms (Garton, 2014). Moreover, the inadequacy of teaching materials poses additional difficulties for teachers, as larger classes require more resources (Ajibola, 2010). Similarly, the shortage of facilities and equipment makes it difficult for teachers to deliver lessons effectively (Nurkamto, 2003; Fatiloro, 2015). According to Pande (2013), adequate teaching aids are essential because language learning involves practicing all four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As results, schools should ensure the timely provision of sufficient teaching materials to support effective English instruction.

#### **2.2.6. Linguistic problems**

Teaching English faces numerous challenges, which can be divided into two main categories: linguistic difficulties and language interference. Mukattash (1983) identified common mistakes in pronunciation, grammar, sentence structure, and spelling,

as well as students' struggles to express themselves in English. "Specific problems related to pronunciation, stress, and intonation become challenging for students" (Khan, 2011, p. 72). In addition, the interference of students' first language or mother tongue also contributes to these difficulties. Both teachers and students often use their native language in class, which unconsciously affects their English performance (Fatiloro, 2015). Finally, Pande (2013) notes that when teachers and students switch between their mother tongue and English, they sometimes forget that each language has its own rules for stress, intonation, and pronunciation.

### **2.2.7. Psychological problems**

The misconception that English is the most difficult subject is widespread among students, which creates a barrier to effective learning. This perception affects their willingness to engage in classroom activities. According to Pande (2013), this belief can negatively impact their motivation and performance in English classes. Similarly, Fatiloro (2015) points out that one of the main challenges in teaching English as a foreign language is dealing with students' negative attitudes towards practicing the language. For example, some students may be afraid to speak in front of their classmates, especially when there is a competitive student in the room. Thus, these psychological factors can influence students' motivation and attitudes toward learning English.

## **2.3. Solutions to Solve English Teaching Challenges**

### **2.3.1. Attitude reform**

Improving attitudes towards English language teaching and learning is essential for overcoming existing challenges, as it requires strong commitment from teachers, students, and policymakers. According to Fatiloro (2015), English language teaching and learning should be examined and reformed through changes in attitudes. He further emphasizes that both teachers and students must make a firm commitment to understanding English. Similarly, Pande (2013) suggests that clarifying the role of English in the education system and policy can help promote positive attitudes toward language learning. Overall, reforming attitudes involves a collaborative effort among teachers, students, and the government to create a more coherent and effective educational system.

### **2.3.2. Different teaching methods and techniques application**

Diversity of teaching methods and techniques is essential for effective English language teaching, as they enable teachers to address a wide range of students' learning needs and challenges. There are numerous methods of language teaching that can be implemented. Fatiloro (2015) argues that "in handling English teaching problems, teachers must use a variety of methods for teaching English language" (p. 29). In addition, Pande (2013) also believes that through applying various methods, particularly in matching the method and teaching topic, it will help teachers to establish an effective teaching process. Moreover, applying various techniques in language teaching should be taken into account because it will enable teachers to create suitable conditions for students in learning English as well as help students to deal with their learning challenges (Holenšinská, 2006). Therefore, students can be helped in their language learning when teachers understand what best teaching methods or techniques meet the needs of students.

### **2.3.3. Teaching facilities improvement**

English teaching cannot achieve its goals without adequate teaching tools and facilities. According to Pande (2013), teachers need appropriate resources such as classroom space, books, and teaching aids to ensure effective instruction. Similarly, Fatiloro (2015) emphasized that providing suitable teaching tools empowers both teaching and learning processes. Therefore, adequate teaching equipment is essential, especially for teachers working in contexts where exposure to English is limited.

### **2.3.4. Classroom management**

Effective classroom management is essential for increasing students' exposure to and familiarity with the English language. According to the Virginia Department of Education (2006), teachers can create opportunities for English language exposure through effective classroom organization. For instance, they can design a culturally diverse classroom environment, arrange seating for cooperative learning, and build a classroom library with age-appropriate books at different reading levels. Such management strategies help students become more familiar with and confident in using the target language.

