

Teaching Young Learners with the Use of Contextualized Language Instruction

By

Margana

English Education Study Program
Faculty of Languages and Arts
State University of Yogyakarta

Abstract

In teaching English to young learners in Yogyakarta, in particular and other regions in general, English teachers of young learners are trapped in teaching about the target language and culture which give an emphasis on the form of language rather than the use of language in contexts. Very often, English teachers ask learners to repeat after them, to memorize an English dialog or to respond to a mechanical drill, to learn the isolated vocabulary items, to deal with grammar rules, and the like. Such a way of teaching is inspired by the utilization of the behaviouristic theory advocating that learning the target language is a matter of imitation and memorization.

Different to the teaching principle above, some experts such as Ausubel and Chomsky in Shrum & Glisan (2005) propose the cognitive approach which advocates that the individual's systemic knowledge does not reflect to conditioned behaviour but rather the ability of creating an unlimited number of novel utterances or sentences. This approach offers more meaningful use of language and creativity. However, the framework of the cognitive approach does not guarantee the success of teaching English to young learners as learning the target language cannot be separated from the social context. This drives the existence of the top-down approach which advocates that teaching English should facilitate young learners to achieve a clear and whole portrait of how words and structures operate in contexts enabling learners to achieve meaningful elements through an overall message. This framework highlights that the meaning of language is constructed from the whole context with the use of learners' background knowledge to do with any tasks provided by English teachers.

In reference to the above problems, contextualized English language instruction is believed to be one of the paramount ways to establish young learners' English proficiency on the grounds that young learners are engaged in tasks and topics which relate to the circumstances and situations that constrain the use of language. With the use of this framework, young learners are able to conceptualize the presented English materials and to drag and store the language memory in a long-term memory space because the language data are presented in meaningful and contextual ways.

Key words: *Cognitive approach Top-down approach Contextualized instruction*

A. Introduction

Nowadays, there has been a hot debate by scholars on the way of teaching English to young learners. Some experts claim that teaching English to young learners should give an emphasis on the language form which is called as skill-based approach or traditional bottom-up approach (River in Shrum & Glisan, 2005:51). This approach accentuates analyzing and

learning the grammar rules and vocabulary. Such a way of teaching facilitates young learners to construct the language concept of the target language enabling them to create accurate and appropriate utterance or sentences. This assumption drives English teachers of young learners spend much time to deal with teaching vocabulary and grammar of the target language which are separated from their contexts and culture as well as the macro-language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Through such a way of teaching, young learners are expected to be able to cognitively analyze the linguistic forms, for example, nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and the like. They are also concerned with the teaching of grammar embodying tenses, active voice, passive voice, degree of comparison, conditional sentences, and others. Such a condition is supported by the existence of the various methods: direct methods, indirect methods, audio-lingual, and the like advocating the utilization of segregating teaching – the separation of the macro-language skills and micro-language skills. Also, English teachers of young learners are spoiled with the availability of the English textbooks designed for young learners which are organized with regard to a grammatical syllabus. As a result, young learners get bored of English lesson and have a concept in their mind that learning English is difficult and stressful. The following presents the example of teaching English with the use of bottom-up approach.

Different to the teaching principle above, some experts such as Ausubel and Chomsky in Shrum & Glisan (2005) propose the cognitive approach which advocates that the individual's systemic knowledge does not reflect to conditioned behaviour but rather the ability of creating an unlimited number of novel utterances or sentences. This approach offers more meaningful use of language and creativity. However, the framework of the cognitive approach does not guarantee the success of teaching English to young learners as learning the target language cannot be separated from the social context (Cameron, 1991). This drives the existence of the top-down approach which advocates that teaching English should facilitate learners to achieve a clear and whole portrait of how words and structures operate in contexts enabling learners to achieve meaningful elements through an overall message. This framework highlights that the meaning of language is constructed from the whole context with the use of learners' background knowledge to do with any task provided by English teachers. This implies that teaching English to young learners should be directed on how language is used in contexts. To do so, English teachers should utilize a contextualized language instruction (abbreviated as CLI) or top-down approach rather than bottom-up one. Wong & Van Pattern (2003:403) urge that the use of the bottom-up approach should be discarded from English instructional practices as the application of the mechanical drills of vocabulary and grammar rules is not beneficial for the acquisition of the target language. This suggests that English teachers of young learners should provide meaningful and contextual practices of the target language.

In reference to the use of CLI, English teachers of young learners are encouraged to consider for the following principles as proposed by Met (2000). They include (1) perceiving a concept of language proficiency as reflected in four macro-language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, (2) promoting student pair and group work in classroom activities, (3) establishing oral teacher-student exchanges, (4) promoting micro-language skills as the elements of the communication rather than the goal of teaching, (5) using authentic English materials and commercially created materials organized around the communicative topics and situations, (6) providing meaningful and purposeful classroom activities, (7) integrating various aspects of both local and target culture into language

learning, and (8) using ways of assessing student learning which gives an emphasis on performance on knowledge in use.

