THE ENGLISH TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS IN AN INTERNATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SURAKARTA

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Abstract: The objectives of this study are: (1) to investigate the English teaching strategies implemented in terms of teaching planning, teaching implementation, and teaching assessment, (2) to investigate the students' responses towards the implementation of the teaching strategies. This research is a case study which includes in qualitative research. The participants of the study are a homeroom teacher and 24 grade five students in which all of them are male. The data collection methods are observation, interview, and document analysis. The findings of the study are: (1) there are four strategies in teaching planning. Those are curriculum, documents, teacher's professional development, and students' seat arrangement. While in the teaching implementation, there are sixteen strategies. They are icebreaking, recalling memory, brainstorming, discussion, game, listen and read, listen and match, draw and write, write a paragraph, filling the blank, vocabulary writing, concluding material, police of English, reading time, English camp, and assembly. Besides, there are five strategies in the teaching assessment. Those are daily tests, vocabulary tests, mid-term examination, final examination and International Progression Test (IPT). (2) The students' responses toward the implementation of the teaching strategies are their participation, understanding, memory, interest, and motivation increased during the learning process.

Keywords: English, teaching strategy, primary school

INTRODUCTION

One of the best ways to master English is to learn the language at a young age. Many people presume that the earlier a person starts to learn new things, the easier he or she will master. It includes learning English. Todd (2003) states that age factors determine the optimum achievement in an L2. Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) also supports that language can be acquired easier in the age range of two years up to early teens (Brown, 2000). Moreover, Ryan (2004) emphasizes that the early age thoroughly should be used for language training.

Paradis (2004) and Johnstone (2009) mention several advantages to starting to learn English at an earlier age. They state that children have a great spirit in learning language especially the sound system, and elaborate implicit knowledge in which the knowledge is held unconsciously. They indisputably have higher quality at gaining the sounds and rhythms of the target language but they have low quality in the affective filter. They have good intuition and are less insecure. Likewise, they hold much more time in learning other languages and a bigger ability to acquire consciousness of the intercultural identity. Eventually, when children learn earlier, they may have more

advantages to improve their abilities. Therefore, 'the younger the better' assumption proves that younger learners learn better and an extended exposure leads to substantial experience at the end of the learning process (Enever and Moon, 2009).

In teaching English to young learners, as stated by McCloskey (2014), there are eight principles that a teacher should take into account. They are: offer learners enjoyable, active roles in learning experience; help students develop and practice language through collaboration; use multi-dimensional, thematically organized activities; provide comprehensible input with scaffolding; vocabulary learning: an active approach; integrate language with content; validate and integrate home language and culture; provide clear goals and feedback on performance.

In the Indonesian context, English is learned as a foreign language in which there is a limited chance for students to use the language actively with their surroundings. The subject is only learned in the academic area such as schools and courses. Students tend to learn English through a textbook and focus only on sentence structure or grammar. Additionally, students rarely use the language outside the school, while the key to be a master in using English is not only to learn it passively but also to use the possible language often as as communicatively in the real life.

Indonesian students start to learn English since primary school until senior high school. In junior and senior high school, English is included as compulsory subjects. In primary school, the government has decided that English is positioned as local content –one that is not obligatory to be implemented. Due to the policy of English included in the local subject, many primary schools exclude English from the school subjects. On the other hand, this issue is contrary to the importance of learning English from an early age.

Although English is included as one of the local subjects, several primary schools in Indonesia still have English as their compulsory subject. Even they use English as their means of communication during school programs. One of them is the international primary school where the researcher conducted the research.

During the teaching and learning of English, sometimes the class atmosphere is boring. A teacher should be able to boost students' spirit in learning English and find effective strategies to make the students interested. Therefore, the goals of the learning process can be achieved. This research aims (1) to investigate the English teaching strategies for young learners in the international primary school in terms of teaching planning, implementation and assessment, and (2) to investigate the students' responses toward the implementation of the teaching strategies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a qualitative study that was conducted using a case study method. It was conducted in grade 5 of an international primary school in Surakarta from January to March 2019. The subjects of the study were a homeroom teacher and her students. The sources of the data are informants, events, and documents.

