



Exploring English for Young Learners (EYL) pre-service teachers' experiences: Innovations during their teaching practicum

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Pre-service teachers of English to young learners should be exposed to educational innovations through experiences and practices for developing contextual language learning. As English has been a locally-tailored school subject in Indonesian primary schools, there is a wide arena of innovations. It can be carried out by integrating the English as an International Language (EIL) principles into the themes selected by the teachers of EYL. To internalize the innovations, Pre-Service Teachers (PSTs) of EYL should be knowledgeable with the current setting. Adopting an exploratory case study, ten PSTs were recruited as participants of this study by considering the Lesson Plans (LPs) that they developed. The data were collected from multiple sources; document analysis, observations, and interviews. The findings revealed that all LPs developed by the PSTs of EYL had integrated innovations which could be reflected from the intelligent themes linked to the YLs life experiences, characters building and intercultural awareness. Moreover, the activities focused on YLs' characteristics and language acquisition process. As this study was only dedicated to the face-to-case learning, the further studies should be projected to innovations for remote and bended learning that PSTs of EYL should aware due to unpredictable situations of learning near future.

Keywords: innovations, thematic lessons, TEYL, Pre-service teachers of EYL

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INTRODUCTION

Present language and literature learning pedagogy has been affected by recent developments in the usage and use of English and improvements in the search for the best language teaching methods. Curriculum components such as the syllabus, instructional materials, instructors or teachers, and assessment procedures play crucial roles for the English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum in the sense of society. It is implied in the English as an International Language (EIL) pedagogy that English learning aims at enabling its learners to communicate their ideas or culture using English (McKay, 2003; McKay, 2018), focusing on the students' greater access to the complexity of English and more experience in ELT interactions.

Related to transition in status of English as a compulsory subject to a locally-tailored school subject in Indonesia, Teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL) has arrived in situation where English could be taught to primary school students based on particular focus.

This situation is reliable with [Shin's and Crandall's \(2014\)](#) views on the commitment of English for Young Learners (EYL) teachers to design materials and select methods that provide young learners (YLs) with opportunities to learn English communicatively and practice the target language through the use of themes. In context of Indonesia, feasibility of integrating themes had been studied by [Sesiorina \(2014\)](#) as well as [Setyaningrum and Purwati \(2020\)](#) and they entailed more careful lesson planning and teacher's linguistics and pedagogical competence to enhance.

Recently, English is verified to be a favorite extra-curricular for the primary schools students in Indonesia ([Meisani & Musthafa, 2019](#)). They encountered over fifty percent of the total numbers of primary schools in Malang – East Java province committed to teach English for some main reasons. They were, the schools' understanding of the importance of incorporating English as a foreign language for global communication, the schools' efforts to prepare students for secondary education, and school's initiative to equip the primary school students with basic English to take part in the Science and Mathematics Olympiads. In addition, expectation towards EYL to improve the English overall input for students before enrolling the secondary levels ([Zein, 2015](#)) has evidenced positive impact to the students' performance in the lower secondary level ([Rachmajanti & Anugerahwati, 2019](#)). The aforementioned justification correspond to the EIL principles that English is learned by the students for accessing vast amount of information globally ([McKay, 2003](#)), and interacting with people whose English background varied ([McKay, 2018](#); [Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018](#)).

Carrying out the EYL classes for the sake of catering YLs experience of language learning naturally as a skill mediating them to live ([Sehan, 2018](#)) requires lesson preparation which considers YLs' holistic needs instead of teaching the YLs the language components in isolation. [Harmer \(2007\)](#) mentioned that EYL teachers should recognize that YLs like exploration activities that they can respond to by using imagination that they can participate well in puzzle-like activities, in creating things, in drawing items, in sports, in physical movements or in songs. In accordance, [Shin \(2006\)](#) proposed ten ideas of teaching EYL, such as: 1) using images, reality and movement; 2) involving students in images and reality making (as teaching media); 3) going from activity to activity; 4) teaching themes; 5) using stories and meanings familiar to students; 6) creating classroom routines in English; 7) using L1 as tools dependent on necessity; 8) involving group helpers; 9) collaborating other teachers at school, and 10) communicating with other TEYL professionals. These ideas are developed alongside the principle of supporting theme-based teaching and learning, which focuses on activities connected together ([Cameron, 2005](#)) so that YLs get the opportunity to learn English by incorporating it into other learning contexts ([Shin & Crandall, 2014](#)). Hence, the concept should be meaningful when it is put into the teaching-learning process.

