Teaching English for Young Learners in Elementary School: Perceptions and Strategies

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A K

Pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda di Indonesia masih kontroversial di kalangan guru dan orang tua. Orang tua sangat memperhatikan kemajuan anaknya dalam berkomunikasi dan berinteraksi. Banyak kursus dan program bahasa Inggris dengan cepat menarik anak-anak dan keluarga mereka dari latar belakang kelas menengah hingga kelas atas. Pengajaran bahasa Inggris di Indonesia tampaknya memaksa siswa untuk mengetahui aturan dan mengembangkan kalimat. Selain itu, beberapa guru yang mengajar bahasa Inggris kepada siswa muda tidak memiliki pengalaman pendidikan yang sesuai untuk mengajar siswa muda. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menggali persepsi dan strategi dalam TEYL serta menggunakan metode kualitatif. Subyek penelitian adalah guru dan orang tua. Akibatnya, dua faktor penting harus ditangani dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk pelajar muda. Aspek pertama adalah persepsi; salah satu aspek terpenting dari pengajaran bahasa Inggris kepada pelajar muda adalah memperoleh persepsi dari orang tua dan guru. Guru dan orang tua sangat percaya bahwa semakin muda seorang anak mulai belajar bahasa Inggris, semakin banyak pengetahuan yang mereka dapatkan. Dengan nilai tertinggi pada persepsi guru yaitu 73 dari 80. Sedangkan pada persepsi orang tua nilai tertinggi diperoleh 57 dari 60. Aspek kedua adalah strategi; guru menerapkan strategi yang baik mengikuti kondisi dan situasi sekolah. Dalam hal ini, pembelajaran berbasis video adalah cara yang paling cocok untuk acara siswa, dan berisi pengembangan karakter siswa.

A B S T R A C T

Teaching English for young learners in Indonesia is still controversial among teachers and parents. Parents are very concerned about the progress of their children in communication and interaction. Numerous English courses and programs are quickly drawing children and their families from middle-class to upper-class backgrounds. Teaching English in Indonesia seems to force students to know the rules and develop sentences. Besides, some teachers who teach English to young students do not have the appropriate educational experience to teach young learners. This study was conducted to explore perceptions and strategies in TEYL and also used qualitative methods. The research subjects were teachers and parents. As a result, two critical factors must be addressed in teaching English for young learners. The first aspect is perception; one of the most important aspects of teaching English to young learners is obtaining perception from parents and teachers. Teachers and parents firmly believed that the younger a child begins to study English, the more knowledge they get. With the highest score in teacher perception, which is 73 out of 80. Meanwhile, in parents' perception, the highest score received 57 out of 60. The second aspect is strategy; the teacher implements a good strategy following the conditions and situations of the school. In this circumstance, video-based instruction is the most suitable way for the student's events, and it contains the students' character development.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century era, teachers must enable the students to learn, understand, think, and do (Fauzi & Basikin, 2020; Rosidin et al., 2019). Teaching means determining ways in which a learner thinks about the subject and issue. In Indonesia, it is a part of a curriculum to teach English to young learners (Nurasiah, 2017; Ratminingsih et al., 2018). Ministerial Decree No.22 the Year 2006, dated May 23, 2006, states that it may provide English Subjects as local content to elementary students. This mandate results in English in elementary schools taught for two credit hours each week, starting from the fourth grade. In contrast to these ideas, the Indonesian government has removed English as a required subject for elementary school children after updating the curriculum (Anh, 2019; Schulz, 2009). In Indonesia, English is not taught in elementary schools, and it is not required of elementary school students (Arif, 2015; Zein, 2016). Even though the government has abolished English as a subject, some schools still use English as their subject. It is possible to apply English as a subject because some people consider English essential in finding a job and

ease them from school with a higher quality standard (Parvin & Salam, 2018; Peck, 2001). So that makes the school discretion because parents have specific demands to introduce English to children early.

