Challenges for ELT from the expansion in teaching children
by *Lynne Cameron*

To anyone teaching English as a Foreign Language to school-aged children in any part of the world these days, one issue may be more important (and more common) than any other: the expansion of English classes to an increasingly younger audience. It seems that no matter where one looks, ministries of education are offering or planning to offer English to younger students. However, "younger is not always better," as this author points out. One of the challenges of teaching younger learners is the need to adapt teacher-education programs to those learners. Too often, the needs of teachers are considered only after the changes to the curriculum have been made, so teachers do not have the necessary tools to best serve these younger students. Another consequence of teaching younger children is that motivation must be maintained for a longer period of time. Students have different forms of motivation, but not all are so motivated that they can continue their study of English for twelve years without losing whatever motives they had in the beginning. Another consequence of teaching English to younger learners is the likelihood that students will reach secondary school with very mixed levels of ability. It would be much easier for secondary teachers to have every student at the same level—as they would if all students began their study in secondary school—than to have students come in with many different abilities as a result of having studied for up to nine years. And how many schools are willing to offer several different English classes to the same ninth-grade class? Two important areas of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) are discussed in this important article: (1) the need for children to gain meaning in their use of English and (2) the problems of literacy with a younger audience, who may not yet have achieved a significant level of literacy in their first languages. Another often-overlooked area Cameron discusses is the need for assessment instruments adapted to a younger audience. Anyone who has an interest in TEYL, trains primary or secondary-school teachers, or is involved in administrative or ministerial-level discussions of the teaching of English to children would benefit from reading this article and considering the issues Cameron raises.

"Ownership" of English in the Outer Circle: An Alternative to the NS-NNS Dichotomy
by *Christina Higgins*

As the spread of English around the world accelerates due to technology and ever-increasing access to information, the issue of "standard English" and its impact on determining native or non-native speakers gathers importance. In this study, Higgins examines speakers from India, Malaysia, Singapore, and the United States in the context of B. B. Kachru's framework of an inner circle of places traditionally considered "home" to English, an outer circle in places where English has been formally made an additional language, and the rest of the world an expanding circle. Coupled with the concept of "ownership" of a language, the study examined the degree of authority these different groups of speakers exhibited toward English. The participants, paired off according to background similarities, were given an Acceptability Judgment Task consisting of several sentences, designed to encourage a discussion of the acceptability of the English in these statements. What followed was an interesting discussion that forms the basis of Higgins' research—what level of ownership does each person claim over English in making a pronouncement of the acceptability of each sentence? The results were determined by examining the language each of the speakers used—pronouns (particularly *you)* and modals indicated the strength of ownership claimed by each subject. According to the author, the degree of ownership, or stake in a language, and the learners' perception of the target language are both important factors for teachers to consider when assessing language abilities and achievement.