To provide the students opportunity to achieve satisfactory social interaction and be more sensitive to cultural diversity in speech ([Newton, 2016](#)), the teacher can select a 60-minute weekly theme to teach in EYL class by emphasizing the activities. The theme does not contain repeated activities in regular thematic class by using English but the development of the theme by considering YLs' characteristics. Learning by doing, engaging with the environment, the need for instructor help and scaffolding ([Shin & Crandall, 2014](#)) are the characteristics correspond to simple, meaningful, and fun activities. As an example, when grade 4 regular thematic theme is Jobs, the EYL teacher can take Part-time and Full-time Jobs as a theme to teach in EYL classroom. A role –play of doing a part-time job like being a content-writer or a You-tuber as well as a full-time job like being a teacher, a doctor can be practiced by the students with supports of related English vocabulary. The teacher and students work together for language improvement contextually. [Shin and Crandall \(2014\)](#) summarized the experience of EYL teachers from various parts of the world and mainly from non-English-speaking countries and explained that the EYL teachers still rely upon L1 in teaching.

[McKay \(2018\)](#) claimed that L1 can be used to develop language proficiency and English with EIL paradigm can be embedded in the local context. When TEYL is conducted informally outside the class setting – like in English club – procedures should be fixed but viable for improvements. [Zulhermindra \(2018\)](#) promotes some activities for students' performances in study club like Master of Ceremony, English Songs, Language Games, Poetry, Story Telling, and Drama/Role-play. In the meantime, [Meisani and Musthafa \(2019\)](#) reported that the flexibility of TEYL in Indonesia was also interpreted as freedom to adopt international curriculum for English and other subjects, like Cambridge curriculum. It is to make the learners competent being international speakers ([Marlina & Giri, 2014](#)).

Nonetheless, the fact that most primary school teachers are graduated from primary level education program - PGSD (Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar/ Primary School Teacher Education), SPG (Sekolah Pendidikan Guru/ School for Teacher Education) and general undergraduate programs such as Physics, Mathematics, Biology, among others ([Zein, 2014](#); [Zein, 2016](#)), professional development (PD) is urgent. It is suggested that the school of education to provide a specific program for educating the prospective EYL teachers or conducting in-service training for the EYL teachers who have been in the teaching sites. Both pre-service and in-service trainings can be organized by the English Language Education Study Program ([Sulistiyo, et.al, 2019](#); [Zein, 2014](#); [Zein, 2016](#)) in order to cater the needs of professional English teachers who facilitate various EYL programs at primary schools.

The urgency, however, had not been considered crucial by all English language education department in Indonesia to educate the pre-service teachers (PSTs) of EYL to teach YLs English with sophisticated program. [Zein \(2015\)](#) asserted that PGSD and English departments had not adequately prepare

the prospective teachers of English for the primary level. Furthermore, [Zein \(2016\)](#) had uncovered the PD model needs analysis for primary EFL teachers which encompassed language, knowledge, and pedagogy to be included in the pre-service training for EYL. In addition, tasks and activities should aid primary EFL teachers' creativity and versatility in creating interesting materials and well-integrated lessons that work best for young learners.

Determination of incorporating EIL principles to the EYL classes is critical despite scarce evidences explored in the contemporary studies. Generally, they entailed suggestions about TEYL by increasing YLs vocabulary numbers in the target language in terms of providing learning resources and facilities and acknowledging technology integration for TEYL classes with significant doubts of using the L1 ([Bakhsh, 2016](#); [Inbar-Lourie, 2010](#); [Kyza & Georgiou, 2019](#); [Leśniewska & Pichette, 2016](#); [Macalister & Webb, 2019](#)). In case of Indonesia, the government's decision in shifting the status of English for primary school students from subject to locally-tailored subject has proven the breakthrough for both teachers and students' awareness in teaching and learning English within new paradigm.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, English as a locally tailored-subject and regular thematic lessons could be integrated for TEYL to prepare the students' future life because EIL has given voice to people of different linguistic backgrounds to connect and understand each other. The present study was conducted to showcase a serious attention given by an English Language Education Department in one of Islamic Private University of Indonesia to educate PSTs of EYL to respond the current situation. English as a locally-tailored school subject should be taught by considering the YLs' needs and incorporated with pedagogical principles of EIL. It investigated how the PSTs of EYL designed the EYL lessons and practiced to teach YLs with activities that support the YLs' holistic development as well as provide them with experience to use English contextually. This is to answer the research question: How do the PSTs of EYL design innovative lessons and practice them for their teaching practicum?

METHODS

Design

It is a case study that allows an investigation of a particular situation to obtain the results for explaining certain circumstances or events ([Richards, 2005](#); [Yin, 2016](#)). Employing in-depth analysis from multiple perspectives of the nature and significance of a specific project, policy, organization, program or framework in a real-life context ([Creswell, 2012](#); [Merriam & Tisdell, 2016](#)) this research is intended to gather the data of TEYL innovations which ruminated EIL principles in form of thematic lessons. They were practiced by the PSTs in the English Language Education Department (ELED) at an Islamic Private

University in Malang – East Java Province – Indonesia.

