TEACHING READING STRATEGY FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract

Keywords:	
Teaching Reading Strategy, Young Learners	Nowadays English is a compulsory subject must be taught for students, because English is global language. English has some skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the important skills is reading, because through reading students will have broad insight, so the habit of reading has to start with students in Elementary. Elementary students are English young learners that should be facilitated well in their learning reading by using good strategy. Teaching English for young learner is different with teaching English for adult learner. Young learners have different characteristics and learning preference. In teaching reading, English teachers should implement appropriate strategies and interesting to young learners which can be a stimulus to become active students and participate in teaching and learning process. Therefore, this article aimed to explain some reading strategies that can be applied by the teachers for young learners. The method employed is library research which has four steps to collecting the data namely note-taking, outlining, describing, and draw conclusion. As the result five applicable strategies are described to teach reading for young learners. The strategies are Emergent Literacy, Mnemonic Strategy, Read aloud strategy, Decoding Strategy, and Language Experience Approach.

Kata Kunci:	Abstrak
Strategi Pembelajaran Membaca, Pelajar Usia Dini	Saat ini, Bahasa Inggris adalah mata pelajaran yang diwajibkan untuk diajarkan bagi siswa, karena bahasa inggris adalah bahasa global. Bahasa inggris memiliki beberapa keterampilan yaitu mendengarkan, berbicara, membaca dan menulis. Salah satu keterampilan yang penting adalah membaca, karena dengan membaca para siswa akan memiliki wawasan yang luas, maka kebiasaan membaca harus dimulai dengan siswa di sekolah dasar. Siswa sekolah dasar adalah pelajar bahasa inggris usia dini yang hendaknya difasilitasi dengan baik dalam pembelajaran membaca dengan menggunakan

strategi yang baik. Mengajar bahasa inggris untuk pelajar usia dini berbeda dengan mengajar bahasa inggris untuk pelajar dewasa. Pelajar usia dini memiliki karakteristik dan preferensi pembelajaran yang berbeda. Dalam mengajar membaca, guru bahasa inggris hendaknya menerapkan strategi yang tepat dan menarik bagi pelajar usia dini yang dapat menjadi pendorong mereka untuk menjadi siswa yang aktif dan berperan serta dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Oleh karena itu, artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan beberapa strategi membaca yang dapat diterapkan oleh para guru bagi pelajar usia dini. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kepustakaan yang memiliki empat langkah pengumpulan data yaitu mencatat, menguraikan, mendeskripsikan, dan menarik kesimpulan. Sebagai hasilnya lima strategi aplikatif dideskripsikan untuk mengajar reading bagi pembelajar usia dini. Strategi tersebut adalah Emergent Literacy, Mnemonic Strategy, Read aloud strategy, Decoding Strategy, dan Language Experience Approach.

INTRODUCTION

English consists of some skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In this case, reading becomes important skill that should be mastered by students since they are still young. Reading as one of English skill that is very important that should be taught and delivered well. Reading is one of the most important skills in language learning. It is a crucial skill for students of English as a Foreign Language. Being able to read, as well as to write, enables the students to speak more communicatively, which is the main goal of language learning. One of the milestones in children's education is how and when they learn how to read (Debat, 2006 in Suganda, 2016). Reading comprehension skills can be acquired easily through positive communication between the educator and the learner (Alharbi in Husni Mubarok, 2015).

Millions of EFL learners are learning reading as part of learning English, and thousands of EFL teachers are searching for an approach to teaching reading that will work most effectively. Teaching and learning reading are not easy.

However, teaching and learning reading is not difficult, either. Reading requires specific instruction and conscious effort (Fromkin, etc., 2007 in Suganda, 2016).

