

ASSESSING YOUNG LEARNERS: IT IS NO LONGER A “NIGHTMARE”

Ni Luh Putu Eka Sulistia Dewi

English Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Art,
Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja
Jalan Jend. A. Yani 67 Singaraja 81116, Telp. 0362-21541, Fax. 0362-27561
echaningdharma@yahoo.com

ABSTRAK

Pada umumnya terdapat beberapa persyaratan yang hendaknya dipenuhi oleh guru yang berkualitas. *Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)* atau konsorsium lintas wilayah yang menangani asesmen dan dukungan terhadap guru baru seperti yang dikutip dari Slavin (2006:23) menyebutkan 10 prinsip yang harus dikuasai oleh seorang guru. Prinsip-prinsip tersebut telah digunakan sebagai landasan dalam tes sertifikasi guru. Salah satu prinsip tersebut adalah asesmen pembelajaran siswa. Gagasan ini juga didukung oleh Harmer (2001:58-67) yang menyatakan bahwa guru tidak hanya bertindak sebagai pengendali tetapi juga sebagai asesor yang menawarkan umpan balik dan koreksi serta menilai siswa dengan berbagai cara. Dengan demikian, asesmen memegang peranan yang penting dalam pembelajaran.

Peran penting ini juga berlaku pada pengajaran Bahasa Inggris pada anak-anak. Pemilihan strategi asesmen hendaknya memperhatikan karakteristik peserta didik di mana mereka berbeda dengan pembelajar dewasa. Strategi yang dipilih hendaknya autentik, kontekstual dan bermakna, contohnya adalah observasi tidak terencana, observasi terencana, asesmen berkelanjutan, konferensi, portofolio, asesmen diri dan teman sejawat, serta tes kelas.

Kata kunci: guru berkualitas, asesmen, strategi asesmen

INTRODUCTION

Governments and private schools all over the world have decided to introduce English at primary level because there is a strong ‘folk’ belief that young children learn languages better and more easily than older children. The result of a worldwide survey of teaching English to young children published in www.britishcouncil.org/english/eyl/index.htm as cited in Brewster et.al (2007:1) shows that educationalists all over the world have recognized the need for English language learning at primary level and are doing whatever they can do to promote it.

There are some reasons for starting to teach a foreign language several years earlier (at

age six or nine instead of eleven or twelve) as stated by Brumfit (1991: vi). The first reason is the need to expose children from an early age to an understanding of foreign cultures in order to stimulate their tolerance and sympathy to others. It is also stated that it is a need to link communication to the understanding of new concepts. The third reason is the need for maximum learning time for important languages—the earlier we start the more time we get. Thus increasing the total number of years spent learning the language. This statement is also supported by Brewster et.al (2007:3) who say that having children learn language in a regular short slot during the week is likely to be more effective than a longer more concentrated slot only once a week. The last rea-

son is the advantage of starting with early second language instruction, that is, that children seem to have a greater facility for understanding and imitating (Brewster et.al, 2007:3), so that later the language can be used as a medium of teaching.

In primary school in Indonesia, English belongs to the local content subject. *Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan* (2006) defines on local content subject as a subject whose purpose is to develop competencies based on the special characteristics of the areas where the schools are established. The Minister of National Education Policy No. 22 Year 2006 support the idea by explaining that the choice of the subject to be included should concern with the special characteristics of the schools' environment, the potential aspects to be developed, and the richness of the area where the schools are established. By concerning the same educational policy number and because Bali is a tourism area where English is highly needed to meet the need of communication in the society, most of the elementary schools in Bali include English in their curriculum as one of the local content subjects.

English learnt in primary schools in Indonesia is expected to be used to support the interaction both in classroom and in the students' society. The standard of content as described by the Minister of National Education Policy No. 22 Year 2006 specifies that English teaching in elementary schools is aimed at developing language accompanying action which means that English is used for "here and now" interaction (school context). It is expected that the students will be able to face the challenges in the global competition.

