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An Investigation into The Implementation of An English Language Preparation Program for Preschool Children in Kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, Dong Thap Province

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Article Info.	Abstract
Received: April 15, 2026	<i>This study examines the implementation of an English Language Preparation program for preschool children in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, Vietnam. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 32 preschool administrators, 70 teachers, and 143 parents through structured questionnaires. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were organized into broad thematic categories. The study explores stakeholders' perceptions of program implementation, supporting conditions, and perceived challenges. The findings indicate that the program has been implemented for a considerable period in most kindergartens and is delivered with a consistent time allocation. Stakeholders generally expressed positive attitudes toward early English exposure, particularly regarding its role in fostering children's interest, enjoyment, and social interaction. Parents also reported high levels of children's enthusiasm and spontaneous use of English at home. Despite these positive perceptions, several persistent challenges were identified, including shortages of qualified teaching staff, inadequate facilities and instructional materials, and limited opportunities for teachers' professional development, particularly in developmentally appropriate pedagogy and assessment practices. However, these findings should be interpreted with caution, as stakeholders' perceptions do not provide direct evidence of instructional quality, program effectiveness, or children's English language development. The findings suggest that although the program has received broad stakeholder support, its long-term quality and sustainability depend on stronger institutional support, targeted professional development for teachers, and enhanced collaboration between schools and families.</i>
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1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, English proficiency has become an essential competence for individuals worldwide, supporting professional development, everyday communication, and access to information and entertainment. As the global lingua franca in education, science, technology, and international communication, English plays a pivotal role in promoting personal development and facilitating social participation (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2008). Consequently, English language education has received increasing attention across many countries. This growing recognition has prompted a shift in educational policy toward introducing English at progressively younger ages, including the preschool level. Early childhood is widely regarded as a critical period for language acquisition, during which children demonstrate remarkable capacities for sound perception, imitation, and natural language learning (Lenneberg, 1967; Scovel, 1988).

Recognizing these developmental advantages, various international educational frameworks have been implemented to facilitate early linguistic growth. Models such as “Language Awareness” (often referred to in European contexts as *éveil aux langues*) focus on developing a child’s sensitivity to linguistic diversity and the phonetic structure of sounds (Goswami & Bryant, 2016). Similarly, many countries have implemented early English programs in kindergartens and nursery schools under different models such as *language awareness*, *early language exposure*, and *language development*. These programs aim to familiarize children with a foreign language in enjoyable and age-appropriate ways rather than to achieve formal language proficiency (Ekizoglu, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). A survey by the British Council also revealed that over 60 countries have now integrated such English language preparation or exposure programs into their national kindergarten curricula (Rixon, 2013).

Over the last two decades, Vietnam’s education system has paid more attention to English as a foreign language education for young learners at primary schools, and even at preschools and language centers (Le et al., 2024). Additionally, Huynh (2018) witnessed that teaching English to children in Vietnam is a fast-growing trend and that private kindergartens or public kindergartens have English programs for children under the age of 5. In 2014, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued a Circular, promulgating the National Foreign Language Project 2020, which highlights the goal of developing human resources capable of using foreign languages independently and confidently in multilingual and multicultural environments. For early childhood English education alone, the issued Circular No. 50/2020/TT-BGDĐT, providing a formal framework for the “English language preparation program” (*Chương trình làm quen với tiếng Anh*) in preschools, encouraging kindergartens and nursery schools to implement activities that familiarize children with English in a fun and age-appropriate manner, mirroring the “early exposure” models used internationally (MOET, 2014, 2020).

