

**TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS PRACTICALLY  
BY THE SIXTH SEMESTER STUDENTS  
OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
IN IKIP GUNUNGSITOLI**

**BY**

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**Abstract**

**Key Words:** EYL, young learners, role play, game, puzzle

This study is aimed at describing the teaching style of the sixth semester students of English department (the intakes 2010, 2009, 2008) in *IKIP Gunungsitoli* to young learners (elementary school). Based on the obtained data analysis through document analysis (interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, records, coursebooks, and films), it is found that teaching English for young learners have the same pattern during three years with different intakes. Three types of media which are interesting, funny, unique, colourful, meaningful and authentic as well as treatment (nice words and gifts), and creating role plays, games and puzzles really support a good interaction between the sixth semester students of English department and young learners. However, practically the sixth semester students still need to learn young learners' psychology to progress their skill to teach young learners.

## **Abstrak**

**Kata kunci:** Mata kuliah EYL, pelajar berusia muda, bermain peran, permainan, teka-teki

Penelitian ini bertujuan menggambarkan proses pembelajaran bagi pelajar berusia muda (anak sekolah dasar) yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa/i semester enam program studi pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di IKIP Gunungsitoli selama tiga tahun terakhir (2008-2010). Berdasarkan hasil analisis data yang diperoleh melalui analisa dokumen seperti hasil transkrip wawancara, catatan lapangan, foto/gambar, rekaman, buku teks, dan film; ditemukan memiliki pola pembelajaran yang sama dengan angkatan yang berbeda. Ketiga jenis media yang menarik, lucu, unik, penuh warna/i, bermakna dan familiar serta kata-kata yang memotivasi dan pemberian hadiah, serta bermain peran, permainan and teka-teki sangat mendukung terciptanya interaksi yang baik antara mahasiswa/i semester enam dan pelajar berusia muda. Kendati demikian, secara praktis mahasiswa/i semester enam masih perlu mendalami teori psikologi anak untuk mengembangkan keahlian mereka dalam mengajar pelajar berusia muda.

## INTRODUCTION

### PROBLEM

Teaching English for young learners is not easy as teaching English for adult learners. Otherwise, some others also say that teaching English for young learners is more difficult than teaching English for adult learners. Which is the true one? Is it easier to teach English to young learners? Or otherwise? Why do some others have different sight about this? It is because of some experiences faced by language teachers in schools or even in private classes.

Many language teachers complain when teaching English to young learners in schools and even in private classes in *Gunungsitoli*. They often say that it is better to teach adult learners than teaching young learners (the graduations' report of *IKIP Gunungsitoli* who never studied EYL, and from outside as well as open university). Teaching English to young learners is more difficult because they cannot control them while teaching, they make a noise, they get bored, and they cannot care of the language teachers' teaching. What the language teachers teach today will be forgotten by them in the next teaching. When the language teachers ask them, they only say that we forget sir, mom, miss. Why does it happen? Why teaching English for young learners becomes a burden for many language teachers? For the graduation either who never studied EYL or who studied in advance? Even for the sixth semester students of English department who are studying the lecture of English for Young

Learners in *IKIP Gunungsitoli* now? Have they taught English correctly to young learners? Do they know really how to teach English to young learners? Or they teach English to young learners like teaching English to adult learners? Are they really candidate of English language teachers for young learners? A lot of questions are posed related to the problem above. Shortly, the problem above has been searched by the researcher through some documents such as interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, records, coursebooks, and films during teaching the lecture to the sixth semester students of English department for three years. To simplify all the questions, the researcher formulates the problem is what can be learnt about this phenomenon by studying the documents?

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the research is to learn the phenomenon by studying the documents. It can be learnt through some weakness and strength of teaching young learners and the description of the process of teaching young learners.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This research can be useful for the following people as:

1. A mirror for the students of English department as candidates of English teacher to teach young learners.
2. A learning experience for the other students who tend to teach young learners in English classes.