Setting and Participants

EYL is an elective course offered to PSTs of English at the previously mentioned institution. EYL 1 is a two-credit course offered and educates the PSTs with basic knowledge of EYL. During the second half of the semester, the students are assigned to prepare lessons for their EYL teaching practicum. They are put into six groups for designing the LPs and learning materials as well as evaluations for their prospective students. One group is also responsible to recruit YLs based on specific the level to teach in the EYL community class. The classes are conducted on Sundays at the campus. Moreover, EYL 2 is a four-credit course aims at catering the PSTs with knowledge of implementing their LPs, teaching materials and evaluation. While the first half of semester is used for coaching the students to better their teaching practicum preparation as well as peer-teaching, the second half of the semester is used for teaching practicum. To run a well-designed teaching practicum, each group of PSTs is supervised by a faculty member for consultation and teaching practicum feedbacks.

Out of thirty PSTs who enrolled in EYL 1 and EYL 2 elective courses during their third year of education in academic year 2019 – 2020, ten of them were selected as the participants of this study because they met the criteria of PSTs who developed LP innovatively. By acknowledging EIL principles and themes, the LPs were concrete, specifying the language content, reiterating children-friendly materials that support their cognitive, educational, and cultural values, incorporating technology, and manipulating authentic materials ([Chien, 2019](#); [Rixon, 2019](#); [Tomlinson, 2013](#)). Out of ten participants, only one male PST whose LP was selected for this study. [Table 1](#) displays the participants' demographic information.

Data Collection and Analysis

Multiple data for this study were obtained from the PSTs' LPs, observation notes, and semi-structured interviews. The LPs were collected and selected by the end of EYL 1 course while classroom observations and semi-structured interviews were conducted during the EYL 2. Following the LPs selection, the ten PSTs were observed. The non-participant observation was employed to collect information related to the research problems and to provide a first-hand account of phenomena ([Merriam & Tisdell, 2016](#)) before they were organized into field notes. The focus of those observations is teacher-students interactions to evidence how the teacher communicates particular theme to the YLs through activities to support language learning ([Shin, 2006](#); [Shin & Crandall, 2014](#)). To complete the data of this study, all PSTs were interviewed because of some emergent situations to be clarified. The semi-structured interview questions covered self-evaluation about the innovations they had developed in their LPs and their professional learning about innovation in material and activities they had practiced during the EYL practicum like what had been carried out by [Chien \(2019\)](#).

LPs analysis was undertaken to verify the innovations encountered within the thematic LPs. They were different from the one analyzed by [Sesiorina \(2014\)](#) because the current LPs included more points to cover like characters building and intercultural awareness which was linked to EIL principles. Furthermore, they were coded manually to perceive the innovative points.

According to [Miles, et.al \(2014\)](#) as well as [Saldana \(2013\)](#), pattern or focused coding is advised to employ to answer the research question of "How does...?". Furthermore, Field note is important for the collection of concise, detailed data to describe what was observed during the observation periods ([Taylor, Bodgan, & DeVault, 2016](#)) reflected by the teacher and students' interaction. Furthermore, the data from the observations and interviews were coded and analyzed thematically.

TABLE 1 | Participants Demographic Information

No.	Participant	Gender	Pre-requisite Courses Status	Level for Practicum	Innovative Theme
1.	PST 1	Female	Passed	Grade 1	Me and My Friends
2.	PST 2	Female	Passed	Grade 2	Travelling Safely
3.	PST 3	Female	Passed	Grade 3	The Weather Forecast
4.	PST 4	Female	Passed	Grade 4	Alternative Energy
5.	PST 5	Female	Passed	Grade 4	Full Time and Part Time Jobs
6.	PST 6	Female	Passed	Grade 4	My Trip My Adventure
7.	PST 7	Female	Passed	Grade 5	Living in Harmony
8.	PST 8	Male	Passed	Grade 5	Food Shopping
9.	PST 9	Female	Passed	Grade 5	Healthy Cooking
10.	PST 10	Female	Passed	Grade 6	Unity in Diversity

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As suggested by [Tomlinson \(2013\)](#) that intelligent topics/themes for ELT like what the students can find in their daily contexts, including arts, music, health, individuals, society and culture are critical for innovative ELT. The ten LPs with intelligent themes passed the initial selection. Since there is no curriculum and syllabus for TEYL, the LPs were developed by considering innovations suggested by [Chien \(2019\)](#), [Rixon \(2019\)](#), and [Tomlinson \(2013\)](#) and feasibilities of their developments, linked to the current curriculum, integrated thematic lesson for primary school students of Indonesia and the principles of EIL ([McKay, 2003](#); [McKay, 2018](#); [Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018](#)).