## **2.4. Related studies**

In recent years, many studies have examined the challenges of teaching English in rural areas. These studies aim to understand their causes and identify possible solutions for improving English education. Several studies have explored the challenges EFL teachers face in rural areas around the world. For example, Saiful and Triyono (2018) examined resource shortages and a lack of student engagement in Indonesia. Although the study provides useful teacher insights, it does not focus on broader solutions. Similarly, Choi and Liu (2020) highlighted the need for teacher development programs but did not address issues specific to rural primary schools in South Korea. In addition, Fayzulloyeva and Murzina (2022) found that rural schools often lack student and parental support, good learning environments, and student motivation, yet their study was broad and not region-specific. In another context, Hu and McKay (2012) reported that rural EFL teachers in China faced heavy workloads and limited opportunities for professional development, which negatively impacted teaching quality. However, their study focused primarily on secondary education. While these international studies provide useful insights into the general difficulties of rural English education, it is also important to examine how similar challenges appear in the Vietnamese context. In Vietnam, Pham (2021) found that English language education in rural areas faces significant constraints in terms of facilities, funding, teaching staff, and learning resources. These difficult learning conditions negatively affect students' motivation and learning outcomes. Do et al. (2022) further studied

the barriers to implementing English education policies in rural areas, but their research focused more on policy issues than classroom practices.

In conclusion, while existing studies on the challenges faced by EFL teachers provide valuable insights, several research gaps remain. Most studies focus on rural areas outside of Vietnam and do not fully reflect the unique challenges in An Giang province. Furthermore, practical solutions for managing multi-level classes, resource shortages, and low parental involvement are still lacking. There is also limited research on the specific challenges faced by primary school teachers, as most studies target secondary education or policy issues. Finally, although some research employs qualitative methods, more case studies combining teacher interviews and classroom observations are needed to better understand how teachers address these challenges. While these studies provide valuable insights, few have explored the Vietnamese rural primary context through teachers' perspectives.

To fill the gap, this study will focus on a rural public primary school in An Giang province. This study aims to investigate the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching English to young learners at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. In addition, it also aims to explore the way in which EFL teachers solve the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching English to young learners in the EFL classroom.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A case study was employed to explore the challenges and solutions experienced by English teachers in a rural primary school in An Giang province, Vietnam. A case study approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of the specific context and the lived experiences of participants. According to Yin (2009), case studies enable researchers to examine real-life phenomena within their natural settings. In this study, three EFL teachers from a rural primary school volunteered to participate in semi-structured interviews. The qualitative case study approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the research problem and questions.

Next, the participants of this research were three female EFL teachers working at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. This school is located in remote area, where access to educational resources and professional development opportunities is often limited. The participants were working at a rural public primary school in An Giang province. All of them had more than five years of teaching experience and held a bachelor's degree in English language teaching. In addition, they were responsible for teaching English to students across different grade levels at the school. These teachers were the only English teachers at the school, so their participation provided a complete and representative view of the teaching situation in that context. Purposive sampling was applied to select the participants. The participants were intentionally chosen because they were English teachers at the same rural public primary school. In addition, they had direct experience with the teaching context and were willing to participate in the study. According to Teddlie and Yu (2007), purposive sampling is commonly used to focus on specific and unique cases in qualitative research.

Moreover, the data for this study were collected through interviews. A semi-structured interview format was adopted as the main source of data, allowing participants greater opportunities to elaborate on their teaching practices. According to Burns (2000, p. 424), a semi-structured interview "permits greater flexibility and a more valid response from the informant's perception of reality." The interviews consisted of a common set of questions with additional follow-up questions to explore teachers' knowledge and beliefs in depth (Bogdan, 2007). Each interview lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and was conducted in Vietnamese to ensure participants could express their experiences clearly. All interviews were recorded with participants' consent, transcribed by the researcher, and pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality. The interview questions focused on the challenges teachers face in delivering English lessons and the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges.

Finally, the process of data analysis is identified as a complex and challenging part of qualitative research. All interview data were processed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data from interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analyzed and coded. After preliminary coding, different sources of data were compared to see if consistent patterns emerged, and they were combined to depict a more comprehensive picture. As Spencer et al. (2003) pointed out, "It requires a mix of creativity and systematic searching, a blend of inspiration and diligent detection" (p. 199). The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim for accurate analysis and interpretation using Google Docs. Then, all transcripts were carefully read to gain a general understanding of the data. Interesting passages were marked with brackets and labeled. Subsequently, the data were coded to identify key concepts related to the challenges faced by EFL teachers in rural areas as well as the teachers' solutions. The last one, the coded data were translated and presented in English.