Teaching English to young learners is not an easy task. Teacher needs to use appropriate learning strategies so the students are engaged and motivated in teaching and learning process (Wulandari et al., 2020). If the teachers cannot teach the children appropriately, the children may not enjoy their learning. Consequently, the teaching learning process may be unsuccessful. It is highly suggested for teacher to create interesting, enjoyable and fun lesson for young learners. It is because young learners have a quite short attention span and are easy to get bored (Wulandari et al., 2020). Younger children likely to develop native-like English proficiency than adult learners (Harmer, 2018), but they are not necessarily better learners compared to older learners.

What the students bring to the classroom is the main difference between educating adults and young learners. Adults provide life experience, while young learners bring zeal, vigor, and vitality. Adults have lived a lifetime and have their own views and perspectives, but young learners are still learning about the world around them. Unlike younger students, who lack a clear sense of direction, adults come to learn English with a specific goal in mind, which is typically to advance their jobs. Because each age group has various motivations for attending class, this has an impact on motivation levels.

From the discussion above, it can be stated that teaching English for young learner is different from teaching English for adult learner. Young learners have different characteristics and learning preference. In coping with these differences, English teacher should select the appropriate teaching strategies for young learner. A good and appropriate teaching strategy is believed can motivate the students in teaching and learning process and help to achieve the learning goals. Considering strategy of teaching English for young learners and the importance of applying the strategies, this study attempted to investigate teaching reading strategy for young learners.

The objective of this research was to explain teaching reading strategy for young learners which can be implemented by the teacher. While the research

questions in this research is what are teaching reading strategies for young learners that can be implemented by the teacher?

Reading Skill

Reading is an activity which is done to catch ideas or information of written text. By reading, the readers will get knowledge which is important in daily life activity. For the students at school, reading is an activity which can motivate them to be active in adding their knowledge and activating their thinking process. It is caused that during reading they catch and reach much information about anything from their reading. Reaching much information in reading will help the students have much knowledge, especially related to their study. Therefore, students are encouraged to do the reading activity and have good ability in it. It is done in order to provide the students with full of knowledge about everything. Besides, by reading well, the students can increase their background knowledge and experience from reading the text (Ikhsan, 2017). It can be said that the students that read much will get more information and knowledge while those that read less will be lack of knowledge and insight.

Reading is the practice of using text to create meaning. The two key words are creating and meaning. If there is no meaning being created, there is no reading taking place. So when the reader read, she or he combines visual and non - visual information to create meaning of the text (Johnson, 2008). Reading is the reader's struggle to understand what the text is about. In other words, it is a dialogue between the text and the reader (Hedge, 2000 in Spanou & Zafiri, 2019). So the readers that can undesrtand the meaning of passage, can also catch the meaning of the text.

Reading is a strategic process in that a number of the skills and processes used in reading call for effort on the part of the reader to anticipate text information, select key information, organize and mentally summarize information, monitor comprehension, repair comprehension breakdowns, and match comprehension output to reader goals (Grabe, 2020). That definition

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strengthen the definition of reading in which reading is an active process in the brain.

In conclusion, reading is the interpretation process of the word meaning and understand the information of the text. Reading is not an easy job, reading is a complex process. In reading process the reader must be able connect their thinking to the writer's idea and they must use their background knowledge in order to help them understand and get the information was delivered by the writer.

The phases of reading include: (1). *Pre-reading stage.* In the pre-reading phase, teachers should help learners activate their background knowledge and their cognitive schemata in order to become fully equipped when facing the new text (Spanou & Zafiri, 2019). (2). *While-reading stage.* At this stage, readers know that they have a reason to read, they recognize the structure of the text, identify the main ideas and relate their background knowledge to the text. They scan the text to find a piece of information or a word and they skim it to acquire a general understanding of it (Vrublevskis, 2015 in Spanou & Zafiri, 2019). (3). *Post-reading stage.* Post-reading activities include: retelling the meaning of the text, performing a role-play based on the text's story and characters, summarizing the text, filling in charts and tables with data from the text, writing a paragraph and being involved in a class discussion (Ibrakhimova, 2016 in Spanou & Zafiri, 2019).