Intelligent Themes Linked to YLs Real Life Experiences

In today's globalized society, YLs are exposed to a variety of global issues through various media and everyday encounters. Ten themes, namely; Me and My Friends, Travelling Safely, The Weather Forecast, Alternative Energy, Full Time and Part Time Jobs, My Trip My Adventure, Living in Harmony, Food Shopping, Healthy Cooking, and Unity in Diversity were selected because by their intelligent themes. They should be intelligence ([Tomlinson, 2013](#)) because they are representing current issues in the society. Therefore, from those themes, YLs could relate their learning to their immediate life experiences. They comprised of ...important knowledge to attain by the YLs...(PST 1, PST 4, and PST 9), ...popular and updated...(PST 2, PST 5, PST 6, and PST 8), and ...critical global issues...(PST 3, PST 7, and PST 10). The following figures help clarify the statements.

Lesson I: Me and My Friends (90 Minutes)

Skills to be emphasized:	Speaking, Writing
Target Structure:	My name is ... I have friends... She/he loves me.
Target Vocabulary:	Girl, boy, name
Objectives:	The students will be able to (SWBAT) - mention their names - use pronouns (I, me, my) - introduce themselves before their friends - differentiate boy and girl - write one of students name under a boy or a girl picture.
Materials:	Powerpoint presentation, songs' video, ball, boy and girl coloring pictures
Characters:	Religious, Independence
Intercultural:	Hug your friends, hold your friend's hand, and kiss your friends.

FIGURE 1 | LP Identity

Me and My Friends has been selected by almost all teachers of EYL for the first meeting. PST 1 also selected the theme with some improvements on the lesson. As this LP includes characters building and intercultural awareness, she designed the lesson by connecting the theme with those two points. [Figure 1](#) showcases the lesson identity which could predict the activities to carry out in the classroom. Particularly for character building and intercultural, PST 1 argues,

"...the YLs needs to know that friendship allows them to hug and kiss as well as hold hand. They can do it while singing I Love You, You Love Me song or to show feelings. In fact, I have to make it clear that it is restricted according to to Islamic value. They could hug, hold hand, and kiss their friends of the same gender."

(PST 1_IA)

On the one hand, characters building and intercultural awareness could be embedded in the teaching and learning process without being stated in the LP. On the other hand, urgency of specifying those two aspects in LP is critical to make the learning concrete and suitable with the goal of TEYL indicated by specific primary school. To evidence innovative LPs and activities, two definite points are stated; character building and intercultural awareness. They are to complete detailed part of common LP such as identity, pre-lesson activity, activities which include warm-up, presentation, practice, production, evaluation, and closing.

Pre-Lesson Activities (5 minutes)

Pre-lesson activity is arranged to invite YLs' learning readiness by singing an Opening Classroom Password. Opening Classroom Password is a song composed by specific grade PSTs as an "official" song as identification of a group and sung before the class starts. The following is the example of Opening Classroom Password from Grade 4 (Sunny Class). The Opening Classroom Password uses Doraemon theme song's tone.

*Welcome to Sunny class, welcome to Sunny class.
Say hello, good morning, and how are you today?
Are you ready to have fun, with your friends and your teachers?
Are you ready to start the class with happiness?
Let's listen and enjoy the class, in Sunny class.
Hey, shining together.
Sunny class, shining, shimmering, and splendid.
We are family.*

PST 9 clarifies the reasons of choosing the Doraemon theme songs' tone for the Opening Classroom Password, as follows.

"...of course it takes time to memorize the Opening Classroom Password. In fact, all students like it and the tone helps them to sing it again and again. I can hear some students sing it during the class activities." (PST 9_PLA_OCP)

Song is one of the attractive media for TEYL because the YLs can learn English from the vocabulary used in the song. They also can move along the song and activate their bodily intelligence ([Shin, 2014](#)).

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

Various warm-up activities were presented by the PSTs for inviting the YLs attention and linking the activity to theme of the day. The following are the examples from grade one (younger learners), grade four, and grade six (older learners).

Warm up (10 minutes)

1. Stimulating and Introducing the lesson
 - a. Telling the students that they are going to learn about themselves and their friends.
 - b. Telling them that they have friends in the class.
 - c. Giving example about telling the teacher's friend.
2. Rolling Ball Game

The teacher plays a song. Then, the student who holds the ball when the music (ABC song) is paused has to mention her/his name.