### 4. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the interviews, focusing on the challenges English teachers face in teaching EFL and the solutions they have implemented in a rural primary school. The data gathered from the interviews were analyzed qualitatively and grouped into two main categories: the challenges encountered and the corresponding solutions applied. These findings are described in detail in the following section.

#### **4.1. The challenges of English teachers in a rural public primary school**

English teachers at a rural primary school in An Giang province encounter several challenges in teaching English, which are mainly related to students, teachers, and school facilities. The findings revealed that English teachers at a rural public primary school in An Giang province encounter significant barriers in teaching English. These barriers were categorized into three core areas: student-related, teacher-related, and school facility-related challenges. Each area comprised specific sub-themes identified through data analysis.

##### **4.1.1. Student-related challenges**

###### **4.1.1.1. Limited vocabulary knowledge**

One of the major challenges in teaching English is students' limited vocabulary knowledge. Both participant 1 and participant 2 mentioned that many students lack sufficient vocabulary to express their ideas effectively in class, which hinders their speaking and writing performance. It hindered the students' English speaking skills "...they say: a, I don't know, I don't know like that." (Participant 2). In addition, participant 1 asserted that the main challenge in English communication skills was students' lack of vocabulary mastery "...the ability to communicate directly is also a bit difficult, so that ability is a bit slow." (Participant 1). Moreover, participant 2 said that students were very lazy to learn vocabulary, so this affected students' lack of vocabulary mastery. "...students are lazy to learn vocabulary, I provide them with vocabulary, they are lazy..." (Participant 2).

###### **4.1.1.2. Lack of opportunities to practice English**

Students lack sufficient opportunities and environments to practice using English effectively. Participant 1 stated that older teachers often failed to update their knowledge, which made students feel uncomfortable practicing English with them. "...And the lack of an environment to practice the English language. In rural schools, some teachers are often old and their approach to new things is not very perfect, so it is possible that the child will not have a good approach." (Participant 1). In addition, participant 3 said that students worked part time job and helped their family after school, so they did not have practice environment with English language "...they have to help their families and some can even work part-time to earn extra income every day, so they lack an environment to practice English and the sentence patterns they have learned." (Participant 3).

###### **4.1.1.3. Large class sizes**

Large class size was identified as a major challenge. Participant 2 and participant 3 stated that their class were too crowded, so they could not pay attention to each student as well as teach enough knowledge for every student in the class "...I can not observe everything, I can not convey all the content..." (Participant 2), and "...each class has about 39 to 44 students, so one period is only 35 minutes, it's too crowded, I can not reach all the students in the class..." (Participant 3). Additionally, participant 1 and participant 3 said that their class were crowded, so their students made so noisy and affect their's learning of friends in the class "...if it is too crowded now, some children will do their own work and make noise, which will affect the concentration of the children around them." (Participant 1), and "...it is very difficult to tutor..." (Participant 3). Moreover, participant 1 also showed that it was very difficult to manage in the crowded class "...we can not manage the whole class..." (Participant 1).

###### **4.1.1.4. Insufficient parental support**

A lack of parental support negatively affects students' English learning. Participant 1 and participant 3 reported that their students with less parental involvement often face difficulties in learning English. In addition, Participant 1 declared that the support of students' parents affected their learning English at school "...if parents can speak English to children at home to practice communication, it is a good thing, but if parents do not have the ability, of course the children will not be able to improve their speaking ability..." (Participant 1). Moreover, participant 3 said that the support of students' parents also affected their ability of English "...those whose parents work far away, whose parents are divorced and have to live with their grandparents without enough love and care from their parents...I see a completely different thing." (Participant 3).

###### **4.1.1.5. Low confidence in using English**

A major factor affecting students' English learning is a lack of confidence. Many students feel shy about speaking English and prefer their native language. This psychological barrier reduces their willingness to communicate, as they fear making mistakes or being laughed at. Participant 2 said that students always spoke Vietnamese and were shy to speak English in the class "...students use Vietnamese in class or are afraid of speaking English or do not have an environment to practice English..." (Participant 2).