Education is the pawn in this age, and that it also becomes one of the essential aspects of building a strong country. However, the problem of education in Indonesia is very complicated in the current reality. In Indonesia, teaching English for young learners is still controversial among teachers and parents. Parents are very concerned about the progress of their children in communication and interaction (Arifin, 2020; Shen & Chiu, 2019). Numerous English courses and programs are quickly drawing children and their families from middle-class to upper-class backgrounds (Lie, 2017; Schulz, 2009). In line with this, parents prefer to send their children to schools that provide English classes (Zein, S, 2017). However, because of their different abilities to deliver English language programs in their institutions, their rivalry based simply on pricing causes an imbalance in the standard of supply to the public.

Even teaching English in Indonesia seems to force students to know the rules and develop sentences. Besides, some teachers who teach English to young students do not have the appropriate educational experience to teach young learners. Sometimes, there are things in the material that is out of sync and out of control. Since this issue appears especially in teaching English for young learners, the Indonesian government has launched many policies to solve this current issue. In Indonesia, teaching English to young learners was considered necessary in large cities. Many parents are competing to have their kids learn English as young as they are. This situation is how these schools deal with this phenomenon and how they can be delivered effective and efficient learning. When the teachers are teaching English to young learners, it means teachers develop the children's knowledge. There are several theories about developing children relevant to language education, including foreign language (Dixon et al., 2020; Supriyanti, 2012). Teachers should apply these theories to implement English for Young Learners in Indonesia as the general premise. Piaget, Vigotsky, and Brunner provided the approaches. A current theory that explains how languages are learned is interactionism (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Interactionism is derived from cognitive development theory and sociocultural theory (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978). The experts' focus is cognitive development. Children need social contact in learning English and need the support of adults to enhance their learning. So based on the statement above, there are many theories that we can apply to teach English for young learners, such as Piaget, Vigotsky, and Brunner. All experts discuss the step of children's development that requires the interaction between them and the older (parents and teachers).

The essential thing in strengthening an elementary school education is the connection between children and parents. The parents' role is a critical process because they are a reflection of children. The collaborative interaction between parents, school, and society is referred to as school and family. They develop cooperation to improve the lives of the children and the community as a whole. Mutual trust, understanding, and shared responsibility for education should all benefit from these relationships. There is now enough research to prove that successful schools have high levels of parental and community involvement. As a result, regardless of social or cultural background, the family is critical for students' success (Krisprasetyama, 2013; Xiaoyang et al., 2018). And the point is, the perception that exists in a teacher can motivate students in the classroom. English has been deemed a required talent for people all over the world due to future needs, so children who do not speak English fluently may face a slew of challenges (Krisprasetyama, 2013). Parents force their children to learn English at a young age because they are afraid of learning English later (Chang, Y., 2008).

The term "late learning English" refers to an adult's failure to learn English. There are several reasons why youngsters should continue to learn English (Pan & Wu, 2013; Supriyanti, 2012): other countries are prepared to start teaching English as early as elementary school. According to the British Council and Aston University, English is taught in elementary schools in 144 nations across the globe. As a result, Indonesian children must learn it as well. As a result, kids will have sufficient prior knowledge and improved proficiency later (Supriyanti, 2012; Yusuf, 2020); The society's high demand The society's expectations on youngsters are increasing. Indonesian society views English as a school subject and a requirement in daily life. Finally, society requires English in their daily lives or in their development. As a result, they must master it sooner rather than later (Supriyanti, 2012); Early on, there are more opportunities According to the Critical Era Theory, children's cognitive growth is the "best age" for learning English. Young learners may have more opportunities to hear and speak the language in a safe environment where they are not pressured to communicate correctly. Older students, on the other hand, are more likely to be forced to utilize more complicated vocabulary. As a result, the students not only get the opportunity to learn English on a regular basis, but they can also do so freely and effectively. However, there are several drawbacks to teaching English to children. This statement is related with the previous study that stated when young learners are taught a language in school, they become semi-lingual, which means they are

taught English but are unable to fully understand each language (Grigg, 2015; Kadek et al., 2021). As a result, the ability to communicate becomes overpowering and mixed.