FIGURE 2 | Warm-Up Activity for Grade One – Rolling Ball Game



FIGURE 3 | Warm-Up Activity for Grade 4 – Diego's Adventure Video



FIGURE 4 | Warm-Up Activity for Grade 6 - Unity in Diversity

From [Figure 2](#), [Figure 3](#), and [Figure 4](#) there is a significant fact that different interactive activities based on the students' grades have been included into the LP. Bodily intelligence activation is projected for younger learners while challenging and comprehension activity is planned for older learners. PST 6 adds that Diego was chosen to introduce adventures experienced by Diego from Brazil which might be different from which are explored by students in Indonesia. Additionally, PST 10 selected Powtoon video about Unity in Diversity from YouTube with more English text for the sixth graders. Both PST 6 and 10 agree to use technology for EYL lessons to equip older learners with more sophisticated authentic texts, sounds of English, and intercultural contents. Besides utilized by PST 6 and 10, technology was also found in other sample LPs, like using YouTube videos for Me and My friends and Traveling Safely themes, as well as interactive PPT for almost all themes.

Presentation (15 minutes)

Presentation is urgent in TEYL. It is to provide the students clear information about the theme of the day.

Activity 2: Presentation (Listening, 15 minutes)

1. Showing all materials and ingredients for Fruits Salad and naming them one by one.
2. Practicing Gouin Series of making Fruits Salad
 - I wash all fruits.
 - I cut them into bite-sizes.
 - I combine the fruits in a mixing bowl.
 - I pour condensed milk over the fruits and mix them.
 - I scoop them into a container.
 - I add cheese grated cheese onto the fruits salad as topping.
 - I enjoy the fruit salad.
3. Offering times to the students to comment on the presentation.
4. Grouping the students to practice making Fruit Salad.
5. Assigning one of group members to “shop” the ingredients.

FIGURE 5 | Activity – Presentation - Gouin Seried to Make Fruits Salad

The presentation procedure depicted by [Figure 5](#) shows the PST 9 effort in presenting her theme communicatively. She considers the importance of lively and understandable presentation to provide information or example of doing the following particular activity. Longer presentation can be carried out for the older learners to provide detailed information. In addition, shorter and embedded theme explanation within activity could be set for younger learners. In this LP, PST 9 provides steps in making Fruits Salad in Gouin Series for students to imitate. She explains,

“Communication should run well in class. I have to present learning materials clearly and chronologically. I plan my motions to ease me recalling what to say clearly.”(PST 9_Pt)

Practice (25 minutes)

To practice English, the PSTs provide their students time to involve in class activity. As the example is activity prepared by the PST 2. She opts to involve the students in Role Play so that they can take specific role while practicing English. She justifies that LP should concisely explain detailed information about the teaching and learning activities. She argues,

“I have to make sure that my LP is understandable. If I cannot teach my students for a certain meeting, the substitute teacher can rely on my LPs without any problems of carrying out the planned activities.” (PST 2_Pr_Act)

According to [Nikolov \(2016\)](#), Role Play is one of YLs favorite classroom activities besides watching video and other oral tasks. Therefore, it should be planned carefully to provide the students' experience in playing the specific role based on the theme and ease the teacher to organize it. The following is the example.

**Practice (25 minutes)
Group Role Play**

1.	Divide the class into two groups—Group A and Group B.
2.	Show different pictures of transportations and their safety equipment should be prepared when traveling with particular transportation.
3.	Explain the students that Group A will get some clue cards for the role play. The students could see different kinds of transportation on the cards. Group B will get cards with the pictures of transportation safety equipment. Group A will demonstrate the transportation movements while group B will match the transportation with its safety equipment. When one round done, the students exchange their roles.
4.	Provide example of dialogue about asking suggestion for the safety equipment using modal “should” for a peer dialogue practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TC: What should I use today? (Show students a picture of a motorcycle). • CT: You should take a helmet and wear it. (Pick up a picture of helmet). • TC: Wow, thank you very much. Now I can ride safely.
5.	Flow to each peer to see the students practices, provide feedbacks as well as alternative vocabulary used for the interaction

FIGURE 6 | Activity – Travelling Safety Role Play

[Figure 6](#) evidences the clear role play procedures to make the YLs involve in the activity to attain a new knowledge about the theme by using English. Based on the LP, this Role Play is carried out after all students get the basic understanding about equipment used for transportation from CoCo melon's music video No Play Safe from YouTube.

Production (20 minutes)

Since the learning entails product, project can be included in production activity for TEYL, based on theme. This project can be considered as evaluation for the YLs' learning. The following figure explains the project identified in Grade 4's LP.

Project (20 minutes)

Let's make an alternative energy model!

- a. The teacher explains the activity that the students have to follow.
- b. The teacher explains the materials used for making the model; pictures, playdough, and craft supplies.
- c. The teacher provides example of step by step in making the model by emphasizing the specific vocabulary related to each model.
- d. The teacher shares the way how to present alternative energy model to the audience.
- e. The teacher assigns the students to start making the model.
- f. The teacher moves from one group to another to ask questions related to alternative energy and asks them to prepare a presentation about the model. The presentation should cover alternative energy name, materials used to make it, and advantage (s) of using it.