3. A reflection for the researcher to make teaching EYL lecture better and comprehensive for the English department especially the sixth semester students of English department.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The method applied is qualitative research which is the type is document analysis (Ary et al, 2002:29). The researcher focuses on analyzing or interpreting recorded material within its own context. The material consists of interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, records, coursebooks, and films.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Based on the data obtained in the field, the researcher finds some findings out as follows.

1. The sixth semester students of of English department (the intakes 2010, 2009, 2008) have the same pattern in teaching young learners (elementary school) such as preparing lesson plan, main media and supporting media either visual, audio, and audio-visual media (interesting, funny, unique, colourful, meaningful and authentic media), treatment (nice words and gifts), and creating role plays, games and puzzles.
2. A few of the sixth semester students of all groups of English department (the intakes 2010, 2009, 2008) make media as cheap as possible and especially for visual media are totally different with different intakes and different groups.

3. Teaching young learners is invaluable learning experiences for the sixth semester students of English department since they know practically how to interact with young learners physically and psychologically.
4. Majority of the sixth semester students of English department disagree if the EYL teachers do not have any basic knowledge related to EYL lecture or training, workshop, seminar etcetera.
5. All groups of the sixth semester students of English department teach young learners language skills and language components integratively, but they often speak bilingual.
6. Young learners like learning English with interesting, funny, unique, colourful, meaningful and authentic media, either visual, audio, and audio-visual media; they like singing English songs by moving their body, they like role plays, games, and puzzles; even they like learning English in groups and sharing to their friends.
7. Young learners like learning new things which are familiar with them in their daily life.
8. Young learners get confused when the sixth semester students of English department in a group have different pronunciation in the same words and in the same meanings.
9. Young learners like if the teaching styles of the sixth semester students of English department in groups are totally different.
10. Motivation, confidence, braveness, spirit in learning English are formed and increased through good treatments (nice words and gifts) for young learners.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

In this part, the researcher discusses the research result through characteristics of qualitative research. They are naturalistic, descriptive data, concern with process, inductive, and meaning (Ary et al, 2002).

### **1. Naturalistic**

The direct source of data is obtained by the researcher as the key instrument through some documents such as interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, records, coursebooks, and films during teaching and monitoring the lecture to the sixth semester students of English department for three years with the total number of the students is 109 persons of the intake 2010, 90 persons of the intake 2009, and 107 persons of the intake 2008. Interview transcripts are composed by the researcher to ask the sixth semester students of English department what their plan, what to teach and how to teach young learners. Field notes are written by the researcher during the sixth semester students of English department apply their teaching practice to young learners. Photographs are also obtained when the sixth semester students practice their teaching. The records are taken from the teaching practice of the sixth semester students of English department who study EYL and practically inviting and teaching young learners (elementary school) with 5 to 7 persons for each group. Coursebooks are usually used by the researcher to teach the sixth semester students of English department such as English for Young Learners, Teaching Languages to Young

Learner, Teaching English to Children, Teaching English to Children in Asia, Children Learning English, and Teaching English in the Primary Classroom and some other supporting books, while the films are taken from internet.

## **2. Descriptive data**

In the research, the researcher collects the data and interpret into the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The data include interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, records, coursebooks, and films. Then it is narrated by the researcher. Below is the description of each datum collected.

### **a. Interview transcripts**

The interview transcripts are analyzed by the researcher through the answers of the students. The students of each group get the same questions that consist of 10 questions. Based on the obtained answers, the researcher describes it as follows.

- 1). The majority of the groups answer that they like learning EYL lecture while some of them or 19.27% (2010), 13.33% (2009), or 13.08 % (2008) say, 'No', because of a lot of preparation.
- 2). The majority of the groups answer that they like teaching English to young learners because they are funny, motivated to learn English, more concentrate in learning English, and good imitators but some of them or 6.42% (2010), 7.78% (2009), or 5.61% (2008) dislike.