##### **4.1.2. Teacher-related challenges**

###### **4.1.2.1. Lack of professional training**

One of the main challenges in English teaching is the shortage of professional training. Teachers often lack opportunities for regular professional development, which limits their ability to adapt modern teaching methods. This issue is particularly serious in rural areas, where training programs are infrequent and often too short to be effective. Participant 1 said that I was not usually trained about teaching methods, so I did not know how to teach effectively in their classroom "...then I do not have a grasp of the navigation into the class or how to guide the organization of that class according to the lesson to suit the students..." (Participant 1). Besides that, participant 3 said that teachers were not usually trained about teaching methods, so they did not have general teaching methods "...I found that they were not consistent with each other..." (Participant 3).

#### 4.1.2.2. Frequent changes in textbooks

Constant changing of books affects quite much to the teaching and learning English of both teachers and students. Regular changes in textbooks increase financial and time burdens on both teachers and students. Participant 1 and participant 2 showed that the price of the book was so high and teachers had to train for the new books, so their students were not enough books in their class and teachers were time-consuming for training “...in urban areas, the cost of books is not a problem, but in rural areas, the cost of books is a bit high compared to the ability...” (Participant 1), and “...change books continuously, teachers have to take them for training and have to study the books for a long time...” (Participant 2).

#### 4.1.3. School facility-related challenges

##### 4.1.3.1. Lack of visual teaching aids

The lack of visual aids in English teaching poses a significant challenge for teachers. Since children are more engaged and motivated when lessons include pictures or visual materials, teaching without them becomes less effective. As a result, the absence of visual aids and interactive tools can reduce lesson quality and limit students’ understanding. Participant 3 said that shortage of pictures was very difficult for teaching English in the class “...if we do not have any pictures, it will be very difficult to teach...” (Participant 3).

##### 4.1.3.2. Shortage of smart tvs and interactive devices

The lack of smart TVs or interactive screens in each classroom poses a significant challenge. The shortage of interactive teaching tools reduces the quality of lessons and limits students’ engagement. Consequently, it significantly affects the overall effectiveness of teachers’ instruction. Participant 1 said that teachers taught a boring lesson with shortage of smart TV “...I teach that there are not TVs or projectors. If there is nothing else, then teaching normally...” (Participant 1). Participant 3 stated that the teaching was also affected so much because there was only an interactive TV for 4 teachers to use it “...a subject room at a single point has only one TV, but with three teachers, of course it will be affected...” (Participant 3).

## 4.2. The solutions of English teachers in a rural public primary school

The findings indicated that English teachers in the rural public primary school used a range of pedagogical and institutional strategies to address their teaching challenges. These solutions fell into six main themes: supporting vocabulary development, creating opportunities for English practice, managing large classes, utilizing teaching resources, enhancing student motivation, and seeking support from institutions and parents.

### 4.2.1. Supporting students’ vocabulary development

Some teachers used online learning resources such as “hoclieu.com” and “YouTube” to support students’ vocabulary learning. Participant 1 and Participant 3 stated that their students had to practice writing new words at home many times to remember vocabulary “...I tell him to practice writing that word three times so that he can remember it...” (Participant 1), and “...to practice writing vocabulary ...” (Participant 3). Next, participant 1 also said that students could look vocabulary on “hoclieu.com” or “YouTube” to remember it “...looking at pictures, supplementing learning materials, or using Youtube...” (Participant 1). In addition, participant 1 and participant 2 also declared that teachers gave a mindmap of vocabulary for students to remember new words “...I will have mindmaps...” (Participant 1), and “...I usually provide a mindmap of vocabulary with sample sentences...” (Participant 2). Finally, participant 3 showed that teachers gave a gift for students to motivate their learning vocabulary “...I will give 10 stamps as a gift. The children will feel more excited...” (Participant 3).

### 4.2.2. Creating opportunities for english language practice

Teachers created a practice environment with English language. Group and pair activities, as well as English-speaking contests, were organized to promote student engagement. Participant 1 showed that students worked in groups to practice speaking English “...I let him practice in groups to develop speaking skills...” (Participant 1). Next, participant 2 said that students chatted with their friends in English in free time “...I encourage them to talk to each other when they have free time using the English sentences they have learned...” (Participant 2). In addition, participant 3 showed that teachers created contests to practice English “...create playgrounds for the students, for example, the Golden Bell or the English speaking contest or the drama contest...” (Participant 3). Finally, participant 3 also said that students worked in pairs to practice speaking English “...the students will sit at their desks and ask and answer each other about the sentence patterns that they learned the day before...” (Participant 3).