FIGURE 7 | Production - Project of Making Alternative Energy Model

[Figure 7](#) elucidates the PST 4 detailed explanation by providing steps to avoid students' misunderstanding. According to PST 4, the steps are presented to the students in order to explain the activity, exemplify the language' functions, and monitor their learning. Monitoring can be functioned as evaluating for TEYL. PST 4 states,

“When I come and join the group discussion, I ask some questions to monitor and evaluate the students' learning...I will get the other score to evaluate student's leaning from group presentation. What I understand about process evaluation is when I can evaluate my students' learning during the learning process.” (PST 4_Pro_Ev)

Furthermore, there are various types evaluation carried out by the other PSTs to get the students' learning result based on their level. In fact, evaluating the students by project is beneficial for them. [Nurhajati \(2018\)](#) found that project-based learning (PBL) as teaching model is suitable for creating product and providing learning opportunities for students to get a success by teamwork, imagination and critical thinking. Moreover, the following section provides examples.

Evaluation (10 minutes)

In EYL 1, the PSTs had been well-informed about evaluation in TEYL. Its principles have been explored in previous studies (i.e. [Butler & Zeng, 2015](#); [Nikolov, 2016](#); [Zein, 2012](#)). All PSTs had agreed that they could evaluate their students' learning not only by providing test but also including it in tasks or activities to avoid the YLs anxiety of being tested. The following Take Home Project is the example.

Activity 6: Evaluation (Take Home Project)
(10 minutes)

The teacher explains the way how the students can identify different activities related to Living in Harmony. The students are assigned to interview people at their homes to name activity (-ies) which meet the criteria of living in harmony.

Living in Harmony
A Project by _____

No.	Name	Activity

FIGURE 8 | Evaluation – Living in Harmony Take Home Project

[Figure 8](#) exemplifies how Take Home Project is formed in order to evaluate the YLs' understanding about activities related to Living in Harmony. This evaluation is taken home to do with parents or other family member (s). Besides evaluating the students' learning it is also for strengthening every student and family bonding. PST 7 has specific reason of evaluating the YLs' learning by assigning them to finish the project at home. She affirms,

“...it is challenging but I expect the YLs' could extend their knowledge related to the theme from real life setting.”(PST 7_TH_Ev)

As there is no particular requirement of conducting evaluation to YLs, all PSTs agree to use various forms. However, processed evaluation is the PSTs' preference in order to avoid YLs' anxiety of being evaluated ([Nikolov & Djigunović, 2019](#)). Further, the students' project could be also considered as portfolio which is powerful for YLs' learning ([Seitz & Bartholomew, 2008](#)) because it can function to promote the students awareness of their learning progress ([Chou, 2014](#)).

Closing (5 minutes)

Similar to opening, every grade has Closing Classroom Password. This password is sung before the PSTs greet their students a goodbye. The following is the example of Grade 2 Closing Classroom Password. The lyric was composed by grade 2 PSTs and the tone was from one of Indonesian children classical song “Cangkul – Cangkul”.

*Goodbye goodbye my teachers.
We want to go home and see you next time.
Goodbye goodbye all my friends.
Thank you for today and see you next time.*

For younger learners, shorter opening or closing classroom password is suggested. It can be sung along with the movements which represent the lyric.

All of the samples LPs were developed by considering some elements proposed by [Shin and Crandall \(2014\)](#), consisting of skill to be emphasized, target structure, target vocabulary, objectives, materials – related to the theme and activities. In addition to those elements, character building as the attribute of the 2013 curriculum of Indonesia and intercultural competence for providing opportunities for learners to engage with culture in and around language ([Newton, 2016](#)) were included.

Planning the activities for TEYL is crucial because the YLs' short attention span should be accommodated by the meaningful and fun activities that make the learners love learning. That is the reason why curriculum innovation is needed and some factors that support should be considered ([Orafi, 2013](#)) namely; the innovation nature; the teachers' beliefs role, teachers' training and development; the examination system; and the context where the innovation is implemented. Based on the LPs developed by all PSTs, the innovations have served the new paradigm of EIL that the ELT is providing more exposure and wider range of practicing how to use English for interaction ([Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018](#)).

Engaging Activities to Enhance YLs English Learning

Following the LPs that the PSTs had developed, engaging activities were showcased during the teaching practicum. As mentioned by [Carless \(2012\)](#) that innovation brings improvement in ELT, it should be developed gradually in primary level. As a result, new pedagogical approaches, such as task-based language teaching ([Pinter, 2019](#)), changes to teaching materials ([Tomlinson, 2013](#)), technological developments, such as computer-assisted language learning, and alternative assessment methods ([Nikolov & Djigunović, 2019](#)) such as the use of portfolios should be emphasized. PSTs, as prospective EYL teachers, should learn about all of the aforementioned approaches. They should be practiced to enhance the YLs' engagement in learning during their

teaching practicum. The practices are exemplified by the following activities.

