

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ABOUT TEACHING ENGLISH AT DIGITAL AGE TO YOUNG LEARNERS AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN PALANGKA RAYA

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Abstract

Teaching English to young learners might be of importance as they are in their golden age; their brains are still flexible so that they are able to learn anything, including language. The objective of the survey research was to find out teachers' perceptions about the teaching of English to young learners at Elementary Schools in Palangka Raya at digital age 2020/ 2021. The research subjects were five English teachers at Elementary Schools in Palangka Raya. The research instruments were developed in the form of interview and a questionnaire using Google form for collecting the data needed. Description and quantitative were employed to expose the survey results. The results of the study were used to determine the perceptions/opinions of teachers about teaching English to young learners at elementary schools during the covid 19 pandemic in Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan.

Keywords: teachers' perception, teaching English, young learners

INTRODUCTION

According to Crystal(1997) it is stated in the previous era the spread of English from Britain to other territories was mostly through colonization. Since then they need one language to communicate and understood by many people from many countries. It is called the lingua franca. Because English is the oldest language in the world and appeared around the year 8 AD and it was agreed that English is the common language, then it is used as an international language today.

English has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, diplomacy, technology, and scientific research in many

countries all over the world. In the world of education, mastering English is an important value for teachers to have because they can improve themselves both academically and in life skills.

Realizing the importance of English in this country, the Indonesian government has made a decision that English is a part of a school curriculum. The decision written in the Education Unit Level Curriculum or we are known KTSP in 2006 stated English are a tool to communicate in spoken and written. English subjects are designed to develop these skills so that English speaking and speaking skills are at a certain literacy level (Depdiknas, 2006: 3).Based on Permendiknas Number 22 of 2006

about Content Standards and Permendiknas Number 23 of 2006 about Graduates Competency Standards. It stated English is one of the compulsory local content for all Elementary School teachers for grades I through grade VI. That is why English lessons are not required subjects for elementary school children. However, schools and parents realize the importance of teaching English to young learners. Because English lessons are very effective taught to young learners, especially elementary school children as Sukarno (2008) stated Rendering an English lesson to the teachers of elementary school is an appropriate decision viewed from the fact that the teachers of elementary school have a period called golden age and they have critical period, the period that children are able to learn anything easily. In this period, their brains are still flexible so that they are able to learn anything, including languages.

In this study, the researcher is interested for research in teaching English to a young learner at digital age especially in coronavirus pandemic 2020. As we know, the world of education has changed from face-to-face teaching to e-teaching since 1 years ago. The world is facing and struggling with a new virus pandemic namely Corona Virus Disease (CoVid-19) since the end of December until now. The outbreak was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and it has spread to Indonesia on March 2nd, 2020. Since then, the

pandemic had spread to all 34 provinces and finally affected in all aspects of human life especially education system in Indonesia.

The researcher would like to research about how does the teacher teaching English to the young learner at digital age, how effective to do teaching to young learners through media digital, What are advantages and disadvantages of teaching English to young learner at Elementary school at digital age, and how is the implementation of teaching English at elementary school in Palangka Raya at digital age. Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducts a research entitled: **Teachers' Perception About Teaching English At Digital Age To Young Learners At Elementary Schools In Palangka Raya.**

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study is a quantitative research. The population is teachers at elementary school Palangka Raya from the 1st to the 6th grade teacher. The subjects who participated in this study are 46 teachers (25 female and 21 male) from the 4th to the 6th grade teacher of elementary school at Palangka Raya. The participant of the study is teachers with minimum 2+ years of English teaching.

The data for this study was collected from a questionnaire, adapted from Bada, Erdogan & Okan, Zuhail (2000). The questionnaire is aimed to know how the teachers' view

about teaching English and their teaching preference, including their working style, ways of teaching, vocabulary teaching, error correction, media preference, and assessment of language performance. The data was analyzed using SPSS. Binomial-non parametric is used to describe the answer of the research question. The data will be explained descriptively.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Presented here are the results of the questionnaire. There are 14 questions distributed to the subject to know their perception in teaching English and their teaching preference. The first item asks whether the teachers like or dislike English. Item 2 asks about teachers' opinion about English as a subject at school. Item 3 asks about teachers' opinion about English teaching at their classroom. Item 4 asks teachers opinion whether the teacher should use English, bilingual or Indonesian in teaching English.

Table 1. Teachers' perception in teaching English

No.	Statements	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
1.	Do you like teaching English?	23	50	23	50	.506
2.	Do you think English subject is:					
	a. easy?	19	41	27	59	.498
	b. difficult?	22	48	24	52	.505
3.	Is teaching English in your school:					
	a. interesting?	26	57	20	43	.501
	b. confusing?	11	24	35	76	.431
	c. boring?	7	15	39	85	.363
4.	What language do you like the teacher use in teaching English?					
	a. using English?	11	24	35	76	.431
	b. using bilingual?	32	70	14	30	.465
	c. using Indonesian?	23	50	23	50	.506

The table above shows the teachers perception in teaching English. Statement 1

shows that 50% teachers like teaching English. Statement 2 shows that 41% teachers think that English is easy and 48% teachers think that English is difficult. Statement 3 shows that 57% teachers feel that English is interesting, 24% teachers feel English is confusing, and 15% teachers feel English is boring. Statement 4 shows that 24% teachers like if the teachers use English in the classroom, 70% teachers prefer the use of bilingual language, and 50% teachers want the teacher use Indonesian.

Item 5 asks about language difficulties in teaching English. It covers the difficulties in pronunciation, writing, speaking, listening, reading, and understanding the language.

Table 2. Language difficulties

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. in pronouncing English word/sentence	35	76	11	24	.431
b. in writing English	26	57	20	43	.501
c. in speaking English	30	65	16	35	.482
d. in listening English word/sentence	20	43	26	57	.501
e. in reading English word/sentence	32	70	14	30	.465
f. in understanding English word/sentence	22	52	22	48	.505

The table above shows there are 76% teachers have difficulties in pronouncing English word/sentence, 57% teachers have difficulties in writing English, 65% teachers have difficulties in speaking English, 43% teachers have difficulties in listening English word/sentence, 70% teachers have difficulties in reading English word/sentence, and 52% teachers have difficulties in understanding English

word/sentence.

Item 6 asks about teachers preference the students in doing activity in the classroom. The result is drawn below.

Table 3. Working Styles

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. individually	18	39	28	61	.493
b. in pairs	29	63	17	37	.488
c. in small groups	30	65	16	35	.482
d. in large groups	29	63	17	37	.488

From the table above, the result suggests that teachers prefer the students to work in small groups, 65%, and in pairs or in large groups, 63%, than working individually, 39%.

Item 7 asks about teachers preference on the way of teaching English. Every teacher have different way of teaching. Some teachers can learn something by visual, musical/auditory, verbal, physical/kinesthetic, logical/mathematical, solitary. The result will be described below.

Table 4. Ways of Teaching

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. listening	36	78	10	22	.417
b. reading	30	65	16	35	.482
c. copying from the board	41	89	5	11	.315
d. listening and taking notes	26	57	20	43	.501
e. reading and making notes	24	52	22	48	.505
f. repeating what you hear	35	76	11	24	.431
g. making summaries	11	24	35	76	.431

89% of teachers prefer teaching by copying from the board, 78% teachers prefer listening, 76% teachers prefer teaching by repeating what they hear, 65% likes reading, 57% likes listening and taking notes, 52% likes reading and making notes,

and 24% likes making summaries. Those imply that teachers are driven to be passive learners. This is not good for the development of students' competences. The teacher should implement an appropriate teaching method to make the students become more active in learning the language.

Another important thing in teaching English is vocabulary. Item 8 asks the teachers about how do they teach new vocabulary. The result is described below.

Table 5. Vocabulary Teaching

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. using new words in a sentence	20	43	26	57	.501
b. saying or writing words several times	12	26	34	74	.444
c. looking the real object	32	70	14	30	.465
d. memorizing the word	22	48	24	52	.505

Table 5 shows teachers preference in vocabulary teaching. 70% teachers prefer teaching vocabulary by looking the real object, 48% teachers teaching new vocabulary by memorizing, 43% teachers use it in a sentence, and 26% teachers say orwrite the new words several times.

Item 9 asks about media preference. The result shows that 67% teachers like teaching using picture/poster and 63% teachers like teaching using television video. The data is shown in table 6.

Table 6. Media Preference

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. television/video/films	29	63	17	37	.488
b. radio	6	13	40	87	.341
c. written material	20	43	26	57	.501
d. pictures/posters	31	67	15	33	.474

Item 10 asks about teachers preference of in assessment of language performance. The

result shows 59% teachers find out their English improvement through written task and 28% teachers through the use of their language in their real life situations. The data is shown below.

Table 7. Assessment of Language Performance

Options	Yes	%	No	%	Std. Deviation
a. written task set by the teacher	27	59	19	41	.498
b. using the language you have learnt in real-life situations	13	28	33	72	.455

CONCLUSION

In teaching language process, teachers play an important role in creating the suitable teaching environment that help the learners develop their language skills perfectly. Teaching English for young learners requires more effort since young learners have different characteristics from adult in teaching language. Knowing teachers perception and teaching preference can help the teacher to determine an appropriate technique that can support teaching process. The findings of this study can be concluded as follow: Although some teachers (41%) considered English as difficult subject, the amount of teachers who like and dislike English is quite same (50%). Teachers' frequency in practicing their English is limited. Therefore, the teacher should give more opportunity to student use English in the classroom. Teachers face difficulties in pronouncing English words, reading, and speaking in English. The teacher can provide pictures/posters, video, and

another activities that imitate a real-life situation to learn vocabulary. Teacher are expected to implement some techniques that require the students to work with their friends in a small or large group to support their learning.

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