Teaching English For Young Language Learners

Learning a second language is affected by some factors. Lightbown and Spada (1999:68) summarize that age, opportunities, motivation, aptitude, intelligence, personality, and personal preference give strong influence on learning. Since age is one of the factors, it indicates that

children learn language differently from what adults do. Therefore, it is important to know more about young language learners, such as their characteristics and how to teach and assess them in learning a second language.

The Characteristics of Young Learners

Many experts define the term young language learners. O'Grady et.al. (1989:300) explains that young language learners are those before the age of puberty. Meanwhile, the [www. teyl.com](http://www.teyl.com) describes young learners as children at the age of 6 to 12. McKay (2006:1) defines young language learners as those who are learning a foreign or second language and who are doing so during the first six or seven years of formal schooling. McKay also describes that young learners are children who are in primary or elementary school. Scott and Ytreberg (1990:1-4) describe it by explaining the general characteristics of young learners are as follows: a) five to seven year olds can talk about what they are doing and what they have done or heard. They can plan activities and use logical reasoning to argue for something and tell you why they think what they think. They can use their vivid imagination. They can also use a wide range of intonation patterns in their mother tongue and understand direct human interaction; b) eight to ten year olds have formed the basic concepts. They can tell the difference between fact and fiction and ask questions all the time. They rely on the spoken word as well as the physical world to convey and understand meaning. They are able to make some decisions about their own learning and have definite views about what they like and don't like doing. They have developed a sense of fairness about what happens in the classroom and begin to question the teacher's questions and are able to work with others and learn from others.

For the purpose of the study, the young language learners are defined as the learners of English as the foreign language who are in the age of 9 to 12 years old or those who are at grade 4 to 6 as the grades they start learning English in primary school as a beginning level of the formal

school in Indonesia.

Some characteristics of young language learners make them different from older learners. Brewster et.al (2007:27) view children are different from older learner in learning a language because children have a lot of physical energy and are emotionally excitable, and often need to be physically active. They also explain that children have a wide range of emotional needs. Brewster also adds that children tend to be self-oriented and preoccupied their own world and get board easily, yet they can concentrate for a surprisingly long time if they are interested. Finally, Brewster et al. describe the unique characteristic of children, that is, their ability to be excellent mimics that makes them easily directed but also very enthusiastic.

The above characteristics are described further by McKay (2006:5-15) who views the different characteristics in three general categories: growth, literacy, and vulnerability. Children are growing cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. Cognitive growth characteristics present clear differences between children and adults. The attention span of young learners in the early years of schooling is short, as little as 10 to 15 minutes; they are easily diverted and distracted by other pupils. They may drop out of a task when they find it difficult, though they are often willing to try a task in order to please the teacher. From age five to seven, children are continuing to learn from direct experiences—through objects and visual aids. They are also continuing to expand their use of first language to clarify thinking and learning and they are developing the ability to count and to organize information to remember it. As children progress from 5 to 12 years old, they are developing abilities to think in new ways and moving forward to be able to reason in a systematic and logical fashion in adolescence. A small percentage of children in the upper elementary years are moving into what Piaget called the formal operational stage, when they begin to hypothesize, build abstract categories and handle more than two variables at a time.

Children are also growing socially and emotionally as they are learning language in elementary school (McKay, 2006:8). They gradually develop from a main interest in self toward greater social awareness. They are also developing their understanding of the self in relation to others and ability to function in groups. From 5 to 12 years old, children's need for love, security and recognition and belonging are accompanies a gradual shift from dependence on adults to peer group support and approval. Between five and seven, they are learning to cooperate and share and take turns with others, which means that they are developing the ability to take part in small group tasks. They are beginning to develop feelings or independence but may become anxious when separated from familiar people and places. By the time they are around 11 years old, children have become sociable, spending time with friends of same sex. They are continuing to develop the ability to work and play with others. They may appear relatively calm, with short-lived moments of anger, sadness or depression. They are often able to hide feeling of anxiety; their behavior may become so over-confident. They are also sensitive to criticism and their feelings of success or failure are dependent on how adult and peers respond to them.