As young learners like learning by doing activities because they can practice English within specific context, PST 3 took their students outdoors to learn about Weather. Learning from the current situation outside the class, PST 3 guided the students to forecast the weather.



FIGURE 9 | Learning Weather Forecast Contextually

Figure 9 explains the way the PST 3 teaches this intelligent theme to her students to involve all students to interact communicatively, to get the points of their learning. Excerpt 1 helps clarify the evidence.

Excerpt 1

PST 3: What's a weather what's a weather, what's a weather like today?

What is it? You are using an umbrella but it is not raining. You need water to drink to keep you hydrated.

Ss : Sunny.

PST 3 : Yes, right. It's sunny.

S : But, I bring umbrella every day. Jaga jaga (preparing) for rainy or sunny day.

Wow, wonderful idea. You can watch Weather Forecast on TV or Info BMKG from your mobile phone.

Excerpt 1 evidences that PST 3 effort to make her students engage in the activity has been reflected by the students' willingness to interact with her in English. While the other activity which attracted the students' excitement was also performed under Foods Shopping theme. The YLs enjoyed foods shopping simulation because they could bargain the price, use money toys to pay, and count the change. PST 8 explains,

"Some students have not got any chance to do foods shopping without their family and they find the simulation fun. They tried to figure out different money value and count how much they need to spent for buying foods." (PST 8_Act_FS)

The activities to enhance engagement in TEYL practiced by PST 3 and PST 8 illustrate that meaningful activities

affect reciprocal interactions using the vocabulary they have known (Chou, 2014).

In addition, such interesting theme like Full Time and Part Time Jobs had invited young learners to engage in the learning activities. By linking young learners' background knowledge with learning materials, PST 5 asserts that she found more students would like to get their turn give comments, answer questions, as well as voluntarily practice to use new vocabulary. PST 5's belief about YLs' potential to relate the information that they get with the immediate situations attracts her to compose a Part Time Jobs Song which is sung by using an Indonesian classical children song's tone "Cicak Cicak di Dinding".

"...of course I have concern about part time jobs to include in my teaching because the students need to know kinds of jobs now, and they can have idea of choosing part time jobs if the situation does not permit them to choose full time jobs." (PTS 5_Act_PTJ)

The following Figure 10 is a PPT slide containing a song lyric sung by the students and the content had attracted their attention to communicate using English.

Part Time Jobs Song

Waiter, Cashier, Youtuber
Online Seller and Online Driver
They are all Part Time Workers
Work any places
Unfixed salaries



FIGURE 10 | Part Time Jobs Song's Lyric

Song was used by PST 5 for teaching this theme because it constructs exciting and effective EYL classroom (Shin, 2014) and allows the YLs use their implicit learning skills based on the context (Nikolov & Djigunović, 2019). Furthermore, this PPT was not only used as guidance for singing the song but as trigger for students to discuss the theme. The following excerpt is the example.

Excerpt 2

PST 5 : Well, how do you like the song everyone? Do you like it?

Ss : Yes.

PST 5 : Which job do you like to do?

S : YouTuber. Bikin video-video keren (Making some cool videos) Miss.

PST 5 : Good. What about the others? Mau jadi apa?

Ss : Online seller, online driver.

PST 5 : Yes. Why do you like it Alya?

- S : *I like selling things online very much. Ga perlu ke mana-mana. Di rumah aja dapet duit (I only stay at home and make money) Miss.*
- PST 5 : *Interesting. Remember, you will have unfixed salary when you do it.*
- S : *Tapi dapetnya lebih banyak (But I earn more money.)*
- PST 5 : *Well, waiter cashier Youtuber.....*
- Ss : *Waiter, cashier, Youtuber....*

Excerpt 2 displays example how PST 5 invite the students to speak up. Prompted by the PPT as well as the songs, the students are encouraged to express their ideas using English which is alternated with Indonesian. This idea was initiated by PST 5 and in line with [Nikolov's and Djigunović's \(2019\)](#) notion that grade 4 (8-11 years old) students are able to do multiple matching tasks and use English with L1 support. [Setyaningrum, at. al., \(2020\)](#) found that Indonesian PSTs of EYL also used Indonesian during their teaching practicum and it could be as example how TEYL accommodate the young learners balance proficiency in L1 and L2.

Besides interacting with the PSTs, the students were also provided with activities to interact with each other. Excerpt 3 is the example how the interactions between the students when they enjoy fruits salad as the activity under Healthy Cooking theme.