### 4.2.3. Strategies for managing large classes

Teachers managed large classes by dividing them into small groups, assigning leaders, setting clear rules and variable activities. Participant 1 stated that teachers divided class into small groups to manage and choose a leader for each groups to help them manage in the classroom “...she will divide them into many small groups according to each row of the class...” (Participant 1), and “...group leaders in those groups who will manage the children inside...” (Participant 1). Next, participant 2 said that teachers used various activities in the classroom to attract their students “...I will change the form of activities in many ways...” (Participant 2). Finally, participant 3 showed that teachers set the rules for the class before starting the lessons “...I will also create a routine from the beginning...” (Participant 3).

### 4.2.4. Utilizing available teaching resources and digital tools

Teachers used resources or teaching tools to improve their teaching at school effectively because teaching aids are critical

for success in under-resourced settings. Both of three participants said that teachers usually used resources or teaching tools such as hoclieu.com, and powerpoint to improve their teaching at school “*I find hoclieu.vn very useful...*” (Participant 2), “*...we are using powerpoint...*” (Participant 3), and “*...it has hoclieu.vn, then I will have powerpoint...*” (Participant 1). In addition, participant 1 said that teachers also used “Youtube” and “Google” to support their teaching “*...Youtube to let the children watch the image...*” (Participant 1), and “*...I also search on Google.*” (Participant 1).

#### **4.2.5. Enhancing student motivation and positive learning attitudes**

Teachers gave some games to students before the lessons to motivate students because students’ attitudes improve through engaging activities. Participant 1 and participant 3 said that teachers used some games to attract students “*...I will have games for the children to participate in...*” (Participant 1), and “*...I also let them play games...*” (Participant 3). Next, P1 also showed that teachers gave tickers and gifts to students when they learned well “*...I will give the child a ticker, and when the child practices well...*” (Participant 1). In addition, participant 2 stated that teachers taught students slowly, and encouraged them learning “*...I will let them read it again gently and encourage them to speak...*” (Participant 2). Finally, participant 3 said that teachers asked them watch cartoons related new words or structures, and usually praised students “*...watch cartoons about English and slightly related sentences. Each sentence and vocabulary that they have learned, they will also enjoy it very much.*” (Participant 3), and “*...I will praise them...*” (Participant 3).

#### **4.2.6. Institutional and parental support for teaching and learning**

Teachers received many supports. Collaboration with parents and local authorities helped improve school facilities, such as purchasing TVs and teaching aids. This is a good thing to help teachers’ teaching at school. Participant 1 and participant 2 said that parents donated together and bought TVs for classrooms “*...there is also support such as a TV in the classroom, but Hung bought a TV in the classroom.*” (Participant 1), and “*...parents also contribute to the school. We have a few TVs in the classroom, some classes have TVs.*” (Participant 2). In addition, participant 3 said that parents also support money for teachers’ teaching at school “*...the parents were very happy and willing to pay extra social contributions to help the teachers...*” (Participant 3). Moreover, participant 3 also showed that form teachers also a helpful support for their teaching at school “*...the form teacher is very supportive...*” (Participant 3).

## **5. DISCUSSIONS**

### **5.1. The challenges of English teachers in a rural public primary school**

As the interviews show, teachers face multiple challenges related to students, teachers, and facilities. Limited vocabulary, lack of English practice, large class sizes, low confidence, and minimal parental support slow student learning. Meanwhile, teachers struggle with insufficient training, frequent textbook changes, and a lack of teaching materials and aids. These findings match earlier research. Hasan (2016) and Hoa and Mai (2016) confirmed that vocabulary is a main issue for EFL learners, and Khan (2011) found that limited English exposure reduces motivation. Overcrowded classrooms support Baker and Westrup’s (2000) claim that large classes hinder effective teaching. Similarly, Garton et al. (2011) and Pande (2013) reported that rural teachers lack training and resources. Frequent textbook changes further hinder curriculum implementation in under-resourced areas, as noted by Garton (2014).