Maitreyawira elementary school is implementing Curriculum 2013; it is a curriculum that enables students to teach and learn through themes. Maitreyawira School has a curriculum that teaches English, not only thematically. This school is one of the schools that still extend the subject of learning to English classes. Many parents want their kids to learn English at school for young learners of their child's age. But the absence of time to learn English is a weakness that exists in these schools. Learning English is only carried out on a Friday or once a week. Teachers face a learning situation because of time constraints, and students realize that there is still a lesson plan. Therefore, the charge teacher is responsible for having an efficient and practical method to solve this issue. Based on the background above, the objective were to find out the teachers' and parents' perceptions of teaching English for young learners at Maitreyawira Elementary School and to find out the teachers' strategies in teaching English for young learners at Maitreyawira Elementary School.

2. METHOD

In the research design part, the researcher used qualitative research. Qualitative data refers to all non-numeric sources of knowledge in origin, including voice, text, pictures, images, or any combination. It means that qualitative data is the data that is not extracted from quantitative or related items because this data is unique, referring to the interpretation of knowledge that can be accessed. Such data's qualitative essence is wholly independent of its analysis (Syed & Nelson, 2015). Then, qualitative is collecting data qualitatively, and the empirical approach is also mainly qualitative. The process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting data to provide an explanation for an interesting phenomenon is known as qualitative analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The approach used is a case study, because all parents in the researcher's scope believe that their children should learn English from an early age, based on the researcher's personal experience. Because, according to them, learning English at an early age provides children with numerous advantages, including a brighter future. If a definition of a case study is needed, it is better if it is more general and does not include a plethora of meticulous descriptions (Flyvbjerg, 2011). We cannot, however, assert that the definition of a case study is superfluous because it is the definition that places the case study in its own space and distinguishes it from other types of qualitative research. Case studies have been defined in general by a number of researchers. The participants were Maitreyawira elementary school because Maitreyawira elementary school still used English as a subject even though other schools use thematic. Then, the participants were teacher and parent. Teacher as a participant to see how the teacher's strategies and perceptions of learning English for young learners compare. Meanwhile, parent as a participant to see their expectations for young learners studying English. Then, for collecting data, this research used a questionnaire and interview.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In this part, the researcher discussed the finding of the study. The questionnaire is used to find out the teachers' and parents' perceptions. Perceptions are the ability to realize an object or phenomenon through the use of the five senses. Perception is the first step in acquiring information through the senses, referred to as sensation. People have five senses that allow them to receive information from their surroundings. A person gains all of the necessary knowledge and skills to interact in a real-life setting. Every person has a different perspective on something. As indicated by (Robbins, P. S. &Timothi, A, 2008), there are several factors that influence someone's perception. The perceiver is a person who uses his or her senses to try to make sense of what he or she sees around them. Behavior, motive, interest, experience, and expectation are all factors that influence. The perceiver's target is a person, a group, a situation, an event, or an idea; it can be a person, a group, a situation, an event, or an idea. The situation refers to the setting in which the perception occurs. It could be due to a lack of time, a lack of social interaction, or a lack of employment.

An interview is used to find out the teacher's strategy. Teaching strategy is one factor that influences the success of the English teaching and learning process. A skilled English teacher prepares the best for the students by employing certain learning strategies, particularly those that increase students' motivation to study English (Nguyen & Terry, 2017). Furthermore, the adoption of appropriate English teaching strategies that are adapted to the needs of students can aid in the teaching and learning process, allowing learning objectives to be met (Intarapanich, 2013). In today's education, finding teaching practices that generate significant learning and promote motivation, interest, and enjoyment in young children is a

challenge (Remer & Tzuriel, 2015). As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the presence of a teaching strategy is critical in determining the success of the teaching and learning process.