However, the transition from policy to practice in Vietnam has encountered significant challenges although (Chu et al., 2023) affirmed that language development is one of the important tasks for the comprehensive personality development of kindergarteners in particular and preschool children in general. National evaluations suggest that English preparation programs have not yet been implemented with the consistency or success required to meet modern standards (Le, 2019). Various barriers have been reported, including a lack of qualified teachers, limited materials, insufficient professional training, and a focus on traditional recitation over holistic engagement (Nguyen, 2023). Whether similar challenges exist in Cao Lanh Ward remains unclear, as systematic empirical evidence on the current implementation of English language preparation programs in the locality is still limited. This

discrepancy is notably apparent in Cao Lanh Ward although the region has been officially recognized by UNESCO as a Global Learning City, a distinction that implies a high standard of lifelong learning and educational innovation. This discrepancy may also be present in Cao Lanh Ward, where systematic empirical evidence on current implementation remains limited. When the critical importance of early language acquisition and the current localized pedagogical gaps have appeared, there is a clear need for a systematic evaluation of current practices. Therefore, this study aims to investigate stakeholder perceptions of the implementation of the English language preparation program in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward. Specifically, it addresses the following questions: (1) How is the program currently organized and implemented? (2) How do managers, teachers, and parents perceive its conditions, benefits, and challenges? (3) What common concerns and priorities for improvement emerge across stakeholder groups?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overview of English Language Preparation for Preschool Children

In Vietnam, as in many other member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), early English education has been promoted through educational reform policies (Nguyen et al., 2024). Within this context, *English language preparation (làm quen với tiếng Anh)* (ELP) for preschool children is defined as “an educational activity organized with clear objectives, plans, content, methods, instructional resources, and assessment by educators to support the development of a second language among preschool children. Teachers are encouraged to use songs, stories, poems, and games in English flexibly and creatively when planning and implementing these educational activities in preschool settings” (Nguyen et al., 2024, p. 48). Although the definition refers to second-language development, the primary purpose of the program is to familiarize children with English through developmentally appropriate experiences rather than to develop measurable language proficiency.

This understanding aligns closely with international perspectives on early foreign language education. Early language programs are widely conceptualized as language awareness or early language exposure initiatives that emphasize children’s sensitivity to linguistic diversity and foster initial familiarity with a foreign language (Ekizoglu, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). Within this perspective, early English exposure is viewed as a foundation-building process that aims to cultivate positive attitudes toward languages, openness to linguistic diversity, and readiness for later formal language learning rather than immediate language proficiency (Pinter, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). Instead of developing full communicative competence, such programs seek to enhance children’s awareness of other languages and cultures while preparing them psychologically and linguistically for subsequent formal instruction. From a developmental perspective, early English language preparation is supported primarily by implicit learning mechanisms. Young children tend to acquire language through repeated exposure, memorization of unanalyzed chunks, and contextualized language use rather than through explicit rule learning (Nikolov, 2023). Furthermore, English exposure is integrated into everyday classroom activities, such as songs, chants, storytelling, games, movement, and daily routines, allowing children to encounter the language in meaningful and emotionally supportive contexts (Guz, 2016).

Overall, although ELP is specific to Vietnam’s education policy, it is conceptually consistent with international approaches to early foreign language education for young children. Internationally, comparable programs are described using different terms, including *language awareness*, *early foreign language exposure*, and *language development* (where defined within specific educational frameworks). Despite these differences in terminology,

preschool programs share several core principles, including child-centered, play-based learning, developmentally appropriate practices, and meaningful language exposure (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011).

2.2. Methods of ELP: International Perspectives and the Vietnamese Context

International research on early foreign language education consistently emphasizes the importance of young children's active engagement and initiative in the language learning process (Nguyen et al., 2024). A widely recognized pedagogical principle in early language education is the emphasis on listening and comprehension before speaking, often referred to as the *silent period*. According to Krashen (1981), young learners may require a period of receptive exposure during which they actively process language input without pressure to produce oral language. During this stage, children develop receptive vocabulary and comprehension through observation, gestures, and meaningful participation, even when their verbal production remains limited (DaSilva Iddings & Jang, 2008). International research also indicates that assessment in preschool foreign language programs is predominantly informal and observation-based, focusing on children's engagement, participation, and communicative confidence rather than linguistic accuracy. Such assessment practices help prevent children's silence or limited oral production from being misinterpreted as a lack of learning while ensuring that assessment remains developmentally appropriate (Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2023; Thieme et al., 2022). Within preschool education, English is viewed as a complementary learning experience that supports children's holistic development rather than as a competing academic subject. This perspective is consistent with international recommendations that emphasize safeguarding children's well-being, promoting balanced language development, and preserving the central role of play and overall development during the preschool years (Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011).