With regard to the above principle, young learners are expected to enjoyably learn the target language which directly or indirectly contributes to the acquisition of the target language maximally because the way of learning is designed to use the target language in contexts. Adair-Hauck & Cumo-Johnson as quoted by Shrum and Glisan (2007:55) claim that the utilization of the top-down approach facilitates young learners to acquire the target language at a higher and more successful rate in comparison with the application of the bottom-up approach on the grounds that the former accentuates the contextualized language practices while the latter spends much time to analyze the segment of the target language. To sum up, the top-down approach is believed to be much more determinant in assisting young learners to acquire the target language.

B. The Notion of contextualized language instruction

The term *contextualized language instruction* has the same meaning as the top-down approach. It refers to the way of teaching of the target language applied by English teachers through providing young learners with contextualized and meaningful texts not discrete grammars and isolated linguistic components (Adair-Hauck & Cumo-Johanssen, 1997). This approach is aimed at conferring learners a clear and whole portrait of how linguistic elements and grammatical rules are activated based on the contexts that perform them in the overall meaningful message. The contextualized language instruction is established with regard to the theory which advocates that the meaning of words is successfully described through the contexts (Shrum & Glisan, 2005:53). This suggests that teaching English to young learners should be carried out with the use of contextualized language instruction.

With the use of the CLI, young learners are driven to apply higher-level skills which are then followed by lower-level skills (Adair-Hauck & Cumo-Johanssen in Shrum & Glisan, 2005:53). This suggests that they are guided to manipulate the learned target language to communicate thoughts by activating higher-level skills which include relating knowledge from several areas, utilizing the known ideas to create the new ones, making a generalization from the facts, predicting the content of the text, making a conclusion, and others. After that, young learners are directed to apply lower-level skills to recognize, identify, and recall the language elements as performed in given texts. In other words, young learners deal with the use of the language in context by promoting the meaning negotiation and problem solving with their friends and teacher before they focus on language elements.

The application of the CLI takes an advantage of the Critical Period Hypothesis which claims that neuropsychological functions of the brain in the early childhood years facilitates first or second language acquisition as the brain of a younger learner is malleable in nature and is shaped by its own activity (Lightbown & Spada, 2003:60) enabling him/her to store the language in long-term memory space in a fantastic time through meaning negotiation. Cummins in Shrum & Glisan (2005:97) add that younger learners may acquire higher levels of functional proficiency than those learners who begin language learning at a later age. This implies that communicative tasks seems to be successfully gained in the critical period. Therefore, English teachers of young learners are encouraged to provide contextualized tasks in order to facilitate them to acquire the target language maximally.

C. Teaching English to Young Learners in practice

As previously discussed, in practice, some English teachers of young learners tend to use the bottom-up approach which gives an emphasis on the language form development. The following presents the example of the use of bottom-up approach by some English teachers in teaching English which is carried out at some elementary schools in Yogyakarta.

1. Teaching listening

Task 1 Listen, point, and say

1.2 Months in a year January February March April May June July August September October November December	1.1 Days in a week Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday	1.3 Ordinal Numbers 1 st = The First 2 nd = The second 3 rd = The third 4 th = The fourth 5 th = The fifth 6 th = The sixth 7 th = The seventh 8 th = The eighth 9 th = The ninth 10 th = The tenth 11 th = The eleventh 21 st = The twenty first 12 nd = The twenty second
---	---	--

Task 2 Listen and repeat.

1. On Sunday, November the first is my birthday.
2. On Wednesday the fifth, I visit my uncle, aunt, and cousins.
3. On Friday the eighth, I play chess. I win.
4. We go home late on Tuesday the fourth.
5. Thursday the second is my parents' fifteenth wedding anniversary.

(Adapted from English Materials of SD Model, Yogyakarta)

In reference to the English materials above, it is evident that the English teacher gives an emphasis on the form. In Task 1, young learners are driven to repeat the names of days, the names of months, and ordinal numbers. The English teacher only drills the three issues without providing the clue of how such forms are used in communication practices. Those language forms are meaningless because they are not presented in contexts. In other words, those forms are not followed by the examples of how they are used. To do so, English teachers may put the names of the days in contexts. For example, English teachers select the English material performing the time table of the English course for kids, a TV program which is good for children to watch as found in Jakarta Post, and the like.