### **5.2. The solutions of English teachers in a rural public primary school**

According to interviews, teachers used various strategies to address the challenges of teaching English. They encouraged students to practice vocabulary at home and used digital tools such as “hoclieu.com,” “YouTube,” and “PowerPoint” to make lessons interactive. Teachers also organized group and pair work to promote collaboration, managed classrooms through clear rules and student leaders, and included games and rewards to boost motivation. Support from parents and local authorities helped improve school facilities. These practices reflect previous studies. Holenšinská (2006) and Fatiloro (2015) noted that diverse teaching methods enhance engagement, while Pande (2013) stressed the importance of teaching aids. The use of games and rewards also supports Pande’s (2013) point that motivation reduces anxiety, and parent collaboration supports. Fatiloro’s (2015) view that shared responsibility strengthens English education.

### **5.3. The implications of the study**

To effectively address the challenges faced by English teachers in rural primary schools, comprehensive training and support programs are essential. Training programs should focus on equipping teachers with adaptive teaching methods, including strategies for teaching vocabulary, managing large classes, and using low-cost teaching materials. Workshops on designing interactive activities using digital tools such as “YouTube” or “hoclieu.vn” could help address the lack of materials. Additionally, promoting school-home collaboration through initiatives such as home-based English activities could increase parental support and create a more supportive learning environment. At the policy level, governments should prioritize curriculum development, resource allocation, and infrastructure improvements, such as providing interactive TV and updated materials. Providing financial incentives to rural teachers can also help attract and retain highly skilled educators, addressing both training and motivational challenges.

#### 5.4. The limitations of this study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, this study involved only three EFL teachers from one rural primary school in An Giang province, which limits the generalizability of the findings. However, this small sample size is justified because qualitative case studies focus on depth rather than breadth, aiming to explore participants' experiences in detail (Yin, 2009). Second, relying on qualitative interview data may introduce subjectivity and bias. Combining interviews with classroom observations and student achievement data could provide a more detailed view of teaching and learning motivations. Finally, the study primarily reflects the views of teachers, with limited input from students and parents. Future studies should include these stakeholders to better understand the broader educational context that influences English teaching outcomes.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

This study revealed several key challenges faced by English teachers in a rural primary school in An Giang province. The main difficulties included students' limited vocabulary, lack of English practice, large class sizes, low parental support, and students' lack of confidence in using the English language. Teachers also struggled with insufficient training, frequent textbook changes, and a lack of visual aids and modern facilities. Despite these barriers, teachers applied various solutions such as encouraging vocabulary practice through online platforms, using mind maps and games, organizing group and pair work, managing large classes through clear rules, and using technology-based resources like "PowerPoint" and "YouTube". These practical efforts helped improve students' learning engagement and motivation.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed. For practice, schools and education authorities should provide more professional development programs focusing on communicative teaching methods and classroom management strategies for large classes. Educational policymakers should also ensure that rural schools have sufficient teaching materials and facilities to support English learning effectively. In addition, parental engagement should be strengthened through regular communication and guidance from teachers. For future research, more case studies involving multiple schools in rural areas are recommended to compare the effectiveness of teachers' coping strategies. This study contributes to the understanding of the realities of English teaching in rural Vietnam and highlights the importance of ongoing teacher training and community support.