In Vietnam, these methodological principles are reflected in the work of local researchers, who have emphasized that young children learn naturally, develop social skills, and become willing to learn an additional language through their innate curiosity (Huynh, 2018). These perspectives are also consistent with the principles of assessment outlined in Circular No. 50/2020/TT-BGDĐT. Both the international literature and the Vietnamese policy framework emphasize play-based learning, receptive-first language exposure, observation-based assessment, and children's emotional well-being as core pedagogical principles. Accordingly, Circular No. 50/2020/TT-BGDĐT can be understood as a policy-level operationalization of international theories of early language education, adapted to Vietnam's educational, institutional, and cultural context. Within this context, parents play a crucial role in creating a supportive home environment and encouraging children's language-related activities, thereby promoting coherent language development (Dang et al., 2021). Similarly, Hoang (2022) argued that families constitute an important and objective source of information for evaluating the quality of preschool education services, enabling educational institutions to make appropriate improvements that better meet the needs of children, families, and society. Taken together, this theoretical alignment provides a coherent conceptual foundation for examining how English language preparation is implemented in Vietnamese kindergartens and for interpreting the empirical findings of the present study.

2.3. The Importance and Educational Value of ELP for Preschool Children

Research on language development suggests that early childhood is a sensitive period for phonological development, during which children demonstrate a strong capacity to perceive and imitate speech sounds and intonation patterns (Scovel, 1988). Scovel (1988) argues that children possess greater phonological imitation abilities than adults. From this perspective, ELP provides a favorable foundation for phonological development through

meaningful exposure rather than formal language instruction. The potential benefits of early English language preparation extend beyond language learning and may contribute to children's broader cognitive and socio-emotional development. Cameron (2001) argues that children who are introduced to a foreign language at an early age tend to develop greater confidence and willingness to communicate. Through playful and low-pressure language activities, children become more willing to express themselves and participate in interactions, both in English and in their first language, without fear of making mistakes. Such experiences are particularly valuable in early childhood education, where creating a supportive learning environment is essential (Cameron, 2001). In addition, early familiarity with English may facilitate subsequent formal language learning in primary education. Children with prior exposure to English are often better prepared to engage in formal English instruction during the early years of schooling (Pinter, 2006). Beyond linguistic outcomes, early exposure to a foreign language has also been associated with cognitive benefits, including enhanced attentional control, cognitive flexibility, and problem-solving skills (Bialystok, 2001). Another important educational value of English language preparation lies in its contribution to children's intercultural awareness. Brewster et al. (2002) emphasize that early exposure to English enables children to encounter diverse cultural content through stories, songs, films, and visual media. Such experiences help preschool children develop an initial understanding of cultural diversity and foster openness toward other cultures from an early age.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1. Research Design and Setting

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the implementation of the ELP program for preschool children in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, Dong Thap Province. A multi-perspective approach was adopted by collecting data from three key stakeholder groups: preschool managers, teachers, and parents. This design enabled a comprehensive examination of program implementation from administrative, pedagogical, and family perspectives. Data from classroom observations, interviews, or other qualitative methods are not reported in this article because the present study was designed as a preliminary survey to examine the extent to which kindergartens have implemented the requirements of Circular No. 50/2020/TT-BGDĐT and to identify the major strengths and challenges encountered during program implementation. The research was conducted in all 12 kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, including nine public and three private institutions. Participants were categorized into three stakeholder groups:

Preschool managers. This group comprised 32 school administrators, including principals and vice-principals, who were responsible for managing and overseeing the implementation of the ELP program. The questionnaire collected background information on participants' professional roles and the duration of program implementation at their schools. It also examined their perceptions of organizational conditions, institutional support, implementation challenges, and recommendations for improving the quality and effectiveness of the program.