- 3). Each group or 100% (2010, 2009, 2008) answers that they have good plans in teaching young learners such as to make media, think of material to teach and how to teach it by considering their teaching style and organizing lesson plans.
- 4). The majority of the groups answer that they want to teach interesting material based on syllabus, but some of them or 2.75% (2010), 6.67% (2009), 2.80% (2008) tend to teach material not based on the syllabus but how interesting the material to young learners.
- 5). A half of the groups answers that they want to teach the selected material by using interesting and colourful media prepared, but a half of them or 49.54% (2010), 50% (2009), 49.53% (2008) says by using funny and unique media as well as easy to find and cheap.
- 6). All groups or 100% (2010, 2009, 2008) answer that they prepare and use media in teaching English to young learners to make them understand material easily, to make them interest and to transfer English easily to young learners.
- 7). All groups or 100% (2010, 2009, 2008) answer that they use three kinds of media in teaching English to young learners, but it depends on the EYL teacher. They can use visual media, audio media, and audio- visual media. The most important thing is easy to prepare, to find, and it matches to the material taught.
- 8). The majority of the groups answer that they try to approach young learners as close as possible, make them happy and feel joyful and repeat the lesson again when young learners have problem to follow their teaching style. Some of them or

6.42% (2010), 7.78% (2009), and 5.61% (2008) say, 'We need to change our teaching style'.

9). The majority of the groups answer that the EYL teacher must not be funny, childish, beautiful, handsome but the most important thing is s/he has a good interaction and a good approach with young learners in teaching-learning process, while some of them or 3.67% (2010), 6.67% (2009), and 4.67% (2008) say, 'S/he must be funny'.

10). The majority of the groups answer that the teacher who teaches young learners must be the teacher who has learnt EYL lecture or followed EYL training/seminar/workshop etcetera. Others are inappropriate to teach young learners since they never learn theories of teaching young learners or they do not have any basic knowledge to teach young learners so they have a tendency to do more mistakes compared to the real EYL teacher. Shortly, it must be real EYL teachers. While some of them or 7.34% (2010), 8.89% (2009), and 4.67% (2008) say others are needed when there is no EYL teacher in schools or in private classes.

#### **b. Field notes**

Based on the data obtained from field notes, the researcher finds some weakness and strength out of teaching EYL to young learners. The weakness consists of:

- 1). The sixth semester students of English department as candidate of English teacher sometimes consider young learners as adult learners during the teaching-learning process.
- 2). The sixth semester students of English department think too much what they are going to do after a certain activity already done by them during the teaching-learning process.
- 3). The sixth semester students of English department feel clumsy in front of young learners since young learners focus their eyes on them.
- 4). The sixth semester students of English department feel afraid of doing mistakes since they are monitored by the researcher as their lecturer.
- 5). The sixth semester students of English department get confused to face young learners who do not have any good response when they pose some questions related to the material.
- 6) The sixth semester students of English department are not self-confidence to pronounce certain words since they seldom practice it.

While the strength as follows.

- 1). The sixth semester students of English department organize their lesson plan to teach young learners. They also make their interesting, funny, unique, colourful, meaningful and authentic media as tools to transfer English material easily to young learners. Besides, they create some games, puzzles, and role play during the teaching-learning process.

- 2). The sixth semester students of English department manage their time as efficient as possible based on the allotted time and get turn in teaching young learners flawless as well as teaching a selected material with different styles in a group but with an aim to achieve the indicators of learning.
- 3). The sixth semester students of English department are very cooperative, active, and creative to teach young learners.
- 4). The sixth semester students of English department have a lot of ideas how to make young learners feel fun and happy during the teaching-learning process such as singing songs, telling funny stories, showing interesting movies, conducting games and puzzles, letting young learners find correct answers competitively and deciding who the winner is.
- 5). The sixth semester students of English department are capable of acting as good models in front of young learners.
- 6). The sixth semester students of English department choose songs and the songs have a relationship with the material taught to young learners.
- 7). The sixth semester students of English department often praise young learners when they do good points otherwise motivate them when they do incorrect points.

Either the weakness or the strength typed above are commented by the researcher by saying some constructive criticisms, questions and suggestions to the sixth semester students to be revised. For example be aware that young learners are not same with adult learners, learn your lesson plan intensively, suppose young learners are your real young sisters and brothers, keep your self-confidence and

suppose you are the only one who control the teaching-learning process, learn more young learners phycological theories, and practice more together how to pronounce English words correctly to avoid different pronunciation with other students in the same words and in the same meanings.