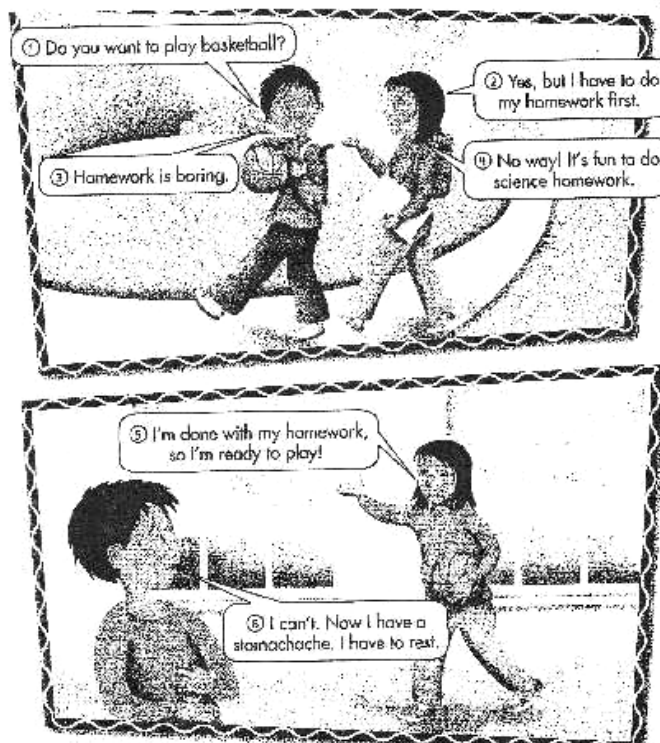
Task 2 also exemplifies the DE contextualization of the language as the English teacher only focuses on grammatical rules. All sentences are not appropriate sentences as they are meaningless in nature. For example, in sentence 1, it is impossible that November the first is always on Sunday. Sentence 2 does not make any sense because the construction does not include the month. In sentence 3, the meaning of the construction is confusing because it does not tell what month it is and how the speaker states that he/she wins. Sentence 4 also confuses learners because it only presents the date and the name of the day. It can be interpreted as an habitual activity but it is impossible. Sentence 5 does not make any sense because the English teacher does not include the name of the month of the fifteenth wedding anniversary of the speaker's parents.

2. Speaking

The following presents the example of the task that deals with teaching speaking to young learners with the use of bottom-up approach.

SPEAKING

Practice the dialogue !



Study this !

is it fun to dance ?	→	Yes, it is
is it fun to clean the room?	→	No, it is not

In reference the above task, young learners are asked to practice the dialog which is not contextualized because there is no context of the situation preceding it. It seems that the English teacher wants learners to do reading aloud rather than practicing speaking. The dialog above does not tell the context which includes the participants, the topics, and the setting of the dialog. In addition, the dialog does not consider the cultural context as performed by the participants in terms of gender.

(Taken from English materials used at SD Model in Yogyakarta)

Exercise 2

Ask your friend and complete the table !

Name	Is it fun to ?	Yes, it is / No, it is not
Dyah	Is it fun to study?
Tiara	Is it fun to swim	Yes it is
Fajar	Is it fun to read	No it is not
Sultan	Is it fun to ^{play} computer	Yes it is
Cindy	Is it fun to Play	Yes it is
Ara	Is it fun to eat	Yes it is
Iga	Is it fun to drink	Yes it is
Intan	Is it fun to Play	Yes it is
Miss wati	Is it fun to play ^{basketball}	Yes it is

With regard the above task, the English teacher accentuates a question and answer with the use of “Is it fun to study” and the answer of it. This shows that young learners are drilled such a form which focuses on the form rather than the meaning. Added to this, the task is not accompanied with the context that may assist learners to acquire the target language. In shorts, the given task is meaningless. The material presented does not make any sense because such expressions are not commonly found in a real life. Besides, young learners tend to find difficulties to select the verbs they use if the English teacher does not provide the domain of the conversation.

3. Reading

In teaching reading, some English teachers of young learners tend to do testing. It means that English teachers give some texts and comprehension questions. They ask learners to read the texts and answer the comprehension questions. After that, they discuss the answers of the comprehension questions by asking young learners to write down on the whiteboard one by one followed by calculating the right answers and the wrong ones. Rarely do English teachers discuss the reasons for the answers. See the following example.

II. Read the text and answer the questions in complete sentence !

Dear Trisna,

My younger brother, Prakash, is very diligent. In the morning, he makes his bed. After that he prays. He likes to help mother prepares for our breakfast. He washes the dishes after breakfast. He walks to school with me at 06.30. He always finishes his works at school . He goes home at 12.30. He takes a nap for two hours then he plays soccer with his friends. He waters the plants in the afternoon. When he has a homework, he never forgets to do it. He is really a good boy.

Dea

11. What is the name of Dea's brother?

the name of Dea's brother is prakash 2

12. What does Prakash do before he plays soccer?

He does prakash do before he plays soccer two hours 01

13. How often does Prakash water the plants?

He does prakash water the plants in the afternoon (once a day) 1, 30

14. Is Prakash a lazy boy?

prakash a lazy boy, No he is not 2

15. Does he do his homework?

he do his homework yes He Does 2

13

(Taken from English materials used at SD Model in Yogyakarta)


4. Writing

In teaching writing, English teachers also give an emphasis on language forms. The following presents the example of the writing material.

