

## TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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### ABSTRAK

*Di Indonesia, bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing. Banyak siswa belajar bahasa Inggris mulai dari sekolah dasar, itu artinya mereka disebut pelajar anak-anak. Pelajar anak-anak berbeda dengan pelajar anak dewasa. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana persepsi guru tentang mengajar dan belajar untuk pelajar anak-anak. Sebuah studi kasus digunakan sebagai desain penelitian kualitatif, dan 5 guru di New Concept English Education Centre sebagai peserta penelitian. Untuk mendapatkan data, peneliti menggunakan kuesioner dan pedoman wawancara sebagai instrumen penelitian. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan tentang bahwa persepsi positif guru tentang pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar anak-anak. Dalam penelitian ini ada dua aspek yaitu persepsi guru tentang karakteristik pelajar anak-anak dan persepsi guru tentang kegiatan kelas untuk pelajar anak-anak. Pada aspek pertama, semua peserta N, SDR, SN, DA, dan MZ mengklaim bahwa karakteristik peserta didik anak-anak sangat aktif dan hiperaktif. Dalam aspek kedua persepsi kedua guru tentang kegiatan di kelas untuk pelajar anak-anak, para peserta menyebutkan lagu, cerita, dan permainan dapat membantu pelajar anak-anak lebih tertarik, percaya diri, dan termotivasi dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Guru juga mengklaim bahwa dari lagu, cerita, dan permainan, pelajar anak-anak dapat meningkatkan keterampilan bahasa mereka.*

### ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, the English language as a foreign language. Many students learn English from elementary school, it means called there are still young learners. Young learners are different from adult learners. The aim of this research was may know how the teachers' perception of teaching and learning English for young learners. A case study was used as the research design of the qualitative research, and 5 teachers at New Concept English Education Centre as a research participant. To get the data, the researcher used the questionnaire and interview guideline as a research instrument. The result of this study showed that the teacher's positive perception of teaching and learning English for young learners. In this research, there were two aspects that teachers' perceptions of the characteristics of young learners and teachers' perception of classroom activities for young learners. In the first aspect, all the participants claimed that the characteristics of young learners are very active and hyperactive. In the second aspect of teachers' perception of classroom activities for young learners, the participants mentioned the advantages of songs, stories, and games can help young learners more interested, confident, and motivated in learning English. In other words, young learners will be happy and fun, and not easy to bored learning English from songs, stories, and games, young learners can improve their language skills.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Characteristics of Young Learners, Classroom Activities

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the English language as a foreign language. Because English as a foreign language, most parents take their children to start learning English from an early age, and they also take their children into the course to more learn English.

However, besides the teacher challenges in teaching young learners above, firstly the teachers should know young learners' characteristics. If the teacher when

teaching young learners, knows and understands the young learners' characteristics, it can make it easier to teacher teach young learners. Young learners and adolescence or adult learners they have different characteristics, young learners are more enthusiastic in the classrooms.

Hang (2017) claimed that children with their distinguishing characteristics as natural language acquirers, cannot be exposed to serious learning all the time. So

those young learners it limited to seriously learning English, because they still want to play than learn. From the young learners' characteristics, there are some methods to teach a young learner to make young learners seriously and make them fun in learning English.

Therefore, the strategy to make fun activities in the classroom is very important, especially for young learners. Avila's (2015, P. 93) statement as follows it is important for teachers to give students a sense of what to expect in the course while making the class fun, entertaining, and beneficial for the learners. There are so many classroom activities for young learners interested, have a motivation, good interaction with others, and have English language proficiency, the activities for instance there use song music, storytelling, and games activities.

Talking about activities in teaching for young learners, first is about learning with the story. Rokhayani (2010, p. 32) mentioned that stories can be used to develop children's language skills, such as listening, imagination, and predicting. Stories can motivate children, stimulate children's and arouse children's interests, etc. Moreover, with storytelling young learners more interested to learn English, and also they got language proficiency.

The second activity to teach young learners is using song activity. Songs are drills but sung, the form of the drill is incorporated into the song and therefore more interesting for children, Witek (2011, p. 16). Not only using storytelling who makes young learners like when they learn English but also songs make their interest in learning English.

Afterword, in other activities, it is games. Caganaga & Gozcu (2016, pp. 127-128) claimed that games are always fun for the learners so they attract their interest, unlike ordinary lessons. The learners both learn the language and have fun in the classroom with the help of the games. Moreover, games are suitable for young learners, because they always fun and enjoy learning English in the classroom.