#### REFERENCES

1. Ajibola, M. A. (2010). Confronting the challenges of teaching English language as a second language in Nigeria. *Journal of the Nigeria English Studies Association* 15(1), 95-105.
2. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
3. Bulter, Y. G. (2005). Comparative perspectives towards communicative activities among elementary school teachers in South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(4), 423-446.
4. Baker, J., & Westrup, H. (2000). *The English language teacher's handbook*. London, UK: Continuum.
5. Bogdan, R. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
6. Burns, R. B. (2000). *Introduction to research method* (4th ed.). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Longman.
7. Chung, H. V. (2016). *A study of reading comprehension problems in English encountered by first year students of faculty of Vietnamese studies at Hnue* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi.
8. Choi, K., & Liu, Y. (2020). Challenges and strategies for ELF aware teacher development. *ELT Journal*, 74(4), 442-452.
9. Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language*. Cambridge university press.
10. Do, T. T. T., Sellars, M., & Le, T. T. (2022). Primary English language education policy in Vietnam's disadvantaged areas: Implementation barriers. *Education Sciences*, 12(7), 445.
11. Derakhshan, A. (2015). The challenges of teaching English language: The relationship between research and teaching. *International Journal of Linguistics* Vol. 7(1), 102-110.
12. Emery, H. (2012). *A global study of primary English teachers' qualifications, training and career development*. British Council.
13. Fatiloro, O. F. (2015). Tackling the challenges of teaching English language as second language (ESL) in Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 5(2), 26-30.
14. Fayzulloyeva, Z. Z., & Murzina, E. A. (2022). Difficulties Faced by EFL Teachers in Teaching English to the Students in Rural Schools. *Ученый XXI века*, (10), 80-81.
15. Garton, S., Copland, F., & Burns, A. (2011). *Investigating global practices in teaching English for young learners: Project report*. London, England: British Council.
16. Garton, S. (2014). Unresolved issues and new challenges in teaching English to young learners: The case of South Korea. *Current issues in language planning*, 15(2), 201-219.
17. Hasan, L.-N. K. (2016). *The effect of lack of vocabulary on English language learners' performance: A case study of English departments students at Salahaddin University Erbil* (Unpublished master's thesis). Salahaddin University

18. Hoa, N. T., & Mai, P. T. (2016). Challenges in teaching English for specific purposes: Empirical study at Vietnam Universities. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*, 9(5), 154-161.
19. Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. London/New York, 32(1), 401-405.
20. Holenšinská, A. (2006). *Teaching English as a foreign language to students with learning challenges* (Unpublished diploma thesis). Masaryk University, Brno.
21. Hu, G., & McKay, S. L. (2012). English language education in East Asia: Some recent developments. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 33(4), 345-362.
22. Khan, I. A. (2011). Challenges of teaching/learning English and management. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 11(8), 68-79.
23. Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language Teaching*, 40(3), 243-259.
24. Mukattash, L. (1983). *The problem of difficulty in foreign language learning*. Amman, Jordan: University of Jordan.
25. Mishra, B. (2015). Innovative ways of English language teaching in rural India through technology. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 6(2), 38-44.
26. Nurkamto, J. (2003). Problem teaching Language English in Indonesia. *Journal Indonesian Linguistics Society Scientific Journal* 21(2), 288-307.
27. Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific Region. *TESOL quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613.
28. Pham, H. C. (2021). English language education in rural areas: Current issues, complexities and ways forward. *VNU Journal of Science: Education Research*, 37(4), 1-11.
29. Pande, V. B. (2013). Problems and remedies in teaching English as a second language. *Confluence*, (1), 416-421.
30. Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
31. Richards, J. C. (2015). *Key issues in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
32. Saiful, J. A., & Triyono, S. (2018). EFL teachers' reflection in teaching english to EFL students of rural areas. *International Journal of Language Education*, 2(2), 1-13.
33. Spencer, L., Ritchie, J. & O'Connor, W. (2003). Analysis: Practices, principles and processes. In Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp. 199-218). SAGE Publications.
34. Teddlie, C., & Yu, F. (2007). Mixed methods sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 77-100.
35. Virginia Department of Education. (2006). *English: Strategies for teaching limited English proficient (LEP) students: A supplemental resource guide to the K12*. Author.
36. Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. United States of America: SAGE Publications.

## APPENDIX 1

### CÂU HỎI PHỎNG VẤN (VIETNAMESE VERSION)

#### Phần 1: Thông tin chung và chào hỏi

1. Teacher give know school I live in the countryside. village or town market ?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Teacher Satisfied teach English at school me Okay many year ?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Teacher often teach English for learn born in the block some ?

.....  
.....  
.....

#### Part 2: The Challenge awake in lecture teach English

4. Challenges awake but Teacher meet Right When teach English at school farmers village To be What ?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. According to the teacher/ lecturer job lack practice training or festival herb specialist subject often xuyên , có image enjoy like position any arrive effect fruit teach language My brother Teacher ?

.....  
.....

6. According to the teacher/ lecturer number learn born too winter above one class study , have image enjoy like position any arrive job lecture teach belong to Teacher ?

.....  
.....

7. Difficulties towel any but learn born belong to Teacher meet Right in job learn English , especially residential To be about from wealthy and lack lip school real onion with language language English ?

.....  
.....

