



## TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS: A REFLECTION FORM ENGLAOSHI COMMUNITY.

Agus Siswanto

### Abstract

Teaching English to young learners at elementary school level is different from adult. So that the teacher of English to young learners need to comprehend the theory of language teaching and learning to apply with the situation. Therefore the activities of teaching and learning meet to the characteristic of young learners. Teacher need to design for an activity for language acquisition by using English songs as teaching media and another media to support it. This paper discusses and presents an activity of teaching English to young learners in an informal activity in my village to give basic knowledge of English.

Keyword: Young learners, language acquisition, English song, teaching media

### INTRODUCTION

What makes different about teaching English to young learners in contrast to teaching adult? Some differences are obvious: young learners are often more enthusiastic and lively as learners. They will have an activity even when they don't really understand why or how. Young learners want to please the teacher rather than their peer group. They have also a lot of physical energy, need to be physically active. In contrast to those facts, they also lose interest more quickly and less able to keep themselves motivated on tasks they find difficult to do. Young learners learn more slowly and forget things more quickly. They tend to be self-oriented, preoccupied with their own world and still developing literacy. That is why teaching to young learners need an appropriate trained teacher who can choose the best method and teaching media to meet with the characteristic of young learners.

The problems mostly found are related to the way the teacher select and use an appropriate technique and medium in the learning process. This gave impact to the atmosphere in the classroom, where it was fun, so young learners will enjoy the process, but if it was boring, they will have no attention to the learning process.

An English song translated from Indonesian song can help the young learners to learn in English in fun atmosphere to let them speak English. But as a media of teaching English, song is not perfect to cope all the teaching objectives. So that flashcards as teaching media can be the next choice to cope the obstacle that did not cover by the song. It give benefit to the young learners pronounce the English word correctly.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Young learners

Young learners according to Curtin and Dahlberg (2004) are divided into four based on their age, they are first, Pre-school student ages 2-4 years normally still at kindergarten school. Secondly, Primary student ages 5-7 years and thirdly, Intermediate students ages 8-10 formally at elementary school and the last Early adolescent student ages 11-14 formally at Junior high school.

Moreover, Brumfit (1997: v) discusses about the characteristics of young learners that they tend to be keen and enthusiastic learners, and they need physical movement and activity as much as

stimulation for their thinking, and the closer together these can be the better. Additionally, Halliwell (1992: 3) clarified the characteristics of children or young learners are already very good in interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual word, children take good pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do, and children have a ready imagination, children words are full of imagination and fantasy, and it is more than simply matter of enjoyment.

Young learners need to hear language being used to talk about things they can see and feel, what they have just experienced or are about to experience especially related to their daily activity, what they are curious about, what they care about and what they like. So, using some fun and creative activities, they unconsciously got and used the language.

#### Song

Song is a short piece of music with word that you sing. Song is a work of art which can be enjoyed by anyone. Song is a musical composition. Song contains vocal parts that are performed with the human voice and generally features word (lyrics) commonly accompanied by other musical instruments.

Songs are repetitive, they have natural rhythm and they have an element of fun, of playing with the language. Children play with language in their modern tongue, so this is a familiar part of their world, and it has an important part to play in their learning process (Pacheco & Segarra; 2011).

Most children enjoy singing and usually respond well to using songs in the classroom, but there are more significant benefits to using songs other than just being fun (Millington; 2011). (Richards, 1969, p. 163) said that The language, vocabulary, and sentence structure of some songs can be quite different from that used in spoken English. Additionally (Millington; 2011) mentioned that songs can help increase student interest and motivate them to learn the target language.

#### Flashcards

According to Kasihani (2010), flashcards are cards that have a big size, usually it uses paper that is rather thick, stiff and the size is A4. It contains a picture and word. While Arsyad explained that flashcards means small cards that contain a picture, text or symbol to remind and to stimulate the students on certain something. In addition According to Longman Dictionary, in language teaching flashcards is a card with word, sentence or picture. It is used as an aid or cue in language lesson.

Jeremy Harmer stated that flashcards are smallish cards which we can hold up for our student to see. Flashcard is a card with word or number or picture that are flashed to a class by the teacher.

Flashcard is a piece of cardboard about 18X6 inches on which appears a word, sentence or a simple outline drawing. The lettering should be large, neat and clear so that it can be seen from the rear of the room. Capital letters are preferred. Print should be used since it is easy to read at the distance (Nasr, 1972:119)

#### METHOD

This is a descriptive mini research conducted by the writer to teach English to young learners by using song. He conducted the English teaching activity to children in his village in Nalumsari village, Jepara district in a formal activity. It is followed by 15 children. He named "Englaoshi" to his activity to teach the young learner in his village.

## DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

The writer is not actually an English teacher at elementary school, but he is an English teacher at senior high school. But he has concern to help the young learners in his neighbourhood to prepare their English mastery. Then he created to teach English to young learners in informal meeting. He named the activity as Englaoshi. He was so surprised at the first time teaching the young learner. Since the characteristic of the students extremely different to the students at senior high school level. Thankfully he got a EYL(English for Young Learners) lesson to teach the young learner from his college. He found the lesson useful to help him handle the situation. He read some reference book about the young learners. He read many books and studies about the use of songs to teach the young learners. With the same objective to teach English young learners, but the writer choose the different song. The song that was not originally from English countries. But the favourite children song that he change into English. The writer recognise that they were still the young learners and still to be strengthened about their indigeneous culture. He didn't want to make the young learners to be like English people. But still Indonesian people who can speak English. The use of song also give benefit to improve the language components.

Some the songs he used to teach English such as the song "Ada kodok" which he change into "There is a frog" naik-naik ke puncak gunung, tombo ati and also gundul- gundul acul song. The technique to apply the song in learning was by writing the lyrics on the white board, then he read the lyrics for students while the students tried to follow after him. They repeat to read the lyrics for several times until the children found easy to pronounce the lyrics. After that they start singing together. He tried to motivate the students to speak English in fun way by using the songs. He also modified the song into different vocabulary based on his objectives.

By using songs in teaching English, the writer tried to analyze the respond from the students in learning. He realized that song could make the teaching more alive, students participation was higher, they tried to play with the English words, student more curious and want to sing again and again. It inline to the statement of expert in their book which said that songs are included in teaching media. The use of music and song in teaching English can stimulate positive association in learning English. The can also make the classroom situation more enjoyable for student and increase the interest to study English for young learners. Song can also be used to teach a variety of language items such as sentence, vocabulary, and pronunciation

After the activity of teaching English to young learners ran for several times, he recognize there was minor problem since the song were originally from the Indonesian songs, so that some English words need to pronounced follow the rytm of Indonesian song, that did not exist in English pronunciation. The writer thought hard how to tackle the obstacles in missing pronunciation of some English words. After reading some reference books and following teaching training, he got the idea to use flashcards as a media of teaching to help him solve the problem. He would like to use flashcards to help the students pronounce the English words correctly. Flashcard and song will work together to improve the students English mastery. He convince that the flashcards will be effective to solve the problem base on the function and benefit of flashcard as stated by several experts.

The function of flashcards in the English teaching learning process used to help the teacher (Kasihani and Suyanto,2008:109)

### The Use of Flashcards

Flash cards are effective memory-aid tools that can help young learners learn new material quickly. It has some benefits as follow, *first*, Inexpensive, Flash cards can be one of the least

expensive way to learn material. Teacher can make flash card by choosing picture from magazine or newspaper. *Second*, Portable, Flash cards provide students with a portable learning tool. They allow students the opportunity to transport as many cards as they need. *Third*, Efficient, the portability of flash cards can improve the efficiency when learn the material. By taking cards everywhere, student can make effective use of time.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The writer has conducted his teaching and learning activity, he got many lesson and experience from the young learners. The use of teaching media gave many benefit in helping the young learners to learn English, but in other hand it has also the weaknesses. Song, as it can make the learning fun, it helps teacher to create a good atmosphere. That is why an English teacher need to be more sensitive with the situation and think creatively to tackle the obstacle. The use of some other teaching media can be effective in solving the problem. In this case, the song as a teaching media give many benefit to young learners, but it has weaknesses, flashcard is coming to solve the problem that the song can not do.

### REFERENCES

- Azhar, Arsyad, *Media Pembelajaran*, Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002.
- Millington, Neil T. 2011. *Using Songs Effectively to Teach English to Young Learners* Language Education in Asia, 2011, 2(1)
- Nasr, Raja. *Teaching and learning English*. London, Longman group limited. 1972.
- Oxford, *Oxford Learner Pocket Dictionary* New Edition New york: Oxford University Press: 2000
- Pacheco & Segarra. 2011. *Teaching vocabulary through songs to six year olds*. Available at [dspace.ucuenca.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/2110/.../tli307.pdf](http://dspace.ucuenca.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/2110/.../tli307.pdf)
- Philip, Sarah, *Young Learner Resource Book for Teacher*, Hongking: Oxford University Press, 2001
- Richards, J. (1969). Songs in language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 3(2), 161-174.
- Suyanto, Kasihani K.E *Englis for Young Learners Melejitkan Potensi Anak Melalui English Class yang Fun, Asyik dan Menarik*, Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- <http://www.studytechniques.org/wwhy-study-with-flashcard-html>