#### Research Question

1. How teachers' perception of the characteristics of young learners?
2. How teachers' perception of classroom activities for young learners?

#### Purpose of the Study

1. To know the teachers' perception of the characteristics of young learners.
2. To know the teachers' perception of classroom activities for young learners.

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Primary school students belong to young learners if it is seen from the age of the children. Children as also called of young learners. Young learners are the children who have to learn at the elementary level, their age around 6-12 years.

According to Bakhsh (2016, p. 121), young learners are agreed to be children from five or six years old who are in the first year of elementary schooling to twelve years old of age. Furthermore, many people realized that the English language is important and they have learned from an early age. Early age usually mentioned as young learners. Also, they have learned English at the elementary level until high level.

Perception is a persons' perspective about what they have known in their mind and their experience then they will be express through their writing or their speech, regarding what they see, smell, and feel. Wang (2007, pp. 1-2) states perception is a set of internal sensational cognitive processes of the brain at the subconscious cognitive function layer that detects, relates, interprets, and searches internal cognitive information in the mind.

Young learners are unique. Young learners are different from an adult, in learning English they most like to play. To teaching English for young learners, firstly the teacher should know the characteristics of young learners. After the teacher knows young learners' characteristics, it can be easy for the teacher to teach them. Young learners were very different from adult learners. Shin ( 2006, pp. 3-6) mentioned there are eight characteristics of primary learners;

- Young learners have fun with movement.
- Young learners tend to have short attention spans.
- Young learners tend to have a lot of physical energy.
- Young learners are very much linked to their surroundings.

- Young learners were more interested in the physical and the tangible.
- As children get older, their ability to concentrate for longer periods increases.
- Young learners function well within a structured environment and enjoy the repetition of certain routines and activities.
- Young learners' group activities can be hard to coordinate.

Moreover, young learners as children still have to move and they always give good energy for their activity. They will enjoy it if their activity is suitable for their environment. But also, young learners very short attention to seriously when learning English in the classroom. Young learners will be happy with their best friends in group activities. Harmer (2001, p. 38) explained the characteristics of young learners as follows:

1. Young children respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual words.
2. Young children often learn indirectly rather than directly – that is they take in information from all sides.
3. Young children learning from everything around them rather than only focusing on the precise topic they are being taught.
4. Young children's understanding comes not just from an explanation, but also from what they see and hear and crucially have a chance to touch and interact with.
5. Young children generally display an enthusiasm for learning a curiosity about the world around them.
6. Young children need to acquire individual attention and approval from the teacher.
7. Young children keen to talk about themselves, and respond well to learning that uses themselves.
8. Young children own lives as main topics in the classroom.
9. They have a limited attention span; unless activities are extremely engaging they can easily get bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so.

10. Children are often enthusiastic and lively as learners.

11. Children will have a go at an activity even when they don't quite understand why or how.

Furthermore, young learners learn in around them, if their friends are active, they will also be active learners, and if their friends are reserved learners, they will not very active. Young learners have very much to be bored. In another theory from Cameron (2001, pp. 1-2) there are the characteristics of young learners; children also lose interest more quickly and are less able to keep themselves motivated; children do not find it as easy to use language to talk about language; children often seem less embarrassed than an adult at talking in a new language; children lack inhibition seems to help them get a more native-like accent; the child as active learners.

Afterword, Nunan (2005) explained the characteristics of young learners.

1. By listening, young learners are preparing to replicate the sounds when they speak.
2. Young learners match the sounds with the corresponding symbols when they decode words.
3. Young learners talk while they play, either alone or with their classmates.
4. Young learners practice conversations between one another.
5. Young learners talk when they engage in make-believe activities.
6. Children are expected to read and write no more than 10 words.
7. Children can easily record new words that they are learning.
8. Grammar has no place in young learner classroom, that it is too difficult for children or is not relevant to their learning.

To sum up young learners have some language skills. They very happy when learning through fun activities. They will express themselves with whatever they like. Young learners can understand the materials through their bodies and movement. Young learners can not learn if they just sit in their seats.

Therefore, Cahyono (2015, p. 218) states creative teachers will always feel curious about something new. Creative teachers can also inspire their students to be creative as well. He should be always

motivated to do self-improvement and learn new things. To teaching English for young learners, there are many classroom activities such as using storytelling, classroom songs, and games activities.