Each of them has its own important role. They are all necessary parts of a reading activity. In language classrooms, these phases have to be put in consideration in order to achieve to develop students' reading skills.

Young Learners

Young language learners are those before the age of puberty (O'Grady et al., in Dewi, 2012). Young learners can be included into those aged 7-11 years or within concrete operational stage, where they learn best from concrete things around them (Fitrawati, 2013). Children develop through specific stages, they are: (1). *Sensory-Motor stage (from 0-2 years)* in which children seemed to learn through physical interaction with the world around them. (2). *Pre-operational*

stage (from 2-7 years) when children need concrete situations to process ideas. (3). *Concrete Operational Stage (from 7-11 years)* in which children begin to conceptualize and do some abstract problem solving, though they still learn best by doing. And (4). *Formal Operational Stage (from 1-15 years)* in which children are able to use abstract thinking (Fitrawati, 2013).

The general characteristics of young learners are as follows: (1) 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, and (2) 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 other (Ytreberg in Dewi, 2012).

Young children, especially those up to the ages of nine or ten, learn differently from older children, adolescents, and adults in the following ways:

1. They respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual words.
2. They often learn indirectly rather than directly-that is they take in information from all sides, learning from everything around them rather than only focusing on the precise topic they are being taught.
3. Their understanding comes not just from explanation, but also from what they see and hear and, crucially, have a chance to touch and interact with.
4. They generally display an enthusiasm for learning and curiosity about world around them.
5. They have a need for individual attention and approval from the teacher.
6. They are keen to talk about themselves, and respond well to learning that uses themselves and their own lives as main topics in the classroom.

7. They have a limited attention span; unless activities are extremely engaging they can easily get bored, losing interest after ten minutes or so (Harmer, 2018).

Teaching Reading to Young Learners

Students of primary schools are young learners who have their has different characteristics as adult learners. Young learners are really enjoyable in playing their games. They have a lot of imaginations and fantasies. The needs of prospectiveprimary school teachers in understanding their world and mastering English both in spoken and written. The teachers also needto have the ability to teach using English as the language of instruction in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Besides, the English teachers of primary schools should be able to use English communicatively and have the skills to teach English effectively (Kusmaryati, 2020).

In teaching young learners, a teacher has many options when choosing a strategy to teach. What we teach and how to make the condition of the class effectively and help increase the students' skills. By knowing the teaching strategy at the class, the teachers may know how to treat and teach students English in the classroom successfully. It can also lead the teachers to select the materials which are appropriate to the ways students acquire the lesson. However in teaching English to young learners, teacher will find many problems in teaching language skills. Itis not simple because of the language is a foreign language. To accomplish the lesson numerous techniques are used by teacher. They are used to increase the students' self esteem. However before deciding on the learning techniques certain aspects need to be taken into consideration such as the material to be taught and how it can be formed to fit into the different learning methods, the students to be taught and their details such as age, level of education and finally the conditions which the teaching is to take place (Saputra, 2016).

METHOD

The research method used in this research is library research. Library research is a research used library sources to collect and analyze the data (Zeid, 2004). Conducting library research, the researchers need to integrate their own ideas and the related sources to establish the result of the study. In attempt to find out sufficient data related to the questions of this study, several source of data collected are books and article journals.

According to Creswell (2012), in analyzing qualitative data, the researcher should be able to understand deeply about how to make sense of text and images so that the research questions meet the comprehensible answers. Thus, the researcher formulates some stages. In the first stage, the researchers found some additional information in journal articles and outlined the key statements in attempt to form classifications which are related to the research question. The researcher eliminated unnecessary information. Then, the data were classified into a paragrapah in order to answer the question. The last stage was drawing the conclusion of the data analysis.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Some strategies can be used by the English teacher in teaching reading for young learners as follow:

1. Emergent Literacy

"Emergent literacy" describes the phenomenon in which children seem to learn to read without any teaching, gradually, and through exposure to text and to reading (Hall cited in Cameron in Suganda, 2016). When children spends lots of time being read to from interesting and appropriate books, some will begin to work out for themselves the patterns and regularities that link spoken and written text.