Preschool teachers. This group comprised 70 teachers involved in the delivery of the English language preparation program, including English teachers employed by the participating kindergartens, preschool teachers with additional qualifications or experience in English teaching, and external English teachers contracted by the schools. The questionnaire collected information on participants' teaching roles, years of professional experience, instructional conditions, perceptions of program effectiveness, professional support, and the challenges they encountered in teaching English to preschool children.

Parents of preschool children. This group consisted of 143 parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in kindergarten classes, including the *Mầm* (3-year-olds), *Chồi* (4-year-olds), and *Lá* (5-year-olds) levels. The questionnaire collected information on children's age groups, parents' motivations for enrolling their children in the ELP program, observations of children's attitudes and behaviors toward English learning, perceived benefits and challenges, forms of family support for English learning at home, and parents' expectations and recommendations for school-based English programs.

3.2. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using three structured questionnaires, each specifically designed for one participant group. All questionnaires were administered online via Google Forms and included a combination of multiple-choice items, Likert-scale statements, and open-ended questions. The survey links were distributed to participants through the participating kindergartens. Before accessing the questionnaire, participants were provided with an information sheet explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and their right to decline or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Submission of a completed questionnaire was regarded as evidence of informed consent. Participants were also informed that no personally identifiable information would be collected, that individual responses would remain inaccessible to school administrators and other third parties, and that all data would be used solely for research purposes and stored securely in a confidential manner. Ethical principles, including informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality, were maintained throughout the study.

The questionnaire items were developed based on the objectives of the study, the provisions of Circular No. 50/2020/TT-BGDĐT, and previous research on early foreign language education (e.g., Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2024). Likert-scale items employed a five-point response format (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), with higher scores generally indicating more positive perceptions. Missing responses were handled on an item-by-item basis. Because the questionnaire items were designed to assess distinct aspects of program implementation rather than a single latent construct, each item was analyzed and reported separately using descriptive statistics. Accordingly, internal consistency reliability (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) was not calculated.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Research Results on Preschool Managers' Responses

This section presents the findings obtained from the questionnaire responses of preschool managers in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward. A total of 32 preschool managers participated in the study, including principals and vice-principals, with the latter representing the larger proportion of respondents. Most managers reported that the ELP program had been implemented in their schools for more than five years, whereas only a small proportion indicated an implementation period of approximately two to three years. These findings suggest that the program has been established in most kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward rather than being a recently introduced initiative. Regarding organizational arrangements, most managers indicated that the ELP program was organized so that each existing kindergarten class had a corresponding English class, reflecting an approach aligned with the schools' existing class structure. A smaller proportion of schools reported grouping children from different classes within the same age group for ELP activities. With respect to scheduling, responses were highly consistent across schools. Nearly all managers reported that English language preparation activities were conducted for two class periods per week during regular

school hours. Detailed information on participants' characteristics and the main features of program implementation is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile of Pre-school Managers and Key Implementation Characteristics (N = 32)

Variable	Category	n	%
Job position	Principal	12	37.5
	Vice principal	20	62.5
Implementation duration	Over 5 years	30	93.8
	About 2–3 years	2	6.2
Class organization model	One English class corresponding to each existing class	23	71.9
	Group children from different classes within the same age	8	25.0
	No responses	1	3.1
Time allocation	Two periods/week during official school hours	31	96.9
	Missing response	1	3.1
Reported constraints*	Lack of teaching staff	10	31.2
	Lack of facilities	6	18.8

Note () Multiple responses were allowed. Percentages were calculated based on the total number of managers (N = 32).*

Managers were asked to evaluate several aspects of the conditions supporting the implementation of the ELP program using a five-point Likert scale. The results indicate noticeable differences across the evaluated domains. Among the implementation conditions, parental support and cooperation received the highest mean ratings, suggesting that managers generally perceived parents as supportive and willing to collaborate with schools in implementing the program. The legal and policy framework, together with support and guidance from higher-level authorities and local government, received moderately positive ratings. These findings indicate that managers generally recognized the availability of policy guidance and institutional support, although these were not perceived as fully addressing the practical challenges encountered during program implementation. By contrast, teaching staff and facilities, equipment, and instructional materials received comparatively lower ratings than the other implementation conditions. These findings suggest that managers regarded human resources and material resources as the most challenging aspects of program implementation. The mean scores and standard deviations for each implementation condition are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Managers' Ratings of Implementation Conditions (Likert Scale 1-5; N = 32)