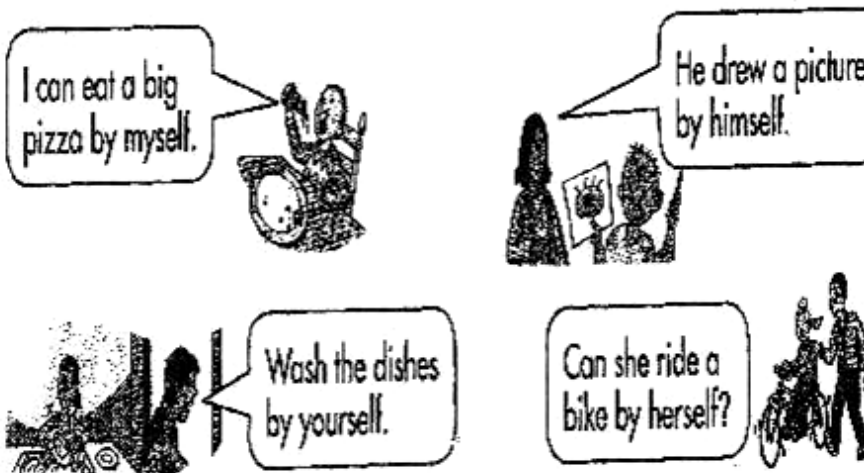
Writing

Look and study !

I	take care of	myself
You	take care of	yourself
We	take care of	Ourselves
You		
They	take care of	themselves
He	takes care of	himself
She	take care of	herself



Look and study !



(Taken from English materials used at SD Model in Yogyakarta)

With regard to the above task, learners are asked to write some sentences based on the pattern given. Such a way of teaching focuses on form rather than content. This does not guarantee the success of language acquisition as the task is not contextual and meaningful.

D. Teaching English to Young Learners with the CLI

As mentioned earlier, the use of CLI is of great importance to facilitate young learners to acquire the target language as they obtain a clear and contextual description of how the target language is used. Shin (2006) states that language structures should be presented within a context that is meaningful and communicative. To carry out the contextualized language instruction, English teachers of young learners should consider the following issues. First, children are active learners and thinkers (Piaget in Shin, 2006). This means that young learners tend to build knowledge through interacting actively with physical environment in developmental stages.

They are willing to learn with their own individual activities, exploration, and elaboration. Second, children learn through social interaction (Vygotsky in Shin, 2006). This implies that young learners need an assistance from adults through establishing instructions to construct knowledge by taking into account for Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), namely difference between the child's capacity to solve problems on his own and his capacity to solve them with assistance. Third, children learn effectively through scaffolding by adults (Bruner in Cameron, 1991). This suggests that English teachers play an important role to guide a child's language learning through finely-tuned talk with the use of scaffolding.

In relation to the above theories, Shin (2006) lists 7 related ideas in teaching English to young learners with the use of CLI. They include (1) designing supplement activities with visuals, realia, and movement, (2) involving learners in making visuals and realia, (3) moving from activity to activity, (4) teaching in themes, (5) using stories and contexts familiar to young learners, (6) establishing classroom routines in English, and (7) using L1 as a resource when necessary. In support of this, Musthafa (2010) identify seven issues of good practices in teaching English to young learners. They include (1) providing relatively much exposure to English, (2) creating print-rich environment in and around classroom, (3) using activity-based teaching learning techniques such as songs, games, storytelling, chants, projects, and the like, (4) applying various techniques for short periods of time to maintain the interest level of the children in engaging the English lessons, (5) accentuating functional English for vocabulary development and for immediate fulfillment of communicative needs of the learners, (6) doing reiteration practices to ensure the acquisition of English expressions or vocabulary items, and (7) conferring useful acquisition-promoting routines.

In reference to the discussion above, English teachers of young learners are encouraged to activate learners' prior knowledge to easily cope with the presented English materials. In addition, the materials are graded and sequenced according to the difficulty level, young learners' characteristics, young learners' interest, and others. To do so, a need survey and need analysis are highlighted in the first meeting through use of some techniques such as questionnaire, interview, documentation, observation, and the like. The results of the analysis are then used to design a syllabus as the framework of the teaching. Such activities are conducted in order to facilitate young learners to maximally acquire the target language.

The syllabus is designed to develop the macro-language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing and micro-language skills (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and the like (Nunan, 1991). Of the two language skills, the four macro-language skills become the main issue of English teaching and learning process. This suggests that those language skills serve as the frame of the target language development which means that micro language skills are embedded in the four macro-language skills (Oxford, 2001).