The result of the questionnaire

The researcher did not go into great detail about it in the questionnaire portion. Because the overall score and average will be the most important factors for the researcher to consider. This discussion will be guided by these two points. The perception of parents and teachers also play a significant part in ensuring that elementary school students have a seamless learning experience. This questionnaire has five responders, all of whom are teachers. They chose a statement and assigned a score based on how teachers view teaching English for young learners. Then there's a table of interval scores and any categories; there are three names in this category, starting with when the teacher's questionnaire score is worth 20 to 40 to get negative category perception. Teachers with a 41 to 60 fall into the sufficient perception category, while those with 61 to 80 fall into the positive perception category. The scale issue is addressed in particular in the questionnaire. On a scale of one to four, four equals strongly agree, three equals agree, two equals disagree, and one equals totally disagree. Meanwhile, T.A = Teacher A, T.B = Teacher B, T.C = Teacher C, T.D = Teacher D, and T.E = Teacher E are the respondent's initials. Table 1 shows the results of the questionnaire for teacher.

Table 1. The result of the questionnaire for teacher

Item	Category	Statement	Responses				
			T.A	T.B	T.C	T.D	T.E
1	Goal	Students learn English at a young age	4	4	4	4	4
2	Goal	Teachers communicate instructional goals to students	4	4	3	4	3
3	Goal	The goals of teachers are consistent with school and district goals	4	3	3	3	4
4	Goal	Effective and frequent communication occurs with parents	4	3	4	3	3
5	Goal	Students are taught to apply the necessary skills	4	4	3	4	4
6	Expectation	Students have a positive attitude toward their school	3	4	4	3	3
7	Expectation	Classroom learning expectations are high, appropriate, and achievable	4	3	3	4	4
8	Expectation	All students, regardless of social or cultural differences, are expected to work toward high standards	3	3	2	3	4
9	Expectation	Expectations for students are based on the knowledge of students and their previous performance	3	4	4	3	3
10	Expectation	Teachers perceive that they can influence school decisions	4	2	4	3	3
11	Assessment	Student performance is evaluated in a variety of ways	4	4	4	3	3
12	Assessment	Assessment data are uses to improve the school's curriculum	4	4	4	2	3
13	Assessment	Student progress is regularly reporting to parents	3	3	3	4	4
14	Assessment	Student assessment data are monitoring, and instruction is modified to promote student learning	4	4	3	3	3
15	Assessment	Teachers provide students with opportunities for learning in small group settings	3	3	3	2	2
16	Development	The school plan is developing with participation by teachers and community members	3	3	4	4	3
17	Development	The curriculum is varied to accommodate the needs, interests, and abilities of students	4	3	3	4	4
18	Development	Professional development of teachers addresses the social and cultural differences in the school	4	3	3	3	4

Item	Category	Statement	Responses				
			T.A	T.B	T.C	T.D	T.E
19	Development	Teachers are involved in planning and evaluating professional development activities	4	3	3	4	4
20	Development	Teachers are involved in developing and reviewing the school's mission and goals	3	4	3	3	4
Total			**73**	**68**	**67**	**66**	**69**

Based on Table 1 can be described that the respondents' responses to the items given in the questionnaire about teaching English for young learners in terms of teacher perceptions are as: First, in response to teacher A's perceptions of teaching English to young learners, most of teacher A's responses were in the "positive" category for each questionnaire item. On a scale of one to four, Teacher A receives a score of 73 out of 80 on the questionnaire. It signifies that, based on the findings of the questionnaire, teacher A receives a positive perception. Then, as a reply to this questionnaire, teacher B had a score of 68. In this questionnaire scale, this state meets the definition of positive perception. Teacher C, like Teacher B, received a score of 67 due to the results of this questionnaire. The positive perception was assigned to the two teachers. Then teacher D receives a score of 66, which is the lowest in this questionnaire's score, but teacher D is still classified as having a positive perception with a value of 61 to 80. Finally, behind teacher A, teacher E gets the second-highest value with a total score of 69 points in the positive perception category. Per the table, all teachers who completed a questionnaire about their perceptions of teaching English to young learners had a positive perception category, with an average score of 68.6. Meanwhile the questionnaire for parents is, this questionnaire received responses from seventeen people, who are parents whose children are learning English early. They selected a statement and assigned a score depending on how parents perceive their child's progress in English. Is there a difference in the child's personality before and after taking English classes? The scale issue is specifically addressed in the questionnaire. Four equals strongly agree, three equals agree, two equals disagree, and one equals totally disagree on a scale of one to four. The respondent's initials are P.1 through P.17.