Implementation condition	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Legal/policy basis (documents, guidance, orientation)	32	3.75	0.62	3	5
Facilities, equipment, and materials	32	3.50	0.62	3	5
Teaching staff	32	3.38	0.66	3	5
Parental support and cooperation	32	4.12	0.34	4	5
Support and guidance from authorities	32	3.69	0.54	3	5

When asked to identify areas in which schools had not yet received sufficient support, managers most frequently highlighted the need for professional development, particularly training in developmentally appropriate teaching methods and assessment practices for preschool children. Managers also identified a need for additional teaching materials, instructional equipment, improved facilities, and financial resources to sustain and enhance the implementation of the ELP program. Although parental support received the highest overall ratings, some managers emphasized the importance of continuing communication with parents and raising their awareness of the objectives of English language preparation at the preschool level. These responses suggest that, in addition to material and professional support, sustained home-school collaboration remains an important component of successful program implementation.

4.2. Research Results on Teachers' Responses

This section presents the findings from the questionnaire responses of 70 teachers, focusing on their professional backgrounds, perceived teaching conditions, views on parental support and early English learning, and priorities for improving instructional quality. Most respondents were preschool teachers with additional qualifications or experience in English teaching (67; 95.7%), whereas only a small number were full-time English teachers employed by the kindergartens (2; 2.9%) or external English teachers contracted by the schools (1; 1.4%). These findings indicate that ELP at the preschool level is implemented primarily by preschool teachers who assume responsibility for English instruction in addition to their regular teaching duties, rather than by a dedicated English teaching workforce. Teaching experience varied considerably among the respondents. Approximately one-third of the teachers (23; 32.9%) reported between four and eight years of experience teaching English to preschool and primary school children, while about one-quarter (18; 25.7%) had more than 10 years of experience. At the same time, an equal proportion (18; 25.7%) reported that they had begun teaching English only in the current academic year, suggesting ongoing changes in staffing and the allocation of English-related teaching responsibilities within kindergartens.

Teachers were asked to evaluate several statements concerning their teaching conditions and professional support using a five-point Likert scale. Overall, the findings indicate that teachers perceived their instructional conditions as moderately favorable, although several limitations remained. Most teachers agreed that ELP was implemented according to a defined program with specified content, time allocation, and instructional requirements. They also reported that their classrooms were equipped with the basic facilities necessary to conduct ELP activities. Similarly, many teachers indicated that they had access to at least one set of instructional materials or textbooks for English teaching. By contrast, ratings related to professional support, including guidance on teaching methods, instructional materials, and scheduling, were comparatively lower. These findings suggest that although support mechanisms were available, teachers did not always perceive them as timely, systematic, or sufficiently responsive to their instructional needs.

**Table 3 Teachers' Ratings of Teaching Conditions and Perceptions
(Likert Scale 1–5; N = 70)**

Item	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Teaching follows a defined program (time, content, methods, assessment)	70	3.66	0.80	1	5
Classroom has minimum equipment for preferred teaching methods	70	3.76	0.73	1	5
Provided with at least one set of textbooks/materials	70	3.76	0.71	1	5

Item	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Receives timely support when requesting methods/resources	70	3.57	0.71	2	5
Parents are willing to support children learning English	70	3.89	0.81	2	5
Preschool children should focus on Vietnamese rather than English	70	3.16	1.04	1	5

Regarding teachers' perceptions of parental support for the ELP program, respondents generally reported positive views. In particular, the statement concerning parents' willingness to support their children's English learning received relatively high ratings. This finding is consistent with preschool managers' responses, which also identified parental cooperation as a key strength in implementing the program. At the same time, teachers expressed more varied views regarding the appropriateness of early English learning. Ratings for the statement that preschool children should prioritize Vietnamese over English showed greater variability than those for the other items, indicating differing opinions among teachers. While many respondents supported early English exposure, others appeared more cautious because of developmental considerations. These findings suggest that teachers hold diverse perspectives on balancing early foreign language exposure with the development of children's first language in preschool settings.