There are three techniques in collecting the data: observation, interview, and document analysis. The observation was conducted seven times on the teaching and learning process which was recorded into field notes, videos, and photographs. The interview was conducted with a homeroom teacher and eight students of grade 5. The document analysis included the school vision and mission, syllabus, teacher's note, weekly timetable, teacher's curriculum

vitae, students' seat arrangement, learner's book, activity book, warning cards, midterm document, IPT document, students' assignment book, and the list of students' name.

To get the validity of the data, the triangulation method was implemented. As explained by Sugiyono (2014: 83). triangulation combines several existing

RESEARCH **FINDINGS** AND DISCUSSION Findings

summary of the The research findings is presented in table 1.

Research Questions Summary of Findings 1. What are the English teaching strategies 1. Teaching Planning implemented in grade 5 of the international The strategies in teaching planning are: primary school in terms of teaching planning, 1) Curriculum teaching implementation, and teaching 2) Documents 3) Teacher's Professional Development assessment? 4) Students' Seat Arrangement 2. Teaching Implementation The strategies in the teaching implementation are: 1) Icebreaking 2) Recalling memory Brainstorming 3) 4) Discussion 5) Game 6) Listen and Read 7) Listen and Match 8) Draw and Write 9) Write Paragraph 10) Filling the Blank 11) Vocabulary Writing 12) Concluding Material 13) Police of English 14) Reading Time 15) English Camp 16) Assembly 3. Teaching Assessment The strategies in the teaching assessment are: 1) Daily Test 2) Vocabulary Test 3) Mid-term Examination 4) **Final Examination** 5) IPT 2. What are the students' responses towards The strategies implemented can build the students': the implementation of English teaching Participation a. strategies in grade 5 of the international Understanding b. primary school? Memory c. Interest and Motivation d.

Table 1. The Summary of the Research Findings

technics of data collection and data sources. Triangulation in technics of data collection means the researcher applies several technics in the way he or she gathers the data of the research from the same data source. While triangulation in data sources is collecting data through various sources using the same technique. The details of the teaching strategies used by the teacher are presented below.

The strategies used in teaching preparation are:

- a. There are three kinds of curricula school: implemented in the JSIT (Jaringan Sekolah Islam *Terpadu*) Curriculum. 2013 Curriculum, and Cambridge Primary Curriculum. Furthermore, the school not only uses the product of the Cambridge curriculum but also becomes a Cambridge school center.
- b. The documents used in the teaching planning are teacher's resource, syllabus, lesson plan, teacher's note, and weekly timetable.
- c. Both the school and Cambridge International provide teaching and language development programs for the teachers. Besides, the teacher joins some seminars and workshops outside the schools by herself.
- d. Students' seat arrangement is maneuvered by the teacher once in two weeks and is set based on their competence of certain skills.

The strategies used in teaching implementation are:

- a. The teacher usually conducts some ice breakings to help the students get rid of their boredom by inviting them to sing and dance together utilizing audios and videos.
- b. Recalling Memory is important to help students remember the material they have learned in the previous meeting. Moreover, this strategy helps students relate the previous material with the coming materials so that the students understand the whole materials more easily.
- c. The teacher applied a brainstorming strategy to increase the students'

curiosity and help them acknowledge the new materials.

- d. The teacher hopes that she can know how far the students have understood the material by conducting a discussion. If the students still do not understand the material, the teacher will give other examples or explanations. Additionally, discussion strategy also keeps the students to speak even though the main material is not about speaking skills.
- e. The teacher using the game strategy is to stimulate the students to be involved in the learning process. Besides, it can be used as a warming up related to the material if it is conducted before the main material delivered. It can also be used to ensure that the students have understood the main material.
- f. *Listen and Read* is the students had a text on their hands, listened to the audio and read the text at the same time. The teacher played the audio twice to help students to have a deep understanding of the content of the text and the correct pronunciation of each word.
- g. *Listen and Match* is every student listened to the audio twice and directly matched the pictures they had on their hands with some categorization based on the audio. Besides, they did not have any text displayed.
- h. The teacher asked the students to draw certain pictures and give brief information below the pictures using sentences based on the material they have learned before.
- i. The teacher asked the students to write a paragraph or more describing certain issues after the students have understood the presented materials.
- j. The students were asked to fill sentences using words in the box after the main material has been presented by the teacher.