Children physical growth is characterized by continuing and rapid development of fine-motor skills (McKay, 2006:10). From 5 to 7 years of age, children are developing in their ability to move around (climb, balance, run and jump) and are increasing their fine-motor skills (handling writing tools, using scissors), which involve developments in hand-eye coordination. At this age they are still very active, tiring easily and recovering quickly. Children are tiring more easily from sitting than from running. They usually love physical activities, which they often participate in noisily and sometime aggressively. Young learners around this age have a need to play and to engage in fantasy and fun. By the time they are 9 to 12, children are developing hand-eye coordination, but they are better coordinated than sev-

en- or eight-years-old. These abilities continue to develop on into secondary school.

In terms of literacy, children begin to develop their understanding about how reading and writing work before they start school (McKay, 2006:11). These understandings establish the foundation for literacy. For example, as skills of decoding and whole word recognition and knowledge of discourse organization begin to develop, children's reading is slow and deliberate at first, and then they develop abilities to read aloud and silently and an ability to read for information and for pleasure. The development of writing is determined by progress in fine-motor skills, in children's ability to remember words and spelling and to combine words in sentences and paragraphs. Writing is used to convey meaning in early years with the help of drawing. By the time children are between 7 and 9, they are beginning to self-correct and are beginning to convey meaning only through writing. By 11 to 13, children are able to read a variety of fiction and nonfiction and importantly, to develop critical literacy skills, that is to understand that people may interpret materials in different ways and that they may be a variety of assumption and purposes behind materials they read. In their oral ability, the elementary school students increase their ability to interact conversationally with a range of people, in different situations, with different goals and different topics. They are able to speak about familiar topics broadening to the wider world as they grow and their experience of the world widens.

At the same time as many older learners are vulnerable to criticism and failure, young learners have particular vulnerability that requires careful attention. Young learners have confidence in their own abilities if they received love and support in the past. However, "children have a heightened sensitivity to praise, criticism and approval and their self esteem and can sometimes have long-term consequences" (McKay, 2006:14). Even the smallest failure could cause a child to feel worthless.

In short, individual children may vary in their own development, that is, a child may develop quite rapidly physically, but quite slowly in the social and emotional sphere. It may become constantly warning bells for teachers in designing activities for teaching young learners as well as on deciding the best way to assess their learning.

The Requirements of Teachers Teaching Young Learners

Generally, there are some requirements that teachers should fulfill to be intentional teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) as cited in Slavin (2006:23) requires that the teachers must meet the requirements of the 10 principles that have been designed for the basis of most teacher certification tests, namely knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of human development and learning, adapting instructional strategies, multiple instructional strategies, classroom motivation and management, communication skills, instructional planning skills, assessment of students' learning, professional commitment and responsibility, and partnerships.

Teachers also have some roles. Generally, the teacher has roles as controller, organizer, assessor, participant, resource, and observer (Harmer, 2001:58-67). As a controller, teachers are in charge of the class and of the activity, such as telling students things, organizing drills, reading aloud, etc as an indication of teacher-centered classroom. As an organizer, teachers organize students to do various activities which involve giving the students information, telling them how they will do the activity, putting them into pairs or groups, and closing down everything when the time is over. Teachers also become assessors who offer feedback and correction and grade students in various ways. Teachers might also join in an activity not as teacher, but as participants. They could be the resource for the activity who give guidance to where students can go for information. They should also encourage students to use resource materials for themselves, and become

more independent in their learning. Finally, teachers might be the observers who observe students to give them feedback.