To realize the four macro-language skills in teaching young learners, English teachers are encouraged to present initial authentic oral or written texts. They may apply children stories within age-appropriate contexts to give an integrated-skills approach to acquisition. Heimlich & Pittelman in Glisan and Shrum (2005) state that story telling can facilitate young learners to use their interpretive abilities to recall and organize the central theme and primary elements of the story which include problems, events, solutions, characters, ending, morale values, and the like. Besides, English teachers may use songs, chants, and poems, and the like to facilitate young learners to improve their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and the four macro-language skills. Psychologically, use of songs in teaching English to young learners can refresh their mind to learn English. In addition, the application of songs in teaching English to young learners can improve learners' speaking ability. Chants can be utilized to improve learners' speaking practices as well. Use of poems in teaching English to young learners can improve learners' reading ability. It also can improve learners' language creativity. The following presents the example of the use of CLI in the teaching of macro-skills to young learners by applying songs, chants, and poems as adopted from Shin (2006).

a. Songs

As mentioned earlier, use of song can improve learners' speaking practices. It also can improve learners in pronouncing some words or phrases of the target language. See the following example.

Five Little Fishies (1)

One little fishie swimming in the sea,
 Splishing and a-splashing
 And a rocking to the beat.
 Here comes another fish
 Oh, say "Hello,"
 Two little fishies
 And away they go.
Two little fishies...
Three little fishies...
Four little fishies
 Five little fishies swimming in the sea,
 Splishing and a-splashing
 And a rocking to the beat.
 Here comes a shark,
 And don't you know,

What's the Weather (to the tune of Clementine) (2)

What's the weather?
 What's the weather?
 What's the weather like today?
 Tell us (student's name),
 What's the weather?
 What's the weather like today?
 Is it sunny? (hold arms above head in a circle)
 Is it cloudy? (cover eyes with hands)
 Is it rainy out today? (flutter fingers downward)
 Is it snowy? (wrap arms around body and shiver)
 Is it windy? ("blow children over" with a swoop of your arms)
 What's the weather like today?

The first song is good for teaching numbers as they are used according to the context. It also can be used to improve the micro-language skills such as pronunciation, grammar,

and vocabulary. The second song is used to deal with describing the weather. The following presents the example of the use of chants.

b. Chants

Chant is defined as a fun and rhythmical way. It can amuse young learners. It can also be used to improve the micro-language skills such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The following presents the example of use of a chant to teach the English alphabet.

<p><i>Alphabet Chant</i> <i>(Children repeat each line after the teacher.)</i> A B C D E F G School is so much fun to me. H I J K L M N Learn and play with all my friends. O P Q R S and T We're the best as you can see. U V W X Y Z Now it's time to stop and FREEZE!*</p> <p><i>(When children freeze, quietly give them directions or motion for them to follow you.)</i></p> <p><i>* You can change the last words of the chant to say:</i> <i>Now look at your teacher, please OR Now you must get up and leave!</i></p>	
---	--

c. Poem

Use of poem in teaching English to young learners can improve the reading ability. It provides learners to make sense of the poem. The following presents the example of the use of poem in teaching English to young learners.

My Playmate

I often wonder how it is
That on a rainy day,
A little boy, just like myself,
Comes out with me to play.

I really wish he'd talk to me,
He seems so very kind,
For when I look and smile at him
He does the same, I find.

And we step in all the puddles
When walking through the town,

But I never hear him speaking,
So surely he must be

But though I stand the right way up,
He's always upside-down.

In some strange land the other side,
Just opposite to me.

I have to tread upon his feet,
Which is a sorry sight,
With my left foot on his left foot,
My right foot on his right.

By Mary I. Osborn


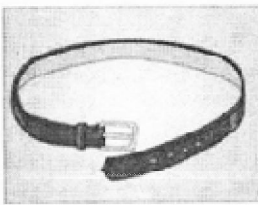




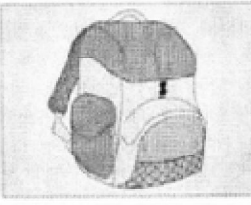


Besides, English teachers may select or develop the English materials which focus on how the target language is in context. The following presents the example of the English materials that can be used to teach English to young learners taken from YLE Flyers (2007).

1. Listening

In teaching listening, English teachers are encouraged to include two aspects, namely content and form. Of the two aspects, they should give an emphasis on how language is put in contexts. See the following examples.

Task 1 Listen to the tape recorder and tick the things that Mr. Salt's family chooses to buy.

Have a look at the pictures below. What did each person in Mr Salt's family choose to buy in the new supermarket? In the test, there are two more people to match to objects

 Mr Salt <input type="checkbox"/>	 A	 B	 C
 Betty <input type="checkbox"/>	 D	 E	 F
 David <input type="checkbox"/>			

This is what you hear ...