Teachers were also asked to identify the area they considered the highest priority for improving the quality of the ELP program. Their responses showed a clear convergence around a small number of key priorities, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers' Reported Priority Areas for Improving English Teaching Quality (N = 70)

Priority area	N	%
Invest more in facilities and equipment	25	35.7
Provide training on assessment and evaluation methods	21	30.0
Improve parents' awareness of the importance of English learning	18	25.7
Change class organization or time allocation	4	5.7
Change the curriculum	2	2.9

The results indicate that facilities and instructional equipment were perceived as the highest priority for improvement, followed closely by the need for professional development, particularly in assessment practices appropriate for preschool children. A substantial proportion of teachers also emphasized the importance of raising parents' awareness, suggesting that clearer communication about the goals and nature of the ELP program may help foster shared understanding and strengthen home-school collaboration.

4.3. Research Results on Parents' Responses

This section presents the findings from the questionnaire responses of 143 parents, focusing on (i) their reasons for enrolling their children in the ELP preparation program, (ii) their observations of children's responses to English learning, and (iii) family support practices and suggestions for program improvement. Parents were asked to indicate their primary reason for allowing their children to participate in English learning. The most frequently reported reason was the perceived long-term benefits of English learning (66; 46.3%), followed by the influence of other parents' investment in English education (32; 22.4%) and children's interest or aptitude for learning English (22; 15.4%). Smaller proportions of parents selected reasons related to national education policy (13; 9.1%) or support for school initiatives (10; 7.0%).

Parents generally reported positive changes in their children's emotional and behavioral responses to English learning. Overall, the findings indicate highly positive perceptions of children's engagement with English both at school and at home. In particular, many parents agreed that their children looked forward to English lessons and frequently used English words or phrases, or imitated English-related actions, at home. Parents also reported positive changes in their children's social skills following participation in the program. By contrast, the statement describing children's negative reactions to English-related conversations or activities at home received relatively low ratings, suggesting that such responses were observed less frequently. These findings are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5. Parents' Ratings of Children's Responses to English Learning
(Likert Scale 1–5; N = 143)**

Item (Parents' observations)	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Child looks forward to English lesson days	143	4.41	0.73	1	5
Child reacts negatively when family members use/talk about English	143	1.54	0.67	1	3
At home, child uses English words/phrases or imitates English-related activities	143	4.38	0.79	1	5
After learning English, parents notice positive change in social skills	143	4.41	0.74	1	5

Parents also reported how they supported their children's English learning at home. The most frequently reported form of support was purchasing English learning materials (48; 33.6%), followed by providing electronic devices and educational software (35; 24.5%). A notable proportion of parents indicated that they did not provide any support for English learning at home (32; 22.4%). Other forms of support included speaking or playing in English with their children (16; 11.2%) and arranging additional English tutoring (10; 7.0%). Only two parents did not respond to this question (2; 1.4%). Finally, although many parents provided brief responses such as “no opinion,” “no suggestion,” or general expressions of satisfaction with the school's English program, a smaller number offered specific recommendations. The most common suggestions included (a) sharing lesson content and learning materials with parents to facilitate children's learning at home, (b) increasing the number of English lessons, and (c) creating more opportunities for children to communicate in English and to experience an English-rich learning environment.

To facilitate triangulation across stakeholder groups, Table 6 presents a synthesized comparison of the key findings reported by preschool managers, teachers, and parents. Whereas the preceding sections present the findings for each stakeholder group separately, Table 6 integrates these perspectives to identify areas of convergence and divergence regarding program implementation, implementation conditions, and priority needs. This comparison provides an overall synthesis of stakeholder perspectives and serves as a foundation for the interpretation and discussion of the findings in the following section.