The same requirements and roles should also be performed by teachers of young learners. In addition, there are four competencies that the teachers in the primary schools should have. The Government Policy No. 19 Year 2005 Chapter VI Article 28 Part 3 describes them as pedagogic competence, personal competence, professional competence and social competence. The pedagogic competence is described as the ability of the teacher to manage the teaching and learning activities which include the teaching preparation, teaching process, assessment procedure, and guiding the students to be aware of their potential. Meanwhile, the personal competence refers to the teacher's characteristics that could be good model for the students. The professional competence is importance because the teacher is expected to be able to master the teaching materials and able to transfer it to reach the objectives of the lessons. Finally, the teacher is expected to have social competence that refers to the teacher's ability to build good relationship with the stakeholders, such as students, colleagues, students' parents, etc.

To represent the above competencies, teachers for young learners are considered to have special characteristics. They have characteristics that make them different from teachers in higher level of education. Suyanto (2007:30-31) describes the characteristics of a teacher of English for young learners as a person who is friendly and could create fun teaching and learning atmosphere, having high motivation and creative. He/she is also a good story teller, humorous, with good teacher talk. Moreover, one of Harmer's (2001:64) explanations on the teachers' role supports the characteristics of teachers for teaching young learners. It is stated that the teacher has a role as teaching aids. He/she can perform mime and gesture to represent meaning. Moreover, the teacher at the same time is a good model of languages for the students.

The roles that the teachers should have are dependent. It depends on the teachers' expectation on what the students should achieve. Therefore, the teachers should have an ability to switch between the various roles, judge when a particular role is appropriate to be applied. Finally, after making decision on which role should be performed, teachers should then be aware of how to carry it out and how to perform it at best.

How to Teach English to Young Learners

Learning second or foreign language can not be separated from the influence of the first language. Thus, the teacher needs to consider some principles related to the comparison of process and condition between L1 and L2 to create learning-centered teaching as suggested by Brewster (2007:40). First, children are excellent observers and have a natural ability to grasp meaning in their L1 from a variety of sources. The teacher can help learners draw on this skill in the L2 by ensuring contextualized language use and using visual support wherever possible. In learning their L1, children often repeat words and phrases to themselves in order to become completely comfortable with their sounds and meaning. The teacher must be guided by the children's reactions to know when repetition is enough. In acquiring their L1, children have spent years honing their puzzling-out, hypothesis-testing skills. The teacher simply needs to ensure there is enough contextualized, motivating language 'data' for the children to work with. Inductive way of teaching is one example. Moreover, children are skilled at guessing and predicting and the teacher can usefully draw on these skills and the other thought processes as part of 'learning to learn'. Children also like to talk, even if they do not know much language. This is also a useful tactic that can be used in L2 development. Furthermore, the teacher should be balanced in providing support and challenge. If all the language work is over-guided, it becomes too easy. Similarly, if all work is challenging, too difficult and threatening, learners become demotivated.

To successfully teach children a second language requires specific skills and intuitions that differ from those appropriate for adult teaching. Five categories may help give some practical approaches to teaching children (Brown, 2007:102-4).

1. Intellectual development

Since children (up to the age about 11) are still in an intellectual stage of concrete operation, the teacher should remember their limitation. Rules, explanation, and other abstract talk about language must be approached reasonably. Therefore, the teacher should not explain grammar using terms like “present progressive” or “relative clause”. Rules stated in abstract terms (“To make a statement into a question, you add a do or does”) should be avoided. Some grammatical concepts, especially at the upper levels of childhood, can be called to learners by showing them certain patterns (“Notice the ing at the end of the word”) and examples (“This is the way we say it when it’s happening right now: ‘I’m walking to the door’”). Certain more difficult concepts or patterns require more repetition than adults need.

2. Attention Span

Since language lesson can be difficult for children at anytime, the teacher’s job is to make it interesting, lively, and fun. It can be done by having activities which are designed to capture children’s immediate interest, because children are focused on the here and now. A lesson needs a variety of activities to keep interest and attention alive. A teacher needs to be animated, lively and enthusiastic about the subject matter. A sense of humor will go along way in keeping children laughing and learning. Children have a lot of curiosity, thus the teacher must make sure to tap into it whenever possible to maintain attention and focus.