Girl: Have you been to that new supermarket in town, Mr Salt?

Man: Yes. I took all the family there last week to do some shopping. It sells all kinds of things - clothes, food, things for the car, sports things. I even found a very nice dark blue suitcase there. It wasn't expensive so I bought it to use on our next holiday.

Girl: Did anyone else buy anything?

Man: Well, David. He's my oldest son - he's nineteen. He wanted a volleyball so he went to look at all the sports things first. He found one and he bought it. There were a lot of other things that he wanted, too, so he'll go there again another day. He'll have some more money soon.

Girl: You've got a daughter too, haven't you?

Man: I've got two! The older one is called Betty. She just loves clothes and she found some shorts which she liked a lot. They were too big for her, but she still bought them because she loved the colour. She'll have to wear a belt with them, I think.

The task above exemplifies the English materials to be taught to young learners focusing on identifying the things from the spoken text.

Task 2. Listen to the cassette and tick the things that the woman wants the boy to do.

This is what you hear ...

One

Woman: Would you like to help me?

Boy: Yes please.

Woman: Can you put some bottles of glue on all the desks, and some scissors, too, please.

Boy: OK. And paints?

Woman: No, not today.

Two

Woman: Daisy left her dictionary in the library. Can you put it on her desk, please?

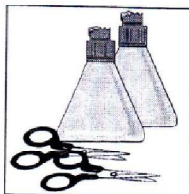
Boy: Yes, but which is her desk?

Woman: It's that one, near the door.

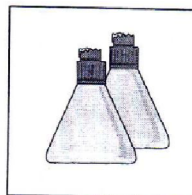
Boy: This one?

Woman: No, there's a bin under Daisy's desk.

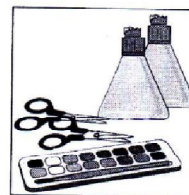
1 What should David put on the desks?



A ☐

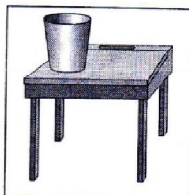


B ☐

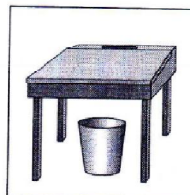


C ☐

2 Which is Daisy's desk?



A ☐



B ☐



C ☐

(Taken from YLE Flyers, 2007)

Fill in the worksheet according to the information given. Questions 1-3 are based on Text 1 and questions 4-5 refer to Text 2.

No.	Question areas	Responses
01.	There are ____ people in the text?	
02.	The woman ask the boy to do ____?	
03.	Does the woman ask the paints, too?	
04.	Daisy left a dictionary ____?	
05.	Is the desk near the door?	

The task above shows that English teachers may use the material for listening practices. It aims to identify the thing that the women wants the boy to do. In addition, the task exemplifies how to ask some to do something in context. See the other tasks below.

Task 3 Listen to the cassette and draw the lines. Look at the example below.

This is what you hear ...

Can you see the line? This is an example. Now you listen and draw lines.

Man: Who's the boy just behind William?

Girl: There are two boys just behind him. Which one do you mean?

Man: The one with dark hair. He's coming second in the race now.

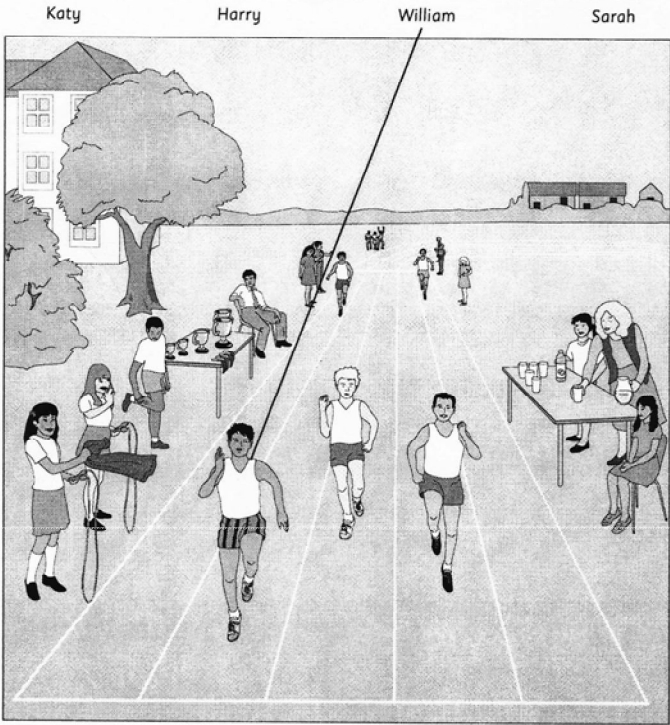
Girl: Oh, that's Harry. He's very good at running, too.

Man: Look at all the silver cups on the table.

