

## Characteristic English Learning Style For Young Learner In New Normal Era

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### Abstract

*English lessons are very important for students, and learning English should be introduced to students as early as possible, so that at an adult age students can keep up with international developments. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the process of learning English as well as possible, so that the goals that have been set are successfully achieved by students. In order to achieve success in teaching English to children, especially school age, teachers must have knowledge about young learners, characteristics of young learners, learning styles of young learners, techniques of teaching, and how to develop learning materials for young learners. So that by understanding the characteristics of children's learning, how students learn in class, teachers can choose appropriate techniques and can develop learning materials appropriately according to the needs and development of students.*

*Keywords: Characteristic, Learning Style, technique and material development.*

## INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a child is one of the best ways to master English. Many people believe that learning at a young age it will get easier to master. It includes learning English for young learners. EYL is English for young learners. The students called EYL are students of elementary school between 6-12 year old. They have divided into two groups; they are *Younger Group* (6-8 year olds) and *Older Group* (9-12 year old). At now, the young learner had studied English from elementary school. So, the student could learn it since they are still young. Every young learner is unique with different characters and different learning style one. Brown (2000) defines learning style as the manner in which individuals perceive

and process information in learning condition. He said that learning style is one aspect of learning and refers to the choice of one learning condition. Humans have different learning style in absorbing, organizing and processing information. By realizing this, someone will be easier in thinking. In teaching English to young learners, teachers have to understand the character of student learning styles, and appropriate teaching techniques, choose the appropriate book for teaching and also be able to develop creative and innovative learning material. So that by understanding the character of students, the teacher can choose the right technique, meaningful, purposeful, enjoyable and also appropriate book that will help student achieve their potential in theirs life. For more details, the focus of this article is talk about young learners, characteristics, learning style, teaching technique, and creating material development for young learners.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. English Young Learners**

EYL is English for young learners. EYL are students of Elementary school between 6-12 years old. They are divided into two groups: younger group (6-8 years old) and older group (9-12 years old). Based on the level, the lower class students are 1, 2, and grade 3 and also Upper class students are 4, 5 and grade 6. According to Scott and Ytreberg refer to limit the age of 5 to 11 years as a young learners. Slattery and Willis divide into two groups: very young learner (under 7) and young learner (upper 7 years). Base on the explanations above young learner is a student who learns English stars from 7 years.

In teaching and learning process of students' maturity in the classroom is not depending how old the student only, but also another factors such as: environments around (city or village), culture, interest, media and parental influence. According to Lightbown and Spada, Quoted by Brewster (2007) found that children imitate adult and analyze how language works; rather than

IQ, setting and context play an important role in acquiring a language; high motivation is a factor for language learners to be successful in language learning; and language must be contextualized so that students can understand it. Furthermore, the most important purpose of teaching English for young learners at elementary school is arouse interest to study English since young.

## **2. The Characteristics of Young Learners**

According to Scott and Ytreberg (1993) the characteristics of young learners as the active learners, learn through sensory, respond the language through concrete things, interested in physical movements and real activities to stimulate thinking. They will be enthusiastic if they are taught using fun activities, love to play and learn best when they are enjoying themselves. Furthermore, as young learners are not same as adults, the teachers must know their characteristics detail, which are as follow:

- 1) Being active/learning by doing.
- 2) More interested and curious with something.
- 3) Having the capacity for indirect learning.
- 4) Unable to think abstract but good at imitating.
- 5) Talking a lot and being creative with limited vocabulary and grammar.
- 6) Having capacity to grasp meaning and own world of imagination.
- 7) Having short concentration, like playing and learning best when having fun activities. Slattery & Willis, 2001, Scott & Ytreberg, 2004)

Base on the explanation above the teachers expectedly can understand about student's character so that they can condition effective classroom activities and efficient according to the needs of children at their age.

## **3. Learning Style of English Young Learners**

Children have different ways of learning and every student characteristics directly related to the study results, between one to another: intelligence, motivation, ideas, perceptions and attitudes. Besides that, the students have different capabilities in studying and learning. According to Bob Samples (2002) said: intelligence, learning style and creativity in learning, as well as ways of its development. Moreover, Melvin L (2014: 28) states that many of the students can learn effectively with the teachers who bring learning activities that combine the visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

According to DePorter and Hernacky (2006) mention each of the learning style as follows:

**a. Auditory of Language Learner**

These types learn through listening to what others have to say and talking about what they 're learning. They 're also more likely to:

- 1) Attention is split
- 2) Remember information by talking aloud
- 3) Need to have things explained orally
- 4) May have trouble with written instructions
- 5) Talk to themselves while learning something new
- 6) Enjoy discussion groups over working alone (Dialogue internally and externally).