8. According to the scriptures experiment belong to Teacher , regarding replace change book border vulgar , lacking painting image in lecture teach , educate pill need Right lift High presentation IT proficiency , updates Japan the application use labour turmeric information in lecture teach ... have image enjoy position any arrive too presentation lecture teach and learn practice belong to Teacher and learn born ?

.....  
.....

9. According to the teacher/ lecturer the challenge awake about language language , mind reason belong to learn born and the head private and mandarin heart from beside outside home school ( for example) example like history use Vietnamese above class , scared speak English , no Have lip school real onion English , learn born Are not Have movement force study , support brother Are not head private and mandarin heart arrive job learn belong to learn born ... have close shoulder game mandarin weight in possibility power learn English of learn born No ? If Have and in Why ? If Are not and in Star ?

.....  
.....

**Part 3: Solutions France and war comb lecture teach**

10. Teacher Satisfied pressure use children war comb or direction France any effect fruit to overcome the challenge awake in job teach English at school me ?

.....  
.....

11. Teacher chest reason class learn winter learn born like position any When teach English above class ?

.....  
.....

12. Teacher prize decision problem topic lack from wealthy and real onion English of learn born like position any ?

.....  
.....

13. The assets original or labour old man lecture teach any Satisfied help Teacher cabbage u job lecture teach effect fruit best ?

.....  
.....

14. Teacher do position any to create movement force give children learn born Are not indulge animal or have a cold see English is difficult . learn ?

.....  
.....

15. Teacher Satisfied receive Okay the support assistance any from beside outside home school ( for example) example like the chapter presentation belong to main office , department , or office teacher sex , the support assistance from departments group can

be in the commune or from extra brother learn birth ) to support assistance job lecture teach belong to me Not yet ? If Yes , type support assistance any To be day benefits best ?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Part 4: Questions export cabbage u**

16. Teacher Have topic export What opposite to with :  
School

.....  
.....

Department

.....  
.....

Department and group body

.....  
.....

Nest leader

.....  
.....

Copper profession

.....  
.....

**Xin chân thành cảm ơn quý Thầy/Cô đã tham gia phỏng vấn!**

-----^-----

**APPENDIX 2  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (ENGLISH VERSION)**

**Part 1: General Information and Greetings**

1. Teacher, could you please tell me if your school is located in a rural or urban area?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. How many years have you been teaching English at our school?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. What grade level do you usually teach English to?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Part 2: Challenges in Teaching English**

4. What challenges do you face when teaching English in rural schools?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. In your opinion, how does the lack of regular professional training or workshops affect students? How effective is your English teaching?

.....  
.....  
.....

6. In your opinion , how does having too many students in a classroom affect your teaching?

.....  
.....  
.....

7. What difficulties do your students face in learning English, particularly with vocabulary and a lack of opportunities to practice the English language?

.....  
.....  
.....

8. In your experience, how do the frequent changes in textbooks , the lack of illustrations in teaching, the need for teachers to improve their computer skills, and the updating of information technology applications in teaching affect the teaching and learning process for you and your students ?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. In your opinion, do language challenges , students' psychological factors , and external investment and support (e.g. , using Vietnamese in class, fear of speaking English, lack of an English practice environment , students' lack of motivation , parents' lack of investment and interest in their children's learning , etc.) play a significant role in students' English learning ability? If yes, why? If no, why?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Part 3: Teaching Solutions and Strategies**

10. What effective strategies or methods have you used to overcome the challenges of teaching English at your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

11. How do you manage a large class of students when teaching English in the classroom?

.....  
.....  
.....

12. How do you address students' lack of vocabulary and English practice ?

.....  
.....  
.....

13. What teaching resources or tools have helped you improve your teaching effectiveness the most?

.....  
.....  
.....

14. How do you motivate students who are uninterested in or find English difficult to learn?

.....  
.....  
.....

15. Have you received any support from outside the school (e.g. , government programs , education department or office support, support from community organizations, or from parents) to assist in your teaching? If so, what type of support was most helpful?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Part 4: Suggestions for Improvement**

16. Do you have any suggestions regarding :  
School

.....  
.....

Department

.....  
.....

Departments and organizations

.....  
.....

Leader

.....  
.....

Colleague

.....  
.....

**Thank you very much for participating in the interview!**

-----^-----