Girl: Yes, they're ready for the teams that win.

Man: Who's the older boy? – look, he's sitting next to the table.

Girl: That's Michael. He's won lots of cups for running. He's going to give the cups to the children that win.



Katy Harry William Sarah

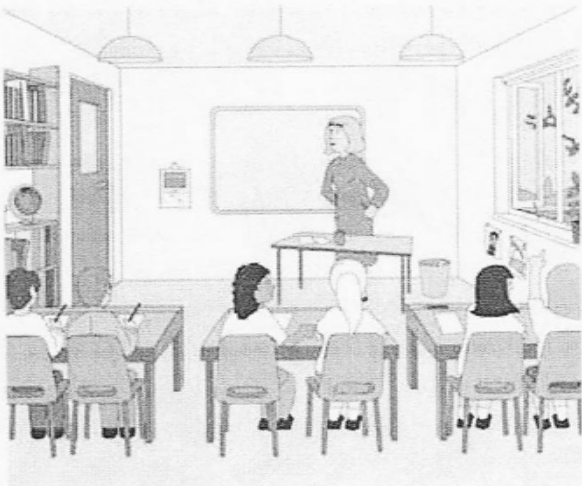
Richard Michael Helen

(Taken from YLE Flyers, 2007)

2. Speaking


In teaching speaking, English teachers are encouraged to design the English tasks which facilitate young learners to do with the meaning negotiation. To do so, the contextualized tasks of speaking are highly recommended. Added to this, the teaching of speaking to young learners should be designed to encourage learners to conduct interactions as the meaning negotiation only exists in interactive activities. The interaction should take a format of teacher-learner, learner-teacher, learner-learner, learner-materials, and the like. Of the four types of interactions, learner-learner should be dominant in the process of English language teaching and learning to young learners with the use of CLI. Also, teaching speaking to young learners should be devoted to language functions, expressing like and dislike, showing the ways, asking for information, and others. The following exemplifies the speaking tasks for young learners.

Task 1. Look at the picture and make a dialog as in the example.



Daisy's class

Teacher's name	Miss Castle
How many children	14
What / studying	history
Lesson interesting / boring	boring
What time / finish	10:15



Harry's class

Teacher's name	?
How many children	?
What / studying	?
Lesson interesting / boring	?
What time / finish	?

(Taken from YLE Flyers, 2007)

Situation: Harry and Daisy make a conversation about the history class. See the bold forms (*tulisan bercetak tebal*)

Harry : Hi, Daisy. How are you?
 Daisy : I am fine, thanks. And what about you?
 Harry : Very well, thank you. How about your history class?
 Daisy : Err.. It is okay.
 Harry : **What is the name of your history teacher?**
 Daisy : Miss Castle. It spells C -a-s-t-l-e. Castle.
 Harry : **How many students are there in the class?**
 Daisy : Fourteen students.
 Harry : **Is the lesson boring?**
 Daisy : Yes, it is.
 Harry : **What time does the lesson finish?**
 Daisy : It ends at a quarter past ten.
 Harry : Thank you. Sorry, Daisy I have class now.
 Daisy : That is okay. See you then.
 Harry : See you.

Task 2 in pairs, make a dialog based on the following clue.

Areas	Guides
Teacher's name	MissJaneSmith
How many students?	20 people
What/ studying?	English
Lesson interesting/ boring	Interesting
What time/ finish	12.30

3. Reading

Reading is defined as making sense of the written texts (Spratt, et al., 2005). Teaching reading to young learners with the use of CLI should be carried out by giving an emphasis on developing higher-levels skills as manifested in sub-reading skills such as predicting, previewing, skimming, scanning, inferencing, and the like. After that, English teachers may use the lower-level skills which accentuate the language form.

Task 1 Read the text and complete the following questions by labeling T (True) and F (False).

Questions

- 1 The time on the round clock is quarter past nine. _____
- 2 The woman who is talking on the telephone is also holding a newspaper. _____
- 3 The woman with a baby has got a fan in her hand. _____
- 4 A boy is putting an empty bottle into the bin. _____
- 5 One of the men in the café is wearing black shorts. _____
- 6 The door which is nearer to the plant is closed. _____
- 7 The man in the uniform has got a green flag in his hand. _____



(Taken from YLE Flyers, 2007)

Task 2 Study the following text and complete the worksheet.

Questions

1 Emma got the doll when she

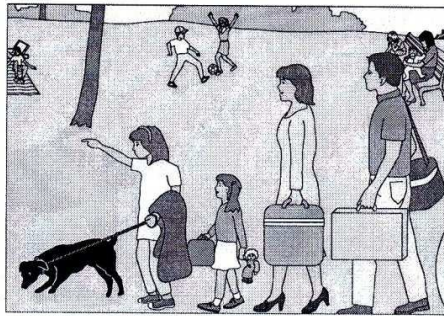
_____.