Table 6. Cross-Stakeholder Comparison (Rianguation Summary)

Theme	Managers (N = 32)	Teachers (N = 70)	Parents (N = 143)
Support / engagement	Parental high support (M = 4.12)	Parents perceived supportive (M = 3.89).	Children look forward to English days (M = 4.41).
Facilities / materials	Facilities/materials moderate (M = 3.50).	Minimum equipment moderate (M = 3.76);	Home support: materials (33.6%, 48/143);

Theme	Managers (N = 32)	Teachers (N = 70)	Parents (N = 143)
		facilities top priority (35.7%, 25/70).	devices/software (24.5%, 35/143).
Staffing capacity	Teaching staff lowest-rated condition (M = 3.38); staffing mentioned in suggestions (37.5%, 12/32).	English taught mainly by preschool teachers with additional English expertise.	Staffing is not salient in parental items; comments focus on general quality/requests.
Training / assessment	Most common support needed: training in methods or assessment (56.2%, 18/32).	Training in assessment or evaluation is a key priority (30.0%, 21/70).	Training rarely rises in open responses.
Home–school alignment	Parent communication is noted occasionally in suggestions.	Parent awareness/expectations a priority (25.7%, 18/70).	No home support reported by 22.4% (32/143); some requests for lesson/material sharing.

Overall, the comparison across stakeholder groups indicates substantial convergence in positive attitudes toward the ELP program, particularly with respect to parental support and children's engagement. Preschool managers, teachers, and parents all expressed generally favorable views of early English exposure, while parents reported high levels of children's interest in and enjoyment of English learning. At the same time, differences emerged in stakeholders' perceptions of implementation priorities and challenges. Preschool managers emphasized staffing shortages and the need for stronger institutional support, whereas teachers highlighted limitations in facilities and instructional resources, together with the need for additional professional development, particularly in assessment practices. By contrast, parents focused primarily on the perceived benefits of early English learning for their children and the importance of effective communication between schools and families. Taken together, these findings indicate broad stakeholder support for the ELP program while also identifying different priorities for its implementation and further development.

3. DISCUSSION

This study investigated the implementation of the ELP program for preschool children in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, drawing on the perspectives of preschool managers, teachers, and parents. The findings are discussed in relation to theoretical perspectives on early foreign language exposure, language awareness, and developmentally appropriate practice. They are also considered in light of their implications for the implementation of early English education in Vietnam and other comparable educational contexts.

One key finding of the study is that ELP has been implemented in most participating kindergartens for an extended period, with the majority of school managers reporting more than five years of continuous implementation. This suggests that early English exposure has moved beyond a pilot or experimental phase and has become an established component of preschool provision in the local context. In addition, there was strong convergence across schools regarding time allocation, with English activities typically delivered in two periods per week during regular school hours. This level of structural consistency indicates a shared institutional understanding of the appropriate intensity of early English exposure. From an international perspective, such limited and regular exposure aligns with models of early

foreign language awareness, which recommend frequent but low-intensity contact to support familiarity and positive attitudes without introducing academic pressure.

Findings from teachers and parents suggest that the program largely reflects language awareness and familiarization orientation, rather than formal language instruction. Teachers reported that English activities generally follow defined programs and are supported by basic teaching conditions, while parents observed that children demonstrate enjoyment, anticipation, and spontaneous use of English in everyday contexts. Parents' reports suggest that children were perceived as responding positively to English activities; however, this should not be taken as direct evidence of classroom quality or emotional safety. These outcomes are consistent with research emphasizing that the primary value of early foreign language exposure lies in fostering positive dispositions toward language learning, rather than in achieving immediate linguistic outcomes and that these programs aim to familiarize children with a foreign language in enjoyable and age-appropriate ways rather than to achieve formal language proficiency (Ekizoglu, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2011). The low incidence of parent-reported negative reactions may indicate that overt resistance was not commonly observed at home, although this does not rule out classroom-level discomfort or variability among children.

Despite long-term implementation and strong parental endorsement, the study identified persistent challenges related to human resources, facilities, and professional development. Both managers and teachers reported shortages of qualified personnel, limited teaching materials, and inadequate learning spaces as ongoing constraints. Notably, ELP is largely delivered by preschool teachers with additional English expertise rather than by designated English specialists. This reliance on teacher versatility raises concerns about sustainability and consistency, particularly in contexts where teachers already manage heavy workloads. Furthermore, teachers consistently expressed a need for professional development, especially in teaching methods and assessment practices suited to preschool learners.