The respondents' responses to the questionnaire items about teaching English to young learners regarding parents' perceptions are as follows: two respondents received 57 out of 60. It indicated that the two respondents who made statements on the questionnaire were in line with the questionnaire. Parents are allowed to play an active role in enhancing children's abilities, such as the importance of children learning English at an early age. It can be concluded that these two respondents, P.2 and P.3, were assigned to the category of positive perception respondents. This questionnaire showed that nearly all respondents from P.1 to P.17, or parents from one to seventeenth parents, completed it. P.1 received a score of 51, P.4 received a score of 50, P.5 received a score of 55, P.6 received a score of 54, P.8 received a score of 52, P.9 received a score of 52, P.11 received a score of 52, and P.12 received a score of 51, P.13 received a score of 53, P.14 received a score of 52, P.15 received a score of 54, P.16 received a score of 54, and P.17 received a score of 53, indicating that respondents 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 falls into the positive perceptions category. The seventeen responders who completed the questionnaire received an overall score of 894 points. The positive perception circle has an average score of 52.58, which means that all respondents who have offered their answers are included. Furthermore, two of the seventeen respondents (P.7 with a score of 49 and P.10 with a score of 48) had a score below 50 but are still in the positive perception circle. The conclusion can then be drawn that instructors and parents both believe that children should learn English at an early age. This is being done in order for them to have a brighter future in all areas. These two perceptions are then classified as positive perceptions because their average score is higher than the interval table in the positive category.

The result of the interview

The interview is classified as formal/informal; structured/unstructured; individual/group; one-off/sequential; public/private, based on the setting, conditions, and methods to the interview. There are three fundamental approaches to the interview or two headings: organized and unstructured interviews. At Maitreyawira Elementary School, there are five English teachers, but only one matches the characteristics that the researcher is looking for. Because one of the criterion is five years of experience teaching students, it turned out that there was only one teacher who met all of the criteria at the time. As a result, the researcher only interviewed with one teacher. The researcher provides ten questions for the interview segment. During the interview, the researcher concentrated on the teacher's strategies for teaching English to young learners. The results shows that the teacher's strategy is to use audiovisual video in the learning process. Students are more interested in watching videos while learning, and it is based on teacher experience teaching English for young learners. So, the teacher started with a cartoon video, then moved on

to the PPT material being taught, and eventually to activities to see how much they had absorbed. The findings of this interview also show that the teacher's main priority in providing knowledge in the learning process of videos is character-building; thus, at every meeting, the teacher offers a moral lesson in the video relevant to the student's daily life.

Discussion

The focus of the discussion is on the results of the research questions raised. It considers how teachers and parents view teaching English for young learners. Teaching English for young learners is essentially the specific activity that encourages learners to think, play, and interact with the language (Kimsesiz, 2017; Nufus, 2018). This activity will attract them not to push them to know the language's forms or structure since teaching English for primary learners has no rules that may or may not require the school to conduct. It requires that the teachers have to boost our standard of teaching young learners since teachers need to think about anything, communication, and others (Azmy, 2020; Habibi & Sofwan, 2015). Teaching English to young learners requires taking into account the learners' age, as different ages result in varied levels of ability. The following are some of the developments. The key age for acquiring a language is still a matter of discussion in society (Fahriany, 2018). That children begin learning a second language at the age of six and continue until they are twelve years old (Chen, 2016; Si, 2019). In this section, you will learn about two different perspectives. It is about Teachers' and parents' perceptions of TEYL. Is the perception that is Negative, Sufficient, or Positive included in the perception? The researcher employed a questionnaire technique in the data collection process to find out the outcomes of the questionnaire answered by the respondents. The teacher questionnaire has 20 items on a four-point scale, while the parent questionnaire has 15 items on a four-point scale too.

This questionnaire has five respondents who are elementary school teachers. And the table above is the result of a questionnaire provided to teachers at Maitreyawira elementary school, which, after being reviewed by the researcher, revealed that all teachers strongly agreed with the statement "Students acquire English from a young age." All of the teachers expressed strong agreement with this statement. It means that, in the teacher's opinion, pupils who learn English at a young age can swiftly assimilate the information and apply it to their future. And then, the total score of the five teachers was 343 points, with T.A receiving 73 points, T.B receiving 68 points, T.C receiving 67 points, T.D receiving 66 points, and T.E receiving 69 points. However, teaching perspective differs from teachers', turning to the parents (Armstrong, 2009). Many parents still envision classrooms where students sit in the neat rows of desks facing the building's front, where the teacher gives the students lectures. In addition, a questionnaire concerning parents' perceptions can be determined that only one parent, respondent P.7, disagreed with the impression that children learn English at a young age. P.7 then received a score of 49 out of 60. The score is low among the 17 responders, yet it is still in the positive perception category. Even though one of these respondents disagrees with this perception statement, parents encourage their child to improve his academic performance. One aspect of teaching that the teacher must consider is teaching and learning strategies. Teachers must have a strategy in place whether they are teaching English or other topics. The teacher's strategy must be distinct from that of other teachers. The strategy must consider the current situation and conditions, particularly in this day and age, when all teaching is submitted online by teachers.

The teacher gives evidence in videos in each meeting based on observational data acquired during the learning process. Because it is based on the teacher's experience, the video is offered as one of its strategies. It is clear that when students are provided material in movies and PowerPoint presentations, their enthusiasm improves in class. Remember, the teacher admits everyone who wishes to join the English class during the interview session. The researcher also inquired about the teacher's teaching style during the interview. The teacher selects an audiovisual Film that focuses on introducing new terms to supplement their English vocabulary. The researcher considers the observation period and the interview session while employing audiovisual video because it positively affects students. As a result, students can distinguish between good things that can be implemented in everyday life and harmful things that should not be followed. The advantage of employing video as a teaching approach is that it creates an energetic learning environment where students feel joyful and have fun during the observation and interview sessions. Overall, this method worked fantastically with the students at this school. It can be seen by their participation in a project about their preferred subject. Their vocabulary has grown due to this session, and they are no longer afraid to express themselves

4. CONCLUSION

Teachers and parents accept that students should learn English at a young age, between six and twelve. At that age, the teacher teaches English using a theme that the students enjoy, including moral lesson

material in every lesson. When children believe there are difficulties in the learning process, parents often direct and assist them. Then with the strategies used in the classroom, adjusted to the conditions and situations in the school. In the Maitreyawira school, the teacher uses the strategy of providing material through video, because according to the teacher's experience and seeing the situation of students in class. And also because of the current situation which makes all activities based online. From several months of observation, it was also found that students enjoyed learning English using the video method. Students enjoy and are also active in the learning process. Then, as a whole, the learning process is very effective. And also, the teacher is very efficient in managing the time to deliver the material. Therefore, the teacher makes several stages in each learning process to focus on the material. And all the material to be taught is conveyed to students. In the learning process, the teacher always provides words or sentences that make students excited about participating in the learning process. The last is according to parents' experience, and they feel the most significant impact when their child learns English at a young age. Since English is the language spoken in all countries, parents agree that students learn English at a young age. At a young age, children can quickly absorb new words or sentences taught by the teacher. After getting new words, students can practice their words after finishing school online or relaxing. Parents are also proud of their children's achievements, so parents hope that they will not find it difficult to go to the next step.

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