2 Daisy always sits

_____ Emma when
she eats.

3 The family had a

_____ in the park
on Sunday.



Emma's favourite doll

My name is Betty and I have a little sister called Emma. She has lots of dolls, but her favourite one is called Daisy. Mum and Dad gave it to her when she was a baby and she takes it everywhere with her. She takes it to school and to her bedroom and

when we sit down to eat, the doll always sits next to Emma.

Last Sunday, our family went to the park to have a picnic. We took our dog, Treasure, with us and of course, Emma took Daisy too. There were a lot of people in the park because it was sunny. We found a place near the lake to have our picnic. After lunch, Emma and I went on the swings. After a few minutes, Emma said to me, 'Betty, I want Daisy on the swing with me. Can you go and get her for me?' 'OK!' I answered . . .

(Taken from *YLE Flyers*, 2007)

The two tasks above are contextual and meaningful in nature as they present how language is used in context and give new knowledge to the young learners. In addition, to teach the tasks, English teachers do not present them through testing. In this case, English teachers of young learners do not emphasize the answers of the questions, but the way of answering questions by applying some reading skills such as scanning, guessing the meaning of the difficult word, recognizing the organization of the texts, and the like.

4. Writing

Writing is one of the four language skills which deals with expressing ideas, thought, feelings, emotions, and the like in the form of a written text. This suggests that teaching writing to young learners should be targeted on producing simple texts which meet the age appropriateness on the part of learners. With the use of CLI, the writing tasks should be contextual and meaningful. This means that English teachers of young learners should focus on use of the target language in context instead of use of discrete language forms. In addition, young learners are driven to develop their micro-writing skills which include finding the topics, generating ideas, developing ideas, outlining, drafting, revising a draft, editing a draft, and others.

To teach writing, English teachers may sequence their teaching in three stages, namely pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing. Blanchard and Root (2003) identify the writing process into three steps, namely pre-writing, writing, and revising. In pre-writing, learners are guided to think about the topic and to organize ideas. To do so, learners may conduct clustering the selected topic and deciding what topic to be written. In the second stage, learners make a first draft with regard to the selected topic. In the last stage, learners are driven to improve their writing by revising their first draft made. Look at the example of a contextualized writing task.

Task 1. Please select one of the well-known foods that you know. Write the main ingredients and how the food is made. Look at the example.



What are the main ingredients?

How is it made?

E. Final Remarks

With regard to the above explanations, some conclusions are made. First, the application of the top-down approach or contextualized language instruction in teaching English to young learners is believed to confer some promising benefits one of which is facilitating young learners to acquire the target language in the higher rate compared to the utilization of the bottom-up approach which gives an emphasis on teaching vocabulary and grammar as the segments of the language. To carry out the contextualized instructions, English teachers of young learners have to incorporate visuals and realia, meaningful contexts, and vivid examples and analogies and to apply higher-order thinking skills such as categorizing, predicting, comparing, imagining, evaluating, analyzing, and the like. Third, teaching English to young learners should provide contextual and meaningful English materials to facilitate young learners to maximally acquire the target language. Last, English teachers are encouraged to create interesting classroom interactions with the use of various tasks and techniques which are gained through the syllabus negotiation.

F. References

- Adair-Hauck, B., & Cumo-Johanssen, P. (1997). Communication goal: Meaning making through a whole language approach. In J.K. Philips (Ed), *Collaborations-Meeting New goals, new realities, Northeast Conference Reports* (pp.35-96). Lincolnwood, II:NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group.
- Branchard, K & Root, C. (2003). *Ready to Write*. New York: Pearson education Ltd, Inc.
- Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lightbown, P. & Spada, N. (2003). *How languages are learned* (2nd edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Met, M. (2000). Instruction: Linking curriculum and assessment to the standard. In G. Guntermann (Ed). *Teaching Spanish with the five C's: Ablueprint for the success* (pp. 49- 69). Forth Worth, TX: Horcourt College.
- Musthafa, B. (2010). Teaching English to young learners in Indonesia: Essential requirements. *Educationalist*, IV, 2.
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Boston:Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Oxford, R. (2001). Integrated skills in the ESL/EFL classroom. *ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED 456670).
- Piaget, J. (1970). *The science of education and the psychology of the child*. New York: Oxford.
- Shin, J.K. (2006). Ten helpful ideas for teaching English to young learners. *English Teaching Forum*, 44(2), 2-7, 13.
- Shrum, J.L. & Glisan, E.W. (2005). *Teacher's Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction*. Boston: Thomson Heinle.
- Spratt, M. et al. 2005. *The TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test Course)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wong , W., & Van Pattern, B. (2003). The evidence is IN: Drills are OUT. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36, 403-423.
- YLE Flyers. (2007). Information for candidates. Cambridge: University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations.