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The Influence and Importance of Getting Used to English For Elementary School Students Since Grade 1

Herdika Fauzan Ginting¹, Syarifah Aini Siregar², Cahya Dwi Putri³

¹²³Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, UINSU, Medan

Email: HrdFuzG@gmail.com¹, ainisiregarsyarifah@gmail.com², Cahyadwiputri@gmail.com³

Abstract

English lessons can officially be taught in Elementary Schools since the 1994 school year as a local content subject. Although in reality there are several schools that have programmed English lessons for their students who are in Study Groups and Kindergarten, or called Early Childhood Education. In this era of information and globalization, the government realizes the importance of the role of English and human resources who have the ability to communicate in English, which in Indonesia is a foreign language. As a forward-looking policy, the government has issued the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 1987 concerning the National Education System followed by Government Regulation Number 28 of 1990 which states about human resource development. English lessons need to be implemented early on, because with early English learning, children find it easier to develop English when they become teenagers, namely when children enter Elementary School, Junior High School or to a higher level, the English taught by the teacher will stick in their memory and it is difficult to forget it, compared to children who are not taught English when they are in kindergarten or PAUD. This study aims to obtain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the English language learning process for students.

Keywords: *Elementary School English, Students, Influence, Importance*

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INTRODUCTION

The readiness of Elementary School teachers is very important in shaping, teaching, and guiding their students in the learning process, both in and outside the classroom. Teacher involvement in teaching and learning activities includes aligning themselves with the community that carries out the educational process in its entirety, namely the students. Teachers must coexist with students and open up various possible perspectives when with them. In this situation, teachers must be able to provide the knowledge they have to the maximum (Freire, 2003).

Naturally, children learn language not by reading or writing, but by listening and then imitating. This process is continued by learning to speak using expressions that have been heard. However, in practice, learning is not as easy as expected. Not all students have the same competencies, only a small number of students are able to have these competencies. This is the problem faced by partner schools.

METHOD

This study uses qualitative research. According to Yin Hesse - Biber & Leavy: 2006: in Astuti, S (2016:5) said "Qualitative research produces both exploratory and descriptive explanation." Therefore, the data taken is not calculated based on numbers but is described. The location of this study is in several elementary schools in Medan City. So by using a qualitative approach, this research is expected to provide comprehensive facts about English language problems and solutions in elementary MIN 3 schools in Medan city.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings by interviewing English teachers at ten elementary schools in Medan, almost everyone believes that English needs to be taught in elementary schools for various reasons, namely:

First, English is needed because in the era of globalization, all systems use English. In the era of globalization and instant, students from elementary school age to kindergarten are required to

compete in English subjects. "In other words, if elementary school children are left behind in English subjects, this will create problems for the child, where the child becomes less confident, ostracized from his environment, Aedi, N & Amaliyah, N(2016:195).

Secondly, so that students can more easily continue to secondary school and not feel surprised when they receive English language subjects. This is because learning English in secondary schools is different from learning English in elementary schools, but at least after elementary school children gain English knowledge in the right way in elementary school according to their character and level of development, elementary school children who will continue to secondary school will not be easily stressed psychologically and in their cognitive development.

Third, Almost all English teachers say the reason why English is needed in schools is that language acquisition is easier to teach to elementary school students. According to Lenneberg, the capacity to learn a first language will be lost if it is not activated or trained during the critical period which ranges from 2 to 13 years of age. (Madejusana wordpress). This means that elementary school is the right time to introduce English to children.

The results of the data obtained from respondents show a conclusion that English teaching materials in elementary schools must be fun and interactive. Therefore, the materials and methods provided must be in accordance with student development. Teachers said that they could use songs, puzzles, games and interesting pictures during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, it is the teacher's duty and obligation to be able to select games that are suitable for them according to the child's cognitive, physical and emotional levels. The results of the data also show that teachers believe that students' textbooks should be colorful in order to attract the attention and motivation of the students themselves. According to Greene and Petty (1967), colorful and interactive images make students interested and curious, thus increasing their motivation to learn the next material. It was also added that students will find it easier to memorize vocabulary when they see something interesting. Therefore, the main focus in teaching English according to respondents is vocabulary mastery, especially extra conversation which is starting to disappear. By mastering a lot of vocabulary, students can easily master other language skills.

CONCLUSION

Language is a very important communication tool in human life. In addition to communicating, there are several other roles of language, namely as a tool to express oneself and as one of the important elements in the formation of a culture. As one of the citizens of Indonesia, of course the language that is a tool for interaction in everyday life is Indonesian and the language that represents the area where one lives. Along with the development of the era, now we often encounter languages and terms from various countries that are no longer foreign to use without us realizing it, such as English. English is a language that has been established by the world as an international language, so it is not surprising that most Indonesian citizens, especially those who live in big cities, such as Bandung, can use English well.

Based on data obtained in the field, almost all English teachers want English to be included in the curriculum so that English is positioned as local content (mulok) in elementary school learning, and if possible English is aligned with other subjects, because with the presence of English in elementary schools will be able to maximize English because the age period of 6 to 13 years is the period of child language development, and children are easy to accept language because of the process of separating the functions of the left and right brain in children, so it is very unfortunate if during this period it is simply missed by not providing English in elementary schools. Although English is easily understood by students, it must also be considered the right learning methods and models, varied and the material taught must be in accordance with the child's development level. Basically, English in elementary schools needs to continue to be taught, even though problems arise in the implementation of English learning in elementary schools.

The government is so wise in saying that English can and cannot be implemented depending on each elementary school. The solution is that schools need to implement English in their schools and if there is a controversy among English teachers regarding English learning, it is necessary to identify and provide a solution.

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