- k. The teacher asked the students to write the new vocabulary they have learned in an assignment book. This strategy is expected to be able to help the students enrich their vocabulary and build their understanding of the vocabulary.
- 1. For students to have a clear and good understanding of the materials, the teacher helped the students to draw the presented materials into a conclusion by delivering questions related to the material to the students.
- m. Police of English demands the students to communicate using English with all of their friends and teachers. The school also pointed some students in each class to be the police of English. That police will monitor and make sure that all of their classmates communicate in English.
- n. To support the students' competence, knowledge, and reading interest, the school organizes *Reading Time* every Thursday. It is a kind of reading for pleasure activity which is held in the morning before the first lesson begins.
- o. During three days in the *English Camp*, the students are expected to upgrade their English speaking competence by having whole daily activities in English.
- p. Assembly is organized to support the students' capability in English that is conducted twice in a year. In this event, the students can show any performance based on their expertise.

The strategies used in teaching assessment are:

- a. Daily Test which is conducted after the material of each chapter has been learned by the students.
- b. Vocabulary Test in which the students were tested about the word's meaning in Indonesian, parts of speech and usage in a sentence.

- c. Mid-term Examination covers three skills: reading, writing and listening.
- d. Final Examination includes three skills: reading, writing, and listening.
- e. International Progression Test (IPT) is conducted under the Cambridge Primary Curriculum. This assessment is almost the same as *Ujian Kenaikan Kelas* (UKK).

The whole teaching strategies implemented are considered effective to increase the students' participation, understanding, memorizing the material easier, interest and motivation.

Discussion

The teaching strategies deal with the teaching preparation of English lessons in the school including curriculum, documents, teacher professional development, and students' seat arrangement. The school implements three kinds of curricula -JSIT Curriculum. 2013 Curriculum. and Cambridge Primary Curriculum. Thev implement those three curricula because they want to achieve their purposes as stated in their vision and mission.

However, the implementation of those three curricula has some differences in terms of school subjects. The subjects of the JSIT Curriculum include Islamic religion subjects such as Qur'an, Fiqh, and Islamic history. 2013 Curriculum covers all thematic subjects. Cambridge Primary Curriculum includes the three subjects: Science, English, and Math.

Therefore, the English subject that we discuss here refers to Cambridge Primary Curriculum, –an international curriculum from England. This curriculum is a well-designed curriculum as it provides all the teaching guide for teaching young learners including curriculum development and classroom teaching and learning. The students are provided with an exciting educational journey that helps them to become learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged. Apart from that, the students are also facilitated with an official certificate from Cambridge International to allow them continuing their next academic level.

There are five kinds of documents used by the teacher in teaching planning. They are a teacher's resource, syllabus, lesson plan, teacher's note, and weekly timetable. Those complete documents are helpful for the teacher in preparing the learning process for the students. However, there is a problem in making the lesson plan that the teacher makes the lesson plan only when there is a visitation in the school. Dealing with this problem, the teacher is still capable to prepare the learning process by the other documents. The teacher's resource and teacher notes which are simpler and the weekly timetable which helps to achieve the weekly learning goals.

The teachers of the school are supported in the way of improving their teaching capability. They are provided with some teaching language development conducted both by the school and Cambridge International. As a result, these programs help them a lot in teaching the students confidently and appropriately. Besides, the teacher joining a certain seminar outside the school by herself proves that she intends to give the best learning experience for her students. This is in line with the statement of Suyanto (2008: 30), he declares that English teachers of young should have good English learners competence and keep it developed. They should also improve their teaching ability and teacher's good character, and have the competence of handling the children in the school. Therefore, the school providing the teacher's professional development and the teacher joining a certain seminar about

teaching help the teacher fulfill the teacher's teaching needs.

In terms of students' seat arrangements, that is changed every two weeks by the teacher, this may help the students to interact and be friend with all of their classmates. The students may get a new experience sitting with another friend. To conclude, this strategy can support the conduciveness of the learning process in the classroom.

Generally, both of the school's and the teacher's efforts in the way of preparing the English teaching and learning process is satisfying. They consider several points relating to a good teaching preparation such as the choice of curriculum, teaching professional documents. teacher's students' development, and seat arrangement. This is in line with the statement of Suyanto (2008: 36-40) that a teacher should have well-routine-prepared planning before entering the class such as constructing lesson plans. preparing teaching materials, teaching media, and assessment.

This condition leads to some strength such as Cambridge Primary Curriculum is applicable for young learners; the curriculum also provides the teacher's resource and syllabus as the teaching guide for the teacher; the teacher's note and the weekly timetable are also valuable because they can help the teacher when she does not make the lesson plan yet. However, making the lesson plan when there is only a school visitation leads to some weaknesses such as time-consuming because the teacher should make the teacher's note daily and some learning objectives may not be achieved. However, the teacher's professional development and the arrangement of students' seat arrangement still can encourage the learning process to run well.

During the research conducted, there were fifteen strategies implemented in teaching English to grade 5 of the international primary school. The first strategy is Ice Breaking. The implementation of ice breaking in the middle of the day becomes an effective strategy to help the students get rid of their boredom. The choice of singing and dancing activity by the teacher in this strategy engages the students' interest and gets their focus into the learning process.

The second strategy is *Recalling memory*. Recalling memory is like an aid for the students to remember the previous knowledge that they have learned in the previous meeting. Sometimes some of the students forget the material that is learned in the last week. Therefore, the teacher implementing the recalling memory strategy is accommodating in the learning process.

The third strategy is *Brainstorming*. As stated by Suyanto (2008), brainstorming is a technique to generate an idea. Here, the teacher will come up with a topic and students will carry out their idea which is related to the topic. The teacher conducted this strategy at the beginning of the lesson by delivering several questions to the students related to the materials. By this means, the students' curiosity towards the new topic is increased and their critical thinking skill is also improved. Besides, the teacher giving questions that relate to the students' life is successful in getting their focus on the learning process.

The next strategy implemented by the teacher is *Class Discussion*. This strategy includes questioning and inquiry technique. The teacher delivered a question to the students, asked them to analyze certain information and summarized the material into a conclusion. This is following Suyanto (2008); he says that questioning, analyzing and concluding are used in questioning and inquiry techniques. The questions delivered by the teacher to the students were able to encourage the students' critical thinking. Besides, this strategy facilitates the students to easily understand the material and have much more time to actively express their idea in answering the teacher's questions. Therefore, the students' speaking ability is increased. This is in line with the statement from Suyanto (2008) that question and answers session is effective to increase students' knowledge, skills, and understanding.

Another strategy in is game. The games conducted by the teacher were in the form of group competition and movement that dealt with language grammar. The group competition game was proven capable of increasing the students' participation and enthusiasm. They confidently represented themselves in creating some sentences orally. While the movement game which included listen and move activities, helped the students to learn the material less stressful with pleasurable activity. This strategy is the same as listen and do, a technique that is declared by Suyanto (2008). He explained that listen and do is one of teaching technique that is suitable for young learners.

Furthermore, this movement game is included in the Total Physical Response (TPR) method. In obedience to Larsen, Freeman, and Anderson (2016), the teacher can make the language learning more enjoyable and less stressful by conducting Total Physical Response (TPR).

The sixth strategy is *Listen and Read.* In this strategy, the students both listened to the audio which was played twice by the teacher, and read the text of the audio which was provided in the textbook at the same time. This strategy helps the students to recognize the correct pronunciation of each word in the text. By discussing some of the vocabularies in the text, the students can also understand clearly the author intention of writing the text.

The seventh strategy is Listen and Match. In this activity, every student had pictures of certain figures on their hands. They listened to the audio twice and directly matched the pictures with some categorization based on the audio. So here, the students did not have any text of the audio displayed. By having this kind of listening techniques, the students were trained to have both competences, to listen to certain information and match the information needed with the pictures simultaneously.

Draw and Write becomes another strategy used by the teacher in delivering English lessons. The teacher asked the students to draw certain pictures and write brief information below the pictures using sentences based on the material the students have learned. By conducting this strategy, the students were facilitated with interesting activity in learning and were helped to apply the knowledge they have learned into real practice. As stated by Suyanto (2008), drawing activity is one technique that is suitable to be conducted for young learners in learning the English language.