While overall attitudes toward early English exposure were positive, teachers' responses revealed divergent views regarding the balance between English learning and Vietnamese language development. Some teachers expressed concern that preschool children should prioritize their first language before engaging with a foreign language, reflecting a common pedagogical tension in early childhood education. This finding underscores the importance of clearly articulating the purpose of ELP as supplementary and non-competitive with first-language development. Without shared understanding, teachers may experience uncertainty or ambivalence in implementation. Clear policy guidance and professional development are therefore essential to ensure that early English exposure is understood as supporting holistic language development rather than undermining it.

Triangulated data from managers, teachers, and parents reveal both shared views and differing priorities. While all groups valued early English exposure and recognized the need for better implementation conditions, managers emphasized staffing and institutional support, teachers focused on classroom resources and professional training, and parents highlighted long-term benefits and school communication. These differences indicate that improving program quality requires coordinated, multilevel responses addressing administration, pedagogy, and family engagement, as isolated interventions are unlikely to be effective. Overall, the findings suggest that early English preparation is widely supported by stakeholders and may be feasible in preschool settings when implementation conditions are strengthened. Key priorities include clarifying language awareness objectives, strengthening professional capacity, and enhancing home-school collaboration.

In summary, although the findings indicate generally positive perceptions of the English language preparation program and high levels of reported child engagement, they should be interpreted with caution. The study relied on self-reported data collected through questionnaires distributed by participating kindergartens, which may have introduced social desirability bias. As a result, respondents may have provided more favorable evaluations of program implementation and children's learning experiences than they actually perceived. Moreover, the reported enthusiasm for English learning may partly reflect a novelty effect associated with children's initial exposure to enjoyable learning activities rather than the sustained effectiveness of the program. Consequently, the findings should not be interpreted as conclusive evidence of long-term educational outcomes or program effectiveness.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. Conclusion

This study investigated the implementation of an ELP program for preschool children in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward through a multi-stakeholder perspective, incorporating views from school managers, teachers, and parents. The findings indicate that early English exposure has become a stable and widely accepted component of preschool education in the local context, characterized by long-term implementation, consistent scheduling, and strong parental endorsement. Stakeholders generally perceived the program positively, but this should not be interpreted as direct evidence of program effectiveness or child outcomes. These findings suggest that the program has largely achieved its preparatory objectives, consistent with international models of early foreign language awareness.

At the same time, the study identified persistent challenges that constrain the quality and sustainability of implementation. These challenges include shortages of qualified teaching staff, limited facilities and learning materials, and insufficient professional development, particularly in relation to developmentally appropriate teaching methods and assessment. Divergent teacher beliefs regarding the balance between early English exposure and first-language development further highlight the need for clearer conceptual and pedagogical guidance. Overall, the study contributes empirical evidence from a local Vietnamese context to the broader discussion on early English education, demonstrating how early language preparation can be meaningfully integrated into preschool settings while also revealing structural and professional conditions that require further attention.

4.2. Limitations of The Study

Despite providing valuable insights into the implementation of the English language preparation program in kindergartens in Cao Lanh Ward, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. *First*, the study relied primarily on self-reported data collected through questionnaires administered to preschool managers, teachers, and parents. Although data were obtained from multiple stakeholder groups, self-reported responses may not fully reflect actual classroom practices or children's learning experiences and may be influenced by social desirability bias. *Second*, the study did not include direct classroom observations or assessments of children's English language development. Consequently, the findings reflect stakeholders' perceptions rather than objective evidence of instructional quality or children's learning outcomes. *Finally*, the study was conducted within a single local context in Cao Lanh Ward, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different institutional, socioeconomic, or policy contexts. These limitations suggest that the findings should be interpreted with caution. Future research would benefit from employing mixed-methods and longitudinal research designs, together with direct classroom observations and

assessments of children's language development, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation and effectiveness of ELP in preschool settings.

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