Excerpt 3

- S1 : *I love fruits salad. That is why I can speak English.*
- T : *Masa sih? Kalo suka rujak?(Really? What if I like rujak (traditional Javanese fruit salad with spicy palm sugar souce)) Comments, please!*
- S1 : *Bukan gitu (I don't mean it), I am kidding. You eat rujak and you speak English.*
- S3 : *Me. I love rujak and I can speak English.*
- Ss : *Hahahaha...*
- S4 : *I love rujak and fruits salad because they are healthy foods.*
- T : *Great job everyone. Me, I love all kinds of salads for my health.*
- S2 : *I love to eat fruits salad but I don't like to make it.*

The interactions during or after particular activity reflects the students have got new knowledge and English vocabulary based on content. In excerpt 3, PST 9 invites more interactions by posing questions and relates it with fruits salad in Javanese culture.

One other engaging, meaningful, and creative activity shown by the observations was under Alternative Energy theme. The students learned some new vocabulary such as solar panel, windmill, electricity, power plant, and micro hydro power plant. Moreover, inviting the students'

involvement in the class activity by modeling alternative energy from play dough was one of the innovations that the PST had made. [Carless \(2012\)](#) and [Tomlinson \(2013\)](#) argumentation about innovation had been reflected in that activity. According to PST 4, the activity involves cognitive, affective, and psychomotor simultaneously because the students are encouraged to make the models then use the new vocabulary when they present their alternative energy models. In addition, PST 4 clarifies that she changed her belief about applying paper-pencil based test to evaluate her students by observing individual learning progress during the lesson and group evaluation presentation. The following [Figure 11](#) features the students' alternative energy models.

[Figure 11](#) elucidates that non paper-pencil evaluation worked very well with YLs. Playdough solar panel, windmill, and micro hydro power plan were made and presented by the students to their classmates by using the vocabulary that they had learned during the session.



FIGURE 11 | Group Work Activity for Lesson Evaluation: Playdough Solar Panel, Windmill, and Micro Hydro Power Plant

PST 4 explains,

“...so cute, they really could make it. From this activity I can evaluate my students understanding about the language and content from group discussion that I attend. They also perform better presentation because they can prepare it in group beforehand. This is challenging, yet entertaining evaluation.” (PST 4_Cr_Ev)

The PST 4 moved from one group to the other and had a discussion with the group members while evaluating the students' language performance. [Nikolov and Djigunović \(2019\)](#) suggested feedbacks and evaluation for YLs should be practiced along the continuum. They should be appropriate not only for evaluating but also for learning. In fact, the prevailing situation should be taken as consideration. [Sulistiyo et al. \(2019\)](#) recommended the assessment for TEYL is designed by the teachers for pupils' and institution needs.

CONCLUSION

Innovative thematic lessons in TEYL had been practiced by the pre-service EYL teachers who enrolled in EYL elective course. They started it by planning the lessons with intelligent themes, teaching materials, and evaluations. They followed the experts' ideas for innovative lessons by integrating themes and principles of EIL (Chien, 2019; Rixon, 2019; Rose & Montakantiwong, 2018; Tomlinson, 2013) with various level of implementation. Samples of LPs, activities, and evaluations displayed in this article were selected because they showcase the singularity for characters building and intercultural awareness. The LPs showcase the innovations of integrating characters building and intercultural awareness that had not been investigated simultaneously by previous seminal studies. Character buildings like religious, teamwork, independence, integrity were integrated into activities like how to behave with friends of different gender, working together model energy alternative, deciding what to do when grow up, and respecting others in diversity. Moreover, intercultural awareness was accommodated within videos experience across cultures and PSTs and students' interactions.

As the innovation applied, such English expressions were used for asking and telling someone's jobs, predicting the weather and weather simulation, grouping people and their different activities, figuring out the healthy foods, planning safe trip, selling and buying, and modeling alternative energy. To evaluate, the PSTs practiced to develop the evaluation based on the current learning situation utilizing processed evaluation. Therefore, the innovations practiced by the PSTs were not not restricted to technology integration but any changes that affected the learners' performance after particular innovative lesson was conducted. The use of some authentic materials which are commonly used in EYL class like own body, clothes, toys, drawings, and other objects, as well as activities such as shaking hands, holding hands, role playing or simulation evidenced meaningful for YLs to learn language functions. In addition, valuing L1 for learning L2 and strengthening characters for national identity and intercultural awareness for catering the students' sense of using English as an international language are to accommodate EIL principles for TEYL.

This present research was conducted at a private university during EYL teaching practice that all preparations were organized well to instill the PSTs readiness for their future teaching. Meanwhile, innovations in the real EYL classrooms practices should be considered to investigate near future. Each innovation can be explored more comprehensively that the EYL teachers can take the research findings to pattern their innovations in TEYL.

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