Auditory learners might look like they're not paying attention when you talk to them, but their listening skills are more developed than their visual skills.

**Visual of Language Learner**

As their name suggests, these people learn through watching. It's believed to be the most dominant learning style and many traditional classrooms are geared towards the visual learner. For their learning to make sense they need to be able to see, visualize and illustrate their knowledge skills and concepts. Visual learning characteristics include:

- 1) Regularly and pay attention to everything
- 2) Requires thorough overview, objective, and capturing detail
- 3) Remembering visual details and doodling while listening.
- 4) Preferring to see what they are learning
- 5) Needing to have paper and pens handy
- 6) Liking to write down instructions or see them demonstrated.

Telling these learners how to do something may not make sense to them at all they need to see it.

**b. Kinesthetic**

These learners like to be actively involved in the learning process, and learn best through hands on activities and movement. Other kinesthetic characteristics are they:

- 1) Given the go and see
- 2) Learning by doing something
- 3) Often talk with their hands
- 4) Like to touch things in order to learn about them
- 5) Want to actually do whatever is being talked about or learned
- 6) Remember events by recalling who did what rather than who said what.

Based on the explanation above students have different styles of learning, so that the teachers can find, combine and adapt the teaching style (DePorter, 2014: 120)

**4. Techniques of Teaching English to Young Learners**

Teaching technique is the implementation of teaching method in the level of procedure which is take place in the classroom. To some extent, different methods may have similar techniques even though they must have different techniques.

Teaching English language for young learners has a variety of techniques in order to accommodate their characteristics in studying. Here are some English teaching techniques for young learners that can be applied to EYL:

a. Listen and Repeat

In teaching and learning process in the classroom, the teacher can use listen and repeat technique for teaching listening, speaking or reading. If the teacher want to use the technique, the teacher say the words and the students try to listen. After that, the teacher says the words again and the students repeat the words. For listen and repeat activity, the teacher can ask the students to imitate how the pronunciation of the words, imitate phrase, and next try to imitate a simple sentence, for example: *orange* *There is an orange on the table*. For reading activity, the teacher can use simple short story, for example *Chuchu & Friends in Story Time with video, cry baby in storyland* and so on. At the first time, the students just focus for listening skill while watch the video or listen the story. Furthermore, the technique approach use to various elements of language and activity, it is one of the best way to improve the student's pronunciation drill hopefully they will familiar with pronunciation of English language.

**a. Listen and Do**

Listen and do learning is done by the teacher giving instructions and students responding to these instructions by doing an activity according to the instructions given by the teacher. Listen and do is the basis of teaching using the TPR approach. The teacher trains students to understand the instructions and students respond by doing what the teacher says or asks correctly. Students respond or respond by doing what the teacher says. For example, the teacher says "*Stand up, please*", "*Sit down, please*", "*raise your hand*", "*Open your book page 7*", *next page, please*", *Let's close*

*our meeting with say hamdallah*". In line with that Asher, Kusudo and de la Torre (Newton and Nation, 2009, page. 29) State that "Listening and do activities are used in most classrooms and are the basis of Total Physical Response Language Teaching", Which means that listening and do is a learning activity that is often used in class, listen and do is the basis of TPR learning in teaching new languages to students

**b. Work in Pair**

Activities carried out by students in pairs or both can train students to interact and his activity will trigger students to interact and learn to respect the opinions of others. In activities carried out in pairs, students practice until they are really ready to interact or ask questions about something. This paired activity can be in the form of question-answer activities or completing sentences or giving answers to a problem.

**c. The Benefit Work in Pairs**

With this method of playing in pairs, at least the process of learning speaking skills will bring benefits in the form of:

- 1) Intensive practice of asking and answering with the topic of the lesson that has just been taught by the teacher (eg telling the times. It is called intensive, because all students in the class will practice with their partners at the same time.
- 2) HSTT (high student talking time) and LTTT (low teacher talking time) atmosphere, which means giving more opportunities to practice speaking to students (not dominated by teachers), and thus the teacher only functions as a facilitator, giver of instructions and controller of pronunciation. intonation and word order accuracy. This paired practice method has been proven to be effective in d learning outcomes in the minds of students, because students have had direct experience using the communicative language functions that have just

been taught by the teacher. This is very different when the teacher only teaches theory and examples without a natural atmosphere as is attempted in the pair play method. The obstacles most often faced by teachers are creativity in preparing materials, time and funds (for photocopies of materials). These three things often make speaking learning in schools run in place. Learning as exemplified above, meanwhile, is mostly adopted by English language course institutions outside of school which do have a habit of innovating in terms of teaching materials.