3. Sensory input

Children need to have all five senses stimulated. The activities should go well beyond the visual and auditory modes that are sufficient for a classroom. Therefore, the teacher needs to pepper the lessons with physical activity such as game

and TPR activities. Project and other hands-on activities go along way toward helping children to internalize language. The use of sensory aids helps children to internalize concepts. Moreover, nonverbal language is important because children indeed attend very sensitively to the facial features, gesture, and body language.

4. Affective factor

Children are often innovative in language forms but they frequently extremely sensitive, especially to peers. Teachers need to help them to overcome such barriers in learning. The teacher can help students to laugh with each other at various mistakes that they all made. The teacher needs to be patient and supportive to build self-esteem, yet at the same time be firm in expectation to students. The teacher should also elicit as much oral participation as possible from students, especially the quieter ones, to give them plenty of opportunities for trying things out. To create a peaceful and save atmosphere for children to learn, UNESCO proposes an AJEL (Active Joyful and Effective Learning) that could work best for children. The main aim of AJEL is to create a safe and interactive learning environment where students can learn new skills, knowledge and attitudes for their lives. Srini et al. (2005) conducted evaluation on the teaching and learning process that an involves AJEL in twelve schools in North Maluku. The result shows that the method has motivated teachers to manage classes in a non-violent way, through fun, participation and children’s creativity.

5. Authentic, meaningful language

Children are less willing to put up with language that does not hold immediate rewards for them. Language needs to be firmly context embedded; hence, a whole language approach is essential.

Assessing Young Language Learners

Assessment is a key element in language teaching. It is often associated and confused with evaluation, but the two concepts are different. Jonglo (1992:293-294) mentions that assessment

is a general term that is synonym for evaluation. He defines assessment as means to evaluate the level, importance, or worth of something. Meanwhile, Farquharson (1995:115) uses the term assessment to describe a variety of different activities that occur throughout the cycle of learning. The other expert, Brown (2005:4), explains that assessment is an on going process that encompasses a wide domain than a test. Whenever a student responds to a question, offers comments, tries out a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously makes an assessment of the students' performance. A clearer definition for the two terms, assessment and evaluation, is given by Johnson and Johnson (2002:2). They define assessment as collecting information about the quality or quantity of change in a student, group, teacher, or administrator. Meanwhile, evaluation is defined as judging the merit, value, or desirability of a measured performance. Furthermore, they explain that assessment can run without evaluation, but evaluation must be run with assessment. Ideally, assessment is done continually whereas evaluation only occasionally. Information provided by assessment is used to evaluate. To conclude, assessment can be described as all activities teachers use to help students learn and to gauge student progress that is concerned with measuring learning through performance.

Assessment brings some positive effects toward language learning. Cameron (2001:220) provides some positive effect of assessment in language learning. The process and outcome of assessment can motivate learners. The outcomes of assessment can help teachers plan more effective lessons, and can also inform the evaluation and improvement of courses and programs. The assessment activity can provide a helpful model of language use, and the feedback can support further learning.

Principles for Assessing Children's Language Learning

To assess the students' learning, teachers should concern with some principles of language

assessment. Cameron (2001:218-221) states five principles of assessing children's language learning. First, assessment should be seen from a learning-centered perspective. A Vygotskian perspective on learning emphasizes that learning occurs in social contexts and through interaction with helpful adults or other children. Thus, the teachers should not get a true assessment of a child's ability by measuring what she or he can do alone without help; instead, Vygotsky suggests that what a child can do with helpful others both predicts the next stage in learning and gives a better assessment of learning (scaffolded assessment).

The second principle is the assessment should support learning and teaching. In order to be more in control of the relationship between assessment and learning, teachers need to have clear understanding of the language learning process and of the socio-cultural context in which they operate. They can then predict the impact of the assessment on their teaching and plan accordingly.