Write Paragraph is one of the strategies implemented by the teacher in teaching English. The teacher asked the students to write a paragraph or more describing certain issues after the main material has been understood by the students. By holding this strategy, the students could apply directly the knowledge they have learned before and developed their writing competence into real practice.

Those two writing activities above are by the statement of Shin (2011: 3 - 4). She conveyed that children age seven to twelve years old are learning to write. Therefore, the teacher's consideration in applying those activities is appropriate.

The use of *Filling the Blank* strategy helps the students to practice and strengthen their understanding of the language grammar they have learned in the classroom into some exercises. The teacher asked the students to answer the incomplete sentences using the words provided in the box. Besides, the discussion of filling the blank exercise is full in English. This is in line with Larsen, Freeman, and Anderson (2016). They state that filling the blank exercise is suitable to be conducted in the direct method which is the whole language used in the learning process is the target language.

The eleventh strategy was Vocabularv Writing. After the teacher delivering the materials that contain rare and new vocabulary for the students, the teacher asked the students to write them in a certain book named assignment book. It was a book for students writing down their vocabulary that they just knew. The book contains four columns. The first column is for the name of the vocabulary. The second column is for the meaning in the Indonesia language. The third column is for the part of speech of the words. Finally, the fourth column is for students applying the words into sentences. This strategy helps the students to record their new vocabulary and apply it into a sentence.

The twelfth strategy in the teaching implementation was *Concluding Material*. The teacher usually applies this strategy at the end of the material explanation. This strategy becomes an effective way to help the students have the strength and precise understanding of the main focus of certain material.

Police of English is the next strategy that is organized directly in the school daily activities. By conducting this strategy, the teacher is helped by the four students of the class who become the police that controls students' activity all in English. If a student breaks the rules, he will be given a certain warning card from the police and a consequence from the teacher. Besides the students are demanded with this rule, they will get used to doing all of their activities in English so that the school vision can be obtained.

Reading Time is another effective strategy organized by the school. It is a kind of reading for pleasure activity which is conducted once a week. According to Goctu (2016), reading for pleasure can build positive attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. The students develop automaticity and improve meaning construction as they read a large amount of the materials. Compared to this theory, the implementation of the reading time activity can encourage the students' vocabulary mastery and their reading interests. They can learn new things by reading a certain story or information. Therefore, they will have a wider knowledge.

Based on the interview with the teacher, English Camp is conducted to assist upgrade the students' English and competence through a real practice in real life. According to Wighting, Nisbet, and Tindall (2005), English camp is effective in teaching spoken English. On findings, the students were demanded to be capable to communicate using English in all activities during the camp. the language that is allowed to be used in this camp is English only. If a student gets caught speak in Bahasa or Javanese, he/she will get a consequence. As a result, the students have a new experience using English in all aspects of their life during the camp and their English speaking competence was enhanced.

The last strategy in the teaching implementation was named *Assembly*.

Assembly is a kind of students' performance which is held once a semester. In this activity, the students' English speaking skill is supported. They can show any speaking performance such as drama, singing, reading poem or others which is based on their interest and expertise. As a consequence, through implementing this strategy, students' interest and students' speaking confidence can be increased.

In general, the teacher employs several different English teaching strategies in the teaching implementation. It means that the teacher tries to give the best learning experience to the students in the way of improving their English ability. She does not want the students feeling bored and less enthusiasm because there is no learning miscellaneous activity in the process. This is regarding Suyanto (2008: 18), he states that young learners easily get bored and have a short attention span. Therefore, different kinds of activities should be conducted so that students will enjoy and be more motivated in learning a language.

Dealing with the teaching assessment of English lessons in the international primary school, the teacher used five kinds of assessment strategies. The four of them are conducted based on the school policy. They are Daily Test, Vocabulary Test, Mid-term Examination, and Final Examination. While the rest is called International Progression Test (IPT) – a class promotion test based on Cambridge Primary Curriculum.

Daily Tests can be in the form of writing, speaking, and pronunciation tests, while Vocabulary Test is conducted in the form of vocabulary reciting. Mid-term Examination, Final Examination, and IPT are administered in the form of multiple choices, true or false statements, incomplete conversation, incomplete words, filling the blank question, short paragraph, and listening activities.