The features of emergent literacy those are most relevant for foreign language teaching. They are:

1) children choose the books they want to hear and read;

2) children are motivated by choice and by the quality of the writing they encounter;

3) children often choose to read the same book many times, and this is a valuable learning experiences;

4) meaning comes first because the child understands the story as a whole;

5) from this overall meaning, attention moves to whole words and letters, beginning with initial consonants, then final consonants, then vowels in the middle;

6) the link between reading and oral skills is very strong because children adopt and play with the language of the story;

7) parents can be involved with their children's language learning through reading aloud with them (Cameron in Suganda, 2016)

Read aloud to your children every day is probably the most important daily activity parents can do in teaching children to read. Reading to children increases their knowledge of the world, their vocabulary, their familiarity with written language, and their interest in reading.

2. Mnemonic Strategy

A mnemonic is a strategy in memorizing and assimilating information (Joyce, et.al. in Putri, 2020) The teacher can use the mnemonic to guide their presentation about delivering materials so that the students can easily absorb the information from those presentations. The teacher can also teach tricks that can be used by the students to improve information study and concept, both individually and groups. This model has been a lot of tested in various curriculum field and the students in all ages and all characteristics.

Sometimes memorizing activities are seemed as boring activities because it needs continually repetitions, and it needs memorize unclear terminologies or ancient and unimportant information, it is seemed as mnemonic learning is just related to information in the lowest level. It is not fully true. It is because a mnemonic can be applicated to help the students in mastering interesting concepts

so that this model can also be learned happily. Besides, A mnemonic can be very effective and can make the students motivated and the classroom more interesting (Georger cited Amiruddin in Putri, 2020).

From those reasons, it can be concluded that a mnemonic is a technique or a specific strategy that is used as "mental linking tool" or as "memory aiding" in memorizing and assimilating information. The teacher can use the mnemonic to guide their presentation about delivering materials so that the students can easily absorb the information from those presentations. Mnemonic has been a lot of tested in various curriculum field and the students in all ages and all characteristics. Although sometimes memorizing activities are seemed as boring activities, it is not fully true. It is because a mnemonic can be apply to help the students in mastering interesting concepts so that mnemonic can also be learned happily.

Mnemonic strategy is very suitable that implement in teaching reading for young learners. Mnemonic strategy helps learners link a new item with something known. These devices are useful for memorizing information in an orderly string in various ways; examples are by sounds (rhyming), by body movement (TPR) or location on page or blackboard (the locus technique) (Husni Mubarok, 2015). A mnemonic is an instructional strategy designed to help students improve their memory of important information. This technique connects new learning to prior knowledge through the use of visual and/or acoustic cues.

The following teaching strategies are recommended for mnemonic strategy in the classroom:

1) The teacher introduce the material to be taught in the classroom,
2) The teacher makes an enlarge copy of the story, so that the students can see the word clearly,
3) The teacher uses a pointer and point each words as the teacher read,
4) The teacher ask the students to read again the words,
5) The teacher ask the students to translate the word into Indonesian,
6) The teacher ask the students to memorize the words,

7)   At the end of the thing and each learning process, the teacher ask the students to make sentence based on the words (Huggins and Ross in Putri, 2020).

3.   Read-Aloud Strategies

A read aloud is a systematic method of reading a book aloud. Its process has enormous benefits to literacy learning (Morrison & Wheeler, 2009). Read-aloud is an instructional practice where teachers, parents, and caregivers read texts aloud to children. The reader incorporates variations in pitch, tone, pace, volume, pauses, eye contact, questions, and comments to produce a fluent and enjoyable delivery. Along with teaching vocabulary, the teacher also provides examples of understanding techniques. Reading aloud is a powerful way to engage children in the literacy process. Many of previous studies have demonstrated the significant impact of read-aloud practice in different areas of reading development. It improves students' vocabularu development and comprehension growth. They also noted its potenstial to increase motivation to want to read while building the knowledge necessary for the successful acquisition of reading.