The next principles are more than testing and congruent with learning. A skilled teacher continuously assesses students' learning through what she/he notices and how she/he interprets these observations in the light of experiences and learning. It is not necessary to test children to understand how much they have learnt—or at least it is not necessary to do it too often. There are some 'alternative assessment' techniques that could go beyond test, such as portfolio, self-assessment, and observation, because these kinds of assessment are interactional rather than isolated or providing solo experience (congruent).

The last principle is that the assessment issues should be understood by children and parents. Even if individual teachers want to convert their understandings of learning into new assessment practices, nothing can change without the support and involvement of key players: the learners themselves and their parents as the primary "stakeholders" in the educational process. The children need to understand the purposes

of activities and to play a role in them. Self-assessment can be part of learning from the beginning, and can contribute to the development of self-motivated and self directed learners at later stages. Meanwhile, school policy on assessment must take account of parents' demands, but also has a responsibility to inform and educate parents about theories of learning that underpin a school's teaching. Thus, parents need to know what teachers are doing and why; the efforts it takes to explain will be repaid by parental support for teachers. At the very least, parents can see how they can most effectively help children cope with examinations, and teachers can explain how assessment activities other than tests provide information on children learning.

Assessment Phases

Before conducting the assessment, there are some phases that should be put into consideration in order to make it successful. MacKay (2006:146) proposes three assessment phases that could be used by the assessor as basic consideration.

1. Design phase

In this phase, the teacher decides on the purpose for the procedure, checks that the assessment is appropriate for the situations and tasks that learners need in their actual language use contexts, or that are specified in the curriculum, and checks the characteristics of the learners. Cameron (2001:227) provides an example of checklist of questions that can be applied in preparing the assessment of children's language learning and to help decide what types of assessment are appropriate.

2. Operationalization phase

In this phase, the teacher prepares the assessment tasks or blueprints for assessment tasks that may be adapted in different ways. Instructions as well as the scoring method are prepared. In terms of scoring, Mackay (2006:271) offers some consideration in the evaluation of scoring rubrics and reporting scales for young learners as.

3. Administration phase

In this phase, the teacher is concerned with actually carrying out the assessment procedure and checking that the procedure has worked well. There may be a try-out of the assessment procedure first, when the test can be checked with individuals or with a group of children.

Strategies in Classroom Language Assessment

Much classroom assessment is done through continuous assessment practice, combining many strategies over time to assess children's performance, or recording observations and of coming to a decision about progress from the use of these strategies. Observation (both incidental and planned) and on-the-run assessment are key components of continuous assessment (McKay, 2006:153). Some examples of the continuous assessments are discussed further.

1. Incidental observation

The incidental observation happens as part of teaching as teacher moves around to observe and work with children during teaching activities. Puckett and Black (2000) as cited in McKay (2006:153) describe how teachers engage in incidental observation in the elementary classroom. They took story time as the example of the activity. At first, the teacher scans the listeners' facial expressions and body language and listens for verbal expression indicative of enjoyment, language development, and comprehension. During the main activities, the children are also observed as they interact with one another and with adults. These incidental observations provide valuable information about what individual students are feeling, thinking, understand, and can do and guide the responsive teacher in setting appropriate expectations and experiences for them.

Incidental observation can take place, for example, during oral action, during drafting process in writing, and during reading, when there is a feedback and support process about the reading, and when questions and discussions take place on reading. Observation might take place outside in the playground (are the second language learners able to hold their own in the new language dur-

ing play). Mental or written notes are made by teacher to inform teaching decision.

2. Planned observation

This kind of observation can involve many techniques. The teacher may watch children's performance in tasks and activities in the classroom and take notes of what he sees. This kind of observation becomes assessment only when they are recorded systematically over time so that characteristics in students' performance are noted. The result of the observation can be noted on observation checklist or rating scales. This observation could relate to any aspect of language learning—to sound, letter correspondence, word recognition, reading skill, and so on.

