

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter consists of explanation about teaching English to young learners taken from numbers of experts. Additionally, effective TEYL, considerations of video implementation as a medium in TEYL and TEYL through video are provided to enrich knowledge of readers.

A. Teaching English to Young Learners

Teaching English to young learners (TEYL) becomes a great concern for educators around the globe. In addition, English is being introduced to ever more and ever younger YL and in many countries around the world English is now compulsory in primary education (Nikolov, 2009a; Pinter, 2006, as cited in Garton, Copland, & Burns, 2011, p. 3). Moreover, knowledge and understanding of teaching practices in the field of young learners is, at best, sketchy (Garton, et al., 2011, p. 3). Therefore, this current research is expected to provide more understanding and knowledge about TEYL practices.

TEYL is a complex teaching and learning activity for English teachers. One of the reasons is that the process of the teaching and learning involves 7 to 11 years old learners (Garton, et al., 2011) or 7–12 years old (Willis, 2001, p. 4, as cited in Shin, 2006, p. 2). At this phase of age, young learners (YL) in Indonesia are in elementary schools. Another reason is that “teachers of young learners have two jobs: to provide care and to provide instruction (Linse 2005, as cited in Ulloa Salazar & Díaz Larenas, 2018, p. 98). Moreover, when introducing new materials to the YL, teachers must give explicit descriptions of

concepts or processes, and whether we can or cannot explain such new ideas clearly to the YL may make a crucial difference to the success or failure of a lesson (Ur, 1991, p. 16, as cited in Ulloa Salazar & Díaz Larenas, 2018, p. 94). Thus, English teachers of YL need to provide supportive learning environment and medium in TEYL to help them learn English well.

B. Effective TEYL

In providing YL effective English learning, teachers are required to be competent in TEYL. Moon (2005) elaborates three competencies for EYL teachers. Competent EYL teachers have knowledge of and fluency in English (including good classroom communication skills) and knowledge of the culture. The second one, they have good understanding about YL foreign language pedagogy (knowledge of YL's FL learning and appropriate teaching strategies for TEYL). The third one is having knowledge/understanding of YL's overall development (p. 32). Henceforth, it is necessary for EYL teachers to be as competent as possible since it determines the quality of their teaching and learning activities to YL.

Teachers are required to understand and follow requirements to have effective teaching and learning practices in TEYL. Here are the requirements elaborated by Musthafa (2010, pp. 120-123), as follows:

1. Know who YL are

It is critical that teachers know who their target learners are before they can design a good English instruction (p. 120). Additionally, YL have their own culture, ways of doing things, which are different from adults.

2. Know how YL learn

YL have their own ways in learning something, they are:

a) Learning and creating knowledge base from direct experiences from what they can capture using their senses (p. 120).

b) Learning from hands-on physical activities (p. 121). YL's learning is greatly enhanced when the learners are engaged in hands-on physical activities such as playing with physical objects or making physical movements (p. 121).

c) YL's thinking is embedded in here-and now context of situation (p. 122). YL's thinking tends to be embedded in what is happening right now and what can be experienced on site (p. 122)

d) Learn from whole to parts, holistically using scripts (p. 122). YL create knowledge by accumulating what has already been experienced case by case. From this kind of experience, YL develop scripts which serve as a kind or organizer for digesting their ensuing experiences (p. 122).

e) Having short attention span (p. 122). YL can hold their attention for about 15 to 20 minutes only. This relatively short attention span has a great implication for teaching procedures (p. 122).

3. Know how YL learn a language (p. 122). YL acquire a language from direct contact with language in use, including observing and participating in literacy practices; watching how people read and write for functional real purposes; and participating in literacy events (p. 122).

4. Know how YL learn a foreign language (p. 123). Learning English with no clear social function can pose a real challenge to teachers because the student learning motivation can be low and the exposure to the language use outside the class can be very limited (p. 123). In addition, very low frequency of instructional encounter virtually precludes skills development on the part of learners (p. 123).
5. Know the principles and facilitate YL in learning English as a foreign language (p. 123). Teachers of English should use English all the time/or as much as possible during the session in the classroom. Then, as YL learn more readily when engaged in physical movements, teachers should use activity-based teaching-learning techniques (p. 123). Teachers should focus on functional English or vocabulary development, and for immediate fulfillment of communicative needs of the young learners (p. 123). Afterwards, as YL have relatively short attention span, teachers of English should use various techniques for short periods of time to maintain the interest level of the YL in engaging the English lessons (p. 123). Moreover, it is good idea if the teachers can provide useful acquisition-promoting routines in English (p. 123).

Considering the explanations, YL should be treated and appreciated in their own right (Musthafa, 2010, p. 120). As a result, teachers can have effective TEYL practice.

C. Considerations of Video Implementation as a Medium in TEYL

In English language learning, especially in the field of TEYL, video implementation appears to be a beneficial medium. Video is “the selection and sequence of messages in an audio-visual context (Canning-Wilson, 2000, as cited in Muslem, et al., 2017, p. 28). Additionally, it can portray settings, verbal and non-verbal signals, and paralinguistic features of speaking which can provide important visual stimuli for language practice and learning (Canning-Wilson, 2000, as cited in Muslem, et al., 2017, p. 28). Therefore, it provides numbers of benefits for EYL teachers and YL.

Use of video as an audio-visual material in foreign language teaching classrooms has grown rapidly because of the increasing emphasis on communicative techniques (Cakir, 2006, p. 67). He adds that it is obvious that the use of video is a great help for foreign language teachers in stimulating and facilitating the target language (p. 67). Similarly, the use of video is a great helper and facilitator for foreign language teachers in learning the target language (Yükselir, C., & Kömür, S. (2017, p. 256). Afterwards, language teachers like video because it motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom, contextualizes language naturally and enables learners to experience authentic language in a controlled environment (Cakir, 2006, p. 68). Hence, it becomes one of common media chosen by English teachers in TEYL.

Teacher’s choice of implementing video as the medium draws YL’s attention. It is an interesting medium for them in learning English. Accordingly, they like it because videos are interesting, challenging, and

stimulating to watch (p. 68). Moreover, it shows them how people behave in the culture whose language they are learning by bringing into the classroom a wide range of communicative situations (p. 68). In addition, by means of it YL could learn about lands and people they can never visit and how they cope with their environment (Isiaka, 2007, p. 106). Through videos, learners can also experience things they have never seen before (Isiaka, 2007, as cited in Muslem, et al., 2017, p. 28). Therefore, YL can be more stimulated to learn English with the teachers well.

D. TEYL through Video

In this sophisticated age, teachers are having a beneficial help from technology for their teaching practices. More specifically, they can choose one of the technology as their medium in TEYL. Moreover, in teaching English vocabulary to YL, they can obtain a number of videos from internet. It is explained that “nowadays, internet facilities and availability of different technology have made the task of the language teachers easier” (Al Mamun, 2014, p. 10). In addition, they can download different videos appropriate for the learners from internet (p. 10). It is because there are thousands of readymade videos designed for language teaching, teachers can easily choose according to their needs (Ozkan, 2002. p. 37, as cited in Al Mamun, 2014, p. 10). Hence, the teachers can be easier to teach English vocabulary to their YL.