Reading aloud to young learners who are developing their reading skills is a very beneficial exercise. It stretches their attention span and ability to focus, engages and encourages imagination, models positive reading behavior, and shows them that books are worthwhile of attention and interest, among other advantages of reading aloud to children. It can also be enjoyable for them.

There are stages of read-aloud strategies can be implemented by the teachers in the reading class:

1)   Before Reading
    a)   Ensure that all students are seated so they are able to see the book clearly. Consider the needs of each student (i.e., students with LDs related to attention should sit close to the teacher, or may be encouraged to help turn the pages of the book).
    b)   Identify vocabulary that may be new to most children as well as words that are particularly important to the meaning of the story.

     c) Select some interactive pre-reading activities to help prepare the students to understand the story: Have students identify the title and author; Discuss the title and cover image; Ask students to make predictions about what might happen in the story; Ask them what words might be in the story and write them on chart paper; Introduce text features that may be new or difficult; Allow students to ask questions about the text before starting to read.

2) During Reading

     a) Read the story aloud to students, at a natural pace and using lots of expression. Stop at pre-selected points to emphasize important ideas and enable students to make in-story predictions.

     b) Activate reading activities that will engage students during the reading process in this stage; the important things are comprehension and enjoyment of the story.

     c) Ask open-ended WHAT questions to promote understanding such as "What do you see in the picture?", "What is going on?", "What do you think will happen next?", or "What do you think 'X' might do?"

3) After Reading

     a) Ask students to retell the story in their own words. Starting with one student, others may add to the summary, one after the other.

     b) Immediately after retelling, revisit the predictions that were made during stages 1 and 2. Compare the predictions to what actually happened.

     c) Review the title and cover image. Ask students if the y think it is appropriate for the story, and have them explain their thinking.

     d) Ask open-ended WHY questions, and offer appropriate praise and support

     e) Discuss the vocabulary and text structures that were highlighted during stage 1. Encourage students to use the new vocabulary in their responses.

     f) Ask students to connect the text to their own lives or prior knowledge.

4. Decoding Strategies

Decoding has been defined as "the act of deciphering a new word by sounding it itout" (Moats, 2000). In other words it is the process of making sense of letters and the words they form. In order to pronounce and recognize a word, a new reader must first be able to identify each letter and the sound it makes. Decoding takes time at initially, but as children develop their skills, it becomes instinctive, resulting in fluency in reading.

Teaching phonological awareness and phonics abilities to students is a key component of teaching them how to decode words. Phonological awareness is the foundation for learning to read and spell. Students cannot sound out a word if they are unaware of the sounds that different graphemes create. Students will also be able to decode words by breaking them down into smaller pieces with the aid of morphological knowledge. If they are familiar with prefixes, suffixes, roots, and bases, they can recognize those components and begin there. Additionally, students should be familiar with typical spelling patterns, syllable division, word parts, and phonemic awareness.

Coyne et al (2013) conducted an experimental research study on supplemental beginning reading intervention which supports phonics instruction. It showed that the students who received the early reading intervention experimental condition in kindergarten continued to outperform comparison students at the end of first grade with significant findings on all measures of word reading, spelling, reading fluency and reading comprehension. Many earlier studies also support teaching phonics and decoding skills. For example, the National Reading Panel's meta-analysis concluded "that systematic phonics instruction helps all children learn to read with greater success than nonsystemic or no phonics instruction" (NICHD, 2000). Research has shown that the different decoding strategies ultimately helps students move from decoding words to comprehension. It also increases the fluency rate for reading text from a slow pace to a faster one, making reading more automatic and less stressful for struggling readers.