3. On-the-run assessment

In the reality, teachers often observe and teach in one continuous process. This process is called the on-the-run-assessment. On-the-run assessment takes place as teaching and learning proceeds. Intervention might involve questioning, seeking clarification, and pushing some learners forward in their understanding and language learning. Scaffolding of learning takes place during this process. Conducting the assessment on the process of teaching and learning allows the teachers to both monitor and respond to children's performance as they participate in on-the-run assessment. It makes the assessment could go together with teaching as one process, rather than a separate process.

4. Conference

A conference can focus on individual piece of work. Teachers ask questions to elicit children's responses, in order to assess their progress, and help children to reflect on their own performance. For example, the children are assigned to comprehend a story book; for this purpose the teachers may ask some elicited questions in the conference such as "What did you do this week?" "Read this piece for me and tell me what it is about." Instead of only having conference with the individual student, other people in young learners' lives can also be the source of information which provides invaluable information on

which to base decisions about children's needs, as well as their performance progress.

5. Portfolio

Portfolio is another strategy that can be applied to assess the children's progress. Venn (2000) describes portfolio as:

"...a systematic collection of student work and related material that depicts a student's activities, accomplishments, and achievements in one or more school subjects. The collection should include evidence of student reflection and self-evaluation, guidelines for selecting the portfolio contents, and criteria for judging the quality of the work. The goal is to help students assemble portfolios that illustrate their talents, represent their writing capabilities, and tell their stories of school achievement..."

From the above definition it can be summarized that portfolio is a medium that can be used to record children's achievement over time and give wide chance to discuss each other's works. The opportunity given for the students to be involved in the criteria for selection and assessment could motivate learning. Meanwhile, the self-evaluation allows the children to reflect upon their own efforts and accomplishments, go back over past performances, and through this, become aware of what constitutes progress and how well they are processing. Hawk and Bullock (2005) classify portfolio into process, product, and showcase portfolio. Process portfolio intends not to prove something, but rather to improve something (to evaluate progress after a period of time). Product portfolio is similar to project (the implementation of writing process). Showcase portfolio is the collections of a person's best work.

For children, portfolio asks them to give details about all the languages they can use and where they use them, and asks them to record what they can do in the target language (coloring in speech bubbles, ticking checklists and filling in additional information about the course). It also gives them a chance to do some language activities.

Marking of portfolio can be done by adding up the marks from the individual pieces of

work in the portfolio, by using set of criteria for the portfolio as a whole, or through the combination of the both. Mackay (2006:161) suggests that it is more valuable in terms of feedback to the learners to mark individual pieces of work with a separate criteria sheet or marking scheme, and not to just give one overall mark for the folder.

6. Self-and peer assessment

Self- and peer-assessment are strategies that can be used throughout classroom-based assessment. Children can be encouraged to be active participants in the assessment process if they are guided to think about their own performance and the performance of their peers. To be more independent, young learners should be given wide opportunity to make use of the chance. Cameron (233-238) provides some advantages that self assessment offers to children. Cameron explains that this assessment makes children understand more about the learning process. In Vygotskian terms, a student who learns to assess his or her work moves from being 'other regulated' to being 'self-regulated' or autonomous. They can be motivated toward some involvement in their learning, so that children will be better prepared to carry on learning, beyond the classroom. For the teachers, they can understand about individual students, thus there will be more equal relationship created between teachers and students. In applying this assessment, children need to be trained for peer-assessment, as with self-assessment. For peer-assessment, children need to learn, for example, to follow criteria, say positive things first, and not to laugh at others when they are experiencing difficulty.