### **c. Photographs**

Photographs are also analyzed by the researcher and it is found out the sixth semester students of English department in the photographs indicate they are close to young learners. Young learners also feel happy, fun, brave, self-confidence, motivated since they have good approaches. The interaction between them runs well. However some photographs also show there are some of young learners feel confused and afraid when the sixth semester students from the other groups try to disturb them by making some jokes. At the end of their teaching, the researcher also comments them not to do that in the next teaching.

### **d. Records**

There are 48 records obtained by the researcher during the sixth semester students of English department practice their English teaching to young learners. In data analysis the researcher looks at all groups conduct their teaching by making media themselves, preparing other supporting media, organizing lesson plans based on syllabus for elementary school as well as preparing themselves how to teach young learners. Additionally, they also try to be close as possible to young learners. All groups divide their teaching stages in pre teaching-learning activities, whilst

teaching-learning activities, and post teaching-learning activities. In pre and post teaching-learning activities each group has different and similar activities to do, while in whilst teaching-learning activities each group has different activities moreover in their teaching style. Some of groups can attract young learners' attention to their teaching style while other groups cannot. Some of groups can easily transfer English learning material to young learners when they have good approaches, interesting teaching style as well as interesting and appropriate media. Another thing found by the researcher is in a certain group there is one or two of the sixth semester students of English department cannot attract young learners' attention so it is difficult for young learners to follow their teaching style. As an impact of it, young learners get confused and misunderstand, the more when the sixth semester students in a certain group pronounce the same words and the same meaning differently. Furthermore almost all groups always praise young learners and give some treatment through nice words and gifts. They also sometimes make positive jokes.

#### **e. Coursebooks**

Coursebooks as the teaching and learning material for young learners give helps to EYL teacher as Halliwell (1992:113) states by providing:

- 1). a clearly thought out programme which is appropriately sequenced and structured to include progressive revision;
- 2). a wider range of material than an individual teacher may be able to collect;
- 3). security;
- 4). economy of preparation time;

- 5). a source of practical teaching ideas;
- 6). work that the learners can do on their own so that the EYL teacher does not have to be centre stage all the time;
- 7). a basis for homework if that is required;
- 8). a basis for discussion and comparison with other teachers.

Halliwell's opinion is supported by Paul (2003:105) saying, 'Coursebooks are not necessary in every teaching situations. The coursebooks helps children organize their ideas and gives them a sense of direction. When they look at it they know what they have achieved and can see where they are going'.

Related to the data analysis, the researcher finds out that the coursebooks are not always opened during the teaching-learning process. The coursebooks used are fun, colourful, and expensive. Young learners enjoy looking at and reading it. This is in line with Paul's statement (2003:106),

The coursebook should attract the children towards English and draw the children into the course. Ideally, it should be fun and colorful so that children enjoy looking at it just as if it was one of their favorite storybooks at home. In some teaching situations, it may be too expensive to have a colorful coursebook, but even if there is little color, the book should not feel like a traditional school textbook.

#### **f. Dubbings**

Dubbings such as cartoons or children programs are also shown to young learners. It is played to them by the sixth semester students of English department once to thrice without sound so they have an idea what the scene is about. As a result young learners can then invent the dialogue themselves when the scene is played the

following time. They can also tell the simple story with their own English words. They enjoy it very much, full of fun since every young learner speaks to tell what they know without thinking it is correct or incorrect. Although some of them still feel shy to tell when they do not know how to say it in English.

Using dubbings is very important to encourage young learners to listen to dialogues or even songs. This is in line with Paul's opinion (2003:113) saying,

Play a short video scene once or twice without the sound so the children have an idea what the scene is about. They can invent the dialog themselves when the scene is played the following time.

He also says, 'It is also important to encourage the children to listen to songs and dialogs away from the classroom'.