The implementation of decoding strategies is presented by Guenin (2018) in his research. One easy way to teach decoding skills is for teachers to use word

families when presenting a new concept word like the short /a/ sound. The teacher has the students sound out a word like /at/. The teacher will then proceed to have the students add a consonant at the beginning of it. An example would be to put the consonant letter-/r/ at the beginning of the word /at/ to make rat. The teacher may also decide to teach the students to sound out the word by chunking it. This is done by say the consonant sound then the word family ending. An example of this would be the consonant letter /m/ sound then say the word family of /ail/ and that makes the word mail.

It is important for students to understand the connection between a letter and its sound as well as how to put the letters together to make a word. Teachers will then want their students to link words together to make complete sentences.

5. Language Experience Approach

Language Experience Approach (LEA) is a method for teaching languages that was developed by Allan in 1963. The approach employs the knowledge and experience of the learners as reading material. According to Stauffer (1970), LEA is a successful technique of language learning because it combines and integrates the four skills that make up language learning. The assertion backs up Brown's (2001) claim that writing, speaking, and listening skills all improve reading comprehension.

Stauffer (1970) lists a few reasons for employing the Language Experience Approach as a substitute for traditional reading instruction for young learners. First, it backs giving children instruction that is suitable for their developmental stage. Second, it encourages balanced instruction, which combines explicit strategy instruction with the reading and writing of real texts. Additionally, it encourages integrated learning. The last step integrates every element of teaching and learning. For those reasons, it will be necessary to apply LEA in order to enhance the effectiveness of reading instruction and fulfill the goals of the educational process.

There are some procedures in implementing LEA as a teaching method. Dixon and Nessel (1983) introduces five cycles in conducting LEA in the classroom:

1) Preparing dictation. In this cycle teacher should provide familiar and important topic for the material and ask students to share their stories related with the topic.

2) Taking dictation. In this cycle teacher asks some students to come forward and share their experiences in front of the class while teacher writes down the story on board exactly what students say.

3) Reading the story. In this cycle, teacher asks students to read the story together loudly. Then, give them time to read the story individually to check their understanding.

4) Conducting follow-up activities. In this cycle, teacher can use several of activities related to the topic to support learning process.

5) Developing basic skills. In this cycle, teacher can develop the material based on the students' needs.

The above steps were implemented by Rahayu (2013) to improve students' motivation and comprehension in reading. The results of this study show that the implementation of LEA in teaching learning process was quite successful. Another study applying LEA was conducted by Masruddin (2016) to teach reading fluency for EFL students. The findings showed that LEA approach is effective in teaching reading fluency of Indonesian EFL students.

Reading is central to the learning process. To access critical information from enormous data banks, students will need to be able to read complex material with a high degree of comprehension (Parkay and Stanford in Suganda, 2016). Learning to read can begin from text level; from sentence level; from word level; or from letter level. Each starting point has produced approaches to teaching reading that can be used in the foreign language classroom (Suganda, 2016).

There are many strategies for teaching reading for early learners. The best strategy is the one that appropriate with classroom condition, students' characteristics, and learning material. The teachers must be selective in choosing which strategies are appropriate to support the achievement of learning objectives.

The five strategies above were selected to be applicative in EFL classroom. Indonesian young learners come from different culture, with different language and they have their own different native language with make them easier in communication, English as a foreign language which is taught here should tend the appropriate age for the learner to learn English. Because not all learners have the learning readiness in learning foreign language, they have should completed enough in mastering their native language to learn other language easily.

CONCLUSION

When choosing how and what to educate, one important consideration is the age of the students. Age-related differences in demands, competencies, and cognitive abilities exist. Being a teacher, we might have students of primary age to learn a foreign language more through engaging and enjoyable activities. It implies that pupils at various levels require various learning strategies. Children still require assistance and direction from adults to grasp the world around them. Therefore, teachers must consider classroom activities from the perspective of them to determine whether students will comprehend what to do or be able to comprehend new language. Hopefully the strategies discussed in this study can be one of references for the teachers in teaching especially for Indonesin young learners.

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