7. Classroom test

A classroom test refers to an individual task, or set of tasks, in which the conditions (e.g. interaction with others and time) are controlled. The tasks should be selected using a plan that reflects the objectives of the course, the content covered and the types of tasks used in teaching. Quizzes (one word or short answers) and paper-and-pencil tests can be used for a careful check on a child's progress, while ensuring that the

work is all the child's own work, and giving them a chance to concentrate without interruption.

CONCLUSION

Generally, there are some requirements that teachers should fulfill to be intentional teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) as cited in Slavin (2006:23) requires that the teachers must meet the requirements of the 10 principles that have been designed for the basis of most teacher certification tests. One of them is assessment of students' learning. This idea is also supported by Harmer (2001:58-67) who says that a teacher does not only act as controller but also as assessor who offers feedback and correction and grades students in various ways. Thus, assessment takes an important role in the instruction.

The role also works for teaching English for young learners. The assessment strategies applied for assessing young learners should concern with their characteristics which are different from those for adult. The strategies should also be authentic, contextual and meaningful, such as through incidental observation, planned observation, on-the-run assessment, conference, portfolio, self-and peer assessment, and classroom test.

In short, a teacher runs two important roles: teaching and educating. Therefore, a teacher is not only responsible for transferring information in such a way that could help the students gain as much as information to improve their achievement. A teacher should also be able to assess the students change in their behavior through instruction. By having knowledge on how to collect data to record students' progress, teachers would be able to reduce their hesitation in assessing the students which is caused by their limitation of perception of how to conduct the assessment. In other words, the changing of paradigm of only using test to assess the students to giving more attention toward the students' process of learning will lead to more vivid instructional atmosphere which may help teachers to reduce

their burden when they come to the end of a teaching term where the students' achievement must be reported.

REFERENCES

- Brewster, J., Ellis, G., and Girard, D. 2007. *The Primary English Teacher's Guide*. Essex: Pearson Education.
- Brown, H. D. 2007. *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Brown, C.L. and Tomlinson, C. M. 2005. *Essentials of Children Literature (5th Ed.)*. Boston: Pearson Education
- Brumfit, C. Moon, J. and Tongue, R. 1991. *Teaching English to Children: from Practice to Principle*. London: Harper-Collins
- Bullock and Hawk. 2005. *Developing a Teaching Portfolio: A Guide for Preservice and Practicing Teachers (2nd Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.
- Cameron, L. 2001. *Teaching Language to Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Farquharson, A. 1995. *Teaching in Practice*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons
- Harmer, J. 2001. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. New York: Longman.
- Jalongo, M.R. 1992. *Early Childhood Language Art*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.
- Lightbown, P. M. and Spada, N. 1999. *How Language are Learned (2nd Ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MacKey, P. 2006. *Assessing Young Language Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Grady, W., Dobrovolsky, M., and Aronoff, M. 1989. *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction*. Canada: St. Martin's.
- Paul, S. G. 1995. *What Is Portfolio Assessment Really and How Can I Use It in My Classroom?* Gainesville, FL: Teacher Education Resources. Available at www.portfolio1.com, accessed on 8 October 2008.
- Paulson, F.L. Paulson, P.R. and Meyer, CA. 1991. What Makes a Portfolio a Portfolio? *Educational Leadership*, pp. 60-63.
- Srini, S., Sinaga, E., Hanafi., and Mashadi, M. 2005. *Final Evaluation Report Enhancing Teachers Capacity in Peace Education Phase II in North Halmahera*. (online). Available at <http://erc.undp.org/evaluationadmin/downloaddocument.html?docid=563> Accessed on 8 April 2010.
- Scott, W.A. and Ytreberg, L. H. 1990. *Teaching English to Children*. Essex: Longman
- Slavin, R.E. 2006. *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice (8th ed.)*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Suyanto, K. K.E. 2007. *English for Young Learners*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Undang-undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 22 tahun 2006 tentang Standar Isi untuk Satuan Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah.
- Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 19 Tahun 2005 tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan.
- Venn, J. J. (2000). *Assessing Students with Special Needs (2nd Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River: Merrill.