While Wright (2014) mentioned that telling and reading stories to children is a central part of classroom life. Children's listening skills can be developed, and stories help children to understand their world and to share it with others. Moreover, tell and read the stories for young learners can be a way for the teachers to teach young learners in classroom activities. Stories also can help young learners to improve their ability in the English language.

According to Rokhayani (2010, pp. 32-33) stories can be used to introduce children to a new language, improve students' skills especially practice listening skills, and to revise learned language/vocabulary. Storytelling can also be used to stimulate children's imagination, can motivate children, to expose children to varied language, to extend/enrich children's language, and to access children. From her theories, that stories can help every side for young learners. Stories can help young learners to more active and have a motivation for learning English. and also with stories, young learners can add language proficiency such as vocabulary and listening skills.

The second activity for a young learner is classroom songs. Sevik (2011, p. 1029) explained songs are regarded as the most effective way of teaching listening comprehension to young learners, regarded as one of the mostly-enjoyed activities for young learners. Songs, when used in appropriate ways may extend young learners' attention spans. In addition to stories, songs also become an effective way of teaching listening comprehension for young learners, and they will enjoy it.

Based on Dzanic (2016, p. 42) children easily absorb and reproduce the language of songs. Songs help children build their confidence. Young learners developed listening comprehension. Moreover, songs make the children confident in learning English, especially when they heard their favorite songs and they can express as they understand those songs. Besides, with songs, young learners can easier to produce the language.

In other words, the third teaching activities for young learners are game activities. Bakhsh (2016, pp. 120-124) explained, games that could be used to teach vocabulary to children, and games are used to assist young learners during their language learning. Games give young learners as an active role when playing promoting, and through games, young learners could interact, discover, and experiment with their surroundings. Young learners do not like to work alone, but to be accompanied by others especially when playing or working. Using games not only enhances students' motivation but also provides an incentive and stimulus to use the language. Games can help young learners to learn their vocabulary effectively.

In another theory, Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson, Musbalat (2012, pp. 3-4). Based on his theory game activities can help the teacher in the class. The games can use when teaching and learning processes finished. That game can be related to the material and be able just to have fun for the students before they left at the class.

Musthafa (2010, p. 123) argued accomplished teachers of English should know the principles and should be able to do things to facilitate children learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia. Therefore, teaching English as a foreign language the first important from the teacher is to know the principles of teaching children.

## METHOD

### Research Design

In this research, the researcher was used qualitative research as a method. Creswell (2012, pp. 16-17) mentioned that a qualitative research study is needed to explore this phenomenon from the perspective of distance education students. A central phenomenon is the key concept, idea, or process studied in qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher used qualitative research as a method, because to explore the phenomenon based on the theory.

Afterword, a case study as a research design the researcher used in this research. A case study can be a process, case, activity, program, or situations related to the phenomena. To understand the issue or problem in-depth, the researcher needs to



investigate and explore the cases. In this study, the researcher described the case study in a qualitative approach to investigate more the teachers' perception of teaching and learning English for young learners.

#### Research Participant

Five teachers at New Concept English Education Centre in Bogor was chosen as participants in this research. Three of them as teachers at New Concept Taman Pagelaran, and two others as teachers from New Concept Bukit Cimanggu City. The researcher was chosen the participants because they have been taught the English language for young learners. The teachers have been teaching young learners about 3 until 5 years in the course.

#### Instrument

To get the data, the researcher used two instruments, there is a questionnaire and the interview guideline. The questionnaire was used to find the teachers' perception of the characteristics of young learners, and teachers' perception of classroom activities for young learners. The questionnaire shared through a google form.

On the other hand, the interview the second instrument to researcher collect the data, it is complementary to the information of the questionnaire. The interview was organized by 5 teachers as samples which were recorded by voice notes in WhatsApp application. Voice note was used to support the result of personal interview guideline which used in this research.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

First, the results of the characteristics of young learners, that teachers have a similarity of their experiences with the theory who talked about the characteristics of young learners. Based on the table from the questionnaire above, the data was gained 81% that teachers have strongly agreed with the theories about the characteristics of young learners.

While the teachers have a 90.25% strongly agreed with these aspects about teachers' classroom activities for young learners, the statements are; children's listening skill can be developed; songs are regarded as one of the mostly-enjoyed activities for young learners using games not only enhances students' motivation but also

provide an incentive and stimulus to use the language.

#### CONCLUSION

The teaching and learning English for young learners had positive and negative perceptions of the teachers. Teachers perceive that young learners very active and easier to bore in learning English. But, activities such as; songs, stories, and games with make the students more interested confident and motivated in learning English and also can improve their language skills.

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