What have been done by some of groups of the sixth semester students give little progression to young learners because they do not give any worksheet with a list of words (a half of the words) they hear and see on the dubbings so that some of young learners cannot identify, predict and recreate the dialogue what they watch. While to be interactive between EYL teachers and young learners before, during, and after listening and watching dubbings, EYL teachers may ask young learners to identify by preparing worksheets with a list of words, to predict by stopping in the middle of a scene or dialogue to think what will happen next as well as to recreate the dialogue or scene, Paul (2003:113).

### **3. Concern with process**

The researcher is concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. In conducting teaching English to young learners, done by the sixth semester students of English department, firstly they look for and prepare syllabus, young learners' level, textbooks/coursebooks, selected material, media, lesson plan, and young learners. Secondly, they invite and begin teaching young learners in the classroom by following steps of teaching as described in their lesson plan. Some of groups begin their teaching by greeting and singing an interesting song while watching on a shown audio-visual media and moving their body. They do it to make young learners relaxe to follow the teaching-learning process since not only young learners in the classroom but also other groups (adult students) with other young learners who notice them. Other groups present the material by showing some familiar media such as pictures and brainstorming young learners' prior knowledge. According to Wright (1989:17), pictures are appropriate for young learners because they are easy to prepare, easy to organize as well as interesting to them. Therefore, pictures are often used to translate abstract ideas into more realistic forms and they are easily obtained (Latuheru, 1988:41).

In the whilst teaching-learning activities, all groups conduct their teaching by applying a certain method or strategy or technique or approach which is considered appropriate to implement to young learners to teach selected materials with interesting topics and sub topics. To avoid getting bored, usually they invite young learners to sing songs or role paly, play games or puzzles. Those are done as to close

the main activities by announcing the winners to get praise and gifts prepared by them.

Of three stages of teaching-learning process, the post teaching-learning is done by all groups to end the class. In this stage, the groups usually motivate young learners, invite them to re-sing songs and convince them that English is fun, interesting, and colourful.

#### **4. Inductive**

Qualitatively the researcher tends to analyze the data inductively without searching out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses. In other words, the researcher analyzes the data from bottom up-top down. It can be said that the research is broken it down from smaller things to larger things or specific to general. This is very important to make readers more understand and also to clarify in learning the phenomenon by studying the documents, to know some weakness and strength of teaching young learners more detail as well as to describe the process of teaching young learners conducted by the sixth semester students. All the data obtained from the research instruments are searched, noticed, analyzed and evaluated for three years by the researcher as a generalization from apparent observed relationships. However, in the research the researcher does not examine previous researches to determine what findings other researchers have reported on the question.

#### **5. Meaning**

The researcher is concerned with what are called participant perspectives accurately in the research. In the sight of young learners invited after they are interviewed by the sixth semester students of English department, they say that they like joining the class of EYL guided by the students because they learn more English with different style of teaching, some role plays and games or puzzles are held to make them more competitive; positive treatment given to them through good approaches/nice words and gifts for the winners and the fail one; interesting English songs which make them happy, fun, and motivated, as well as appropriate, funny, colourful, unique, meaningful and authentic media prepared to make them more understand the material, even they ask the sixth semester students to invite them in another time.

The sixth semester students as the doers of the teaching for young learners admit that it is invaluable experiences since through this lecture (EYL lecture) they have an opportunity to invite and teach young learners formally in the classroom by implementing it practically what they have learnt theoretically. They also say that it is not easy to teach young learners since a lot of good preparation must be done, not only physically but also psychologically.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Firstly, based on the research findings and discussions, it can be concluded and learnt that teaching English to young learners are various in teaching styles,

media, role plays, games, puzzles, and songs. The more actively, cooperative and creative EYL teachers with a good atmosphere, the more motivated young learners join the English teaching-learning process. If they feel motivated, they like learning English and of course English is easy to teach to them.

Secondly, the sixth semester students are suggested to create new patterns how to teach young learners for the next intakes and learn psychology theories for young learners.

Thirdly, English department and *IKIP Gunungsitoli* need to be cooperative to support activities of the sixth semester students who learn EYL lecture related to supporting facilities.

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