**d. Storytelling**

Storytelling is a technique of teaching English to students where the teacher tells a story using a picture book, story book or puppets. Children naturally love to listen and enjoy the story. For young children who are still young, the use of Indonesian can be used, but over time, the frequency of Indonesian can be reduced. By listening to stories, students can develop listening, writing or retelling skills own words. Teaching English by storytelling has several the benefits are: giving examples of natural language, storytelling activities will also make children learn the language with discourse or context, besides that storytelling (with books) will also make children understand that reading is fun and will make them happy with reading activities.

**e. Role Play**

Drama or role-playing is closely related to children's play activities. Based on research conducted by Inawati (2010), role-playing can be especially useful in improving children's speaking skills. Furthermore, it is said that there are at least four types of speaking skills that are mastered by children with role play:

Objects say simple sentences and the last is engage in a conversation. Thus, when children play roles in English, they learn the language in a



meaningful context. This is important because then children will understand that English is useful for them, one of which is as a communication tool.

**f. Songs/chats/rhymes**

In teaching English to children, songs are used as a means to teach materials, be it vocabulary, phrases, or sentence patterns certain.

According to Suyanto (2007) songs used in class have the following characteristics:

- 1) Contains words, phrases, or sentences with specific themes;
- 2) There is repetition;
- 3) Easy to memorize;
- 4) Song with movement: songs can be sung by children outside the classroom.
- 5) The tone is happy and fast. The following are examples of songs that meet the above criteria.

**g. Games**

Playing games is something very important and also natural as part of the growth in childhood. With games, they experiment and interact with their environment (Lewis and Bedson, 2004). The game can be done together with the whole class, in groups or pairs.

Its application can be adapted to the learning target and also the class situation. The teacher must be good at managing the class, because otherwise the children may lose control and become out of control.

**5. English Book and Creating Material Development**

When the teachers open a page in their book, they have to decide whether or not they should use the lesson on that page with their class. Is the language at

the right level? Is the content or topic suitable for the students? Are there the right kinds of activities in the book?

With a good book, there is a strong possibility that the language, content, appropriate, topic, and different language skill will be attractive for students. According to Tomlinson argue that English materials are anything which is used to help the students for studying. English material usually includes a student's book, teacher's book, a photocopied handout, a newspaper, a cassette, a video, CD-Room, and audio or video recordings. When the content of the book is not appropriate to the students, the teachers can adapt the material. Try to replace the book with other books and change it, in the same way, to make it suitable for the students. However, when the teacher wants material personalized and more suitable for the students, Spratt et. al. suggests to the teachers as shown in the following table:

**Table 1:**  
**Teacher's strategy in personalizing materials**

<b>Coursebook provides:</b>	<b>The teacher can provide additional</b>
text/situation/context picture, image, photo, drawing dialogue/conversation and the text tasks and exercise	warmer/warming-up instructions/guide work in pair/ role play homework/task

When the teacher plans to reorder the material of English Teaching for young learners, make sure the organization of the book materials more interesting by using many kinds of drawing, pictures, games, puzzles, songs, mime and realia when presenting the classroom. MD is material development. Material development is able to do by adapting and selecting material base on student need. According to Ricard, 2001:...*writing teaching*

*materials is similar to the processes involved in planning and teaching a lesson.*

Tomlinson, 2001: ....*material development is a process of adapting, implementing, and evaluating in using teaching materials.*

Yuniar, 2010:....*while in creating own material, teacher found some problems like time, experience, confident and references of books.*

Based on the opinion above, material development needs a long process. That is selecting the materials, adapted, write the content, the time needed, experience and evaluation.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching English in Indonesia as a foreign language has its own challenges for teachers in teaching in the classroom. To maximize the teaching of English in the classroom, the teacher must know the characteristics and learning style of children which will later affect the teaching techniques in the classroom, so that they can adapt in developing learning materials that suit their needs. Thus, the purpose of teaching English in the classroom is to introduce English from an early age and also make children happy to learn English at the next level. If children learn with pleasure and the techniques used by the teacher can also follow the way children learn well, then an effective and efficient teaching and learning process will be achieved so that learning outcomes will also be maximized and it is very likely that children in Indonesia will be able to master English as an international language because they are not afraid and traumatized in learning English at the next level of education.

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