As stated by Suyanto (2008), the teacher organizes two types of assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. Daily Test and Vocabulary Tests are included in the formative assessment as they are implemented by the during the learning teacher process. Meanwhile, Mid-term Examination, Final Examination, and IPT are classified into summative tests as they are administered at the end of a certain learning period.

In accordance with Linse (2005), the teacher can be claimed that she implemented two other types of assessments. They are formal assessments and classroom-based assessments. It means that Daily Test and Vocabulary Test belong to classroom-based assessment as they were conducted in the form of classroom activities, while Midterm Examination, Final Examination, and IPT are incorporate with formal assessment as they were organized by the school administration and Cambridge International as formal organizations.

The implementation of the different teaching strategies by the teacher can increase students' participation, understanding, memory, interest, and motivation.

In terms of students' participation, the students actively participated in every learning activity that the teacher conducted. They were active and talkative participating in the learning process. They were also eager to represent themselves in answering the teacher questions. Besides, they looked confident when they were delivering their thoughts to certain issues to the whole students in the classroom.

Besides, the students had the opinion that the teaching strategies applied by the teacher built their understanding of the material delivered. Not all young learners can understand the English subject, but the students argued that they could understand the material easily by the learning activities conducted by the teacher. When they found difficulties in the learning process, the teacher was able to give other explanations that overcame the students' difficulties. Besides, the students were able to apply the knowledge they have understood in some practices.

On the other hand, the teaching strategies implemented by the teacher helped the students to memorize the According material. to the students' interviews, they argued that the teaching influenced keeping their strategies memorization of the material. It is because the students were facilitated with media and activities that support them in memorizing the material. Therefore, they remember the material easily.

Furthermore, the teaching strategies utilized by the teacher could enhance the students' interest and motivation. The students claimed that the teaching strategies highlighted the students' interest and motivation towards learning English. It was because the students were faced with some fun and challenging activities so that their interest and motivation increasing.

IMPLICATIONS

In creating an effective teaching and learning process, a teacher should make a well-designed teaching strategy. TEFL requires certain strategies to achieve the learning objective and teaching efficacy. The implementation of Cambridge Primary Curriculum gives some changes in the teaching and learning process of the English subject. As a consequence, the teacher should be open-minded to maximize the teaching methodology and the teaching strategies that refer to the curriculum.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research finding and discussion, it can be concluded that there are four strategies used by the teacher in the teaching planning. They are (a) Curricula, (b) Documents such as teacher's resource, syllabus, lesson plan, teacher's note, and weekly time table, (c) Teacher's Professional Development and (d) Students' Seat Arrangement.

As a matter of fact, the document of the lesson plan is created only in a certain condition such as when there is a visitation from the representative of Cambridge International in the school. However, the learning process still runs well with other aids of the teaching preparation.

Additionally, there are sixteen strategies in teaching implementation. They are Icebreaking, Recalling Memory, Brainstorming, Discussion, Game, Listen and Read, Listen and Match, Draw and Write, Write Paragraphs, Filling the Blank, Vocabulary Writing, Concluding Material, Police of English, Reading Time, English Camp, and Assembly.

Moreover, there are five strategies applied by the teacher in the teaching assessment. They are Daily Test, Vocabulary Test, Mid-term Examination, Final Examination, and IPT (International Progression Test).

Based on the research. those strategies are effective to be implemented in teaching English to young learners because they can help the students to have a good English learning experience. Those strategies are worthy for teachers conducting a learning process that is fun and suitable for young learners. Besides, students can enjoyably learn English.

Besides, the students perceive that the teaching strategies implemented: increase their participation in the classroom activities; build their understanding on the material; help them memorize the material easily and enhance their interest and motivation in the learning process.

Moreover, it is better for the teacher to create other creative teaching strategies (such as in-pair activity, group activity, and outdoor activity) so that the students as young learners are more engaged in the learning process.

For the other researchers, the writer suggests to have a deeper investigation of the other English teaching strategies used by teachers in the school or other schools. Hopefully, the other researchers will gain more variety of strategies in teaching English to young learners.

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